

Sociology of Education: Culture of School

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Abstract

Pakistan is a multilingual country facing numerous problems in education sector. In Pakistan, there are two sectors, Public and Private. There is a drastic discrepancy between the cultures of both types of schools and their cultures. Media plays an important role in developing a school culture whether public or private. Media, nowadays, is very vigilant and alert and is playing a vital role in influencing school cultures in negative and positive aspects.

The research reported here is a survey of students and teachers of Public, Private and Semi- Government institutions who responded to the questionnaires. The survey examines the attitudes of teachers and students regarding the negative and positive role of media in influencing the school culture. Results point to both the negative and positive effects of media along with the reaction of students, teachers and administration towards these effects. It also shows the stance and efforts of institutions towards these influences. This descriptive study recommends that institutions need to play their part in counseling students. They have to be made aware that nothing is good and bad; it is the attitude and aptitudes of people which makes a thing good and bad. Teachers and students had their opinions about the effects of media and the role of administration, parents and teachers to make things better.

Introduction

A brief study has shown that media, in this century, has influenced school culture. Media is very powerful and it is just because of its power the world has become a global village. Though media, the entire world is connected to each other now. However, we are concerned with the influence of media in Pakistani society. Media affects any culture - school culture - in both ways; negative and positive. People have different views about the effects of mass media as it influences teachers, students, administration, values, traditions, infrastructure of school etc. in both ways.

Mass media is a significant force in modern culture, sociologists refer to this as a mediated culture where media reflects and creates the culture. Communities and individuals are constantly bombarded with messages from a large number of sources including TV, billboards, and magazines, to name a few. What role does mass media play? Legislatures, media executives, local school officials, and sociologists have all debated this controversial question. While opinions vary as to the extent and type of influence the mass media holds, all sides agree that mass media is a permanent part of modern culture. Three main sociological perspectives on the role of media exist: the limited-effects theory, the class-dominant theory, and the culturalist theory.

The limited-effects theory originated and tested in the 1940s and 1950s argues that people generally choose what to watch or read based on what they already believe, so media exerts a negligible influence.

The culturalist theory, developed in the 1980s and 1990s, combines the other two theories and claims that people interact with media to create their own meanings out of the images and messages they receive. This theory sees audiences as playing an active rather than passive role in relation to mass media. One strand of research focuses on the audiences and how they interact with media; the other strand of research focuses on those who produce the media, particularly the news.

Theorists such as Louis Wirth and Talcott Parsons have emphasized the importance of mass media as instruments of social control. In the 21st century, with the rise of the internet, the two-way relationship between mass media and public opinion is beginning to change, with the advent of new technologies such as blogging.

It is this which led Marshall McLuhan in the 1960s to say that "the medium is the message", and to suggest that mass media is increasingly creating a "global village". For example, there is evidence that Western media influence in Asia is the driving force behind rapid social change: "it is as if the 1960s and the 1990s were compressed together." A notable example is the recent introduction of television to Bhutan, resulting in rapid Westernization. This raises questions of 'cultural imperialism' (Schiller) — the de facto imposition, through economic and political power and through the media, of Western (and in particular US) culture.

School's Culture

"School culture is the set of norms, values and beliefs, rituals and ceremonies, symbols and stories that make up the 'persona' of the school," says Dr. Kent D. Peterson, a professor in the Department of Educational Administration at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Culture is also composed of "traditions and ceremonies schools hold to build community and reinforce their values," says Peterson. Every school has underlying assumptions about what staff members will discuss at meetings, which teaching techniques work well, how amenable the staff is to change, and how critical staff development is, adds Peterson. That core set of beliefs underlies the school's overall culture. School culture develops as staff members interact with each other, the students, and the community. It becomes the guide for behavior that is shared among members of the school at large scale.

Research Methodology

Research purpose

It is to examine the role of media in influencing institutions cultures and determine its good and bad aspects in Pakistani scenario.

Nature of Research

It was a descriptive type of research. Following procedure was adopted to conduct this research.

Population

The population of present study was teachers and students of primary, secondary and intermediate level in the Private, Public and Semi Government sectors of Lahore, along with a member of the administration from the Semi-Government Sector.

Sampling

Representative sample was taken as it was difficult for the researcher to collect data from the population as a whole. The sample was selected randomly to get the answers of research

questions. So, fifty two teachers, seventy two students and one member from the administration were selected as a sample of population.

Tools of Research

Two questionnaires were used as a tool of research - one for the teachers and second for the students, along with an interview conducted by a member of the administration, in order to know their views about influence of media.

