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Title of the Thesis: IMPACT OF MASS MEDIA ON SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR ACROSS
GENERATION

ABSTRACT

The “generation gap” between adolescents and their parents in contemporary Indian society reflects a real and serious conflict of interest. Indian adolescents in many cases are not very much in synch with their parents. Media is influencing social components of human personality as well as social relation. It is mainly targeting on how human feeling, behaviour and emotions can be changed. This research examined the impact of mass media on sexual behaviour across generations. The study was conducted in Bihar and Delhi with a purposive sample of 400 respondents (from 200 households comprising 200 adolescents and 200 parents). Findings of this study indicated that mass media viz., print media, advertisements, newspapers/magazines, cinema/movies, television and internet influenced overall opinions of adolescent and their parents about mass media and HIV/AIDS. The role of mass media in creating generation gap on the matter of sex and related issues was supported by the findings of this study. Media was perceived as responsible for increasing sexual behaviour and generation gap. They gradually promoted a particular kind of sexual behaviour among teens. Mass media were influencing decision making related to sexual behaviour. Media which once was the inspiration for the society with its various roles in character building of the youth for the nation was perceived by most of the respondents as promoting fashion, vulgarity and the mad hunt for money, power and for their name and fame. The study also demonstrated that media increased awareness about psycho-social behaviour, HIV/AIDS, unhealthy practices and related issues. It also affected the life-style (way of life), social and sexual behaviour and in improving standard of living. Media was perceived to have acquired negative image by showing frequent sexual intimacy at an early age, pre marital sex, promoting live-in relationships, Changing sexual partners, unfaithful to partner or spouse and person with no moral values. Television was perceived to encourage teens to start marital life early. Adolescents were found to be heavy consumers of sexually-oriented media products, including magazines, comic books, radio, television, cable, music videos, movies, tapes, blogs, Google, YouTube, compact discs, digital versatile discs, mobile and more recently, the internet. Most of parents played very little role in passing on the right information about sexual behaviour to their children. Peers were often the most important source of information. Further, there were added confusions due to the various myths, misconceptions that abound in it, and also due to the stigma attached to various issues of sexuality. It was noted that the parental interference was very minimal in this matter in the Indian context as the hoax of being uncomfortable barred them from friendly relationship with their children. The proper attitude of father-to-son -- both the authority and the underlying tenderness -- took account of this mutual relationship through unequal dependency. The older generation became not merely an embarrassment, but often an obstructive irrelevance to the young. The relationship between the media and generation are a dynamic one that reflects changes in the larger social and behaviour environment where conceptions of teens and their parents are formed.

Keywords: Mass media, Sexual behavior, Adolescent, Generation Gap.