Chapter 3
Conceptual Study of Mass Communication vis a vis Lifestyle Patterns Among Children and Teenagers

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3.1 Communication

Communication comes into usage daily during the interaction between people not only at work, but also in everyday life. People communicate with each other by using language, gestures, signs and other possible ways of communication.

Over the last few decades, there has been an increasing interest in the study of communication. As a result, it has varied widely in terms of purpose, nature, level of abstraction and scope. Besides, there have been a number of formulations about communication. Some studied applied communication, others the concept of scientific account of human symbol using. This mixed material relates to general explanation of the communication process, some definitional problems, some philosophical concerns and others aspects. In public communication, three major elements play significant role- ethos, logos and pathos. Ethos refers to the character of speaker, pathos- emotions elicited in the audience and logos- power of reason and evidence in text and speech.

Defining Communication

“The word communication is abstract and, like all words, possesses multiple meanings. Scholars have made many attempts to define communication, but seeking a single working definition may not be as fruitful as probing the various concepts behind the term.”  

Little John

“Every communication act is viewed as a transmission of information, consisting of discriminative stimuli from a source to a recipient.”  

Newcomb, 1966

Prolonged controversies, based upon abstract theories, have further eclipsed the origin of communication rather than illustrating it. The time, place and cause of the first communication attempt have not been traced authentically though many essays have been unleashed to unbutton them.

Anyhow, all the earlier ‘Premedia Theories --- such as bow bow theory (which holds that words are the product of imitation of natural sounds, and that is why the representational sounds of almost each and every word connote the relevant meaning); ‘pooh- pooh’ or ‘poo- poo theory’ (which suggests that speech refers to the instinctive, intense feelings and involuntary expressions of emotions, such as the words "pain" and "pleasure" readily give the impression of something unbearable and hear-tening); ‘sing song theory’ (which is based on the idea that words are nothing but outgrowths of primitive and wordless chants, pertaining to feelings); ‘yo- heave- ho theory’(which
states that words grew out of any characteristic sound due to, for example, physical
effort), ‘yuk- yuk theory’ (which proposes that words got birth as a matter of chance
while a humanising animal did something significant or ate something special); or ‘ding
dong theory’ (which advocates the idea that words took to existence as a result of
synchronization between sound and substance—add to prove that the base of all
communications is need oriented. And that it developed as a result of multiple
associations and involved the central nervous system, sense organs and musculatures.
The needs continued to grow with the passage of time and so did the process of
communication with vast improvements coming its pathway.

Archaeologists, going back to the prehistoric period, feel that the cave people
had the basic senses of sight, hearing, touch, smell and taste. Over three million nerve
cells enable man to store and respond to the external and internal situations as and
when the need be. The central nervous system and other chief organic means of
communication such as the brain, eyes, ears, hands and mouth, continued their growth
and development and man, thus started discerning between good and bad. Refined
perception, sophisticated brain and its nervous system developed simultaneously along
with growing basic needs. According to an estimate all the features of the present
human being bear a resemblance to the man of 3, 00,000 B.C.

Communication is a ‘need oriented’ and ‘environmentally oriented’ process.
Wilbur Schramm writes that communication is fundamental human, social process and
its tool that makes societies possible and, by its nature, chiefly distinguishing human
from other species. Charles Cooley calls communication as a ‘mechanism through
which human relations exist and develop all the symbols of the mind, together with the
means of conveying them through space and preserving them in nature.’

Man developed the capacity to criticize, appreciate and improve his behaviour
by processing the available information. He could conceive of a past in which he had
not lived, and a future in which he would not participate. He could deal with abstract
notions like goodness, evil, power and justice. Furthermore, his skill with
communication was such that he could deal with things relevant to his needs and goals,
and tinker with that image in his head until the image would help change the
environment while the changing environment altered the image. The ancient Greeks
were the first to experiment with alternative (i.e. other than sending a messenger)
methods of transmitting information over long distances. These early 'transmissions'
involved the tops of hills, and fire by night, plus columns of smoke or large mirrors by
day. This principle did not evolve very far until the 19th century, when experiments began to transmit messages via a series of electrical clicks on wires. Thus the telegraph system was born, laying the foundation for the broadcast of the human voice and other noises.

Senses, voice and gestures got extended with the passage of time to secure, deliver and process more information, make the message more and more portable and more separately from oneself, both in time and space.

### 3.2 Birth of Language

Before the birth of a communicable language 1, 00,000 B.C., people used to communicate through touch or other sensory perceptions. The signals, however, remained individualistic and were not generalized long after. Then these signals were made portable, i.e. they could be carried over to some distance and be directed towards a group of referents. These sound signals, for example, growling or barking could be transported around and thus conveyed the same meaning to everyone and everywhere without pinpointing to a particular subject. These sounds- signs were supplemented by word- signs. The people started associating specific sounds with specific experiences and behaviours. It is similar to the way and means, the infants use specific sounds or gestures to convey specific meaning. For example, the child cries or produces sounds like um-m-m’ conveying the meaning that he is hungry and wants milk. Similarly, the mother produces a hissing sound prompting, activating or stimulating the child to urinate.

Wilbur Schramm has posed four questions pertaining to the development of language. These refer to generalization and specification of meaning and naming of common and separate things such as particular sound refer, to all such things (as inhaling of saliva, accompanied by a specific sound means to all, that some specific thing and all such things are worth eating and are either sweet or sour). In his second question, he asks how did they (men and animals) find a sound to mean eat or things to eat, rather than just one kind of food? How did they find a sound to refer to all good things rather than one kind of good thing? How did they learn to string sounds together so as to fasten actions and relationships such as those that distinguish "what was" from "what is" or "what will be"? He then goes on to speculate that they must have added to their repertoires the basic conventions of language that any child learns in three years.
Having achieved such a linguistic victory, human beings could survey and catalogue their environment more efficiently.’

Studies have proved that more than 3,000 languages and dialects are spoken around the world even today. Their origin falls back to the languages and dialects, popular in various tribes, who did not come into contact with each other and thus did not develop compatible languages.

### 3.3 Communication Process

The communication process is not easy. The word, the presentation, the indication and the silence should be carefully directed towards the objective of communication. The model process of communication, the communication mix and the hierarchy of communication effects are studied in the communication process.

![Communication Process Model](image)

**Figure 8: Communication Process Model**

The source delivers the message to the receiver. The message may be handed over to the disturbances, known as noise are observed at every step. The source, encoding, channel, decoding, receiver and feedback are influenced by the environment which may be cultural, social, political, legal and economic and so on. The real message may be carried on to the receiver. The effectiveness of communication is disturbed by noise. The encoding is the translation of the message in words, pictures, indications, play etc. These matters are transmitted through channels to the receiver who decodes the message. Any particular message can be distorted by noise and may be interpreted by the receiver in a manner not intended by the source.
3.3.1 The Model Process of Communication

If the message is common or single for the sender and receiver, it will be communication and it will be possible only if it means the same thing to the sender and the receiver. The audience must understand what the sender wants to communicate. The message of communication may be in a silent language, verbal, written or a pictured presentation. Thus, the word, the picture, the silence and the indication may be termed communication if the sender and the receiver perceive the same meaning of the messages. Communication is the social process by which two or more persons exchange views. The communication between two persons, i.e. the sender and the receiver, will be termed individual communication. While, where there are more than two persons, i.e. more than one sender or more than one receiver involved, it is known as mass communication. “Communication” can be defined as the sharing of an orientation toward a set of informational signs. It is a process which requires the same perspectives of the sender and the receiver. It is a two-way channel which must have the same objective. Communication is a social process as it varies with social changes.

The process, the message, the objectives etc. change as the social values change. Culture, tradition, social institutions etc. have a wide impact on the communication process. Mass communication is more complex in the sense that these factors are not uniform in the same communication process. The encoder or sender should be aware of the fact that the audiences are heterogeneous. The sender needs to find out the most suitable form in which to communicate the message to the heterogeneous audience. Audience receives the message in the form in which the sender wants them to receive it. The model process of communication has been described under each component of the communication process that includes source, message, perception, channel, receiver and effect.

