



## THE IMPACTS OF ELECTRONIC MEDIA ON YOUTHS' MORAL BEHAVIOUR OF HIGHER INSTITUTIONS IN EKITI STATE

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### ABSTRACT

*The study investigated the impacts of electronic media on youth moral behaviour of higher institutions in Ekiti State. Specifically, the study investigated the relationship between electronic media and youth moral behaviour, relationship between electronic media and youth sexual behaviour, difference between electronic media and moral behaviour on gender bases and the types of electronic media accessed by youths in Ekiti State. The research design adopted for the study was descriptive design of the survey type. The sample consisted of 250 youths of public higher institutions in Ekiti State. Multistage sampling procedure was used to select the sample for the study. The instrument used for the study was a questionnaire designed by the researchers. The face and content validity was ascertained through experts in Psychology, Guidance and Counselling, Tests, Measurement and Evaluation, while test-retest method was used to ensure the reliability of the instrument which yielded reliability coefficient of 0.60. The data collected were analyzed using inferential statistics of t-test and Pearson Product Moment Correlation. All hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.*

*The findings of the study showed that there is a relationship between electronic media and youth moral behaviour. It also showed that there is no relationship between electronic media and sexual behaviour of youths.*

*It was therefore recommended that government should encourage the media to promote presentations of moral behaviour through educational programs, essential life skills and programs, this will reduce dangers of drug abuse, premarital sex and aggressive behaviours and promote youths' good conduct. Parents, Teachers, School administrators, Educational Psychologists and Guidance Counsellors need to guide the youths on the types of electronic media that influence youth's moral behaviour and again establish good guidelines on how these electronic media should be used by youths in the society.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Electronic media, youths, moral behaviour, social media, behaviour, internet, cell phone.*

### INTRODUCTION

Electronic media is an information or data that is created, distributed and accessed using a form of electronics, electrochemical energy or any equipment used in electronic communications. However, electronic media may be in either analogue electronics data or digital electronic data format. Any equipment used in the electronic communication process may also be considered as electronic media (Schooler, 2006).

Today's world provides the easiest and fastest access to knowledge overcoming time and distance constraints through the electronic media. This is the world of technology where electronic media are in various forms of radio, television, movies, video, computer games, cell phones, computer network and internet prove to be the easiest means to access to information but also provides increasing access to knowledge. It has gradually become a part of daily lives and

source of information, education and entertainment for both young and old. It has also had a huge impact on the present world and become part of modern life style. Technological advancement is taking a steady control over individual lives which many of today's youth are embracing a wide array of media as part of their everyday lives. The use of the internet is becoming an ever more integral part of young people's lives and as a result, they are communicating with each other on an unprecedented scale.

Television, movies, radio, internet has influenced on culture, behaviour and brains. We are witnessing a major cultural revolution that is having an incredible impact on the society. The social media has been described as the most powerful force that has ever influenced human mind and heart. It has a tremendous potential to influence culture. The media has been accused for using tragic consequence to remake society. Violence on television seems influential in making

youths' to be more aggressive in behaviour which could later lead to violent in future life. The continuous behaviour portrayal of promiscuity as exciting, adultery as natural and divorce as acceptable plays powerful role in molding attitudes and behaviour which have devastating effect on moral values of the society.

Garba (2015) explained that radio, television, movies, video games, cell phones and computer networks have assumed roles in children's daily lives. The media has demonstrated potentially profound effects, both positive and negative, on children's cognitive, social and behavioural development. Considering the increasing exposure of youth to electronic media, it is widely accepted that media has profound influence on child health, including violence, tobacco, alcohol use and risky sexual behaviours.

Script writers and producers deliberately undermine the moral values upon which it was founded when they tend to generate and promote the warped content of the media that degrades the values and behaviour of the modern world. The connection is quite obvious when what is projected on the silver screen is compared to what reveals immorality, wickedness, violence, covetousness, murder, strife and all kinds of evil including homosexuality and other perversions in an accurate description of modern media entertainment. The society has forgotten and rejected the ethical values and there seems to be replacement with people became selfish, materialistic, callous, brutal, despisers of good and lovers of pleasures, where people are determined to call evil good and good evil. These and many more are the sobering warnings to a society that appears to have been willingly misled by the corrupting influence of modern electronic media. The present society is most often is perceived as a place where the culture has collapsed, religion has been watered down and corrupted and moral values are under constant attack by the media.