Preparation of Questionnaire

In the light of the objectives of research and review of related literature, two questionnaires were prepared one for teachers which consisted upon three close ended and six open ended questions and second questionnaire for students which consisted upon one close ended and eight open ended questions (See appendix).

Preparation of Interview

In order to have a broader insight into the research, questions for interview were also designed for a member of the administration.

Procedure of Data Collection

Questionnaires were distributed and collected among the students and teachers of in the institutions by the researchers. The interview was also conducted by the researchers.

Method of Analysis and Interpretation of Data

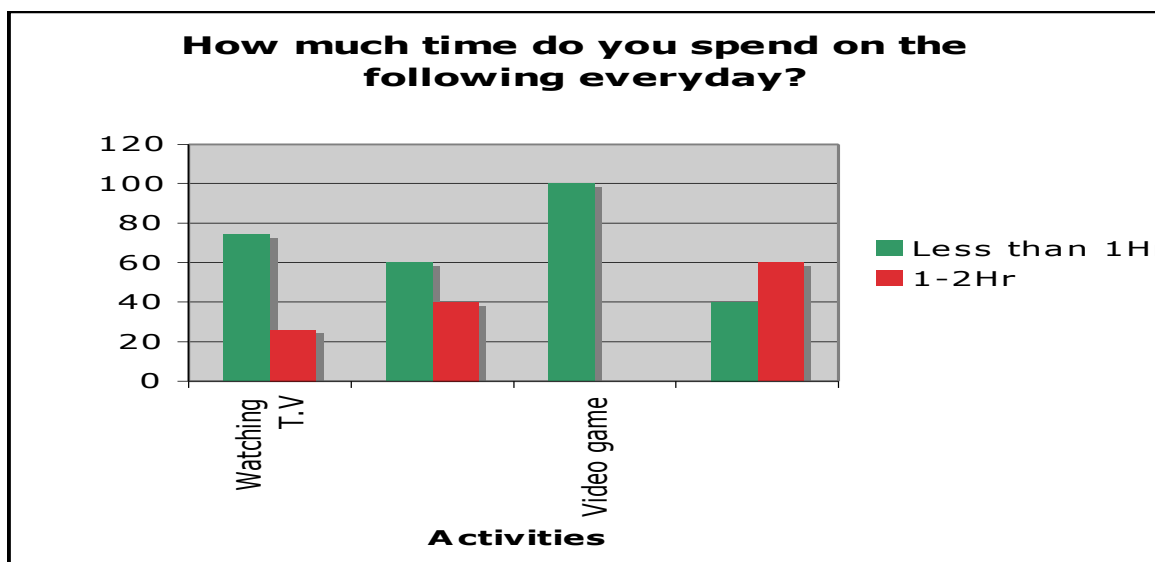
The data was interpreted and analyzed by using percentage method. The results are presented in the form of Pie-Chart and analysis of data is given at the end of each table.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Questionnaire for the Teachers

Table 1

Sr.No.	Statement	Less than 1 hr %	1-2 hr %
1. How much time do you spend on the following every day?			
•	Watching T.V	74	26
•	Internet	60	40
•	Video game	100	00
•	Reading newspaper, magazine & books	40	60



Interpretation of statement no. 1

- 74% percent teachers said that they do not watch TV daily and twenty six percent teachers said that they watch TV daily for one to two hour.

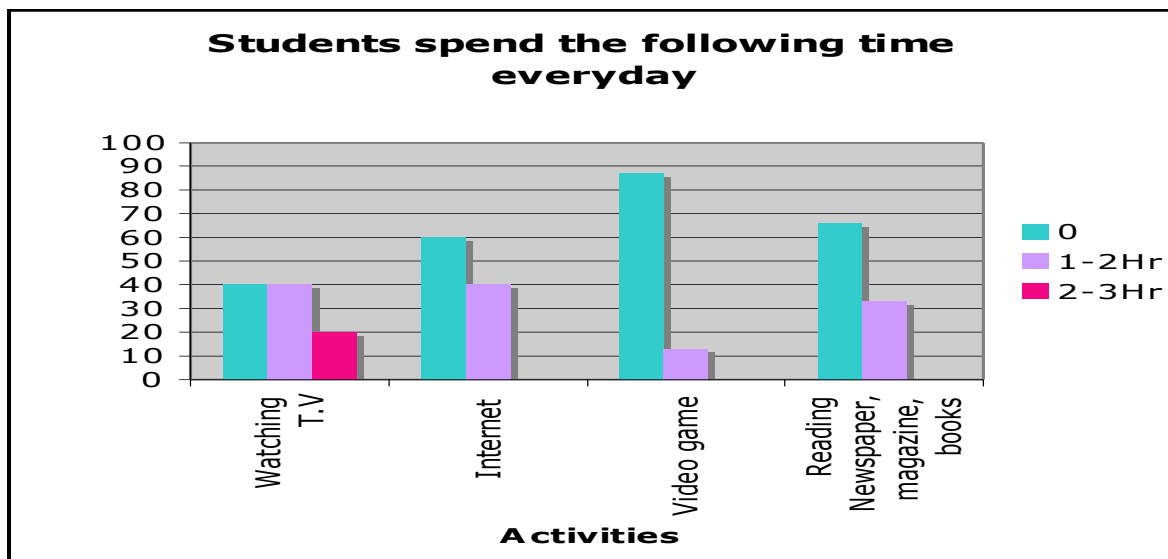
- 60% teachers do not use internet daily and forty percent teachers said that they used internet daily for one to two hour.
- 100% teachers said that they do not play video games.
- 40% teachers said that they do not get time to read newspaper, magazine and books and sixty percent teachers said that they read newspaper, magazine and books for one to two hour.

