
MEDIA INFLUENCE ON SEXUAL ATTITUDE

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Article Received: 7th March, 2018 Article Revised: 16th March, 2018 Article Accepted: 24th March, 2018

Abstract

The use of digital media is increasing day by day. In a family from the youngest to the oldest almost everyone use smartphones, laptops, computers and social media. It is the most common activity of today's children, adolescents and adults. Any website or blog that allows social interaction, broadly socialization is considered as a social media site. It also includes social networking sites such as Twitter, Facebook, and MySpace; gaming sites and virtual worlds such as Second Life, Club Penguin, and the Sims; video sites such as YouTube and daily motion. These sites offer a portal for entertainment and communication for today's youth and have an exponential growth in the recent years. For the same reason, it is very important that parents and caregivers to be aware of the nature of social media sites. Since that not all of them are healthy environments for children, adolescents and adults. Physicians, Psychologists and Pediatricians are in a unique position to help families in understanding about these sites and in encouraging a healthy use and urge parents in monitoring for many problems with cyber bullying, facebook depression, game addiction, sexting, and exposure to inappropriate content. In this study we have reviewed the last 15 years scientific literature on media influence on sexual attitude. The literature review mainly focuses on the influence of media such as social media, televisions, blogs and other websites on the sexual attitude and behaviour. The findings of the study are summarised and discussed in the paper elaborately.

Keywords: *Media, Sexual Attitude, Sexual Behaviour*

INTRODUCTION

In today's world media has earned a powerful place in deciding the fate of anything and everything all over the world. Media is the main means of mass communication (broadcasting, publishing, and the Internet) regarded collectively. Media could be used for almost all aspects, genres and purposes in life. It can make or break a nation and do beyond. And one such aspect that media is influencing in general public through which many issues have arisen is Media's influence on Sexual attitude. As much as it does well there is an equal amount of bad. Where there is development in technology and its Pros, it is also safe to say there is a level of negativity and cons that arises with it. The general public have been exposed to many things as the days go by in the name of evolution and development and as media grew it also found ways to grow in to people's attitude tapping into their desires and greed's. One such negative aspect that found a way to creep into the minds of today's

generation is impact of media in sexual attitude. What was once considered taboo has found a way to be accepted in the society and to know the media has the power to do it is quiet scary.

Mass media back in the days was journals and then came the radio. But today we have extended beyond a television set home to hand held devices like smart phone that has access to World Wide Web which connects all the networks of media. And it's scary how objectifying both men and women is accepted and welcomed in today's generation. Without being aware of the psychological effects it could have on a person who is unaware of their issues that they have developed or might develop due to the impact of media with regards to sexual attitude. It is a fact that today people would like to see a man or a woman being portrayed sexually or objectified to add that extra flair to whatever it is that the media is trying to sell if it's a brief or vest it is sold better if a male model is wearing it instead of showing the making of the particular product which is and may be considered boring, same goes for a simple mango juice is sold better when a woman is objectified instead of talking about the benefits of the juice.

Media here is used to tap into the sexual desires that have been hidden in both men and women since the days of Adam and Eve. There are many psychological issues that are associated with such bad influences by the media which are unfortunately sometimes not noticed or treated in time. Many young children are fed wrong things about sexual desires which have to be experienced and discovered later in their lives and many adults have found a way to develop their desires to such an extent that it becomes an urge to explore sexuality and sexual behaviour in a wrong way. If there is way to prevent media from objectifying men and women for personal interests or a company or a person we could bring about a change in the issues related with Media being an influence in Sexual Attitude. If not prevent at least control any content that prevent Media from being the game changer.