Source → Message→ Perception→ Channel→ Receiver

Feedback

a. Source

1 Baran Stanley, Introduction to Mass Communication (Media Literacy & Culture), Mayfield Publishing Co,Calfornia 1999
2 Schement Jorge Reina, Brent D.Ruben, Between Information & Communication, Volume 4; Transaction Publishers, 1993
The source of communication is the initiator, or originator, that puts the model into action. It is an individual or group that has a specific reason to begin the communication process. i.e., there is a message which they wish another to receive.

b. Encoder

Once the purpose of the source has been identified, there must be a specified format for the message to take. This is what the communication encoder does; it takes the concept that the source wants to send out, and put it into a suitable format for later interpretation.

c. Message

The information, idea, or concept that is being communicated from one end of the model to the other, is the message. Most of the time, in human communication, the message contains a distinct meaning. When the model was created, Shannon and Weaver were not concerned whether the message had substance, but rather that it was being transmitted.

d. Channel

It is essential for meaningful communication that a suitable means to transmit the message be selected. The channel is the route that the message travels on, be it verbal, written, electronic, or otherwise.

e. Noise

It is inevitable that noise may come into play during the communication process. Noise could be considered an interference or distortion that changes the initial message; anything that can misconstrue the message, may be noisy. Noise can be physical, as in an actual sound that muffles the message as it is being said, or it can be semantic, like if the vocabulary used within the message is beyond the knowledge spectrum of its recipient. In order for communication to be effective, noise must be reduced.

f. Decoder

Before the message reaches the intended recipient, it must be decoded, or interpreted, from its original form into one that the receiver understands. This is essentially the same interaction as that of source and encoder, only in a reversed sequence.
g. Receiver

In order that communication is executed, there must be a second party at the end of the channel the source has used. The receiver takes the message proving that the source has sent it.

h. Feedback

For meaningful communication to come to fruition, it is vital that the receiver provides feedback to the source. Feedback relates to the source when its message has been received, and most importantly, that it has been interpreted accurately. Without feedback, the source would never know if the communication was successful. Ongoing communication is made possible by the cyclical route feedback; if more communication between the two parties is necessary, they can follow the model indefinitely.

There are other models also that have been evolved over the years to make the concept of communication easy to understand. The need for different models was realized after taking into consideration different types of communication that are classified on the basis of verbal and non-verbal; technological and non-technological and so on. The type also depends on social group or the number of people involved in the experience of communication. There are different types of communication which are as follows:

Intrapersonal communication: it is individual reflection, contemplation and mediation.

Interpersonal/ Face to Face: it is a direct dialogue between two or more people. It allows maximum interaction and exchange of ideas through words and gestures. There are three stages\(^3\) in this form of communication that include the following:

The Phatic Stage: It is the initial exploratory stage of communication which determines what course the conversation will take. It can therefore, be called as a warming up time during which pleasantries are exchanged.

The Personal Stage: At this stage, one more personal comment is added into the conversation. Most business communication, therefore, takes place at this level as it involves personal interests.

\(^3\) http://www.classle.net/contentpage/effective-communication-skills-0
**The Intimate stage:** This stage is reserved for friends and relatives for the degree of intimacy depend upon the closeness of the relationship. Says Robert Shuter⁴, in this period communicators reveal their innermost thoughts and feelings. This stage is reserved for individual who have established a deep union, based on love, respect and understanding.

**Group Communication:** Group communication is the interaction between members of a group as they work together towards a common goal. A group can be as few as three people. The larger the group, the lesser personal intimacy is possible of exchange.

**Interactive Communication**- This one includes communication via the new media such as cable, tele-shopping, internet et al.

**Mass Communication:** Group Communication has now been extended by the tools of mass communication such as books, press, cinema, radio, TV, internet etc. As far as access to and distribution of mass media in India is concerned, only comparatively well off urban and rural areas are at an advantage.

### 3.4 Barriers of Communication

Communication is effective if it flows freely in a communication loop between the sender(s) and receiver(s). Free flow means the uninterrupted transmission of the information / the message through an appropriate medium, correct comprehension of the message by the receiver and a relevant and appropriate feedback from him. Misunderstanding, Irrelevant response and undesirable reactions are the consequences of a failed communication. Failure of effective communication results in loss of valuable time, resources, material and even life. You know that in an authoritarian set up, be it a state or a business or even a family, communication is unidirectional and is so fragile that it would snap anytime leading to irreparable damage. Though these may be indirect results of communication failure, an effective channel of communication could have reduced the damage. When we say that someone has an open mind, we mean that he is transparent and receptive which in turn means that he is flexible and not rigid. All these characteristics relate to the mental make-up and communication style of an individual. Barriers to communication range from the simple distracting noises to the most complex psychological factors. These barriers may cause a simple

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⁴ Dr. Robert Shuter, Professor of Communication studies in Diederich College of Communication
communication gap or a total failure of communication. A communication gap can be bridged but retrieval of a situation, damaged by miscommunication would be rather difficult.

![Barriers to Communication](http://communicationtheory.org/barriers-to-communication/)

Figure: 9 Barriers to Communication

### 3.5 Origin of Mass Communication

The story of communication which now has developed into mass communication is as old as life when it has started releasing and accepting chemical signals or impulses, which include interaction with physical, biological and social surroundings. Clark and Blankenburg relate earlier communication to the sensory nature. A loss of sensation could mean loss of life and depriving of social communication could result in death. However, the process of sensory communication could not continue for long. The necessities of life sought some advanced forms of communication and which ultimately led to symbolic communication through language. The technique continues to develop from writing to printing and from printing to electronic. The additional tools of computer and satellites have provided impetus to the growth and development of communication system.

From sensory communication, the process of endless intrapersonal communication developed into interpersonal, group, social and then on to mass communication. The steady sophistication of the communication system in early stages accelerated the rate and speed of symbolic exchanging of information for exercising social control and for maintaining order in the social system. The interpersonal communication started to be used cross culturally.
The term mass communication which was coined at the end of the 1930’s, has too many connotations to allow a simple agreed definition. The word mass “mass” itself is a value laden and controversial and term. ‘Communication’ still has no agreed definition- although Gerbners (1967) ‘social interaction through messages is hard to beat for succinctness. Nevertheless, there is sufficient commonality in widely held ‘common sense’ perceptions to provide a working definition and a general characterization. The term 'mass' denotes great volume, range or extent while 'communication' refers to giving and taking a word meaning, the transmission and reception of messages. ‘Mass communication comprises the institutions and techniques by which specialized groups employ technological devices (press, radio, films etc.) to disseminate symbolic content to large, heterogeneous and widely dispersed audiences.’

The process of mass communication is not synonymous with the ‘mass media’ (the organized technology which makes mass communication possible). There are other uses of the same technology and other kinds of relationship mediated through the same networks. For instance, the basic form and technology of ‘mass communications’ are the same as those used for every local newspaper or radio. Mass media can carry public messages to large public for public purposes can also carry personal notices, advocacy if messages, charitable appeals, situations, vacant advertisements and many varied kinds of information and culture.

The term ‘mass communication’ may be considered as a 20th century development. Sending messages to a large number of people and at greater speed was what the man was always looking for. There was a time when men on horseback travelled long distances to convey news about say, a war. Pigeons were used as postmen to deliver messages. You may have heard of Kalidasa who was one of the greatest Sanskrit poets. In his poem ‘Meghdoot’, a Yaksha (celestial singer) sends messages to his beloved through the clouds. The invention of paper and printing, and later newspapers, were the first step towards mass communication. But it was only through the telegraph, invented by Samuel F. B. Morse in 1835, that messages could be sent to long distances using a code. The next step was to send messages through the human voice. Alexander Graham Bell in 1876 succeeded in using wires to send the human voice across long distances. However, it was the invention of the radio by Marconi in 1901 which made sending of human voices over long distances possible. In 1947 the invention of the transistor made radio the most popular medium for sending
voice messages. Today television, which can send voice as well as pictures, is found almost everywhere. This was invented by Baird in 1920.

The progress in this direction, however, remained very slow during the early periods. In the course of two thousand years which separate Alexander the great from Napoleon and the world we know, the cultural frame of reference expanded considerably, but the news about victory of both the military commanders was disseminated very slowly. Historians note that although the so called American War ended with the signing of the peace treaty in Ghend, Belgium on December 24, 1814, some fifteen days later a fierce battle took place in New Orleans because the news about the treaty reached very late and the warring sides continued fighting for extra fifteen days. But subsequently, in the next century, the communication system progressed so fast that the information about the fall of Nazi Germany in 1945 was known throughout the world in a matter of minutes. The speed of disseminating information became so fast in 1960 that the news of man’s landing on the moon spreaded in various parts of the world almost the same time Neil Armstrong performed the feat.

3.5.1 Writing- Another Landmark

Writing was first introduced in the fourth millennium B.C., when from the primeval speech was developed the imaginative art of drawing and engraving. Concrete shapes and forms were given to the ideas of mind for communicating to the tribal groups. Visual and plastic art among the late Palaeolithic people are still preserved in some European, Australian and Saharan caves and African and arctic rocks, graves and campsites all around the world. Abstract pictures were drawn of the life events of the people, animals and situations around pertaining to ‘magic and wishful fillment.’ These pictorial designs and representative pictures decorated the cave walls and other ornaments. Gradually, however due to the need for something that could be written quickly and that which was economical and that which was closest to the spoken language in vogue, the pictorial signs stayed for conveying a particular sound and not by drawing a full picture of the event.

Anyhow, the innovation of writing aided carrying of information all around the globe and places which are out of physical reach of the speaker. It has helped in storing
of important subsequent development. In fact, the invention of writing had prompted the scientists to think of developing it into newer and finer forms which we find today. With the advent of writing, mass media came into prominence; Newspapers, Magazines, Advertising, Films, Radio, Television, and Internet are the media of mass communication. Target in mass communication is very vast, heterogeneous and anonymous audience. Heterogeneous audience is because the message is not directed only to an exclusive or specific group but to a varied group of different categories of ages and people belonging to different levels of education and different geographical and cultural backgrounds. The means employed for mass communication are technological. They are used for mass production of messages for mass distribution.

