Assessment of attitude regarding effect of mass media on behavioral pattern of adolescents in selected high schools, West Bengal

Barsa Das

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Abstract

A descriptive study was conducted to assess the attitude regarding effect of mass media on behavioral pattern of adolescents in selected high schools with the objective to identify the attitude regarding effect of mass media on behavioral pattern of adolescents and to find out the association between attitude and selected demographic variables. The conceptual framework adopted for the study was based on Modified Nola Pender’s Health Promotion Model 2006.200 adolescent high school students were selected by stratified random sampling from selected govt. co-ed high schools. The tools used for the study were semi structured questionnaire to assess the demographic profile and structured rating scale to identify attitude regarding effect of mass media on behavioral pattern of adolescents. The findings of the study revealed that maximum respondents had moderately positive attitude regarding effect of mass media on food habit (57% male and 48% female), aggression and violent behavior (71% male and 74% female), and sexual behavior (61% male and 77% female). The study also revealed that there was significant association between attitude of adolescents regarding sexual behavior and age, gender and place of living. Considering the findings of the study some recommendations were made that include-to conduct a comparative study to assess the attitude between male and female students as well as between urban and rural area and to conduct the study among adolescents on other variables.

Keywords: Attitude, mass media, adolescent, behavioral pattern

Introduction

The term adolescence is commonly used to describe the transition stage between childhood and adulthood. Adolescence is also equated to both the terms ‘teenage years’ and ‘puberty’ [1]. Adolescents are usually dealing with pre-pubertal and pubertal changes, which make them more aware of their own bodies and feelings; this is linked with a natural curiosity. In the 21st century technology has expanded the availability of information through various routes such as television, music, movies, internet and magazine, these routes avail adolescents to endless learning venues about any issues that might be of interest to them [2]. Though mass media has potential for positive effects on adolescent’s health behavior, communication at the same point it also has an ill effect on many aspects of adolescent’s behavior, health development including physical health, sexual initiation, aggressive feeling and beliefs, consumerism and social isolation.

Need for the study

Adolescents are usually dealing with pre-pubertal and pubertal changes, which make them more aware of their own bodies and feelings, this is linked with a natural curiosity and telecommunication is a common media mode and research indicates approximately 83% of programming contains sex, cigarette smoking, alcohol consumption, crime which leads to many discussions with their peers, can promote the belief among them that early smoking, alcohol, sex makes a person ‘look like an adult’. In the 21st century technology has expanded the availability of information through various routes such as television, music, movies, internet and magazines, these routes avail the adolescents to endless learning venues about any issues that might be of interest to them [2].
Mass media violence with a variety of physical, mental, social health children and adolescents including aggressive behavior, desensitization, to violence, fear, depression, nightmares, and sleep disturbance more than 3500 research studies examined the association between media violence and violent behaviors. Children are influenced by media they learn by observing, initiating and making behaviors their own. Aggressive attitude and behaviors are learned by imitating observed models [10].

Ray et al. (2006) from India reported that children having exposure to violence through media had poorer school performance and its impact on their psychological adjustments was detrimental [11].

Hopf et al. (2008) [12] showed that the more frequently children view horror and violent films during childhood, and the more frequently they play violent electronic games at the beginning of adolescence, the higher will these students’ violence and delinquency be at the age of 14 [12].

Moreno M (2009) conducted a study on “Social media influences adolescent’s behavior”, in which it was found that 54% of My Space profiles contained high risk behavior information, with 41% referencing substance abuse, 24% referencing sexual behavior and 14% referencing violence [13].

Casiano H, Kinley D J, Katz L Y, Chartier M J, Sareen J (2012) conducted a regression analyses on “Media use and health outcomes in adolescents” to determine the association between hours of use of television/videos, video games, and computers/Internet, and health outcomes including depression, alcohol dependence, binge drinking, suicidal ideation, help-seeking behavior, risky sexual activity, and obesity. And they found that obesity was associated with frequent television/video use (Adjusted Odds Ratio (AOR) 1.10). Depression and risky sexual behavior were less likely in frequent video game users (AOR 0.87 and 0.73) [14].

Keeping this view in mind, the researcher has intended to do a study to assess the attitude regarding effect of mass media on behavioral pattern of adolescents.

Statement of the problem
“Assessment of attitude regarding effect of mass media on behavioral pattern of adolescents in selected high schools, West Bengal”

Purpose of the study
To assess the attitude regarding effect of mass media on behavioral pattern among adolescents.

