



EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF MEDIA LITERACY ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF ADOLESCENTS IN KANYAKUMARI DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the paper is to develop media literacy among school students. television viewing has undergone great changes during the last decades and is currently far more complex than earlier, today being part of everyday television. The study is divided in to two parts the first part deals about the influence of television viewing on academic performance of adolescents. The second part deals with the effect of media literacy intervention of the students. For this study six parents and six teachers were selected to study the influence of television viewing on academic performance among adolescents and an experimental study was conducted by pre and post survey. The findings of the study reveal that media literacy intervention help the students to achieve in academic performance and get greater control over media content.

KEYWORDS: Media Literacy; Adolescents; Television viewing; Academic Performance; Media content.

1. INTRODUCTION

Literacy is traditionally understood as the ability to read, write and use arithmetic. The modern term's meaning has been expanded to include the ability to use language, numbers, images, computers and other basic means to understand, communicate, gain useful knowledge and use the dominate symbol systems of a culture. In India, literacy is defined by the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India, as the ability of a person aged seven years and above-both to write and read with understanding in any language. Media education in India is still in an experimental stage. In most of the schools, media is used as an educational technology. However, various organizations, institutions, and academic council have taken the initiatives to promote media education through their programmes and workshops. In 1992, the National Leadership Conference on Media Literacy defined media literacy as "the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and communicate messages in a variety of forms" (Aufderheide 1993). Potter (2004, 58-59) defines media literacy as "the set of perspectives from which we expose ourselves to the media and interpret the meaning of the messages we encounter." For Potter, the key to media literacy is to build good knowledge structures. In this study media literacy is when to watch, why to watch, what to watch and how to watch television. This also, to sort through this information and organize it, people need skills of analysis, evaluation, grouping, induction, deduction, synthesis, and abstracting. The more we develop our knowledge structures, the more context we will have to help us understand what we see. The more people actively use the information in those knowledge structures during exposure to media messages, the more they will be able to avoid risks for negative effects. If people want to actively shape the role of media to play in their lives, they need to be aware of the influence of media.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study on media literacy may create awareness among the adolescents regarding television viewing and academic performance. There is a conflict in this transitional age group so as to choose right for them. Therefore media literacy will mould them to understand negative influence of media on academic performance of adolescents and help them to create awareness about it. Media literacy education will be a key to help the children and their future.

RESEARCH PROBLEM

Parents and teachers are responsible for children's media education which is understood as the transmission of values, knowledge, skills and patterns of behaviour. They must act as the filters and monitor the influence of mediation agents in everyday life. It is the time for teachers and parents to help their children to increase the competency level of children in academic performance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Columbia's college of Physicians and Surgeons concluded in 2007 that children below the age of 10 who watched one or more hours of TV daily are at an elevated risk of poor performance, poor homework completion, negative attitude toward school, poor grades and long term academic failure. The study further found that those who watched three or more hours a day were at an even greater risk for subsequent attention and learning difficulties and they were least preferred to go to the college. In 2005, a study published by the American Archives of Paediatrics and adolescent medicine (AAPM) found the harm caused by TV shows up even after correcting the data to account for students intelligence, family conditions and behaviour problems. The bottom line thus is increase in time spent watching TV during childhood and adolescence was associated with a lower level of education attainment by early adulthood. Despite the negative effects of mass media on performance there are a number of positive social effects of mass media on children. Mass media plays a major role in enhancing positive child development. For instance, various education programs aired in television may serve to increase children's knowledge (Preiss, 2007). It is therefore evident that television can serve as a means of learning in children. Also studies show that the significance of poor grades school work is due to excessive TV watching. Because television consume time away from reading and school work, it is significant to control TV viewing while doing school work. Many studies have showed that even two or one hour of daily television viewing by school aged children has a significant harmful effect on academic performance, especially reading. As by the displacement theory which proposes that time is to be spent in activities like reading, it proposes that children who view television most heavily seem to spend less time in activities that encourage cognitive development and in turn show the lowest achievement.

Media responsible for risky behaviour in young people have called particular attention to the problems. The "media effects theories" treat young people as helpless victims of the media, failing to recognize them as active and savvy audiences who can tell the difference between fictional events and reality Gauntlett, (1998). Wober and Gunter (1988) comment as follows, "through analysis of relationships between individuals' reported television viewing habits, particularly the amount of time they spend watching and the perceptions of their social and cultural environment; such works have made it possible to reveal television's contribution to the attitudes, beliefs and values people hold with respect to the world in which they live". Like negative effects there are positive media effects like gaining knowledge, health and educational informations through media. Television and internet are the media discussed in this study.