Grube (2008) reviewed that sexual content in the media can affect any age group, youth may be exposed to sexual content in the media during their developmental period when gender roles, sexual attitudes and sexual behaviour are being shaped. Idakwo (2011) asserts that social interaction and school work have been affected at the advent of these electronic media. Undergraduates spend more time on Facebook, Twitter, and other social networks through smart phones, laptops and other browsing devices that are now in abundance among these youths. Many youths cannot refrain for 2-3 hours without checking and updating their profiles on social networks even at the detriments of other activities that are educational and of career pursuit.

Saleem and Anderson (2012) observed that students' exposure to media violence causes aggressive behaviour. Gould and Ward (2015) supports this view by asserting that children who are exposed to violence are more likely to be obvious and depressed and lack concentration at school. Block (2008) asserts that there is a rising concern in America about excessive use of internet by adolescents which leads to wastage of time, feeling of depression when access to computer is not available, lying and social isolation.

In today's society, electronic media are thoroughly integrated into the fabrics of life, with television, movies, videos, music, video games, and computers, central to both work and play. Media have a powerful influence on health and behaviour. Media violence exposure in form of murder mystery movies, stories filled with violence and torture has a larger effect on later violent behaviour. Children watching

violence on Television or playing violent video games tend to be more aggressive and are more prone to confrontation with their teachers, may engage in fights with their peers, and see a decline in school achievement. Study from India showed that vivid display of violence through media caused stress and depression in adolescents. To optimize children's social development and long term, mental health, parents, teachers and pediatricians should discourage the viewing of violent television programs (<https://www.peoplesdailyng.com>.)

Exposure to sexual content in music, movies, televisions and magazines could accelerate adolescents' sexual activity and increases their risk of engaging in early sexual intercourse. This content is shown to be normal, fun and exciting but without discussion of the risks of early sexual activity, pregnancy or sexually transmitted infection. There is growing concern about young people's exposure to sexual content through electronic media and about its potential effects on their sexual attitudes, beliefs and behaviours. The growing prevalence of sexual talk and portrayals of sexual behaviour is televised media, as well as associations between adolescents viewing patterns and their sexual activities (Enid, 2008).

Youths do go to the extent of downloading not sexual movies through internet on their smart phones. Little wonder of prostitution, cohabitations and other sexual dangerous sexual behaviours being exhibited by the youths. various things youths do through electronic media that can affect their moral behaviour e.g. dressing style, dating unknown opposite partner, fraud (419), cultism, violence among others.

Grube (2008), sexual content in the media can affect any age group, youth may particularly be vulnerable. Youth may be exposed to sexual content in the media during a developmental period when gender roles, sexual attitudes, and sexual behaviours are being shaped. This group may particularly be at risk because the cognitive skills that allow them to critically analyze messages from the media and to make decisions based on positive future outcomes are not fully developed.

Kunkel (2007) revealed that in terms of sexual behaviour, cross-sectional surveys have found that frequent exposure to sexual media content is associated with increased reports of intentions to have sex, light sexual behaviour (kissing, caressing, romance, holding hands), and heavy sexual behaviour, such as sexual intercourse. Sexually explicit material or pornography has become widely accessible, especially on the internet.

The media should be encourage to provide more sexually health content. Advertising and product placement for cigarettes and alcohol as well as exposure to movie character smoking and drinking has increased underage drinking and initiation of smoking and its associated with positive beliefs about alcohol consumption.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

It is perceived that most moral behaviour decadence observed among youths in the society today are obtained from electronic media. Youths appears learning different forms of behaviour through electronic media which are initiated to the moral values of the society more than what the society teaches of morals. This in turn has serious devastating effects on the societal values which has plunged the society into chaotic situations.

## RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

1. There is no significant relationship between electronic media and youth moral behaviour.
2. There is no significant relationship between electronic media and youth sexual behaviour.
3. There is no significant difference between electronic media and moral behaviour on gender bases.