Table 2

Sr.No.	Statement	0 hr %	1-2 hr %	2-3 hr %
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2. How much time do you think students spend on the following every day?

• Watching T.V	40	40	20
• Internet	60	40	0
• Video game	87	13	0
• Reading newspaper, magazine & books	66	33	0

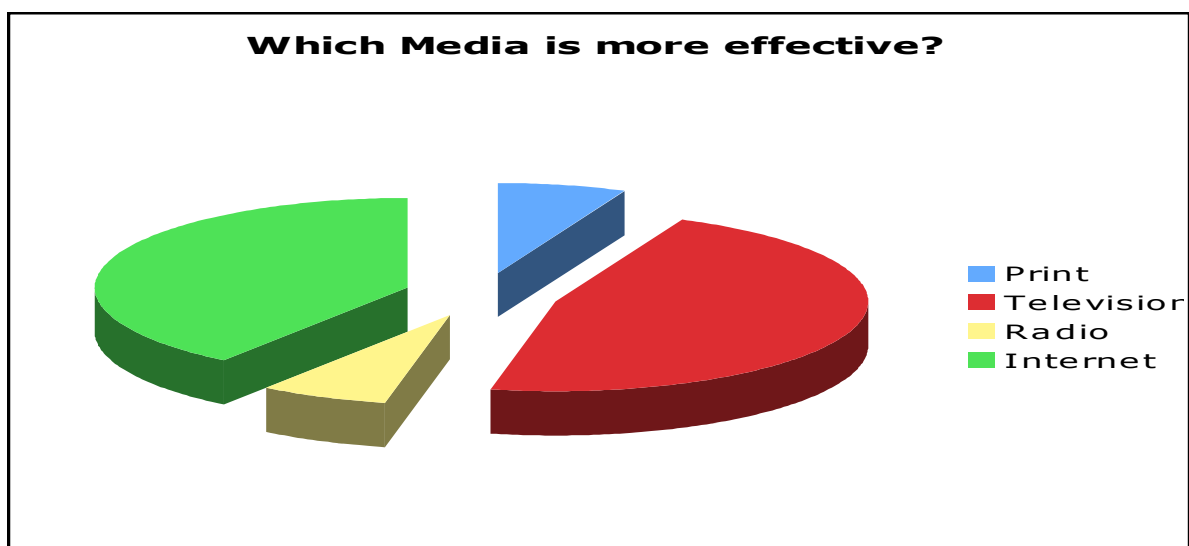


Interpretation of statement no. 2

- According to 40% teachers, students do not watch TV *daily* and 40% teachers said students watch TV for *one to two hour* every day and 20% teachers said that students watch TV for *two to three hour daily*.
- According to 60% teachers students do not use internet every day and 40% teachers said that students use internet every day for one to two hour.
- According to 87% percent teachers students do not play video games and 13% teachers said students play video games every day for one to two hour.
- According to 66% teachers students do not read newspaper, magazine and books every day and thirty three percent teachers said that students read newspaper, magazine and books daily for one to two hour.