A Study by Syed Noor-Ul-Amin & Mohammad Iqbal Mattoo (2014) "The Influence of Heavy and Low Television Watching on Study Habits of Secondary School Students". A sample of 500 students was drawn randomly from various Government secondary and higher secondary schools of District Srinagar

(J&K). The results revealed that there was a significant difference between the mean scores of heavy and low TV viewers. The low TV viewers have a good amount of learning motivations and retaining of information for a long time and low TV viewer female group exhibit good habit in memorizing and remembering the facts for a longer period. In the remaining areas of study habits both the groups under investigation (Low TV viewer male and female subjects) have been found similar in budgeting time, physical conditions, reading ability and note taking. It was revealed that low TV viewers male and female group of subjects were more or less similar in a majority of the areas of study habits.

A report from American Academy of Paediatrics (2001) about Children, Adolescents, and Television, describes the negative health effects of television viewing on children and Adolescents, such as violent or aggressive behaviour, substance use, sexual activity, obesity, poor body image and decreased school performance. Media education is an effective approach in mitigating these potential problems. The American Academy of Paediatrics offers a list of recommendations on this issue for paediatricians, parents, the federal government and the entertainment industry like discussions about family values, violence, sex and drug with their children and show them high-quality educational programmes, They encourage alternative entertainment for children, including reading, athletics, hobbies and creative play to initiate legislation and rules that would ban alcohol advertisements.

Franky Gupta & Rimplejeet Kaur (2014) conducted a study on "Influence of Television Viewing on Mental Health of Adolescents" a sample of 400 students was randomly selected from different schools of Taren city. The purpose of the study was to compare the mental health of these two categories adolescents who watched TV less than 2-4 hrs/day and more than 5-6 hrs/day. The results depicted that mental health of adolescence boys and girls did not differ from each other irrespective of their being watching more, or less TV. Overall result showed that mental health of adolescents under the influence of TV viewing is good as compared to those not influenced by TV. The findings of this study are that parents should monitor the TV viewing patterns of their children and encourage them to watch educational channels as it has positive impact on their academic performance. Teachers can improve the conditions of teaching and learning by adopting television as a teaching aid, to enrich their knowledge and information of the students and the students can improve their TV viewing patterns and devote sufficient time to studies.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1. To determine the TV viewing pattern of the adolescents.
2. To determine the need for media literacy.
3. To find out whether media literacy intervention limits the negative effects of television viewing on academic performance of adolescents.

The present study involved quantitative research (experimental method) and qualitative research (focus group discussion). The researcher conducted a focus group study to understand the influence of TV viewing and need for media literacy among the adolescents. The study was conducted among six parents and six teachers of the students in Kanyakumari district. From the focus group discussion important issues were identified in the area of academic performance and media literacy. Important variables like influence of TV viewing on students and the need of media literacy were discussed. Based on the data gathered by focus group discussion an experimental study on media literacy was planned. For the experimental design the population of the present study consisted of class IX students of A and B division in SMRV Higher Secondary School Nagercoil. The sample comprised of 100 students from A and B, the divisions of class IX of one school. The students were randomly assigned to two groups, 50 students in experimental group and 50 in control group with 25 boys and 25 girls. To confirm whether the two groups the experimental and control group were regarded to be homogenous by the analysis of quarterly examination marks obtained. Pre and post survey were conducted, the two

groups before and after treatment were compared. The media literacy training was given eight days (45 minutes per day), Retention test was done after one month of training.. After the data had been collected, it was processed & tabulated directly in to SPSS 20.0 Software. Cronbach's Alpha reliability was done to find out the reliability of the data. The data reliability score alpha is .678 which is at an acceptable level.

