

A sociological investigation of youth's exposure to cultural diffusion through electronic media: On the examples of Pakistani university students

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ABSTRACT

It is nearly impossible to ignore the media's enormous influence on the behavioural development of youth. As media freedom in Pakistan is almost embryonic, its impact on the youth has yet to be determined. The utilisation of diverse information resources has assumed a crucial position in the life of the youth. This influence may have both positive and negative impacts on the cognitive, political, and socioeconomic development of youth. This study investigates the channels and effects of cultural diffusion on university students in the Faisalabad district of the province of Punjab. The research was carried out using a multistage sampling strategy. As a part of this process, two universities, namely UAF and GCUF, were chosen to participate in the study utilising a simple random case sampling method. The proportionate sampling method was utilised to choose a total of 43 and 77 students, respectively, from two different clusters. The findings indicate an association between age and the perception that electronic media promotes cultural familiarity. Education level relates with respondents' perception that electronic media induces stress. The respondent's family income also affects their perception that electronic media dissatisfies youth. In fact, according to the findings of this study, an overwhelming majority of respondents experience stress, both physically and mentally. Inadequate sleep, which leads to decreased cognition, and a neglect of family involvement in extracurricular activities like sports are other contributing factors. By disclosing these findings, this study has contributed to the discourse on cultural diffusion and filled the gap in cultural diffusion research that currently exists in the Pakistani academic community.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The term "mass media" refers to any form of media that communicates information to a large number of people. There are two distinct categories of mass media: print media and electronic media. Publications such as newspapers, periodicals, books, and pamphlets are examples of print media, whereas examples of electronic media include DVDs, movies, radio, and television (Potter, 2008). Every society has its own unique culture, which is appropriately reflected in the writing, music, art, architecture, and way of life of that society. Every

community is affected by sociocultural elements that are always evolving. Each of these forms of media has a role in expediting the process of bringing about these changes. An important objective of this research was to identify the characteristics that contribute to young people's susceptibility to the influence of foreign cultures and traditions in areas such as language, cuisine, ceremonies, attire, and festivals, among other topics.

Since Pakistan is a predominantly Muslim country, its customs and culture are heavily influenced by Islam. However, the influence of international media plays a part in subtly infiltrating Pakistani society and bringing in foreign norms and customs. As a direct result of this, the rituals and functions of society have experienced substantial transformations, which can be seen in the marriage customs and festivities that have taken on a Hindu flavour as a result of the proximity of India. It is impossible to overlook the fact that all of this is made worse by the way in which the media portrays Indian cinema, television shows, music, and other types of entertainment. The very notions of good and evil, as well as halal and haram, are experiencing a gradual shift at the moment. There has been an increase in the number of promiscuous gatherings as a result of this foreign influence. These gatherings offer opportunities for members of the opposite gender to interact intimately with one another. This has led to the formation of love marriages, which are contrary to the teachings of many cultures, including Islamic traditions.

Due to a more important engagement with practically all cultures and societies around the world, the effect of social media is also politicising Islamic and Pakistani ideals. The youth in Pakistan are being influenced by western culture that is being imported from other countries as well as through private channels. Pakistan is a developing country (Ehsan, 2012). The ever-increasing usage of mobile phones with internet access, as well as the availability of communication in the form of e-mails, chats, and through Facebook and WhatsApp, has both facilitated social interaction and led to aberrant behaviour (Huesmann, 2009). It has been observed that the use of technology in education has resulted in improved interactions between students and teachers, and that students have abandoned the traditionally passive position that they played in classrooms. In a similar vein, educators have evolved into facilitators (Wikipedia, 2011).

