

MASS MEDIA: THE USE AND MISUSE AMONG STUDENTS IN HIGHER INSTITUTIONS IN EKITI STATE

Adepoju, E. O & Ajayi, O.

Department of Vocational and Technical Education
Faculty of Education, Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti

Abstract

The study examined the use and misuse of mass media among students in higher institutions in Ekiti State. The study also identified the types of mass media, characteristics of mass media. The paper adopted descriptive analytical research design of data collection since it is basically an evaluative study. It was concluded that, mass media has been playing an important aspect that cannot be pushed aside in this generation among the students in higher institutions which seems to contribute either positively or negatively to their academic performance. It was also concluded that the ideas and beliefs of students in higher institutions are shaped by increasing the use of mass media around the globe. It was recommended that parents should be alert of the student's activities on social media and visual media. It was also recommended that lecturers should spend time with the students and pay attention to the student's behavior. It was further recommended that teacher should motivate the students to participate in media awareness programs in communities and schools.

Keyword: Mass Media, Use, Misuse, Institutions, Students, Learning

Introduction

The world is becoming a global village at a faster rate, that is very influenced by the use of mass media. There are various forms of mass media in a given society that gives useful information to humanity. Mass media are forms of communication, that could be printed, airing, or verbal which could be used to reach large number of audience at the same time, mass media has significant influence in this modern society and culture all through the world, especially Nigeria. Mass media can be well-defined by way of "forms of electronic communication as websites for social networking and microblogging through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content as videos" ("social media"). Mass Media is all over the society, community, homes, cars, and in educational institutes. In early 70s', Television set was one of the most popular form of mass media and an important fragment of every household.

Mass media refers to a type of technology that include radio set, television set, newsprint, and so on that is usually used as the foremost ways of communication to reach a large number of people, i.e. general public. Mass media can be referred also to a various collection of media technologies that reach a large listener through mass communication. Communication takes place through technologies which include variety of channels.

In this new era of technology, mass media is one of the ways that dictates how people conducts and behaves in their day-to-day activities. Mass media makes people's performance indifferent in the presence of others in attempt to get their interest. This act makes oneself feel better than others in the society. ICT as one of the major aspects of mass media has shrunken walls and promoted fast communication and interactions across boundaries. Hence, the need for a sound mind with the ability to produce sound responses under pressure is essential to

meet the daily responsibilities and challenges of life. The need to meet these basic challenges and responsibilities has also informed the invention and the use of information technologies (Ademodi and Adepoju, 2009)

Humans have resorted to leisure and recreation as much as they have developed in scientific advancements and technologies. Since the age of globalization when technology has gotten almost every nook and cranny of the sphere, there are no areas of life left where electronic mediums of information are unapproachable. Getting television set and computer system is not an issue this present day. It is very easy for students to move around with their gadgets in their pockets which bring them closer to the outside world e.g. cell phones. Students inculcate mass media into their everyday schedule in order to communicate with people outside the time zone. Mass media is also a medium that provides various kinds of information where necessary. The existence of mass media made it possible for students to listen and watch favorite news and shows on Television sets and radio set.

Society and community which include the literates and non-literates see mass media as a source of getting information, this source of getting information could include newsprint, publications, internet, television sets, radio sets and so on. Television sets and radio sets are not totally mass media per se, however, these become mass media only when they have the connection and capable of accessing the media as their sources of information. Mass media is one of the major sources that encourage cultural circulation and multi-culture consciousness. Mass media avail students' the opportunities to know how fellow students from another institution within the country and other parts of the world learn, behave, look like, their lifestyles and their cultural heritages which ultimately enriches their knowledge about different cultures.

Before the advent of technologies, people make use of drums, flame of fire, town criers to invite the residents of a community where they would gather and pass the news to them accordingly. Then gradually people learn how they could write, they would paste the news on places where majority could read and update others. Mass media became more popular with the passage of time and there are internets and social media which is the most advanced form of mass media around the globe. Mass media develops awareness among people regarding social and political issues. Mass media is also a medium of educating, entertaining and connecting with people that out of reach immediately. Mass media has strengthened the methods of accessibility with different types of information.

Mass Media usually build ups the rudimentary proofs or information and presents the facts in order to increase the superficial appeal of things. The importance which mass media lay emphasis on are materialistic; and the people who are engross with the materials possession largely superficial and artificial. Consequently, the cultural and moral values that the media encourages and which are eaten deep down society in this modern periods are superficial and concerned with making money, materials possession and living a charming lives. The point is that, be it television sets, publications, journals or the internet, media is always everywhere, affecting various areas of life. For instance, the events and products advertised by the media and the manners they were advertised are inevitable to affect the practices and ways of the people. Television sets majorly has a way of impacting the young ones, even toddlers, as it stimulates their viewing cultures throughout their lives times.