3. DATA ANALYSIS

The t-test results of two groups' post- test and pre-test scores related to academic performance

Academic performance	tests	Experimental ^a		Control ^b		Mean Difference	t	Sig (2-tailed)
		M	SD	M	SD			
TV affects homework	Post	4.56	.1131	2.38	.2992	2.17	16.64	.000
	pre	2.30	.3321	2.22	.2226	.076	.455	.657
Do not give Attention to appearance than studies	Post	4.61	.3496	1.83	.3496	2.78	15.21	.000
	pre	1.77	.3465	1.77	.3465	.135	.694	.513
Do not watch TV Late night	Post	4.67	.1769	1.98	.1067	2.69	29.18	.000
	pre	2.08	.3879	1.90	.0643	.184	.994	.513
Romantic songs don't affects studies	Post	4.57	.2006	2.19	.1669	2.35	18.00	.000
	pre	2.18	.1423	2.14	.1731	.035	.312	.765
Concentration in class improved	Post	4.49	.2552	1.99	.1170	2.50	17.80	.000
	pre	2.37	.1300	2.16	.1983	.212	1.79	.123
Affects health and eye sight	Post	4.54	.2429	1.98	.1067	2.56	21.57	.000
	pre	2.06	.1039	1.90	.1438	.156	1.96	.085
Waste lot of time	Post	4.50	.1119	2.40	.3964	2.09	10.17	.000
	pre	2.35	.1851	2.31	.4112	.032	.144	.890
Increased extracurricular activities	Post	4.51	.1089	2.33	.1737	2.18	22.11	.000
	pre	2.22	.2609	2.29	.1928	.067	.439	.674

Source: Primary data

$p \leq .05$ ^an = 50, ^bn = 50, M = Mean, SD= Standard Deviation

From the above table the post test mean score of experimental and control group are M = 4.56, and M = 2.38. The 'P' value is less than .05. This shows that there is a significant difference between the two groups, media literacy training given to the adolescents to overcome the negative effects of television viewing on doing homework.

In the analysis of post test the mean score value of experimental and control group on limiting the negative effects of media on studies are M = 4.61 and M = 1.83, the mean difference is 2.78, $P < .05$. This shows there is a significant difference between the two groups. From this the media literacy training is helpful to give more attention to studies than appearance.

In the analysis of post test mean score value of experimental and control group in limiting the negative effects of media on eating habits of adolescents the mean score M = 4.67 and M = 1.98. The mean difference M = 2.69, 'P' value is less than .05. This shows that there is a significant difference between two group and . From this the media literacy training help adolescents to understand the negative effects of late night television viewing..

In the analysis of post test score of the experimental and control group on limiting the negative effects of media on adolescent’s academic performance are M = 4.57 and M = 2.19. The average means score value M=2.35 and ‘P’ value is less than .05. This shows there is a significant difference between two groups and the media literacy training decreases the negative effects television viewing on academic performance.

The average post-test score of experimental and control group in substance abuse are M = 4.54 and M = 1.98. The average mean score value M = 2.56, ‘P’ value is less than .05. This shows there is a significant difference between the groups and media literacy training limits the negative effects of television viewing regarding the concentration of adolescents.

While analyzing the effects of media the average post-test mean score value of experimental and control group M= 4.49 and M = 1.99. The mean difference M = 2.50 and P = .000, the ‘P’ value is less than 0.05. This show there is a significant difference between the two groups and the media literacy training limit the negative effects of media on health issues among adolescents.

The average post test score of experimental and control group are M = 4.51 and M = 2.33 the mean difference is M = 2.18, P < .05. ‘P’ value is less than .05, it shows there is a significant difference between the two groups and media literacy training helps in time management of adolescents.

From the above table it is confirmed that media literacy training is very effective among adolescents in limiting the negative effects of television viewing on academic performance of adolescents.

Difference among the retention scores with regard to media Effects

Media content		Mean	SD	N	Mean Difference	t	Sig (2-tailed)
TV affects home work	Ret	4.75	.0442	50	.038	1.898	.082
	expt	4.71	.0304				
Do not give Attention to appearance than studies	Ret	4.65	.0899	50	.047	.678	.523
	Expt	4.61	.1075				
Donot watchi TV Late night	Ret	4.53	.1769	50	.146	1.739	.120
	Expt	4.67	.0626				
Romantic songs don't affects studies	Ret	4.81	.0806	50	.275	2.543	.044
	Expt	4.54	.2006				
Decreased the concentration in class	Ret	4.56	.1946	50	.0120	.095	.927
	Expt	4.57	.2046				
Affects health and eye sight	Ret	4.59	.2010	50	.050	.732	.355
	Expt	4.54	.2429				
Waste lot of time	Expt	4.71	.1236	50	.215	2.57	.042
	Ret	4.50	.1119				
Increased extracurricular activities	Expt	4.46	.0748	50	.01	.159	.879
	Ret	4.51	.1089				