Table 3

Sr.No.	Statement	Analysis in percentage	
		<i>F</i>	%
3. Which media is/are more effective?			
	• Print	1	6.66
	• Television	7	46.66
	• Radio	1	6.66
	• Internet	6	40

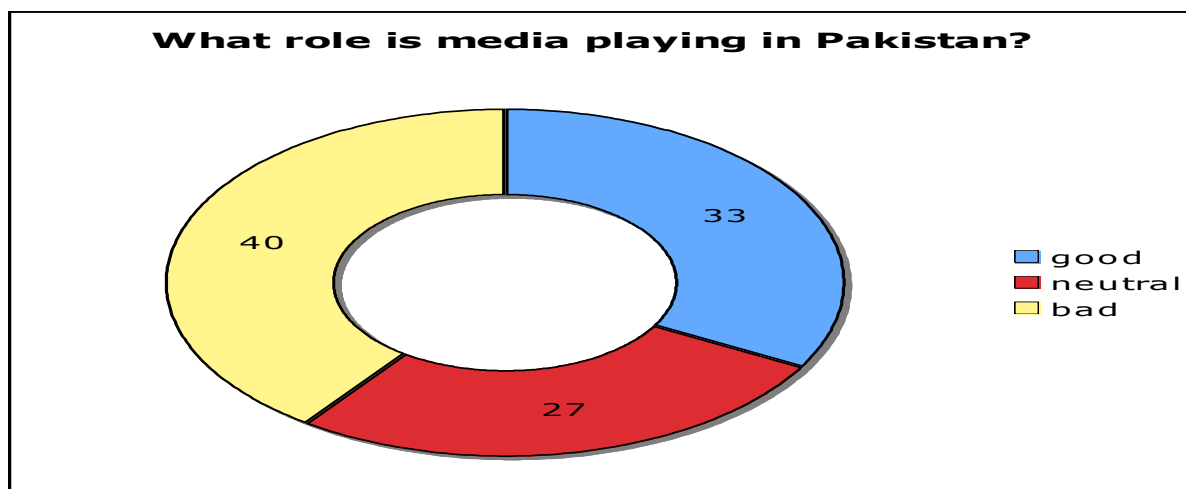


Interpretation of statement no. 3

- Approximately seven percent teachers said print is an effective media.
- Approximately forty seven percent teachers said TV is an effective media.
- Approximately seven percent teachers said radio is also an effective media.
- Forty percent teachers said internet is an effective media.

Table 4

Sr.No.	Statement	Good %	Neutral %	Bad %
4.	What role is media playing in Pakistan?	33	27	40

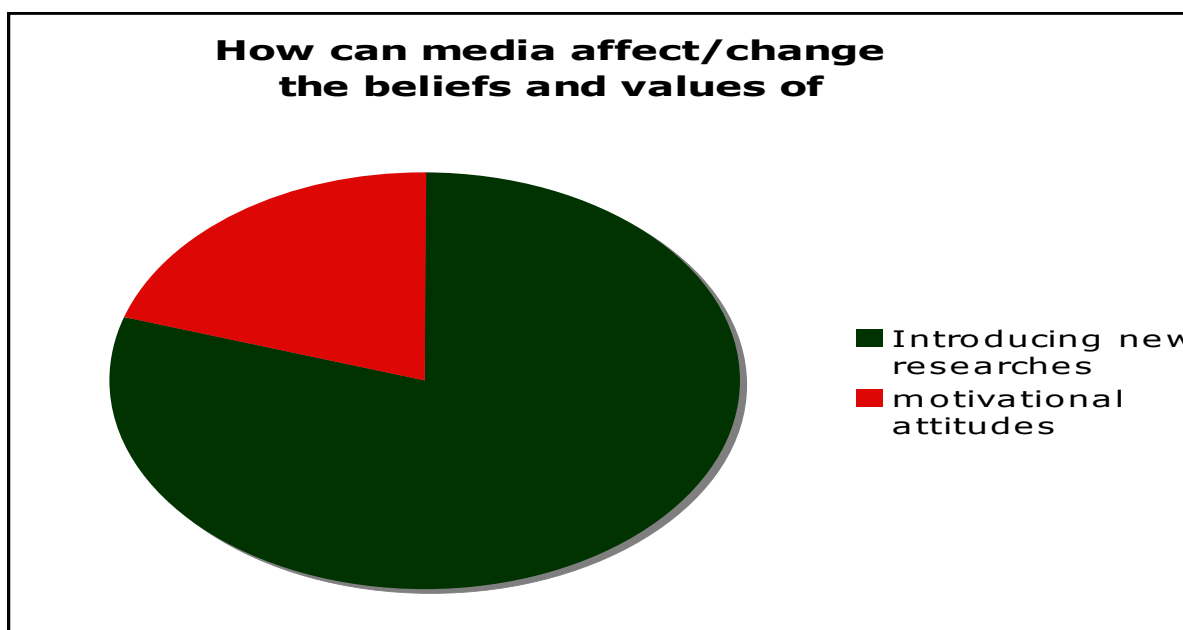


Interpretation of statement no. 4

- According to thirty three percent teachers said that media plays good role in Pakistan.
- Twenty seven percent teachers said media plays neutral role in Pakistan because according to them it depends upon the viewers that how they perceive the things which are shown or discussed on media.
- Forty percent teachers said that media plays bad role in Pakistan.