2. LITERATURE REVIEWS

In order to gain an understanding of the works that have already been done in the relevant field and to obtain information regarding the ways and means of collecting relevant data and interpreting the results of the study, a review of related studies was carried out. Twenge and colleagues (2019) came to the conclusion that social and digital media have profoundly supplanted legacy media. This was demonstrated by the increasing amount of time that sample of high school students spent consuming content from digital media. In addition to this, Maher and Earl (2019) shown that the utilisation of social media has effectively influenced the participation of young people in political activism. In a study that was carried out in Chile, Teresa Correa (2016) found that parents of youngsters who were involved in the use of modern technologies like the internet had an influential effect, with the emphasis being placed on perceived usefulness rather than on the ease of use of these technologies. Yixing-wen (2013) identified cultural shifts as a result of information flowing in from various forms of media, which produced far-reaching and profound repercussions. In addition to this, he issued a warning about the pernicious effects of unregulated media, which can result in detrimental and undesirable deviations from the norms. Chacko (2012) conducted research to determine whether or not social behaviour, such as the need to socialise or feelings of loneliness are the root causes of excessive media use. He discovered that the interest of the people in the media was attributable to a variety of reasons. Through the use of cartoons that portrayed Hindu religious cults, Nazir (2012) investigated the influence that Hindu culture had on the children of Pakistan. The study also found that youngsters, being quick learners, reproduced the motions and Hindi words that they saw in comics and movies. According to Tariq (2012), 83 percent of respondents held the belief that Pakistani values have been compromised as a result of Indian cultural influence. It was also reported that 95 percent of respondents believed that the genuine picture of Pakistani culture was skewed by the mass media. This was another finding. The overwhelming majority of Pakistanis surveyed stated that they watched Indian television networks that highlighted Indian culture. In their study of high school students in the United States, Denniston et al. (2011) discovered a durational association between watching television, videos, and using computers, as well as anger and violent behaviour, as well as the consumption of alcohol and drugs. They discovered an association between aggressive behaviour and the consumption of alcohol at a younger age, in addition to excessive time spent watching television, using computers, and watching videos. Afzal (2010) found that the media was to blame for the youth's lack of awareness regarding halal and haram practises. It was also discovered that there had been a decline in the level of morals, and that the children had no knowledge of the Islamic culture or its values. Glen (2007), like other scholars before him, believed that the immediate negative affects of media are amplified by its ability to erase the positive gains achieved from the school, home, or church. Specifically, he argued that these positive gains are eroded by the media. According

to Lampert et al. (2007), the function that the media plays in diverting young people away from sports and other forms of active play outside is detrimental to their healthy development. They confirmed that excessive usage of electronic media was the root of the problem by referring to a survey on youngsters that was carried out in Germany. Wolak et al. (2007) were also in agreement that social networking sites have a role in the abnormal behaviour of bullying, which can take the form of threats, cruel rumours, and the presentation of obscene content and photos. Shaifali (2006) discovered that exposure to mass media had a significant impact on the formation of an individual's personality. An emerging psychopathological pattern was observable, as evidenced by a rise in juvenile delinquency and even homicides committed by adolescents. Therefore, the purpose of this research was to investigate the socio-economic attributes, perceptions, channels, and effects of cultural diffusion on youths.

3. METHODS AND MATERIALS

The purpose of this study was to investigate the channels of cultural diffusion on youth as well as the effects that it has among university students in the district of Faisalabad in the province of Punjab. Students from two government universities in the district of Faisalabad, one of which is called Government College University Faisalabad (GCUF), and the other is called University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF), were selected using a simple random sampling method in order to evaluate the effects that electronic media has on the students. Through the use of a proportionate sample strategy, the researcher was able to collect 43 questionnaires from students at UAF and 77 questionnaires from students at GCUF who were between the ages of 19 and 24. A well-structured questionnaire with closed-ended questions was developed. Using SPSS, descriptive analyses such as percentage distribution, frequency, univariate analysis, and bivariate analysis were conducted. In addition, analytical procedures such as the gamma test and the chi-square analysis were carried out. For the univariate analysis, the data were arranged into meaningful categories using frequency distribution tables. For a clearer comprehension of the data, averages and percentages were computed. A bivariate analysis was conducted to determine the nature of the association between two variables. Chi-Square and gamma tests (see appendix for formulas) were used to analyse the association and correlation between variables. Overall, the following hypotheses were generated to achieve research objectives:

Hypothesis 1

There is an association between the respondent's age and their perception that electronic media facilitates cultural familiarity.

Hypothesis 2

There is an association between the respondent's level of education and their perception that electronic media contributes to stress in their lives.

Hypothesis 3

There is an association between the family income of the respondent and their perception that electronic media causes youth dissatisfaction.

4. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Socio-economic characteristics of respondents

According to Table 1 (see appendix), the majority of the respondents is comprised of youths aged 23 to 24 years old (40 percent), and over half of the total participants is made up of women. It was also found that approximately 45.8 percent were pursuing their master's degree at the time of the survey. The table also shows that the bulk of the respondents came from joint families, accounting for 47.5 percent of the total, and that their average income was greater than 15000 rupees. This table also reveals that an overwhelming majority of the participants (94.2 percent), as shown in the chart owned mobile phones. At the same time, up to 87 percent of them possessed televisions and internet access in their homes. Surprisingly, just 60.8 percent of respondents had laptop of some kind.

4.2 Use of various forms of electronic media by respondents

According to the information presented in Table 2 (see appendix), approximately 43.3 percent of the respondents spent between one and three hours interacting with electronic media, while around 25 percent engaged in this activity for an additional three hours. In addition to this, it can be noticed that 8.3 percent of the respondents spent more than 12 hours on the activity. As the table also demonstrates, a total of 91.7 percent of respondents were interested in watching television, but 95.8 percent of respondents spent their time using a mobile phone with a Wi-Fi connection. Although 72.5 percent of respondents use computers and laptops to a

substantial level, around 24.4 percent of respondents use them to a medium or lesser extent. There is a sizable population that does not use laptops at all, accounting for 33.3 percent of the total. Again, it can be seen that a large majority of the respondents (90.8 percent) make use of the internet to some degree, whether it be to a great or a small amount. Surprisingly, 9.2 percent of those who participated in the survey did not make use of any form of internet connection.

4.3 Respondents' reasons for using various forms of electronic media

As can be seen in Table 3 (see appendix), the reasons or purposes for utilising electronic media are depicted, along with the various aspects that go into it, such as for information, entertainment, and enjoyment, as well as for academic purposes. According to the table, around 70 percent of the respondents recognised the significance of the distribution of information with multiple dimensions through electronic media, which appears to be a significant contributor to broadening the base of their knowledge. It is noticeable from looking at this table that the respondents appear to be nearly split down the middle in terms of the usefulness of the media for them as a source of entertainment (48.3 percent and 46.7 percent, respectively). Despite this, though, 55 percent of them reported that they enjoyed being exposed to various forms of media. In contrast, 80.7 percent of respondents acknowledged and appreciated the contribution of electronic media in terms of supplying them with the essential knowledge to make their studies better.

4.4 Effects of electronic media

According to Table 4 (see appendix), 47.5 percent of respondents connected their understanding of culture to their exposure to various forms of media. The vast majority of respondents, 85.5 percent, were of the opinion that relatively little time was allocated to activities related to sports. According to the same table, a total of 46.7 percent of young people believe that excessive use of media contributes to the growth of obesity among their peers. On the other hand, there was a sizeable minority that was not in agreement with this statement (42.5 percent). During this same time period, a large majority of the subjects (94 percent) complained of not getting enough quality sleep due to the increased amount of time spent on these gadgets. It was also brought to everyone's attention that a significant portion of the respondents (58.3 percent) expressed discontent with the way they had been living their lives. They also believed that excessive use of media left little time to spend with family. This sentiment was held by 84.2 percent of respondents. Approximately 62.5 percent of those surveyed reported feeling stressed out as a result of the prolonged amount of time they had spent engaging in this activity, which was the source of mental, vision, and general body stress.

Hypothesis 1: There is an association between the respondent's age and their perception that electronic media facilitates cultural familiarity.

The Gamma test and the Chi-Square test were carried out (see Table 5 in appendix) in order to investigate whether or not there is an association between the age of the respondents and their level of agreement or disagreement regarding whether or not electronic media is useful to understand the culture. The chi-square score of 37.95 indicates that there is a significant association between the age of the respondent and their perceptions regarding the role that electronic media plays in facilitating familiarity with the culture. The value of Gamma demonstrates that there is a significant and direct association between the variables. This coincides with the existing body of research, which suggests that the higher the age of the responder, the more will be the belief that increased acquaintance with culture can be achieved through the utilisation of electronic media. To put it another way, this indicates that older pupils have a greater understanding of their culture as a result of exposure to electronic media.

Hypothesis 2: There is an association between the respondent's level of education and their perception that electronic media contributes to stress in their lives.

Chi-square and Gamma tests were used (see Table 6 in appendix) to investigate whether or not there is an association between the education level of respondents and their perception that exposure to electronic media contributes to stress in their lives. The Chi-Square value esteem shows that there is an extremely robust connection between the education level of respondents and their belief that exposure to electronic media contributes not only to stress but also to anxiety in their daily lives. The value of Gamma shows that there is a significant direct association between the variables. This indicates that people with higher levels of education were experiencing higher levels of stress.