Source: Primary data

The above table shows the mean score of the post and retention test of experimental group regarding academic performance has no significant difference. To conclude the media literacy help the adolescents to limit the negative influence of TV viewing on academic performance.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Focus group discussion

1. Most of the parents felt that the children were inattentive, lose concentration and become drowsy in class because of watching TV late night, which affects their study pattern.
2. Most of the teachers felt that the students gave up the habit of reading books and they live in the world of imagination.
3. Most of the parents felt their children love to look like models for that they cut down their meals which lead to anaemic health problem.
4. Most of the teachers felt that students starve to attain zero figures and even they faint in class which leads to health issues.
5. Most of the parents felt that heavy TV viewing affected their children's eye sight. Parents and teachers insisted the need media literacy in curriculum.

TV viewing pattern of the Adolescents

1. A majority 48.6% of the respondents watch TV programmes up to 1-2 hours during week days.
2. The respondents of 36.1% watch TV programmes up to 2-3 hours and 36.5% watch TV programme for about 3-4 hours during weekends.
3. A majority 39% of the adolescents prefer to watch TV alone. 26.8% like to view TV with siblings.
4. A majority 46.8% of the respondents view TV programme for entertainment. 26.7% view TV programme for time pass. 24.4% of the respondents view TV for gaining knowledge.

Television viewing enhances or decreases the school achievement

1. Majority 71.9% of the respondents agree that TV viewing has improved their knowledge and language.
 2. Majority 52.7% of the respondents agree that TV viewing has influenced their home work.
 3. Majority 56.4% of the respondents agree that TV viewing has increased extra-curricular activities.
 4. Majority 56.4% of the respondents disagree that TV viewing improved their study habits.
 5. Majority 53% of the respondents agree that TV viewing waste lot of time.
 6. Majority 63.2% of the respondents agree that lot of TV viewing affects their health and eye sight.
- The findings clearly indicate that, TV viewing decreases the school achievements.

Post test of control group and experimental group

There is significant difference in the academic performance of adolescents among the control group and experimental group.

Pre test – post test control group

There is no significant difference in the academic performance of adolescents among pre and post test of control group.

Pre test – post test experimental group

There is significant difference between pre and post test of experimental group in analyzing the academic performance of adolescents The experimental group student's academic performance increased than control group by media literacy training.

There is significant difference among the mean score of experimental score than control group. This is due to effective media literacy training which limit the negative effect of media on academic performance of students. The findings coincides with the study of Narjes Geraee et al., (2015) Media Literacy training increases the academic performance of students.

4. CONCLUSION

The aim of the study in outline is to provide literacy and educate the adolescents, their parents through media literacy training. In addition, it aims to determine the extent and purpose of the research objectives. Children are constantly bombarded by media messages.. We cannot avoid media messages; the only way is to think about how to overcome these problems. Media literacy is an ideal and somewhat realistic solution helps to mitigate some of the potential deleterious effects. This study focuses on how to view media messages using critical thinking skills. It was conducted to find out the effectiveness of media literacy on the academic performance of adolescents in Kanyakumari district. The purpose of the study is to investigate the influence of media among adolescents on TV viewing pattern, content of TV program, understanding the content of TV program, academic performance, the need of media literacy. The findings show that they have to gain knowledge about time management in TV viewing.

. In this study influence of media on academic performance had positive effects on language, information, extracurricular activities and negative aspect on study habits, home works and health. The study shows decrease in academic achievement. From this study media literacy training proved more effective on the academic performance of the students, they became media literate and have the capacity to perceive positive effects of media and leave the negative aspects. The adolescents cannot escape by avoiding the media messages, but through developing the critically analyzing skills, one can to filter the media messages to overcome this situation. The practice can succeed them in life to have bright future. It is confident that it may be adopted and followed in curriculum and might spark numerous innovative studies on media literacy in the days ahead.

Teachers of government, aided and matriculation schools have to provide media literacy to the student and help their students to analyze the messages using academic performance will get increased. Time spent on watching TV may be reduced and skills and gain control over media. Their talents, extracurricular activities and language will develop to help them to built strong personal locus.

RECOMMENDATIONS

For the good quality of successful academic achievement and positive behaviour changes the students have to become a media literate, to achieve it the curriculum need to be reframed to introduce a paper on media literacy. The knowledge about internet safety is poor for both students and parents. So, sound knowledge is needed for them otherwise it leads to behavioural issues. It is the responsibility of policy makers to impart media literacy in curriculum in primary and secondary education apart from moral values and environmental studies.

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