Printing has been serving to standardize written communication and spread them every-where roads, rails and ships would reach. Its standardizing effects were applied to private communication through the practical development around 1866 by the typewriter. Typewriting and typesetting by machine speeded the process of writing or composing type by hand. Rapid printing compressed the time needed to mass produce, written messages and to make them readily available for public distribution in millions of copies. Newspapers were always organs of commercial as well as political intelligence and now had to sell and entertain as well as to inform the general public. The fraudulent, the morbid, the comic, the personal, the scandalous, the violent, the catastrophic, and the trivial all become news. With the coming of independence, universal suffrage, public education, and rapid industrialization, the class press and the party press were introduced and transformed into a mass press selling lively yellow papers in the crowded streets. Newspaper chains, news and feature syndicates emerged. Magazines also turned to national mass audiences, or to specialized public, to survive the competition for media markets.

3.5.2 Broadcasting

The system of casting the news at a broad basis through the airwaves or electronic signals took birth and then continued its pace of development during the 19th century. This century of dramatic technological developments in the area of mass communication, has been referred to as the "second wave of the communication technology explosion". Broadcasting through television or radio is also non-assembled interposed and is a public system of communication, in contrast to the earlier interposed
but private systems of communication, such as telegraphy and telephony- precursors to broadcasting.

Marshal McLuhan says that ‘printing has upset the balance between oral and written communication, photography upset the balance of ear and eye. And if the movie was the mechanization of movement and gesture, TV was the electronification of the same.’ With radio coming up in the field, the sense of hearing regained its importance after having been dwarfed due to the products of printing technology. However, with the advent of TV, the sense of sight, coupled with the sense of hearing got life and the man got face to face though indirectly, with his physical, social and biological environment. The airwaves or the space pathway was riddled with electronic impulses, signal career waves or channels of sound and pictures. The development of radio and television not only brought societies and cultures in close communication with each other, but also brought an event or happening in the far corners of the world live without much delay.

### 3.5.3 Radio

Radio was the first 'modern' media form, and had a huge impact on the history of the 20th century. For the first time information could be broadcasted, i.e. it could be received by anyone with the right equipment, without wires. The birth of radio ushered in the era of mass communication. Many people have likened the explosion in radio in the 1920s to what is happening with the internet today - lots of enthusiasts setting up their 'broadcast slot' and sharing their knowledge with similar people. Wireless communication has really come full circle, as more and more people turn to mobile phones and handheld computers that can receive internet 'transmissions'. As with the recording of images (in the 19th century, they were recorded on metal plates, now they are recorded on metal plates that make up DVDs and computer hard drives) the broadcast of information has come full circle.

The first documented radio transmission occurred in 1895 and was sent by a 21 year old Italian, Guglielmo Marconi, who conducted simple experiments using a radio transmitter and receiver, the transmitter placed in his house, and the receiver placed three miles away. He got his servant to fire a gun when the transmission had been received - the three dots ··· of the letter S in Morse code. The first commercial radio station opened in Pittsburgh in July 1920, and the radio quickly became a popular
source of entertainment (music, comedy, drama), sports, information and news. By 1930, a radio set provided the main source of entertainment in homes across the world.

3.5.4 Television:

The idea of television (i.e. Sending and receiving images along wireless technology) was first bouncing around in the 1870s, but it did not become a reality until the 1920s. It is very difficult to name one person as 'the inventor of television' as different scientists all over the world invented different components to combine into what we understand today as 'TV technology'. The first of these was Vladimir K. Zworykin, who, in 1921 invented a device that would convert patterns of light into electronic impulses. He was followed by a Scotsman, John Logie Baird, who produced the first television, set in 1924, but it showed only shadows. Also in 1924, Philo Farnsworth, an American, came up with the concept of broadcast television. By 1928, engineers had managed to create a crude receiver set and camera, and this went on show at the World's Fair - the first public viewing of television. However, the opportunities presented by TV were clear to many before this, and both the BBC and CBS were established in 1927.

TV sets have come a long way from their basic origins. Colour TVs were first introduced in the early 1950s (once a way had been found to make colour broadcasts backwards compatible for everyone who still had a black-and-white TV set. Today's high definition televisions are meant for watching so much more than TV shows. They have movie and sports settings, stereo speakers for listening to music, and can be hooked up to games consoles or computers. The latest innovations, like 3D and wireless home theatre systems, mean that the TV set will remain the centre of home entertainment for some time to come, although TV broadcasts are just one form of entertainment that will have to compete for space on the screen.

Everyday experience with the mass communication is extremely varied. It is also voluntary and usually shaped by culture and by the requirements of one’s way of life and social environment. The notion of mass communication experience is abstract and hypothetical. Where on occasion, it does seem to be a reality; the causes are more likely to be found in particular conditions of social life than in media technology or contents. The diversity of technology mediated communication relationships is increasing as a result of new technology and new applications. The general implication
of these remarks is that mass communication was, from the beginning, more of an idea than a reality.

In recent years, the meaning and concept of culture, and society has developed and so have the human beings. They have cultivated their experiences on the basis of observations and continuous process of learning. On the basis of this learning, they have expanded and gained recognition on personal and social fronts. Their cognitive experiences have nevertheless led to what they have been yearning for. Today, media has a major influence on people, their lives, their lifestyles, their happiness and their environment. Its content holds the power to victimize the culture’s moral and fiscal standards, in taking advantage of their impressionable audience (Guerrero, D., Beatty, B., Meyer, L., Marks, C., Gibbs, and J.p4). Everybody is concerned with changes in his/ her lifestyle for the better, so as to live a happy, contented and comfortable life. It has been stated that media programming, when consumed in a balanced lifestyle, can improve the level of personal and societal living.

3.5.5 Internet:

For social interaction, information, and entertainment, Internet has become an important tool. However, the Prevalence of Internet addiction has been increasing rapidly, as the Internet has moved into homes, schools, Internet cafes, and businesses. Internet addiction is characterized as poorly controlled Internet use, and can lead to impulse-control disorders. Recently, Internet addiction, especially among adolescents, has been recognized as an important social issue in various countries because of the high prevalence of depression, aggressive behavior, psychiatric symptoms, and interpersonal problems associated with this addiction.

Adolescents are more vulnerable to Internet addiction than adults, and the social performance, psychology, and lifestyle habits of Internet addicts can be affected by this

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addiction. Numerous cross-sectional studies have shown that Internet addiction has an adverse effect on several lifestyle-related factors in adolescents; it can result in irregular dietary habits, extended periods of time spent on the Internet, physical inactivity, short duration of sleep, and increased use of alcohol and tobacco. Some studies have reported that the change in lifestyle-related factors caused by heavy Internet use could have an adverse impact on the growth and development of Internet addicts.

3.6 Television: Educator's Friend or Rival?

From its commencement, television has been considered a behavioral stimulus (Vos Post, 1995). Factors that impact research on the influence television has on behavior include socio-economic status and rural versus urban settings, as well as factors that are pertinent to the nature and culture of the local society. Should children and teenagers be protected from viewing violence related programs on television? The social cognitive theory of behavior learned through observation expounded by Bandura (2001) has been related to television as well as to the classroom and home environments. Young children are particularly unable to discriminate between the fiction of television and real life. Research shows that they are likely to apply the aggressive behaviors they have seen on television in the playground as early as nursery school age. According to Ortiz (2007), they internalize behaviors that they observe even though they have not experienced them directly.

In 1995 Aronson defined aggression as “behavior causing harm or pain.” In the mid-1990s researchers counted on an average of 18 acts of aggression per hour during the Saturday morning cartoons that continue in the 21st century to be popular with young children. George Gerbner has reported that violent acts take place five or six times per hour during prime time and Saturday morning television. In addition, eight of ten television programs include some sort of violence.

When Bandura's social cognitive theory, which suggests that children learn through observation, is extended to television viewing, it would seem to indicate that children would learn aggressive behavior through observation of violence on television. It also means that if children observe positive behaviors in television programming, they should emulate those behaviors as well. Bandura's theory states that when children see behavior modeled, they will accept it and use it when they deem it appropriate. It also explains the need for positive role models on television for children.

According to Bandura's social cognitive theory, when children see family members or friends working together on a television situation comedy to resolve a problem, it follows that they will try to resolve problems with their own family members or friends peacefully, by working together, instead of fighting with them. Research on the results of this type of modelled behavior is reported to be difficult, with inconclusive results.

According to Hoffner (1996), Bandura's theory of behaviors learned by observation means that young viewers have to identify with the characters to model either pro-social or violent behavior. In other words, if a child observes television characters that she or he perceives as being similar to herself or himself, that child will be more likely to behave in a manner similar to those characters.

Educational programming is based on Bandura's theory of modeled behavior. To be effective with prosocial behaviors, television programmers have to conduct extensive research and make sure characters and events portrayed in their shows have a relation to real-world situations. They also have to carefully create characters who are positive, with good results from their actions; negatively, with undesirable results from their actions; and transitional, who start the show as negative characters but change because of decisions made and actions taken, so they become positive role models by the end of the show.