Hypothesis 3: There is an association between the family income of the respondent and their perception that electronic media causes youth dissatisfaction.

The Chi-Square test was performed (see Table 7 in appendix) to determine whether or not there is a correlation between the respondents' incomes and their perceptions of how social media causes them to feel dissatisfied

and frustrated. The results of the test indicate that there is a significant correlation between these two factors. The result of the Gamma statistic is 0.221, which suggests that there is a significant direct association between the variables. As a result, the recognition of the statement that "the perception that electronic media produces unhappiness among teenagers will increase in proportion to the respondent's income or pocket money" is justified. It is clear that the respondents who have a modest income or only have pocket money are more content than those who have a high income or plenty of pocket money.

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

It is clear that electronic media plays an important part in acquainting youngsters with their culture; yet, over usage of social media has had negative effects on today's youth. The use of mobile phones and the internet for extended periods of time has cut into the amount of time people spend engaging in activities outdoors, sleeping, and conversing and interacting with their families. Stress is caused by electronic media among young people, and adults who have more pocket money report being less satisfied with their lives than those who have less pocket money. Those who have less pocket money report being more satisfied. It is possible to underline the necessity for a policy that suggests the importance of government intervention in the process of stringently regulating the workings of the media, placing an emphasis on the distribution of information regarding information regarding cultural and historical aspects. The usage of mobile phones among students of all ages should be subject to legal monitoring in educational institutions. At the same time, the community ought to encourage participation in intellectual events as well as sporting events. One of the most important roles that contemporary society plays is that of providing care for its younger members. Education is the process of consciously shaping a developing person into a one-of-a-kind individuality, with the goal of fostering the expansion and enhancement of that person's creative capabilities. The family, the community that the youngster spends time in, the institution that the youngster attends, as well as the media, all have an impact on the development of the youngster. All of these elements have a role in the maturation and enhancement of the creative potential possessed by those who are of a younger generation. The mainstream media also holds a unique position inside this complex web of power and influence. In this regard, it is important to remember that the media can have both a positive and a negative effect on young people. Both of these outcomes are possible. Positive elements include the fact that the media is always up to speed on all current events, that the media helps to elevate general culture, and that the media serves to mutually enlighten the populace and the government. The negative impact includes, but is not limited to the fact that the media are also sources of incorrect information; particularly in modern series, films, and even cartoons, there is violence; adult subculture displacing the youth's subculture, which creates stress and dissatisfaction; and in this way, the displacement of native culture established for young people is accompanied by the dominance of instances of "foreign" culture that are far from being the ideal.

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Notes

Disclosure of conflicts of interest

The authors declare that no perceived, potential, or actual conflict of interest exists.

Statement of contribution

The first author, Hira Ahmad Farrah, was the one who carried out the fieldwork for the research. As the primary researcher, it was her responsibility to oversee this project. She was very instrumental in providing research material and literature that was pertinent to the topic. During the process of producing this work, the second author, Tanvir Shirwany, provided assistance to the first author by supporting in the correct arrangement of the data and its scientific analysis. He made significant contributions to the crafting this research work. He offered the three authors his assistance in revising and amending the information that was produced. The primary investigator received assistance in finishing the work from a third author, whose name is Usman Ali. Additionally, he contributed with the drafting and structuring of data. His participation in this project encompassed the entirety of the writing process. The primary investigator had enlisted the help of the fourth author, Qandil Ahmad, in order to carry out this investigation. In addition to that, she was helpful in organising the data and drafting the material. Her involvement in this project continued all the way through to the writing stage.