**RESEARCH METHOD**

The research design adopted for the study was descriptive research design of the survey type. The population for the study consisted all youths of public higher institutions in Ekiti State. A sample of 250 students were selected, the instrument used for the study is questionnaire designed by the researchers. The face and content validity was ascertained by experts in Educational Psychology, Guidance and Counselling and Tests, Measurement and Evaluation. While

the reliability was determined by using test-retest and reliability coefficient of 0.60 was obtained which was considered high, this indicates that the instrument was found reliable. The instrument was personally administered by the researchers and two trained research assistants. The instrument was collected immediately at the point of administration to avoid loss and misplacement. The data collected were analyzed descriptively and inferentially using frequency count, percentage, t-test and Pearson Product Moment Correlation. All hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

**RESULTS**  
**Testing of Hypotheses**  
**Hypothesis 1**

There is no significant relationship between electronic media and youth moral behaviour

**Table 1: Relationship between electronic media and youth moral behaviour**

Variables	N	Mean	S. D	r	Sig.
Electronic Media	250	3.3600	.51265	.216**	.001
Moral Behaviour	250	2.8880	.55386		

P < 0.05

The table shows that  $r_{cal}$  (.216\*\*) is greater than P-value (.001) at 0.05 level of significance and when  $r_{cal}$  is greater than P-value, the null hypothesis is rejected. This means there is significant relationship between electronic media and youth moral behaviour.

**Hypothesis 2**

There is no significant relationship between electronic media and youth sexual behaviour

**Table 2: Relationship between electronic media and youth sexual behaviour**

Variables	N	Mean	S.D	R	Sig.
Electronic Media	250	3.3600	.51265	.082	.197
Youth Sexual Behaviour	250	2.5104	.71111		

P > 0.05

The table shows that p-value (.197) is greater than  $r_{cal}$  (.082) at 0.05 level of significance, null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, there is no significant relationship between electronic media and youth sexual behaviour.

**Hypothesis 3**

There is no significant difference between electronic media and moral behaviour on gender bases.

**Table 3: t-test of Moral Behaviour on Gender Bases**

Gender	N	Mean	S.D	Df	T	P
Male	110	2.9870	.53208	.246	2.94	.004
Female	140	2.7840	.55335			

P<0.05

The table shows that t-cal (2.94) is greater than P-value (.004) at (.246) level of significance, the null hypothesis is rejected. This means there is significant relationship between electronic media and youth moral behaviour on gender bases.

**DISCUSSION**

The study revealed that there is significant relationship between electronic media and youth moral behaviour. The result is in conjunction with the work of Garba (2015) who stated that electronic media have assumed central roles in youth's daily lives. This implies that electronic has thoroughly integrated into youth's moral behaviour. Youths learn so much ranging from dressing, aggression, lying, cheating, smoking and so on from electronic media. These form greater parts of their lives.

The findings further showed that there is no significant relationship between electronic media and youth sexual behaviour. This implies that electronic media has no impact on the sexual behaviour of youth. This contradicts Grube (2008) that sexual content in the media can affect any age group. Youths may be exposed to sexual content in the media

during a developmental period when gender roles, sexual attitudes and sexual behaviours are being shaped. This may indicate that youths can develop different sexual behaviours from several means which may not only be from electronic media.

The study further revealed that there is significant relationship between electronic media and moral behaviour on gender bases. This implies that electronic media have impact on moral behaviour on both male and female. Moral behaviour portrays by some youths both male and female in this contemporary world can be as a result of electronic media.

**CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that electronic media like television, radio, internet, mobile phones all have their impact on youth moral behaviour. Research findings support the fact that electronic media is a powerful agent but its negative impacts outweigh the positive impacts. Electronic media does not significantly influence sexual behaviour of youths. Youths may be getting their sexual behaviour from more other source rather than electronic media only.

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Government should encourage the media to promote presentations of moral behaviour through educational programs, essential life skills and environmental programs. This will reduce dangers of drug abuse, premarital sex and aggressive behaviours and promote youths' conduct.
2. Parents, Teachers, School administrators and educational psychologists need to be aware of the various types of electronic media that influence youth moral behaviour and establish good guidelines on how these electronic media should be used by the youths in the society. Particularly, the use of computers and cell phones need to be highly monitored and regulated.
3. Counselling departments in schools and teachers in general should be aware of how behaviour is highly influenced by electronic media so as to be able to handle behaviour issues especially sexual behaviours and violence among students.
4. There should be policy towards censoring information before it is broadcast over any form of media. This should touch content on music, movies, advertisements, social network and internet. This will allow broadcasting of useful and not misleading information especially to the youth.

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