Violent acts in regular television programming have more of an effect on children's behavior than sports programming. The results of research on the effect that violence on television has on students generally are in agreement that children who observe violence in prime time television or on Saturday morning children's shows that do not include sports programming will behave aggressively whether or not they were pre-disposed to behave aggressively.

A real concern with the effects of television violence and aggressive behavior learned by observation of incidents of violent programming is that this learning has
been proven to continue through adolescence and into adulthood. Vos Post (1995) concluded: “Not only because television violence is a reality, and aggression a fact of life, but because an effective social psychological understanding of the relationship between television and behavior may help to not only reduce socially unacceptable aggression, but may actually enable us to increase socially desirable effects.”

3.7 Mass Media and its Influence on Society:

In the last 50 years the media influence has grown exponentially with the advancement of technology, first there was the telegraph, then the radio, the newspaper, magazines, television and now the internet. We live in a society that depends on information and communication to keep moving in the right direction and do our daily activities like work, entertainment, health care, education, personal relationships, traveling and anything else that we have to do. A common person in the city usually wakes up checks the television news or newspaper, goes to work, makes a few phone calls, eats with their family when possible and makes his decisions based on the information that he has got either from their co workers, news, television, friends, family, financial reports, etc.

What we need to be aware of is that most of our decisions, beliefs and values are based on what we know for a fact, our assumptions and our own experiences. In our work, we usually know what we have to do based on our experience and studies, however in our daily lives, we rely on the media to get the current news and facts about what is important and what we should be aware of. We have put our trust on the media as an authority to give us news, entertainment and education. However, the influence of mass media on our kids, teenagers and society is so big that we should know how it really works.

3.7.1 Affects of Mass Media

Mass media have affected our lifestyle, socialization, living patterns and eavesdropping tremendously. It has not only affected us personally, but our children and teenagers as well. The influence it has on our teenagers, dictates their actions. Whether it is by television or newspapers, our teenagers is affected by it. The media has

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a way of sending subliminal messages through television and magazines. The pressures that young adults face to fit in, is tremendous. Movies, as well, have a large influence on our teenagers.

3.8 Lifestyle Inclination and Media:

The concept of lifestyle has often been used in describing and categorizing different patterns of media use, often as part of a constellation of other attitudes and behaviors (e.g. Eastman, 1979; Frank and Greenberg, 1980; donohew et al, 1987). In one respect, the lifestyle concept offers an escape from the presumption that media taste (unlike traditional, aesthetic and artistic taste) is determined by social class and education, since lifestyles are to some extent self-chosen patterns of behaviour and media use choice.

Lifestyle is a term to describe the way a person lives. This is influenced by their culture, job and family which help the individual to understand the psychological, physical, social and economic environment. Besides this, television plays a major role in bettering lifestyles of people. Behavior and the senses of self and belonging represent, collectively to define a given lifestyle.

A lifestyle is a characteristic bundle of behaviours that make sense to both, others and one’s own, in a given time and place, including social relations, consumption, entertainment, and dress. The behaviours and practices within lifestyles are a mixture of habits, conventional ways of doing things, and reasoned actions. Each person chooses a unique lifestyle to go about his daily life with. A lifestyle defines who you are and how you choose to deal with many conflicts and issues that arise in your life. Although people like to think of a lifestyle as something of their creation, lifestyles are often influenced by many outside factors. Those outside factors often make many people have the same lifestyle, and therefore make us inauthentic people.

A lifestyle, typically also reflects an individual's attitudes, values or worldview. Therefore, a lifestyle is a means of forging a sense of self and to create cultural symbols that resonate with personal identity. Not all aspects of a lifestyle are entirely voluntaristic. Surrounding social and technical systems can constrain the lifestyle.

14 Online etymology dictionary
choices available to the individual and the symbols she/he is able to project to others and the self.

The lines linking personal identity and the everyday doings that signal a particular lifestyle become indistinct in modern society. For example, "green lifestyle" means holding beliefs and engaging in activities that consume fewer resources and produce less destructive waste (i.e. a smaller carbon footprint), and deriving a sense of self from holding these beliefs and engaging in these activities. In modernity, lifestyle construction is consumption behavior, which offers the opportunity to create and further individualize the self with different products or services that indicate different ways of life.\(^\text{17}\)

Lifestyle changes have increased rapidly since the introduction of media. Media - films, television shows, magazines, and more recently, the Internet are the main sources of lifestyle influence around the world. Lifestyle changes include how people eat, dress, communicate, etc. Lifestyle trends have always been influenced by the rich and famous, whether they are spotted at leisure or in a paid advertisement. At the dawn of the media age, there were the humble newspaper, glossy magazines like "Life" (Life Magazine), and TV which allowed the general public to gaze into the window of lifestyles only imagined in books. Today, the Internet is arguably the most powerful medium for spotting and influencing trends. The computer era has changed the way we obtain our news, perspective, and the way we communicate. Magazines are still popular, but now advertisers supply a web address where consumers can visit for more information than a print ad can provide. The average American household has two personal computers, making the Internet easily accessible. Anyone can create a blog, an online journal, personal or commercial, which might detail someone's experience in a new restaurant, a purchased item of clothing or knick-knack, a review of a film, etc. With the advent of the Android phone and its relative ease of uploading photos to social media sites such as Facebook, one can get an idea of how quickly an idea, pub review, coveted object can be shared.

Advertisers have always been privy to the strength of word-of-mouth and have tapped into social mediums, including Facebook, Twitter, and Tumblr, etc. to make their wares known. Douglas Kellner writes, "Radio, television, film, and the other products of media culture provide materials out of which we forge our very identities;\(^\text{17}\)

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our sense of selfhood; our notion of what it means to be male or female; our sense of class, of ethnicity and race, of nationality, of sexuality; and of "us" and "them."\(^{18}\)

### 3.8.1 Factors Influencing Lifestyle

- Newspaper
- Magazines
- Radio
- Television
- New media

The impact of television is vital because of its enormous potential as an audio-visual communicator. Television (T.V.) enables the creative mind to communicate by combining motion, sounds, words, color, personality and stage setting to express and demonstrate ideas to large and widely distributed audience. T.V. Advertisements usually play a role in either introducing a product reinforcing the familiarity with the product and also convincing to purchase the product. Advertisements are among the most visible of the marketing strategy and have been the subject of a great deal of attention in the last ten to fifteen years. It has created a change in the lifestyle patterns among children and teenagers who are very much influenced by the advertisements. Advertisement can not only change emotions but give subliminal messages. Advertising today seems to be everywhere and ever present exerting a far reaching influence on the daily lives of people as well as children and teenagers. Advertisements develop self-concepts in order to induce purchase decisions. Television advertising employs attention grabbing trick such as catchy and pleasing music, lyrics, Jingles, humor and repeated messages. The impact of the advertisements is more on television than the print media or radio. It has brought a change in the thinking pattern where children are choosing products of their need and luxuries of their own and are very much fascinated with the advertisements and fashion trends prevailing in the society.

The lifestyle of children and teenagers has undergone a drastic change, in the present scenario with the effect of mass media. With the changing norms of the society, children are becoming increasingly liberal and busy. The cut throat competition, which occurs in all spheres of the world, has solely changed the equations of family life. With a modern urban family, both the parents are usually working, which gives them little

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time to pay the required amount of attention to their children. This is one of the biggest reasons for the shift in the eating habits of kids. Fast food has become the fastest way for parents as well as children to satisfy their bon-appetite. However, what remains unnoticed, are the ill consequences of the same. Commercials are getting more and more sophisticated. Thus they affect your mind to an even greater extent. Their repeated exposure lets commercials really sink into your mind, affecting you unconsciously. We may not even notice how often the same commercial is running. Repeat exposure is the single most powerful tool of convincing. Every big brand knows that. People associate repeat exposure with credibility. They don't even know what impact this exposure is made on them.

3.8.2 Lifestyle & Technology

Technology and diversity have greatly changed the lives of people in society. Technology has positive and negative effects on our daily lives. However, the positivity and negativity of technology depend on how much we use it and how much we are exposed to it. In other words, our lifestyle controls our use of technology, while technology influences our lifestyles. To begin, technology has changed among their, the fields of agriculture, manufacturing, warfare, transportation, information, medicine, communication,. Technology has also made it easier for other factors to affect our lifestyles, such as the media. All in all, technology has made our lives much easier; therefore we are no longer required to live vigorous lifestyles that, in the past, contributed to the decline in our health. On the other hand, technology has complicated many lives and has many negative effects. Technology has the power to deliver media to us that can change our values and views on the world, which in return will change our lifestyles. Also, technology has negative effects on the environment such as pollution. Because of technology such as the computer and the television, Americans have a much more sedentary lifestyle, which leads to health complications and issues.