Objectives
1. To determine the attitude regarding effects of mass media on behavioral patterns of adolescents.
2. To find out the association between attitude and selected demographic variables.

Delimitation
The study was delimited to
- Adolescents who are studying in class IX and XI
- Adolescents who are able to speak and understand English and Bengali.

Conceptual Framework
The conceptual framework in this study is based on Modified Nola Pender’s Health Promotion Model 2006.

Research Methodology
Research Approach
In the present study survey research approach was used.

Research Design
Descriptive survey research design was used.

Variable
Attitude regarding effect of mass media on behavioral pattern of adolescents

Settings
Jadavpur Vidyapith, West Bengal
Dubrajpur Uttarayan Vidyayan, West Bengal
Loulara R.C. Academy, West Bengal

Reason for selecting the settings were
- Convenient to the investigator.
- Easy accessibility.
- Administrative approval
- Co-operation from all levels of staffs.

Population
Adolescents school students.

Sample
Adolescent school students of selected high schools.

Sample size
200 adolescents school students.

Sampling Technique
Stratified random sampling.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tool No</th>
<th>Tools</th>
<th>Variables to be measured</th>
<th>Techniques/Methods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Semi Structured Questionnaire</td>
<td>Demographic data</td>
<td>Paper pencil test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Structured Rating Scale</td>
<td>Attitude regarding effect of mass media</td>
<td>Paper pencil test</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Content validity of the tool
Content validity of the tool was obtained by submitting the tool along with criteria check list to nine experts to obtain their opinion and suggestion. Three of them were from Clinical Psychology department, two of them were from Psychiatric Social Work department, four of them were from Psychiatric Nursing department.

Pretesting
The pre testing of the tool was done to check the clarity of the items and feasibility and practicability of the item. The tool was administered to 10 adolescent high school students. The time taken for completion of questionnaire was 35-40 minutes for each subject. Some language modification was done to make them understandable.
Reliability of the tool
The reliability of structured rating was established by Cronbach’s alpha method. The reliability co-efficient was 0.88, which indicate a high reliability.

Data analysis and Discussion
Major findings related to demographic characteristics of the samples
- Majority of students that is 66% male, 77% female were belonged to the age group of 14-16 years.
- Maximum number of students that is 98% male 99% female were belonged to Hindu religion
- Majority of the students, that is 56% male and 61% female were belonged to Nuclear family.
- Half of the students that is 50% male and 50% female were from urban community.
- Majority that is father of 29% male student and 33% female student were in govt. service.
- Majority that is mother of 77% male student and 95% female student were homemaker.
- Maximum respondent that is 36% male and 44% female student had a monthly family income of >20,000 rupees.
- Majority of respondents that is 32% male and 28% female had exposure to television.

Major findings related to attitude of adolescents regarding effects of mass media on behavioral pattern of adolescents

Table 2: Frequency and percentage distribution of level of attitude regarding effect of mass media on behavioral pattern of adolescents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Male Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
<th>Female Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male Percentage (%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Female Percentage (%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n=100+100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food habit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative attitude</td>
<td>nil</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>nil</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral attitude</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderately positive attitude</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly positive attitude</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggression and violent behavior</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative attitude</td>
<td>nil</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>nil</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral attitude</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderately positive attitude</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly positive attitude</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual behavior</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative attitude</td>
<td>nil</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>nil</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral attitude</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderately positive attitude</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly positive attitude</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 indicate that maximum respondents that is 57% male and 48% female had moderately positive attitude and 40% male and 48% female respondents had strongly positive attitude and rest 3% male and 4% female had neutral attitude regarding effect of mass media on food habit of adolescents.

The above table also depicts that maximum respondents that is 71% male and 74% female had moderately positive attitude and 21% male and 17% female respondents had strongly positive attitude and rest 8% male and 9% female respondents had neutral attitude regarding effect of mass media on aggressive and violent behavior of adolescents. It is also evident from the table that maximum respondents that is 61% male and 77% female had moderately positive attitude and 37% male and 16% female respondents had strongly positive attitude and rest 2% male and 7% female respondents had neutral attitude regarding effect of mass media on sexual behavior of adolescents. A significant number of male students that is 37% had strongly positive attitude regarding effect of mass media in their sexual behavioral pattern whereas only 16% of the female students possess such attitude. Thus it can be concluded that the attitude regarding effect of mass media on their sexual behavioral pattern varies according to gender.