Violent television programmes are complemented by intense production characters; children are prone to seek out and pay attention to sections of sex and violence they watched—even in comics! It

is regularly seen that young girls and boys emulate their role models thoughtlessly. The undesirable actions and characters of the celebrities are always talked about. The hullabalos in the lives of the celebrities are often mentioned by the media. This gives to a visionless imitation of what appears in the news. The negative side effects of media in especially on children are manifested in terms of their changing mental set-up and the declining quality of their lifestyle. Students who should give attention to reading good books, studying, playing outdoors, exercising and engaging in productive social activities are seen today using their fruitful evenings attached to the television sets. The accessibility of mass media to students exposes them to what is yet to be known and will not understand. Virtuousness is being eroded at the tennage, thanks to the film, music and dance shows in which children are encouraged to participate and imitate the attitudes and actions of adults. The harmful psychological side effects of media are viewed in terms of media changing the people's outlook on life. Mass media have altered the arts, ways of culture and moral values of the society. Majority of the students believe in what is been heard, viewed and portrayed by the media. Students tend to mix the non-factual and the real world under the sway of the mass media.

Mass Media also affects the mental well-being of students to a certain level in their academic performance. Students that spend more time watching television sets or surfing the Internet are likely to obese and suffer from eye problems. Extensive period of hours' exposed to mass media add to the sedentary nature of one's way of lifestyle. What it may result in can be termed a 'cultural lethargy of sorts'. Culture is a lively and energetic integral part of a society. It is good for the society when it evolves with satisfying good characters, and moral values; and when culture fosters lifestyle, attitude and consciousness aimed at improvement of society in the long run.

Culture could also be seen as a way of living which includes beliefs, aesthetics and institutions of a civilization. Bearing in mind that today's way of life, mass media is surely seeing as prominent thing that affect our culture. In recent times, media theories that regard the students as a passive individual have been superfluous, and advanced media theories take into consideration the students' reaction. Despite the cognitive abilities of the students, the mass media has been productively instilling numerous moral values and elements into a large sector of the society. The researchers believe that mass media outlines programmes and activities reflected in our society. Most times, mass media do much more than echo the environments—they amplify, overstate and even highlight what is of utmost importance to make way for entertainment. The media produces celebrities; it fashions idols for students to imitate. A particular type of series shows; music and movies are made current by the media for students to pattern their life after. The acceptance of violent and abusive rap songs amongst students could be traced to mass media publicity. The exposure of students to mass media activities such as murder, stealing, violence, drug abuse, sex and other unhealthy practices and lifestyles have played key roles in the surge of ugly incidents where students got extremely violent and out of control behaviours.

Television sets are parts of mass media publicizing activities that personify cultural, tribal and encourage communal prejudices that show case violence, sexually explicit content and abusive language, they are all embedded in electronic media at presence. There are lots of visual, audio visual music that promotes message that alcohol, drugs and sex are an unavoidable, and part of enjoying life. These kinds of notions portrayed by the mass media may not be suitable, but, owing to their apparent mass acceptance, more students' accepted it as a part of today's culture. Television sets has become one of

the most accepted part of the modern day lifestyle. At the point of understanding the effect of television on society, is the significant relationship between television and the users. Television sets give room for students to digest pictures that otherwise majority of students would not have access to laid hands on in life. This might look like advantage, television sets are not about watching different and diverse things. The television stations control this give-and-take by class advertising surveys to modify programmes to what they perceive as the interests of students. Meanwhile, students believe that they are at home watching the television sets forgetting that they are being traded in the marketplace of watching television sets. Television has twisted the sense of hyper-reality: the reality of television seems to be more real to viewers than the real reality experience. Since the automated pictures viewed on the television set screen seems real, the mind of majority of students been fooled.

Types of Mass Media

There are innumerable categories of Mass media, which are as follows:

1. Transmission media convey information electronically via media such as films show, programmes on radio, playing recorded music, or television sets.
2. Digitalizing media consist of both Internet and mobile mass communication.
3. World Wide Web media include such services as e-mail address, social media sites, websites, and Internet-based radio and television. Many other mass media outlets have an additional presence on the web, by such means as linking to or running Television advertisements online, or distributing QR Codes in outdoor or print media to direct mobile users to a website. In this way, they can use the easy accessibility and outreach capabilities the Internet affords, thereby easily broadcasting information throughout many different regions of the world simultaneously and cost-efficiently.
4. Open-air media communicates information through such media as AR advertising; hoardings; blimps; flying billboards (signs in tow of airplanes); boards or kiosks placed inside and outside buses, commercial buildings, shops, sports stadiums, subway cars, or trains; signs; or skywriting
5. Reproduction media convey information via physical objects, such as books, cartoons, publications, correspondents, or leaflets. Activities organization and free public speaking could be seen as forms of mass media.
6. The groups that control these technologies, such as movie studios, publishing companies, and radio and television stations, are also known as the mass media.

Overall, mass media has been playing an important aspect that cannot be pushed aside in this generation among the students in higher institutions which seems to contribute either positively or negatively to their academic performance. Human being are found of interacting with one another - social animal, with this, there is frequent need to socialize with the world to know what exactly is going on.