3.8.3 Media and Technology

"We live with independent information and communication world to keep us moving in the right direction on our daily activities like work". Media has of the most dominant influences on our lives. Because of technology, media can influence people

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19 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; Backyard Composting: It's Only Natural; October 2009
from childhood to adulthood. Children grow up while being bombarded with images of physical appearance, violence, and shows about the lifestyles of others. This continues on for the rest of a person's life. When most people reach adulthood, they become aware of what is going on in the world around them, and they make their decisions based on those occurrences. Teenagers get exposed to shows that they eventually idolize. Media starts to negatively affect their lives because they want those kinds to start those of lifestyles because of the way they are portrayed on television. Media has also influenced the way certain lifestyles have been looked at throughout the years. For example, for years, people have been familiar with the idea of a stay-at-home mother, or a housewife. Because of shows such as the Real Housewives, the portrayal of this lifestyle has dramatically changed from caring and kind, to fill with drama and scandal. Media also has influenced our health. Because of the constant idolization of physical appeal and the objectification of women, people's morals have changed, and therefore they are living lives controlled with physicality.

3.8.4 Living Patterns & Lifestyles: The 1950’s Vs Today

The rock and roll music and drive in movies, along with new affordable black and white TV sets in the home, made the 1950s a memorable family oriented decade. For the first time in history television, advertisers enjoyed a captured audience. In the 1950’s family dinners was an occasion to sit down, relax, and enjoy a home-cooked meal with family members. The focus was entirely on the family, with morals and values relevant to the happenings of the day being discussed and taught to children at this time. Work was plentiful and the majority of the population thought that they had finally made it, and began to enjoy the fruits of the labours. In the 1950’s, men were mostly the providers and the woman stayed home, cooked, cleaned, and reared children. Media has led to a decline in morals, values and lifestyles over the past twenty five years. Today's lifestyles have changed, and now consumed by technology every minute and hour of the day and night, may it be through television, mobile phone, iPod, or computer. Family dinners have been replaced with today’s media and technology.
Lifestyle changes from the 1950’s include woman working full time and taking care of the house and family. Today it is almost a necessity that the woman and man both work to support themselves and raise their children. Men and women of today are equally the bread winners.

*The Transition: From Old to New Media*

In order to understand the significance of ever-newer media, there is a tendency to oppose (unmediated, real) tradition and the (hi-tech, virtual) future. The research systematically argues against such oppositions, particularly, the evidence over decades of charting the arrival of ‘new media’ supports two broad principles for the increasingly media-rich environment.

- **Displacement**: The first opinion is that new media supplements rather that displace older media. The arrival of a greater variety of new media in children’s lives is consistently associated with an expansion in media use. Many therefore conclude that, despite worries that newer technologies would displace older ones, these new media supplements rather than dislocate old media.

  As new media enter the mix, the amount of time spent with media appears to be increasing overall. Within the expanding media mix, television continues to dominate. Although, there is some evidence that television viewing is, after all, being displaced, this remaining unresolved, particularly characteristic of young people’s leisure is the way in which media are no longer used sequentially but rather simultaneous media use is ever more commonplace. For example, young people use multiple media simultaneously, chatting or texting on their mobile phone while in a chat room or using instant message. The argument for displacement of media is largely paralleled for face-to-face communication and other social activities. Here, however, the evidence is less clear-cut, with some evidence of a reduction in time spent on the telephone or in social activities.

- **Remediation**: Here the principle is that when a new medium is introduced into the existing media environment, the uses and denotations of all media are adjusted. The Internet, therefore, can be expected not only to add to the existing mix but also to transform the way in which the television, video recorder, computer games, radio etc. are used (Bolter and Grusin, 1999; Marvin, 1988). Familiar textual forms, and well-established practices of television viewing, can be seen to be migrating to computers, with children’s interests in Internet content being led by their fandom for content from older media – Harry
Potter, Nickelodeon, Cartoon-Network. Having now gained access to such content online suggests that both these contents and their reception using older media are likely to undergo change in turn.\(^{20}\)

### 3.8.5 Lifestyle & Health

An individual’s health depends a lot on his lifestyle. Maintaining overall health is crucial to an individual’s endurance. The more the time they spend on hygiene, physical fitness, and diet regulation, the healthier lifestyle they shall have. Those who chose to participate in any kind of physical activity on a weekly basis, are generally healthier than those who don't. Mental illness may occur through various variables. For example, depression may promote mental illness through stress and anxiety. Reasons for being depressed can be due to a number of things including job loss, recently widowed, divorce, etc. Depression may lead to or increase the frequency of poor habits not promoting physical health. Poor habits may eventually lead to a poor, even dangerous, lifestyle.

### 3.9 Internet and New Media

Today with more than 1.5 billion Internet users around the world (Jaffe. A. & Chen. A., 2010), the Internet has become an integral part of our society, has spawned a revolution not only for commerce but also in communication and interpersonal behavior. This technology is changing the way people are socializing, studying, working, shopping, searching for jobs and spending their leisure time (DiNicola.M.D. 2004)

Around the world more than 80% of children and teenagers are spending a large amount of time on internet. Because the internet was introduced at a very young age into their lives, the new generation of children and teenagers became one of the first groups to use internet on a large scale and among the first to begin experiencing problems associated with excessive internet usage (DiNicola.M.D., 2004). therefore, it becomes essential for us to be aware of its impact on adolescent behavior, their psychological well-being and development.

The internet acts as a mechanism for:

- Information dissemination
- Social interaction (i.e. social networking sites)

\(^{20}\) [http://www.lse.ac.uk/depts/media/people/sl livingstone/index.htm](http://www.lse.ac.uk/depts/media/people/sl livingstone/index.htm)
Entertainment (online games, songs, video games)

**Internet Addiction Disorder (IAD)**

1 in 3 people consider the internet to be as important as air, water, food and shelter (Jaffe, A., 20011). There are cases of horrifying deaths across the world due to compulsive internet usage; researchers have identified the possibility of new disorder (IAD).

The problem of internet addiction is so acute that it is formally recognized as disorder by American Psychological association. IAD is being considered for the 2012-2013 edition of the diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders (DSM-5) published by the American Psychiatric association.

Recent studies have shown that internet addiction can affect people of any gender, age and socio economic status (Beard & Wolf 2001).21. The sense of satisfaction that comes along the internet indulgences feeds a negative cycle where more time spent online means less real social contact and less physical activity, increasing the vulnerability to psychological disorders. Hence, overuse of internet can genuinely restrain teenagers experience in life, their academic performance, social, psychological and physical well being.

**Risk factors of Internet Addiction:**

- Anxiety: you may use internet to distract yourself from your worries and fears.
- Depressed: it can be an escape from feelings of depression, but too much time online can make things worse, contributing to stress, isolation and loneliness.
- Lack social support: internet addicts often use social networking sites, instant messaging or online gaming as a safe way of establishing new relationships.
- Unhappy teenager: it wonders where you fit in and internet could feel more comfortable than real friends.
- Socially inactive
- Stressed: while some people use internet for change and relieving from stress, it can have counterproductive effect. The longer you spend online the higher the stress level will be.

(Saisan.et.,al 2011)22

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22 Joanna Saisan, M.S.W., Melinda Smith, M.A.,Lawrence Robinson and Jaenne Segal,P.hd October 2011. Internet addictions signs, symptoms, treatment and self help.
Types of Internet Addiction

✓ Cyber relationship addiction—addiction to chat rooms, messaging and social networking to the point were virtual, online friends become more important than real life relationships.

✓ Net compulsions: such as compulsive online gaming, gambling, stock trading, online auction sites such as eBay

✓ Cybersex addiction: usage of pornography, chat rooms or fantasy role play sites impacting negatively on real-life intimate relationships.

Adolescence is a period of transition between childhood and adulthood whereby identity formation, peer relationships, sexuality and self worth are explored. Today for adolescents, the internet is acting as a new social environment where these adolescence issues are being explored. A transformation is being noted in how they communicate, establish and maintain relationships and find social support.

Due to spending countless hours on internet:

- Children spend limited and less time with family and friends
- There is weakening of family bond and limited real social interaction

Online social interaction may help teenagers to form relations on social networking sites which fulfill real life social needs and hence prolonged internet use.

- Adolescents are moving from a “realistic” social world to “virtual social world”

3.9.1 The Effect of Blogs and Internet

Style blogs showcase slender young women posing in the latest fashions. Young girls see these and want to emulate their style. Colorful fashion magazine for pre-teens and teenagers who aim to live fashionably are very much in demand for example lifestyle lounge. The magazine dispenses beauty advice for how you can look like your favorite television star and their promotes expression of style. Influence is prevalent in the blogosphere. Young women with blogs take photos of themselves in their daily outfits. Kellner states, "Media images help shape our view of the world and our deepest values: what we consider good or bad, positive or negative, moral or evil. Media stories provide the symbols, myths, and resources through which we constitute a common
culture and through the appropriation of which we insert ourselves into this culture.”

Fashion and beauty blogs focus on the values of looking a certain way, or what society deems as "stylish." These websites bring together people with the same goals - i.e. looking good - and cultivate a culture in which the beauty myth is prevalent.