Table 5

Sr.No.	Statement	Introducing new researches %	motivational attitudes %
5.	How can media affect/change the beliefs and values of institution?	80	20

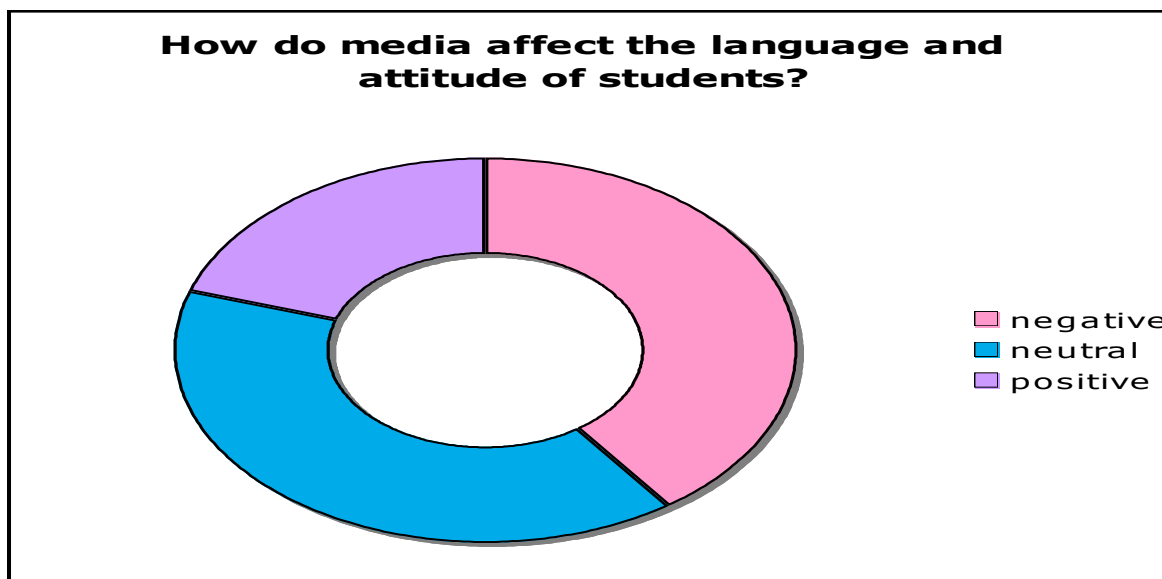


Interpretation of statement no. 5

- According to eighty percent teachers media introduces new researches which can change the beliefs and values of an institutions.
- According to twenty percent teachers different motivational attitudes presented on media can also change the beliefs and values of institutions.

Table 6

Sr.No.	Statement	negative %	neutral %	positive %
6.	How do media affect the language and attitude of students?	40	40	20