Need for review analysis:

The concept of sexual attitude is not a common matter that an individual would openly talk about. Be it a boy or a girl they would be hesitant to answer statements related to sexual attitude and behaviour. The fear of labelling and judgement stops one from sharing or discussing these things openly. The influence of media on the sexual attitude is less studied in our population. It is very important for every individual to understand the effect of media on their sexual behaviour and attitude. The work is also on parents, they need to have a regulation and be aware of their children's activity on smartphones and computers.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Brown, Halpern and Engle (2005) aimed to examine the probability that the mass media to serve as a peer for girls who step in puberty earlier than their age-mates. Several studies have described significant relationships between faster pubertal timing and faster transition to first sex. The study even investigates if puberty can trigger interest in media with sexual content that is perceived as giving acceptance to involve in sexual behavior. The study was carried out in central North Carolina among 471 White and African-American female adolescents chosen from public middle schools. They completed two self-reported surveys in their houses about their pubertal status, perceptions of sexual media content, and interest and exposure to several media. The results revealed that girls who mature earlier reported greater interest than girls who mature later in watching sexual content in magazines, television, and movies, and also in hearing to sexual content in music, in spite of race or age. Girls who mature earlier were also more likely to be reading magazines and hearing music with sexual content, more likely to watch R-rated movies, and to perceive the messages they watched in the media as accepting of teens for sexual intercourse.

Ashby, Arcari and Edmonson (2006) conducted a research to investigate whether seeing television is correlated with the risk of initiating sexual intercourse in early adolescents. In the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health, secondary analysis of data was drawn from 1994 through 1996. 4808 adolescents younger than 16 years who had not involved in sexual intercourse before initial interview were selected. Self-reported daily television watching was primary exposure was, grouped as low or high use and secondary exposure was parental regulation of television programming watched. 48.8% adolescents at baseline watched television 2 or more hours per day, in 1-year follow-up, 15.6% adolescents had initiated sexual intercourse. Sexual initiation was related with high usage of television and lack of parental regulation. 73.8% of the adolescents reported strong disapproval of parental in sex; their total rate of initiation was 12.5%, and risk was independently related with high usage of television and lack of parental regulation. The rate of sexual initiation was higher in adolescents who did not report strong parental disapproval, but not associated to television use.

The previous literature on violent video game literature was not drawn-out to the area of violence against women. **Dill, Brown and Collins (2008)** tested the impacts of exposure to sex-typed video game characters versus pictures of professional women and men on judgments and attitudes supporting aggression opposite to women. The results of the study exhibited experimental impacts of short-term exposure to media that is stereotyped in judgments on sexual harassment but not on rape myth acceptance. A significant interaction showed that men exposed to stereotypical matter made judgments that were highly tolerant of a real-life instance of sexual harassment when compared to controls. Anyhow, long-term exposure to violence in video game was connected with high tolerance of sexual harassment and high rape myth acceptance. The data of this study contributed to understand the role of mass media socialization that assists violence against women.

Association of use and subsequent sexual behaviors and attitudes anticipated by exposure to sexually explicit content like erotica and pornography in adult magazines, the Internet, and X-rated movies were observed in a prospective survey of a large diverse subject of early adolescents. 66% of males and 39% of females had been exposed to any one form of sexually explicit media in the previous year. At the origin, being older, being black, and lower socioeconomic status, high need for sensation, and having less-qualified parents were connected to higher exposure for both males and females. Longitudinal analyses exhibited that early exposure for males anticipated less progressive sexual harassment perpetration, more permissive sexual norms, gender role attitudes, and having sexual intercourse and oral sex two years later. Early exposure of sexually explicit content for females anticipated incidentally lower progressive gender role attitudes, and engaging oral sex and sexual intercourse (**Brown and Engle 2009**).

Courville and Rojas (2009) Mass media play a crucial role in the socializing process among youth. The growth and access to Internet can be the important of this education. But still, effect of internet use on adolescent sexual behaviours and attitudes is not het studies. In New York City, 433 youth were administered with an anonymous survey at a health center. Internet accessibility, exposure to sexually explicit sexually permissive attitudes, sexual behaviors, and Web sites was measured in the cross-sectional. Among the youth, 96% had access to Internet, and 55.4% had never ever visited such websites. Logistic regression analyses exhibited that youth exposed to those websites were more likely to have multiple sexual partners in their lifetime, in the last 3 months to have more than one sexual partner, to have the habit of alcohol or other substances at previous sexual encounter, and to have anal sex. Adolescents who visit those websites showed high sexual permissiveness scores when compared with those who have never visited.