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Appendix

Table 1: Distribution of respondents according to their demographic profile

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
19-20	29	24.1
21-22	43	35.8
23-24	48	40.0
Gender		
Male	58	48.3
Female	62	51.7
Education		
B.Sc. / B. A	24	20.0
M.Sc. /M. A	55	45.8
M.Phil.	41	34.1
Family type		
Joint family	57	47.5
Extended family	15	12.5
Nuclear family	48	40.0
Pocket money / Income		
Up to 15000	33	27.5
15001- 30000	67	55.8
Up to 30000	20	16.6
Ownership		
TV	105	87.5
Radio	76	63.3
Internet	104	86.7
Laptop	73	60.8
Mobile phones	113	94.2

Source: calculated by author based on empirical data

Table 2: Distribution of respondents according to their trends of using electronic media

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Duration of usage of electronic media		
1-3 hours	52	43.3
3-6 hours	30	25.0
6-9 hours	21	17.5
9-12 hours	7	5.8
More than 12 hours	10	8.3
Watching T.V		
To great extent	45	37.5
To some extent	65	54.2

Not at all	10	8.3
Mobile phone usage with Wi-Fi		
To great extent	72	65.0
To some extent	32	30.8
Not at all	16	4.2
Usage of Laptop		
To great extent	87	72.5
To some extent	29	24.2
Not at all	4	3.3
Usage of Internet connection		
To great extent	84	70.0
To some extent	25	20.8
Not at all	11	9.2

Source: calculated by authors based on empirical data

Table 3: Distribution of respondents by reason for utilising electronic media

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Information		
To great extent	84	70.0
To some extent	35	29.2
Not at all	1	0.8
Entertainment		
To great extent	58	48.3
To some extent	56	46.7
Not at all	6	5.0
For enjoyment		
To great extent	66	55.0
To some extent	48	40.0
Not at all	6	5.0
For studies		
Strongly agree	41	34.1
Agree	56	46.6
Neutral	17	14.1
Disagree	4	3.3
Strongly Disagree	2	1.1

Source: calculated by authors based on empirical data

Table 4: Effects of electronic media

Perception: helpful to increasing familiarity with culture	Frequency	Percent
Agree	57	47.5
Neutral	44	36.7
Disagree	19	15.8

Less time for sports		
Agree	103	85.8
Neutral	13	10.8
Disagree	4	3.3
Obesity		
Agree	56	46.7
Neutral	51	42.5
Disagree	13	10.8
Lack of proper sleep		
Agree	94	78.3
Neutral	21	17.5
Disagree	5	4.2
Dissatisfaction with life		
Agree	70	58.3
Neutral	35	29.2
Disagree	15	12.5
Neglect of family		
Agree	101	84.2
Neutral	18	15.0
Disagree	1	0.8
Stress		
Agree	75	62.5
Neutral	29	24.2
Disagree	16	13.3
<i>Source:</i> calculated by authors based on empirical data		

Table 5: Association between the age of the respondents and their assessment of the usefulness of electronic media in increasing exposure to culture

Respondent's Age	Perception about electronic media is helpful to increasing familiarity with culture			Total
	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	
18-20	18	8	3	29
	62.1%	29.3%	8.6%	100.0%
20-22	17	12	14	43
	41.2%	28.2%	30.6%	100.0%
22-24	3	33	12	48
	6.2%	68.0%	25.7%	100.0%
Total	38	53	29	120
	32.1%	44.6%	23.3%	100.0%
Chi-Square = 37.95, D.F. = 4, P-Value = 0.000, Gamma = 0.290				
**Highly significant				
<i>Source:</i> calculated by authors based on empirical data				

Table 6: Association between the respondent's education and their perception about electronic media creates stress in their lives

Respondent's Education	Perception about electronic media creates stress in their lives			Total
	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	
B.Sc	16 68.7%	5 20.8%	3 10.4%	24 100.0%
MA	14 26.6%	33 60.5%	8 12.8%	55 100.0%
M.Phill	7 18.1%	13 37.3%	21 44.6%	41 100.0%
Total	37 32.1%	51 44.6%	32 23.3%	120 100.0%

Chi-Square = 31.34, D.F. = 4, P-Value = .000**, Gamma = .323

Highly significant**

Source: calculated by authors based on empirical data

Table 7: Association between the respondent's family income and their perception about electronic media creates dissatisfaction among youth

Respondent's Income	Perception about electronic media creates dissatisfaction among youth			Total
	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	
Up to 15000	9 21.5%	23 72.3%	1 6.2%	33 100.0%
15001-30000	26 38.5%	26 37.8%	15 22.9%	67 100.0%
Above 30000	6 27.5%	4 22.5%	10 50.0%	20 100.0%
Total	41 32.1%	53 44.6%	26 23.3%	120 100.0%

Chi-square = 34.62, D.F. = 4, P-Value = .000, Gamma = .221

Highly significant**

Source: calculated by authors based on empirical data

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