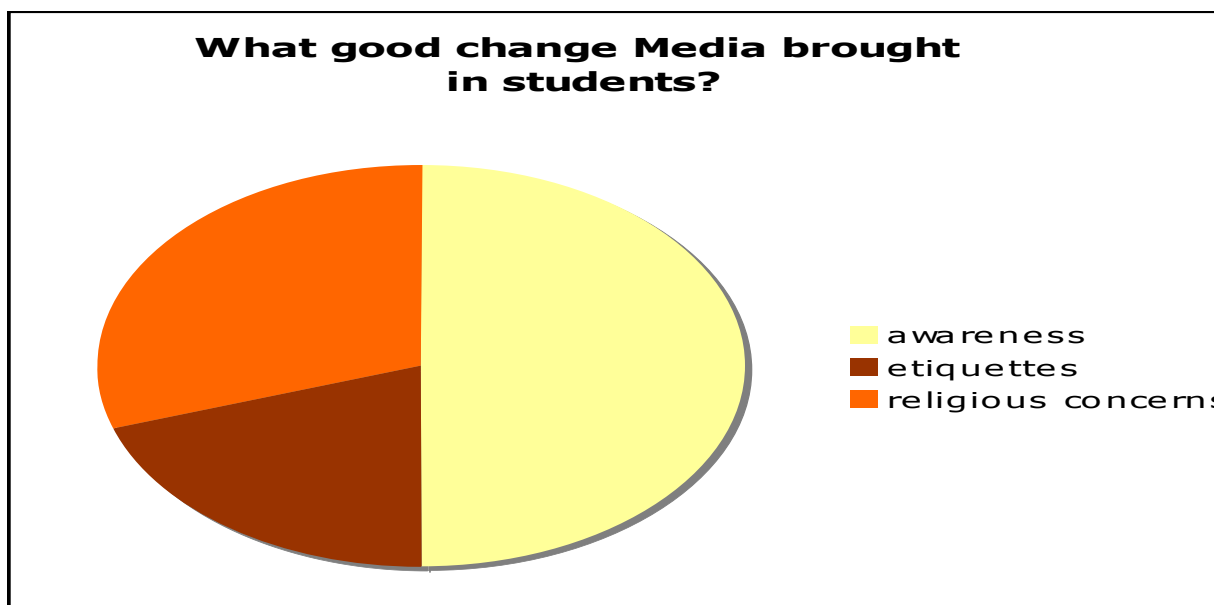


Interpretation of statement no. 6

- According to forty percent teachers media affects language and attitudes of students negatively.
- Forty percent teachers said it depends upon students how they perceive and adopt things being presented on media.
- Twenty percent teachers said that media affects the language and attitudes of students positively.

Table 7

Sr.No.	Statement	awareness %	etiquettes %	religious concern %
7.	What good change(s) has media brought in students?	50	20	30

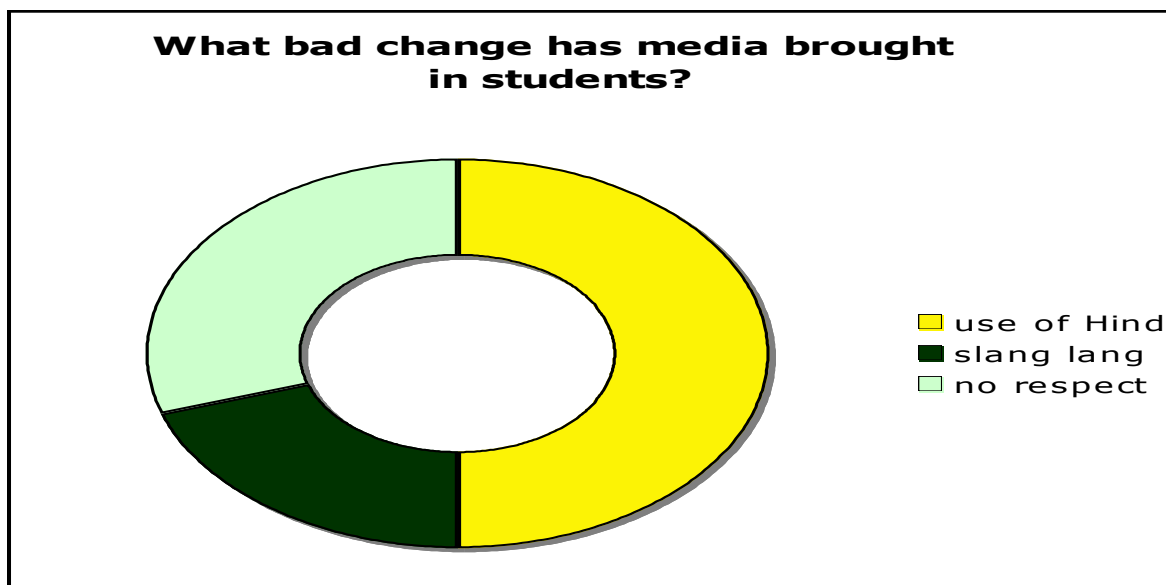


Interpretation of statement no. 7

- According to fifty percent teachers media brought awareness about many good and bad things present in society to the students.
- According to twenty percent teachers media brought good change among the students by presenting good etiquettes.
- According to thirty percent teachers media brought good change in students by presenting concern for religion through different religious programs.