This paper gives an overview of the present state of empirical research in the field of Internet Sexuality, focussing on six areas of online sexuality: Pornography, sex contacts, sex education, sex work, sex shops, and sexual subcultures. The findings of the research revealed the concern of Internet sexuality's forms of manifestation, participant groups, risks, and opportunities. It indicated that in the Western world a sexually connected online activity has become a habit in the past few years for wide segments of the people. It also takes some several forms based on the gender, age, and sexual orientation of each one. Studies by academicians till date have presented on the possible negative effects of Internet sexuality. On the other hand, very few researches have been carried out on potential benefits (**Döring 2009**).

The mainstream mass media (television, magazines, movies, music, and the Internet) provide increasingly frequent portrayals of sexuality. There is only a relatively little knowledge about how this content is used and how it affects sexual beliefs and behaviours. The few available studies suggest that the media do have an impact because the media keep sexual behaviour on public and personal agendas, media portrayals reinforce a relatively consistent set of sexual and relationship norms, and the media rarely depict sexually responsible models. More longitudinal research, especially with early adolescents is needed to learn more about how media content is attended to, interpreted, and incorporated into developing sexual lives (**Brown 2010**).

This multi-method, qualitative study addresses the question: How do mass media images and messages about love, sex and relationships interact with what teens learn about sexuality at home, in school, and from their friends? Using the Adolescents' Media Practice Model introduced by Steele & Brown (1995) as a starting point, this study seeks to extend our understanding of the media's role in shaping adolescents' values, attitudes, and beliefs about sex by factoring in some of the contexts that intersect with media practice. Data generated through focus groups, media journals, room tours, and in-depth interviews with middle school and high school teens suggest that ethnicity, gender, class status, and developmental stage influence media practices in important ways. Identity—teens' sense of themselves and others—affects the media they like best, how they interact with that media, and how they apply media matter in their everyday lives. (**Steele 2010**).

This study addresses those moral panics by investigating teenagers' practices regarding new media and sexuality. New media technologies are central parts of young people's social, romantic, and sexual lives. These communication technologies are important in their practices of meeting, dating, and breaking up. New media technologies also provide important resources about sexual health and identities. However, these informational and relational resources are not equally available to all young people. Indeed use and access to new media technologies often mirrors the contemporary ordering of economic, racialized, and gendered power. Additionally, while youth are aware of online safety practices, some youth are more vulnerable to online risks than others. (**Pascoe 2011**).

The current research made use of the General Social Survey data collected during 2000, 2002, and 2004 to investigate the relationship between exposure to internet pornography and sexually transmitted infections risk behaviors among US male adults. Later control for demographic and individual difference covariates, internet pornography consumption was positively related with having sexual intercourse with multiple partners, engaging in paid sexual intercourse, and extramarital sexual intercourse. Internet pornography consumption was associated with engaging in unprotected sexual intercourse. Following in time General Social Surveys did not ask subjects about their internet pornography exposure. The current survey provided unique insight into the risky sexual patterns of behavior among male adults' internet pornography consumers in the US (**Wright and Randall 2012**).