Findings related to the association between attitude of adolescent students regarding effect of mass media and selected demographic variables

Statistically significant relation was found between attitude of adolescents regarding sexual behavior and age, gender and place of living.

Discussion in relation to other study
On the basis of the findings in the present study and objectives of the study, discussion was held on its relation to other studies.

Findings related to description of sample characteristics of the respondents
The findings of the present study revealed that maximum number of students that is 66% male and 77% female belonged to the age group of 14-16 years and 34% male and 23% female were in the age group of 17-19 years.

The findings of the study are consistent with the study conducted by Ms Jenny Ojha (2014) at Bengaluru, showed that 60% were of age 16 years, 33.8% were of age 15 years and 6.3% were of 17 years age group and 56.3% of them were females [25].

The findings of the present study also revealed that maximum number of students that is 98% male, 99% female belonged to Hindu religion, and rest 2% male and 1% female students belonged to Muslim religion. Maximum number of students that is 56% male and 61% female belonged to nuclear family, 38% male and 34% female students belonged to joint family and rest 6% male and 5% female students belonged to extended nuclear family. 33% male and 21% female students had a monthly family income
of <5,000 rupees. 17% male and 17% female students had a monthly family income of between 5001-10,000 rupees, 9% male and 8% female student had a monthly family income of between 10,001-15,000 rupees. The findings are consistent with a study conducted by Ms Jenny Ojha (2014) at Bengaluru where she showed 43.8% of respondents were Hindu 5% were Muslim, 80% were from nuclear family 18.8% were from joint family and 1.3% were from extended nuclear family, 7% of them had monthly family income of <5,000 rupees, 32.5% of them had monthly family income of between 5001-10000 rupees and 60% of them had income of above 10000 per month. The findings of the present study also revealed that maximum respondent that is, 32% male and 28% female had exposure to television, 10% male and 6% female had exposure to newspaper, 9% male and 7% female respondents had exposure to social sites, 2% male and 1% female respondents had exposure to magazine and 3% male and 1% female respondents had exposure to radio. 17% male and 25% female had exposure to all types of mass media. The findings of the study also consistent with that of the findings of Ms Jenny Ojha (2014) at Bengaluru, where she showed 28% of respondents had the exposure of watching movies and 25% of them had exposure to newspaper.

**Findings related to attitude of adolescents regarding effect of mass media on behavioral pattern of adolescents**

The findings of the present study revealed that maximum respondents that is 57% male and 48% female had moderately positive attitude and 40% male and 48% female respondents had strongly positive attitude and rest 3% male and 04% female had neutral attitude regarding effect of mass media on food habit of adolescents. 71% male and 74% female had moderately positive attitude and 21% male and 17% female respondents had strongly positive attitude and rest 8% male and 9% female respondents had neutral attitude regarding effect of mass media on aggressive and violent behavior of adolescents. 61% male and 77% female had moderately positive attitude and 37% male and 16% female respondents had strongly positive attitude and rest 2% male and 7% female respondents had neutral attitude regarding effect of mass media on sexual behavior of adolescents.

The findings also comply with another study conducted by Ms Jenny Ojha (2014) at Bengaluru, where she showed majority that is 71.3% had favorable attitude and 28.8% had moderately favorable attitude.

**Findings related to the association between attitude of adolescent students regarding effect of mass media and selected demographic variables**

The findings of the present study revealed that there was no significant association between food habit and violent and aggressive behavior and other demographic characteristics like age, gender, type of family, place of living, monthly family income, occupation of father, occupation of mother. But there was significant association between attitude of adolescents regarding sexual behavior and age, gender and place of living.

The findings were consistent with a study conducted by Ms Jenny Ojha (2014) at Bengaluru, where she has identified that there was no significant association between age, religion, type of family with the level of attitude of adolescents regarding psychological effects caused by social media. But there was significant association between genders with the level of attitude of adolescents regarding psychological effects caused by social media.

**Conclusion**

Conclusion were drawn on the basis of objectives and findings of the study. And it was found that maximum respondents had moderately positive attitude regarding food habit, aggressive and violent behavior and sexual behavior. The attitude of adolescents regarding effect of mass media on their sexual behavioral pattern varies according to gender. There was significant association between attitude of adolescents regarding sexual behavior and age, gender and place of living.

**Acknowledgement**

“With God all things are possible”

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