In addition to blogs, social networking sites such as Facebook play a role in media influence. Many celebrities and clothing stores have Facebook profiles in which fans subscribe to receive a constant stream of news from these pages on their Facebook news feeds. Celebrities promote their latest films, television appearance, favourite charities, self-endorsed items, and those who are subscribed to them remain in-the-know and are kept up to date of their glamorous, high-profile words. Clothing stores update their pages with photos of their seasonal collections, showcasing attractive young models dressed in their fashions, thus creating images of desire in their impressionable audiences.

### 3.9.2 Eavesdropping

The mass media, mainly television, have worn down the barriers that have long existed between adults, children and teenagers. However, today's children can watch on television any soap opera, especially prime time sitcoms, and get the worst aspects of an adult life. Drugs, sexual content and infertility are right there on the big screen, in the children’s faces, in their living rooms for them to absorb with the click of a button.

### 3.10 Virtual Social World

Teens often create personal pages where they can make up or post their real identities, personal profiles and pictures on websites such as Myspace and Facebook and Blogs.

A study (Polly Klass Foundation, 2006) showed that:

- Half of teens ages 13-18 often communicate through the internet with someone they have not met in person;
- One third plan to meet someone face to face whom they have only chatted through internet;

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Almost 12.5% discovered that someone they were communicating with online was an adult pretending to be much younger.

This poses a safety risk, it is difficult to discern someone’s “real” identity over the internet. Fake identities are easy to produce and to sell on the internet. Virtual Social Interaction: Internet & Psychological Disorders.

Empirical research indicates that adolescents who spend excessive time online social network sites:

- Experience greater declines in their social and psychological well-being and become depressive (DeFife.J.2010);
- Have lower levels of self esteem and psychological symptoms of maladjustments (Berndt et al., 1999; stocker, 1994);
- Engage in self harming behavior such as suicidal ideation and suicidal attempts (Spruijit & deGoode, 1997).

3.10.1 Online Gaming:

Compulsive online gaming has been responsible for some horrifying deaths across the world of particular teenagers getting addicted to online gaming which is estimated to reach $19 billion in revenue by 2013. Increase in online gaming brings a high exposure to violence and explicit content online. Excessive gaming or online gaming addiction can be classified as an impulse control disorder, defined as an urge to continuously play games despite harmful negative consequences. Violent games have strong effect on children and teenagers. The reason is that they lack the real life experiences to judge whether something they see on screen is realistic.

3.10.2 Learning of Aggressive Behaviour:

According to the social learning theory, children may imitate the acts of aggression as seen through the electronic media (Gunter & McAleer, 1997; Anderson & Bushman, 2002). Repeated exposure to violent behavior, children and adolescents can be encouraged to behave more aggressively as they may learn that violence is a useful and appropriate way of solving one’s issues. Children who strongly identify with aggressive characters and perceive violence as realistic tend to display more pronounced aggressive tendencies (Gunter & Mc Aler 1997).
Violent games desensitize children to cruelty and make them more likely to commit violent acts in real life. An alarming number of children seem to experience pleasure in their violent media encounters, and express insatiable demands for more of the violent content (Schwartz & Matzkin, 1999). Research conducted on adolescents—whereby repeated exposure to films portraying violence, especially with a sexual content where women were victims, was found to shift the attitudes of young men to be less sympathetic towards rape victims and more lenient in their judgments about alleged rapists. Thus repeated exposure to graphic depiction of violence may lead children/teenagers to adjust their emotional reactions to it. These altered emotional reactions may be carried over into realistic settings (Gunter & McAleer 1997).

3.10.3 Growing Aggression in Children

In February 2012, a 15 year old student stabbed his teacher in classroom in a private school in Chennai. In December 2007, two teenagers brought a gun to school and shot a fellow 14 year old student in Gurgaon.

In April 2007, a student killed 32 persons and wounded 25 others before committing suicide on campus of Virginia polytechnic institute and state university virginia, USA

Aggression comes in many different forms and it has now become the menace that every child has to deal with on a daily basis. Small arguments in school have now grown to resemble gang wars, replete with hockey sticks and knives.

Reports of sexual harassment and violence are increasing. Children these days seem to have lost the ability to complete a single sentence without the use of abusive words. The acts of ragging and bullying have been obvious for all of us to see and read about in newspapers and television. Social exclusion and other forms of passive aggression can do a great deal of psychological damage as well. Cyber bullying is latest in the evolving and even changing form of aggression.

Social media had perhaps been one of the greatest factors responsible for the increasing aggression among children and teenagers. The cultural stereotypes that surround children these days enforce expectations of ‘macho’ behaviour among boys. Children who bully are looked upon as being ‘cool’ and others follow in the same kind of social approval—simply to fit in with peers. Children with academic as well as emotional difficulties have been found to be more prone to aggressive behaviour. Even depression often manifests as aggressive behaviour among teenagers. Children’s lives
are becoming increasingly stressful. Our cities are becoming more congested and the safe outlets for children to discharge their energies are gradually decreasing.

The consequences of aggression are devastating for all but more so when the victim is a child, still at a nascent stage where personalities are only just forming and where copying mechanism are not yet entirely in place. Acts of physical violence, bullying and social exclusion have the propensity to lead to many psychological disturbances such as loss of confidence and lowered self-esteem and difficulty in sleeping. Children, who themselves pret end of aggressive acts, whether in homes or among their peers, are more likely to engage in aggressive behaviour.

In that case, the victim then becomes the victimiser, broadening the net of violence and aggression. Psychiatric condition such as depression, anxiety and eating disorders may also develop. The facts are clear to see--- childhood and teenage depressions are on the rise. Adolescent suicide is also on the rise. Adults often tend to ignore childhood aggression; they treat it as a part of normal development, hope the child grows out of it, and basically just push it under the carpet. The bad news is that aggression among children is on the rise. The good news is that still there are things we can do to curtail it.

**Problem Management**

- **Aggression management needs to come to the forefront--- enter the domain of the classroom as well as that of the dinner table.** Anger and aggression are both things that can be controlled and children need to taught teach the skills to be able to do so.

- **Educate children about different kinds of aggression--- that it is not restricted merely to acts of physical violence.**

- **Discuss the potential long term consequences of aggression, both on the victim as well as the perpetrator.** Focus on teaching children effective life skills and move beyond the academic curriculum.

- **Teachers must take time out of regular classes and teach children effective conflict resolution skills as well as effective communication styles.**

- **Explain children the difference between aggressive and assertive behaviour and encourage the later.**

- **Schools must adhere to a zero tolerance policy towards bullying, ragging, and other forms of aggression.**
Hitting the child is a terrible idea – in fact, corporal punishment has been found to only increase the incidence of aggressive behaviour. Instead, aim should to understand the child and later educate and sensitize the child.

What is most important to remember is that aggression is a learnt response. Children do what is being done around them. What kids need are positive, pro-social role models. And this social responsibility of being effective role models falls on each and every one of us. Childhood aggression has become a great hazard to the society. What it now needs to become is the priority of parents, teachers and policy makers alike.

3.11 The Role of Social Media

The super columbine massacre RPG is a role playing video game, which was released in 2005. The game recreated the infamous 1999 columbine high school shootings five decades ago, Albert Bandura, a pioneering social psychologist, proved that aggression, to a large extent is, a learnt response.

Children learn aggression by watching and imitating the behaviour of others. With the rising incidence of aggressive behaviour among children, it is high time the social media are brought under scrutiny. The media don’t just represent our reality; it creates it along the way as well. It begins with children imitating the choke slams they see on WWF, followed by reproducing swear words that have become ‘cool’, thanks to our new age reality shows.

Reality TV is not just getting dumber by the day, it is also getting meaner. The cartoons shows which children watch are not free of aggression anymore, and neither is the news. Whether television or the internet, violence is everywhere. The problem is that role models are changing. Children don’t have many pro-social role models to look up to anymore. It is, instead, aggressive, intimidating, rowdy, anti-social behaviour that catches the eye and evokes acclaim.

Video games are another major cause for concern. Be it Hitman, Call of duty or the countless others, the constant exposure to the violent imagery that characterizes such games has led children to become desensitized to violence, leading to a culture that normalizes aggression. It is as if violence doesn’t bother the kids so much anymore.

In a social environment such as this, children are at the receiving end of thousands of media messages every day. So educating children about the social media is essential. Concepts of media literacy need to be introduced in schools. Children need
to be empowered with the knowledge and skills to filter and make sense of the information they are bombarded with. Children need to be told what is real and what is make-believe. Consequences of aggressive acts need to be looked into. (Dr Samir Parikh)

3.11.1 Prosocial Media for Children.

In the early days of television, the limited offerings of the networks featured many “family-friendly” prosocial programs. Through the 1980’s, content analyses revealed that children’s favorite programs often featured portrayals of empathy, altruism and an exploration of feelings (Palmer 1988). Networks soon discovered, however that more money could be made with a so called program-length commercials --- cartoons that were mainly vehicles for selling toys such as action figures (Kunkel, 1988). As a consequence, prosocial television declined through the 1980’s and mid 1990’s (Calvert & Kotler, 2003). The children’s television act of 1990 aimed to reverse that trend, but it really was not until the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) processing guideline went into effect—explicitly stating a minimum requirement of 3 hours per week of educational television.