The study provided an overview of youth culture and how the media shapes youth culture in today's world. The focus is on the access to sexual content that the different forms of media provide and the possible effect that they have on youth culture today. The sexual development of teenagers is one of the most important areas of their journey into adulthood and can easily be influenced by media messages on sex and sexuality. As such, the sexual behaviour of teenagers mostly seems to demonstrate a misconception on sex and sexuality. The author argued that sexuality can also be viewed as theological issues and concluded by offering a few suggestions on how faith communities can become a more relevant and effective partner in fostering a theological understanding of sex and sexuality, especially to the youth. Faith communities today face different challenges regarding sexuality, including HIV and AIDS, sexual violence, homosexuality, different forms of marriage and family life and the influence of the media. This calls for a revisiting of the Church's stance on the matter, as current views do not seem to offer relevant or sufficient guidance on the questions asked. It would be helpful if churches are aware of their own theological history on sexuality and sex and how it influences their message on sexuality and sex today. Churches do still have various platforms and structures, such as catechesis, through which a lot of youngsters pass in their life time, which create opportunities to engage with youngsters on life issues such as sexuality. Faith communities are therefore urged to make more effective use of these opportunities and take their rightful place in the current discourse on sex and sexuality. (Cloete 2012)

The current paper investigated the concurrent influences of early movie alcohol exposure and movie sex exposure on subsequent risky alcohol use and sex among 1228 U.S. adolescents. The subjects reported between 2003 and 2009 as a telephonic interview, their behaviors health and movie watching up to six times. The Beach method was utilised to form a population-based calculation of each subject's movie alcohol exposure and movie sex exposure, which were later entered into a structural equation model to predict risky sex and past month alcohol use for lifetime at ages 18–21. For both genders, movie alcohol exposure anticipated risky sex via age of sexual debut; movie alcohol exposure also anticipated use of alcohol, acted by age of initiation of heavy episodic drinking. In male subjects, movie sex exposure circuitously anticipated alcohol use and risky sex. The outcomes indicated that early exposure to risk content in movies had both general and specific effects on later risk-taking. Whereas gender differences were clear: for male, movie sex exposure was a strong predictor than movie alcohol exposure, but for female, only movie alcohol exposure anticipated later risk behavior. (Hara, Gibbons, Gerrard and Sargent 2013).

Parkes, Wight, Hunt, Henderson, Sargent (2013) has conducted a study to investigate whether contextual factors (co-viewing, parental media restrictions) and sexual media content were associated with early sexual behaviour. This study comprised a sample of 14–15 year-olds from Scotland, UK. A third (n = 733) reported sexual intercourse. In multivariable analysis the likelihood of intercourse was lower with parental restriction of sexual media and same-sex peer co-viewing; but higher with mixed-sex peer co-viewing. Parental co-viewing, other parental restrictions on media and sexual film content exposure were not associated with intercourse. Findings suggest the context of media use may influence early sexual behaviour. Specific parental restrictions on sexual media may offer more protection against early sex than other restrictions or parental co-viewing.

Hara, Gibbons, Li, Gerrard, and Sargent (2013) has conducted a study on movie sex exposure (MSE) and movie alcohol exposure (MAE) and its influence on sexual behaviour and drinking. This study examined the concurrent influences of early (i.e., before age 16) MSE and MAE on subsequent risky sex and alcohol use among 1228 U.S. adolescents. Participants reported their health behaviours and movie viewing up to six times between 2003

and 2009 in telephone interviews. The Beach method was used to create a population-based estimate of each participant on MSE and MAE, which were then entered into a structural equation model (SEM) to predict lifetime risky sex and past month alcohol use at ages 18–21. For both men and women, MAE predicted alcohol use, mediated by age of initiation of heavy episodic drinking (HED) and age of sexual debut; MAE also predicted risky sex via age of sexual debut. Among men only, MSE indirectly predicted risky sex and alcohol use. Findings indicated that early exposure to risk content from movies had both specific and general effects on later risk-taking, but gender differences were evident: for men, MSE was a stronger predictor than MAE, but for women, only MAE predicted later risk behaviour. These results have implications for future media research, prevention programs for adolescent sex and alcohol use, and movie ratings that can guide parents' decisions as to which movies are appropriate for their children.