Table 8

Sr.No.	Statement	use of Hindi %	slang lang %	no respect %
8.	What bad change(s) has media brought in students?	50	20	30

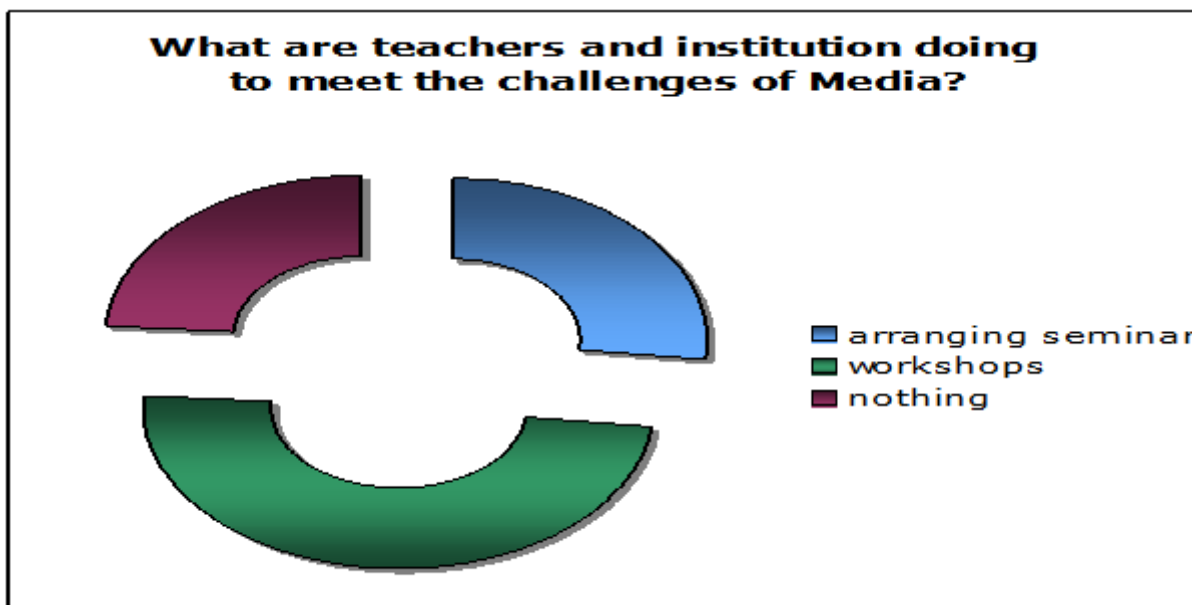


Interpretation of statement no. 8

- According to fifty percent teachers the major bad change which media brought in students is frequent use of Hindi language.
- According to twenty percent teachers the negative change which media brought in students is use of slang language.
- According to thirty percent teacher the bad change brought in students by the media is that students stopped respecting their elders, their views and opinions.

Table 9

Sr.No.	Statement	arranging seminars %	workshops %	nothing %
9.	What are teachers and institutions doing to meet the challenges of media?	27	49	24



Interpretation of statement no. 9

- According to twenty seven percent teachers said that institutions are arranging seminars to meet the challenges of media.
- According to forty nine percent teachers said institutions are conducting workshops for teachers to meet the challenges of media.
- According to twenty four percent teachers institutions are doing nothing to meet the challenges of media.