3.11.2 How Do Prosocial Media Affect Children —

Researchers who study children’s prosocial learning from media typically work under the assumption that characters who behave kindly, cooperatively, responsibly and altruistically are providing models that children can learn from and subsequently imitate.

Children observe a character behave in a positive manner. That behavior is more likely to be imitated if the character (a) is realistic, (b) receiving similar to the child (c) positive reinforcement, and (d) carries out an action that is imitable by the child (Thomas 2005).

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Prosocial content may also be providing children with skills for dealing with their emotions and managing their moods. Children are born with temperament but look to their environments to learn emotional competencies--- for example, ways to feel better about themselves or get through a bad day.

A third potential mechanism underlying the relationship between media content and prosocial behaviour may be that prosocial content offers children “scripts” for dealing with unfamiliar situations. According to schema theory, a schema is an organized structure of knowledge about a topic or event that is stored in memory and helps a person assimilate new information (Mandler, 1984). Schema theory suggests that people possess schemas for emotions, which include information about facial expressions, the cause of feelings, and the appropriate ways of expressing feelings. Children use Schemas to help them interpret what they encounter in the media. In turn, media content can contribute to a child’s schemas. Cultivation theory, has found that, over time heavy TV viewing tend to adopt beliefs about the world that are consistent with television’s portrayal of the world. In other words, children who watch a lot of TV featuring crime or hospitals may come to see the world as a mean and scary place (Gerbner, Gross, Signorielli & Morgan, 1986). The impact of prosocial content seems to peak at age of 7 and fall off rapidly after that (Mares, Woodard, 2001, 2005), so that teenagers may be relatively “immune” to such influences or simply too egocentric to be affected.

3.12 What do Children and Teenagers Learn from Television?

Television influences viewer’s perception of social behavior and social reality (Bandur, 1977; sharum, 2002), contributes to cultural norms (Gerbner, 1985; Greenberg, 1982), and conveys messages concerning the behaviour it portrays (Bandura, 1977; Roberts, 1982). Television may offer teenagers “Scripts” for sexual behaviour that they might not be able to observe anywhere else (Gagnon & Simon, 1990).
1987; Kim et al., 2007; Kunkel et al., 1999). In other studies, teenagers who view a lot of media are more likely to accept stereotypical sex roles (Walsh-Childers & Brown, 1993). Given that the media are filled with sexual talks, behaviour and innuendoes and a lot of inaccurate information (Strasburger, 2005; Sutton et al., 2002), how do children and adolescents interpret such content? Does sexual content have the same impact on a 7 year old as on 17 year old?

Young people bring their own unique knowledge and expectations to the viewing arena (Greenberg, Linsangan, & Soderman, 1993; Truglio, 1992.) Although young children sometimes understand the jokes and innuendoes about sex (Kaiser Family foundation/children Now, 1996). There is usually an age dependent ability to interpret sexual content (Silverman-Watkins & Sparafkin, 1983) Interest paid to and comprehension of sexual content is probably age dependent, although the lower age limits could be decreasing. Sexual content is very appealing to teenagers (J.D. Brown et al., 2006; Sutton et al., 2002). Gender differences also seem to exist. Viewing soap operas which are extremely appealing to many teens, may give viewers unrealistic and unhealthy notions about single motherhood (Larson, 1996). However, not all teenagers apparently interpret the same content in the same way (Greenberg, 1993).

3.12.1 Media’s Negative Effects on Teenagers

✓ Gary Jenson notes that the violence and social behaviors of teenagers in our society are under attack by ‘media violence,’ ‘school violence,’ ‘media effects,’ and peer pressure. When teenagers spend a large amount of time in front of the television, reading magazines, or on the internet, there is a pro-founding effect on their ability to adapt to what they see and hear. Children and teenagers imitate what they see. Many critics note that watching violence can increase the likelihood of a person becoming violent, and his social behavior changes drastically. These mixed messages along with peer pressure put us all over the edge.

✓ There are several negative effects on a teenager’s social well being. The media today is responsible for body image, and self worth, and this is where we see several teenagers suffer from inferiority complex, thus resorting to unhealthy eating habits and weight loss. The media sells sex, drugs, and smoking through the movies and advertisements they show. These negative effects of the media
on teenagers are controlling every part of their social life. Everywhere they turn, television, the internet, newspapers, magazines, and advertisement bombard them. Teenagers are affected by the way the media portray super stardom. Hollywood tells them they must look a certain way, so they develop bad eating habits, and lose weight to look like the ideal person on television. The amount of emphasis put by media on celebrity definitely contributes to negative effects. They look in the magazines, and they see a pretty person that looks good, skinny, and rich and they want to be like this person. This kind of pressure allows many teens to make irrational decisions and put demands on themselves. When they cannot fulfill their desires, they turn to the obvious, drinking, drugs, sex, and alcohol.

✓ Many media outlets increase aggressive tendencies in teenagers, be it television, or a video game. Teens are on public display in front of their peers trying to keep up in the crowd, and this does not always go over well. They demand from their parents, who sometimes become tired of moulding them to go the right way. They want the latest clothing, the latest hairstyle, the newest car, and so the vicious cycle continues. The constant glorification of unhealthy habits becomes the main staple for their survival. Millions of dollars are spent each year to attract teens to certain things. The media sometimes fail to tell the real deal about how one can obtain or achieve things in life. It is not always about money and fame. One must work to rise to the top.

✓ Furthermore, family, friends, peers, schools, and teachers cultivate teenagers, but sometimes these communities break down, because they are not always there for them to show them the right way to go. When this happens, they have no choice but to turn to the media for help and attention. That is why the media, as such have an effect on their life.

✓ Teenagers are always faced with challenges as they grow up. Their bodies change, their personalities change, and these changes to everyday living are hard. Adapting to change is always a struggle for the majority, especially in our society today. The need to fit in is important, as many do not have a strong homebody or role model to turn to. Parents are either divorced or are too busy to see what is going on with their children. Teenagers need a strong community to help them develop into positive young men and women. If they cannot turn to family and friends for help, they will turn to their peers for validation. The
school system is another way for teenagers to grow, but sometimes there is a lot of pressure at school and college. With the emphasis on materialism and appearance, teenagers struggle to survive. Moreover, peer pressure is probably one of the hardest things teenagers face today. Popular groups encourage a person to change his or her behavior, morals, lifestyle, and learning patterns. We know that teenagers face many consequences when they give into this pressure, it erodes their own identity, and prompts them in making flawed choices in their lives.

3.12.2 Rock ‘n’ Roll Music

The term rock and roll music and popular music will be used interchangeably to indicate music currently listened to by teenagers. Such music includes hard rock, soft rock, heavy metal, rap, salsa, and soul music. Different Genres of music are popular with different racial and ethnic groups, although there is considerable crossover. Teenager’s choice in music helps them to define important social and sub cultural boundaries (Bennett, 2005; D.F. Roberts, Christenson, & Gentile, 2003). Although there is more crossover between music types than ever before, in the interests of simplicity, we will maintain these “older” genres rather than trying either to coin new terms or to use terms that will not last.

In addition, MTV and music videos have defined an entire generation the MTV generation: what’s “hot”, what’s “cool”, what’s “in” and what’s “out” are played out every day and night on TV screen.

Of all types of music that teenagers listen to, heavy metal and rap music have elicited the greatest concern. Once considered as only a fringe category of rock music, heavy metal is characterized by the loud, pulsating rhythm of electric bass guitar and drums and the seeming obsession with themes of violence dominance and abuse of women, hate, Satanism and death (Arnett, 1991). From a 1980’s music called heavy metal is now a stylized form which is a rap and now it could just as easily be termed as rap. Rap music has its roots in Black culture and is characterized by talking to a musical beat. At times, it is angry and violent. Critics note that “hard core rap music is now driven almost exclusively by violence, sex and materialism” (Samuels et al., 2000, p.62). Rap music is not unidimensional, however. At times, it can also be prosocial,

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embracing such traditional social values as nurturing, education and self sufficiently (Cohen et al., 2005; Leland, 1992).

3.12.3 Teenagers and Music

Consumption: As television viewing begins to wane during mid to late adolescence, listening to rock music increases, although television remains the predominant medium throughout childhood and adolescence (Marshall, Gorely, & Biddle, 2005; strasburger, 2006). Often teenagers are multitasking and music is simply used as background accompaniment to doing homework, driving, or talking with friends. There is no evidence that music media exert a displacement effect on other activities such as school work (Chritenson & Roberts, 1998), although there are several suggestive studies that teens who spend more time listening to music tend to do less well academically (Burke & Grinder, 1966; Larson & Kubey, 1983) and that students who study while listening to rock music exhibit lower comprehension of material than students studying in silence or listening to classical music (LaVoie & Collins, 1975).