The study was on Asian adolescents and young adults in the three cities of Hanoi, Shanghai, and Taipei, to investigate the relationship between exposure to sexual content in the media and adolescents and young adults, sex-related knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours are explored in societies with traditional Confucian culture, but at different stages in the process of modernization. The data are from a questionnaire-based cross-sectional study conducted from 2006 to 2007, where a sample of 17,016 adolescents and young adults aged 15–24 years from Shanghai, Hanoi, and Taipei completed face-to-face interviews coupled with computer-assisted self-interviews for sensitive questions. Exposure to sexual content in the mass media (including the Internet and traditional media), pornographic videos, and a preference for western/Asian movies/videos were the main media influence measures. Sex-related knowledge, premarital sexual permissiveness (PSP), and sex-related behaviours were the main outcome measures. The impact of each of four contexts including family, peer, school, and media on sex-related knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours were assessed using multiple linear regression stratified by gender and city, controlling for age, urban/rural residence, education, and economic status. The change in adjusted R² from the multiple linear regression analysis was adopted to indicate the contribution of family, peer, school, and media variables to respondents sex-related knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours. The contextual factors, including family, peer, school, and media, explained 30%–50% of the Variance in sex-related knowledge, 8%–22% of the variance in PSP, and 32%–41% of the variance in sex-related behaviours. Media variables explained 13%–24% of the variance in sexual knowledge, 3%–13% in PSP, and 3%–13% in sex-related behaviours, which was comparable with that of family, peer, and school variables. These associations differed by city and gender. **(Lou, Cheng, Goa, Zuo, Emerson and Zabin 2013).**

This study tests the following 3 hypotheses: (1) there is a direct association between consumption of sexually explicit media (SEM) depicting non-condom use and sexually transmitted infection (STI)-related sexual risk behaviour among men who have sex with men (MSM); (2) the association between SEM consumption and STI-related sexual risk behaviour is mediated by men's sexual self-esteem; and (3) the relationship between SEM consumption and sexual risk behaviour is mediated by condom use self-efficacy. Methods: Cross-sectional, Internet-based survey on exposure to SEM and sexual behaviour of 1,391 MSM in the United States was conducted in 2011. Results: The results confirmed Hypotheses 1 and 3, while Hypothesis 2 was rejected. Accordingly, a significant association between the use of SEM picturing condom use and STI-related sexual risk behaviour among MSM was found. Likewise, we found that the association between the use of SEM and sexual risk behaviour was mediated by condom use self-efficacy in an indirect path. However, SEM did not influence sexual risk behaviour via sexual self-esteem. Conclusions: To promote STI

prevention, the actors in SEM may be used as role models in managing condom use in sexual contexts. **(Traeen, Hald, Noor, Iantaffi, Grey and Rosser 2013).**

Muusses, Kerkhof and Finkenauer (2015) aimed to cast light on the directionality of the association between of sexually explicit Internet material use and relationship quality among couples. The utilised prospective dyadic data to investigate the short- and long-term association between of sexually explicit Internet material use, sexual satisfaction, and relationship adjustment among adult of sexually explicit Internet material users and their partners. The results showed that, among husbands, adjustment and of sexually explicit Internet material use are negatively and reciprocally related. Also, sexual satisfaction among husbands predicted a decrease in their wives' of sexually explicit Internet material one year later, while wives' of sexually explicit Internet material did not affect their husbands' sexual satisfaction.

Bulot, Leurent and Collier (2015) conducted a study to examine whether there is a relationship between pornography exposure and few forms of risk behaviour. 812 students reported anonymously to a questionnaire given when they went for consultation to a health centre. The data was statistically analysed using logistic and linear regressions. Exposure to pornography was found in almost all men and 80% of women. 15.2 years was the mean age of initial exposure. Exposure at a premature age is related with sexual activities at young age and with a higher inclination to seek casual partners and use cannabis more often. The exposure age did not appear to have any effect on alcohol or tobacco consumption, the practice of anal penetration, the number of sexual partners, contraceptive use and risk taking in terms of sexually transmitted infections. Often watching pornographic images was related with sexual activity at a young age, an inclination to seek casual partners, a large number of sexual partners, a lower level of prevention of sexually transmitted infections, the practice of anal penetration, and unwanted pregnancies and finally, a higher consumption of cannabis and alcohol.