Characteristics of Mass Media

As a result of the advancements achieved by mass media over time, and assignificant influence of mass media, it is important to know the characteristics of mass media.

- ★ At the present time, internet is the most used mass media for students in higher institutions all over the countries of the globe.
- ★ WhatsApp, Facebook and Twitter are the largest social media platform that work as the mass media for the students in higher institution to

interact and conduct their assignment and other academic activities.

- ★ Print media such as journals, publications, textbooks, newspapers and magazines are now internet based and becoming less printing.
- ★ People of the world could get news from different sources such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, Telegram and so on.
- ★ Twitter is one the most used mass media by the politicians and all types of celebrities.

The ideas and beliefs of students of higher institutions are shaping by increased use of mass media. The researchers believe that students in higher institution's social, physical, and mental development and academic life as drastically improved due to continuous exposure to mass media.

The study of multimedia has given insight to know the advantages and setbacks of mass media around the globe. It seems that there are about 32,000 transmission radio and Television stations in the United State of America along with hundreds of internet cable Television and satellite radio stations. With this figures, daily correspondents, magazines are available all over the internet for every students (readers) at their comfort zone. It appears that mass media is the ways that students of higher institution get their information and this information reach them than in the time past where students needs to visit library to consult textbooks to get their assignment done. The effect of mass media on students of higher institutions with some germane information on how to tame mass media influence on students in higher Institutions of Learning.

The Use of Mass Media to students of higher Institutions

Students in higher institutions being exposed to mass media is not at all times a bad idea as people thought of. Mass Media at long run can have a constructive

influence on student's behaviour, attitudes and positive reason to face their academic squarely. The quality of times and the content of what the student is watching on mass media will depend on its positiveness. The types of entertainment and self-expression; Mass media as a source of inspiration; Mass media aids improve social skills; Mass media will increase social and political sense; Mass media will avail students with the important information of health; Mass media could guide in forming an identity; Mass media connects people to the globe; Mass media gives room for business expansion; Mass media promotes Arts and Cultures of a particular community and Mass media serves as a medium that offer voice to the voiceless

Effects of the Misuse of Mass Media among students in higher Institutions

There are several ways in which visual media and social media use can become a source of negative influence. Mass media might lead to health and developmental issues; mass media could develop unrealistic body image: mass media might instill wrong perceptions; mass media might develop erroneous beliefs; mass media may develop mental health concerns; students often get exposed to bullying, rumor spreading, unrealistic views of other people's lives, and peer pressure through the mass media. All these factors can cause a negative ripple effect on the student's mental health. Such student's may become depressed, anxious, isolated, and possibly suicidal; Mass media might develop violent behaviour:

A study showed that watching violent television shows and an increase in children's violent and erratic behaviours are positively correlated (Rowell, 2007). Similarly, studies show that playing violent video games alters a student's behavior and could make them aggressive (Rong and Yungiang, 2019); Mass media might cause addiction: Habitual viewing or gaming may be the most speculated negative effect of the mass media, especially social media.

Research shows that the overuse of social media network could lead to stimulation that is similar to other addictive behaviors. Most students post pictures or feelings online and eagerly wait for likes, shares, and positive comments from friends. These experiences activate the brain's reward system and increase the levels of dopamine. It can raise the likelihood of mass media addiction in the long run (Eduardo, 2016); Mass media could empower the already powerful; Mass media could be used for disinformation and hate; Mass media could homogenize culture; Mass media could overtake personal connections.

The effects of mass media on students in higher institutions in Ekiti State could be subjected to the quantity of time spent on social media and how well the social media regulates the student's exposure to it. Personalities on media are commanding influencers that have become an unavoidable part of the media. These personalities use their power of influence to promote and advertise an idea, belief, behavior, or product. Most especially, the students of higher institutions are the most vulnerable viewers that easily get engrossed to lifestyles, products, or behavior that these personalities display on social media. These influences of mass media could be positive, at times, they could also be negative, as well.

Conclusion

Based on the studies reviewed, it is therefore concluded that:

1. mass media has been playing an important role that cannot be pushed aside in this generation among the students in higher institutions which seems to contribute either positively or negatively to their academic performance;
2. the ideas and beliefs of students in higher institutions are shaping by

increased use of mass media around the globe;

3. students in higher institutions being exposed to mass media is not at all times a bad idea as people thought of;
4. there are several ways in which visual media and social media use can become a source of positive and negative influence on student's attitude in the society.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made:

1. parents should be alert of the children's activities on social media and visual media;
2. lecturers should spend time with the students and pay attention to the student's behaviour.
3. lecturers should discuss the pros and cons of mass media with the students and encourage students to express their feelings about various programs and media outlets watching;
4. students should choose their role model wisely based on the public figures they watching on social media;
5. lecturers should talk about media messages to help guide the students on the ways to handle the influences of mass media in life;
6. teachers should motivate the students to participate in media awareness programs in communities and schools.

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