Why Teenagers like rock music: the uses (and abuses) of popular music are myriad. Main categories include the following:

- Relaxation and mood regulation
- Social (Partying, talking with friends, playing)
- Silence Filling (Background noise; relief from boredom)
- Expressive

It’s the beat of rock music which teenagers enjoy than the lyrics of the music. Music does play an important role in the socialization of adolescents. It can help them identify with a peer group or serve as an important symbol of anti establishment rebellion (Strasburger, 1997a, 1997b). The performers of popular music also have a significant role in teenager’s development as potential role models.

3.13.3 Media Violence

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Television is not a schoolhouse for criminal behaviour.... Viewers turn to this light entertainment for relief, not for instruction. Video action exists, and is resorted to, to get material out of minds rather than to put things into them.... Television violence is good for people.


Today, there is strong consensus among social scientists that exposure to aggressive messages on television and in movies can have harmful effects on children and teenagers (Bushman & Huesmann, 2001; Smith & Donnerstein, 1998). The most well documented effect concerns aggression. Aggression is a learned behaviour that can be acquired, reinforced and primed by media messages. Young children are particularly vulnerable, as are children who strongly identify with violent characters, who are doing poorly in school, who perceive television as real, and who are unpopular with peers. The evidence does not suggest that media violence is the major cause of violence in society, but it is certainly a socially significant one. The media are part of a complex web of cultural and environmental factors that can teach and reinforce aggression as a way of solving problems.

Yet, aggression is not the only possible outcome. Extensive exposure to media violence also can decentralize young people and make them more callous toward real-world violence. And in others, it can lead to exaggerated concern and fear of becoming a victim of violence. None of these outcomes is straightforward and universal. Instead, certain children and teens are more vulnerable depending on cognitive development, the types of media violence they like, and the amount of exposure they have to media violence in relation to other types of messages.

The challenge for parents and educators is to ensure that youth are exposed to these alternative messages that accurately portray the seriousness of violence in society. The challenge to the media industry is to create more of these alternative messages and to ensure that they are just as appealing as those that glorify violence.

3.13 The Family and Media

Media today is an important part of day to day lives of families, part of the resources parents draw on (to babysit, to stay connected), and part of the very structure of modern household. Media use not only shape but also is shaped by what happens in
the family setting. What’s more, children learn to use media in particular ways based on what they observe their parents and siblings doing with the media.

   It's really a very simple way to just get them to sit down and relax, because you know my children are very active. (My son) is very active and to me, it’s nice, it’s very pleasant for me when he’s sort of like fed, cleaned and he is going to sit down for a while and watch TV. It’s a calm, nice thing. It’s just a phenomenal babysitter. If everybody in the house needs to be doing things, it's just fabulous.

   Mother of 9 year old

3.13.1 The Home as a Multimedia Environment

   Children who spend their days in environments that are filled with television sets, computers, and video games have a great opportunity to use media. Saelens et.al. (2002) explored home environment factors around TV access and their relation to children’s overall TV watching.

3.13.2 Television in Bedroom

   Children’s own bedrooms are replete with media. By increasing affordability and portability of technologies that are quite popular with children --- For Example, Laptop Computers, Handheld Video Games Players and iPods. Placing television in children’s room leads to increase the amount of television watching and the preferable programs of their own which are sometimes inappropriate for their age and parents sometimes are unaware of that.

3.14 Food Advertisements

   Food advertising is a big business. Fast food chains are targeting children and teenagers with advertisements. In children's programming, 83% of all advertisements are for fast foods or snacks (Harrison & Marske 2005). Adolescents may set relatively less food ads. Advertisements are cleverly constructed to get viewers to associate foods with happiness and fun, rather than taste or nutritional benefits. Products such as Coke, Pepsi, and Potato chips, Barbie, McDonalds, biscuits, Chocos along with the fast food

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chains. The top food brands advertised on TV use corporate Web sites that market to kids’ online (Moore, 2006).

Cartoon characters abound and are incredibly effective. It’s the cartoon characters which are extremely effective in getting children to recognize products. Worldwide, the McDonald’s Corporation spends nearly $ 500 million a year on advertising with 40% targeting children and teens (Horgen et al., 2001). Not surprisingly, such advertising works. Increasingly McDonald’s, Burger King and others are engaging toy tie-ins.

Not only are healthy foods rarely advertised on television, but Public Service Announcements (PSA’s) are not used effectively to redress the nutritional misinformation being broadcasted to children. Some teens may understand the disclaimer but by far the most important impact of the commercial is to intrigue the child with how “yummy” and “fun” the product is (Reece et al., 1999)37

New digital-age marketing techniques are targeting older children and teens as well. Web addresses are now printed on product packages, instant messaging Web sites contain interactive commercials, and commercials have been placed on YouTube as videos (Chester & Montgomery, 2007).38

3.14.1 The Impact of Food Advertisements on Behaviour.

Young children, younger than ages 6 to 8 years are developmentally unable to understand the intent of advertisements and in fact frequently accept advertising claims as being largely true (AAP, 2006; Gunter, Oates & Blades, 2005; Kunkel, 2001; Macklin & Carlson, 1999).39

Advertising is effective in getting young children to request most junk food and to attempt to influence their parent’s purchases. Nelson (1998) study, the amount of weekly television viewing of 3-8 year olds actually correlated significantly both with children’s requests for specific advertised foods and their calorie intake. Even brief

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exposures to TV food ads can influence children as young as preschool age in their food choices. Exposure to food ads also increases young children’s snacking behaviour. Two recent studies found that heavier TV viewing correlates with more fast food consumption (French, Story, Neumark-Sztainer, Fulkerson, & Hannan, 2001).

Media have a significant impact on teenager's eating habits, the occurrence of obesity during childhood and adolescence and adolescents and young women’s self images of their bodies also contribute to the development of eating disorders. Exactly, what role media play remains open to conjectures and surmises. It is the lifestyle and exposure which are affecting the health of children and teenagers.

3.14.2 Television Viewing During Mealtime

Television viewing during mealtime contributed to children’s overall TV time, such that children who consume their meals with the TV on spend significantly more time with the medium than children who don’t. Eating during meals affects what the family eats as well. “Cohn, Goldberg, Rogers and Tucker (2001) argue that “because children learn television viewing habits, as well as eating habits, primarily from parents, the choices parents make about the use of television during meals may be associated with choices that they make regarding the foods they buy and make available to their children, independently of children’s direct requests for advertised foods.”

In addition to affecting what is eaten, mealtime TV might also affect family relationships. Television use may both affect and be affected by family interactions. There is a less verbal communication and discussions related to family and other matters.

3.14.3 Eating and Eating Disorders

Television presents viewers with two sets of conflicting messages. One suggests that we eat in ways almost guaranteed to make us fat; the other suggests that we strive to remain slim.

L. Kaufman (1980, p.45)

Although sex, drugs, rock “n” roll music and aggression take hold of the headlines and represent major health concerns during childhood and adolescence, the media have an important impact on the other areas of young people’s health as well.
Television can serve as an important source of information for young children and teens about foods and eating habits. It is not only television advertising which leads to maximum obesity among children and a variety of eating disorders among teens but also internet plays an important role in health disorders. Currently about 30% of obese children and teenagers develop metabolic syndrome (a combination of abnormal lipid levels, elevated blood sugar levels, and high blood pressure) (Institute of Medicine, 2006). Metabolic syndrome sometimes preceeds type 2 diabetes, which used to be extremely rare among teenagers but now is increasingly common (Duncan, 2006; Welsh &Dietz, 2005). Psychologically, obese children and teenagers tend to suffer from lower self esteem than their peers (Franklin, Denyer, Steinback, Caterson & Hill, 2006; Strasburger et al., 2006).

When internet took off in late 1990’s, among the different online groups that began to develop, some of the online communities began encouraging eating disorder behaviors and attitudes such as Pro- Anorexia, Pro- Bulimia and Pro- Eating disorders. In 2010, of 180 online websites, 83% contained suggestions for engaging in eating disorder behaviors (Borzekowski, Schenk, Wilson & Peebles., 2010)

3.15 Parental Mediation of Children’s Media Use

Most parents say that they have at least some rules about what media children can use and how much time they can devote to watching TV, playing video games, or surfing the web (Jordan et al., 2006). Indeed, one of the earliest and most important parent child negotiations that exist could be those in which parents attempt to mediate the flow of media content into the home. It gives parents opportunity not to set boundaries but also to convey their personal values and cultural beliefs to the children.

Three types of mediation styles ---the ways in which parents try to safeguard children’s exposure to media content. First, “active mediation” involves the kind of conversations that parents (or other adults such as teachers) have with children about television. Talk about media might be initiated by parents, who aim to assist children in being more decisive viewers. Talk also can be initiated by children, who have questions about character motivations or want to understand media conventions (Nathanson 2001).
The second is a “restrictive mediation” where parental supervision involves the use of explicit rules about what games can be played, what channels can be watched, or how long a child can be on the web.

Finally, “coviewing” has been explored as a tactic for parents to talk to children about content while watching together. It is basically described as the simple act of sitting in the same room and watching a program with or without conversation.

Basically it’s the content on which parents are concerned with not exactly the time children spend in watching television.