Although numerous studies have examined women's body attitudes in relation to media and sexuality, fewer studies have explored these relations among men. Accordingly, the authors investigated the contributions of media to men's body attitudes and examined how such attitudes relate to sexual decision making. This study comprised a sample of 184 male undergraduates reported media use, body attitudes, and sexual behaviours. Regular media use was related to greater acceptance of the shape and performance of one's body but decreased comfort with aspects of one's real body, such as hair and sweat. Comfort with these aspects of one's real body predicted greater sexual assertiveness and risk-reduction behaviours. Furthermore, comfort with similar aspects of female partners, real bodies were related to greater intimacy in sexual relationships. **(Ward 2016).**

The study was intended to examine the relationship between change in sexual risk over time and social media and whether parental monitoring influences this relationship. This study comprised a sample of 555 Latino youth aged 13-19 years from Maryland, United States completing baseline and follow-up surveys. Mixed-effects linear regression was used to examine the relationship between social media and the change in sexual risk over time and whether parental monitoring moderated the relationship. Sexual risk behaviours significantly increased between baseline (T1) and follow up (T2) (mean=0.432 vs mean=0.734, $P < .001$). Youth sending more than 100 text messages per day significantly higher sexual risk scores (beta=1.008, $P < .001$) but significantly larger declines in sexual risk scores for higher levels of parental monitoring (beta=-.237, $P = .009$). Although adolescents exchange SMS at high rates, parental monitoring remains vital to parent-child relationships and can moderate SMS frequency and sexual risk behaviours, despite parental influence diminishing and peer

pressure and social influences increasing during adolescence. (**Landry, Turner, Vyas, Wood 2017**)

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

From the analysis of review it was found that in most of the cultures, media especially Internet Pornography, Sexually explicit Website, Video games and television programs that show sexual content influence the sexual behaviour and attitude of an individual to a larger extent. In other words, early exposure to this content among girls and boys tend to promote early sexual practices and behaviours with their peers. Teen sex and teen pregnancy is widely found to be the consequences of media exposure. When there is a lack of parental regulation the sex initiation was higher than in families where parents showed a strong disapproval for sexual content in television or internet.

Long term exposure to stereotyped video games in judgment of sexual harassment was highly associated to tolerance to sexual harassment by peers or family members. Movies with sexual content and substance use highly impacted behaviours among adolescents and young adults, those who often watched such movies were anticipated to engage in risky sexual behaviours and substance usage. A study also suggested the curiosity to try and experience the feel of a substance or sexual act, stimulated the adults to try such activities.

Internet pornography has a great role in sexual behaviours and attitudes of an individual. Although the adults and adolescents of this century get a wide knowledge from internet, the disadvantages are also equally present. Due to frequent and long term exposure of sexual content and pornography more than advantages, the prevalence or practice of maladaptive behaviours have increased tremendously with empirical evidence.

Youth exposed to internet pornography are engaged to have sex with multiple partners, use of alcohol before sexual intercourse and frequent masturbating behaviour. It is also found that the practice of unprotected sex, paid sex, anal sex, unwanted pregnancies, and extra marital affair in married couples was comparatively high in individuals who were exposed to internet pornography than who watched them less often. These videos also were perceived by teenagers as an approval for sexual intercourse.

Media is a growing epidemic of such issues regarding sexual attitude not only in today's generation, there is a good chance for tomorrows generation to consider what so called sexual offences are happening now due to the change in attitude because of the influence by media to be the norm.

Limitations and Recommendations

- The review analysis has very limited studies on Indian population.
- Empirical study can be done on the same topic.
- Cross – sectional study can be done across different age groups.

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