Questionnaire for the Students

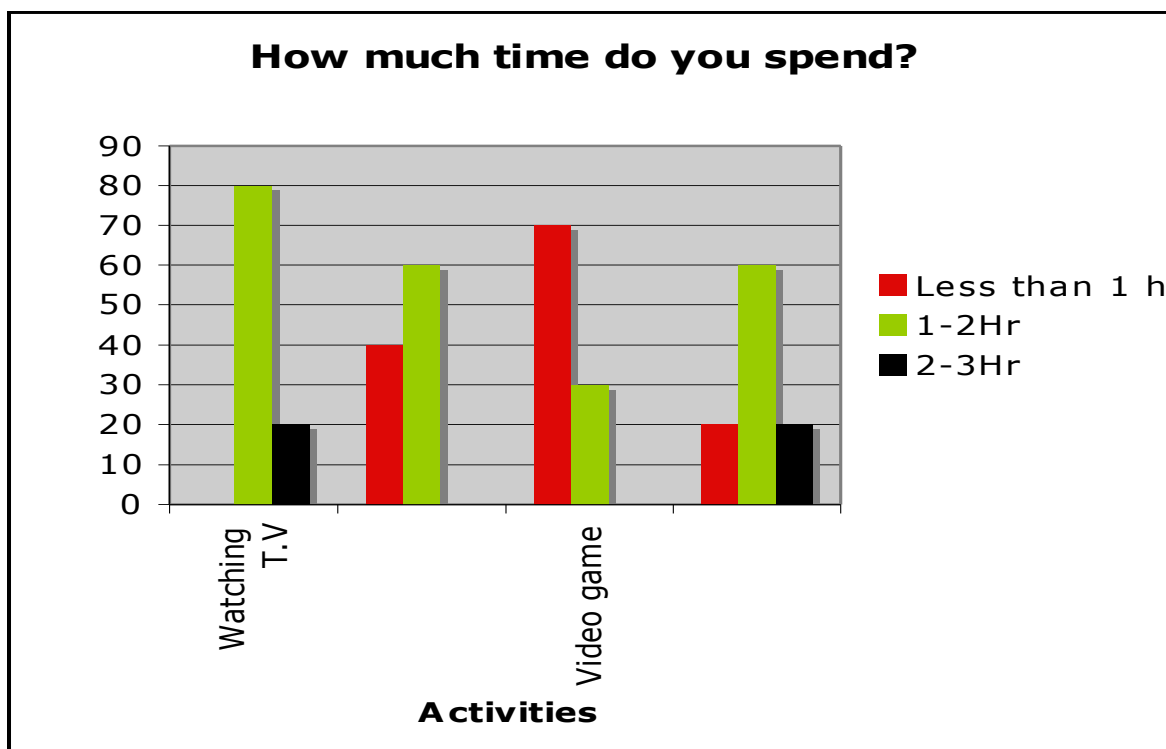
Table 10

Sr.No.	Statement	0	1-2	2-3
		hr	hr	hr
		%	%	%

1. How much time do you spend on the following everyday?

- Watching T.V 0 80 20

• Internet	40	60	0
• Video game	70	30	0
• Reading newspaper, magazine & books	20	60	20

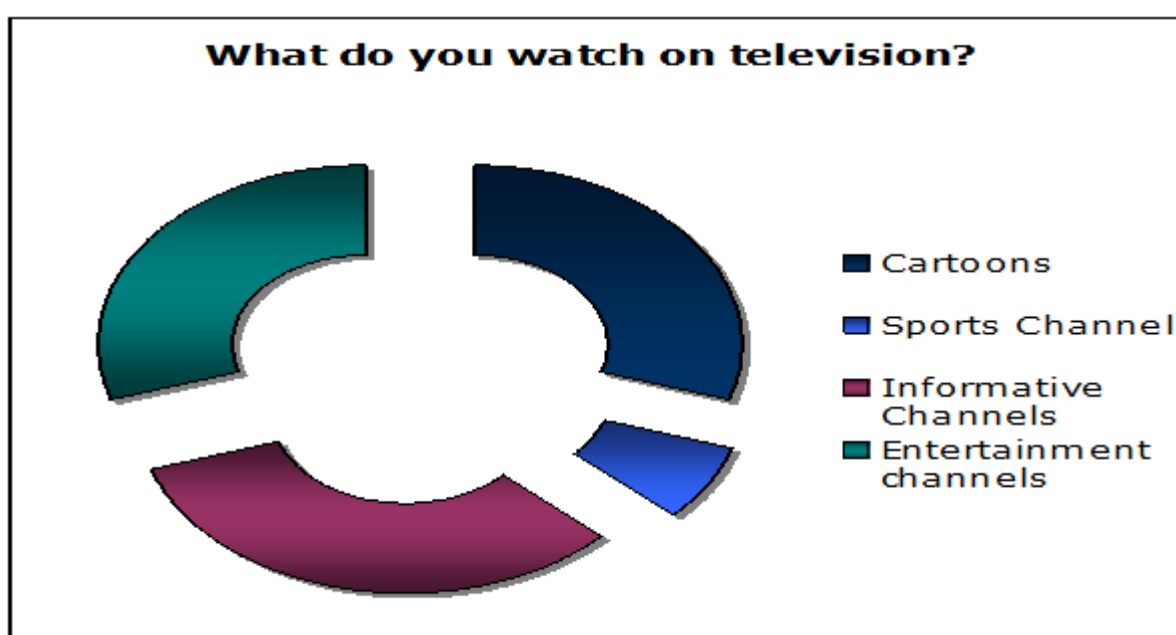


Interpretation of statement no. 1

- Eighty percent students said that they watch TV daily for one to two hour and twenty percent students said that they watch TV daily for two to three hour.
- Forty percent students said they do not use internet daily and sixty percent students said that they use internet daily for one to two hour.
- Seventy percent students said that they do not play video games and thirty percent students said they play video game for one to two hour.
- Twenty percent teachers said that they do not read newspaper, magazine and books and sixty percent teachers said that they read newspaper; magazine and books for one to two hours and twenty percent students said they read newspaper, magazine and books for two to three hour.

Table 11

Sr.No.	Statement	%
2. What do you watch on television?		
•	Cartoons	30
•	Sports channels	07
•	Informative channels	33
•	Entertainment channels	30

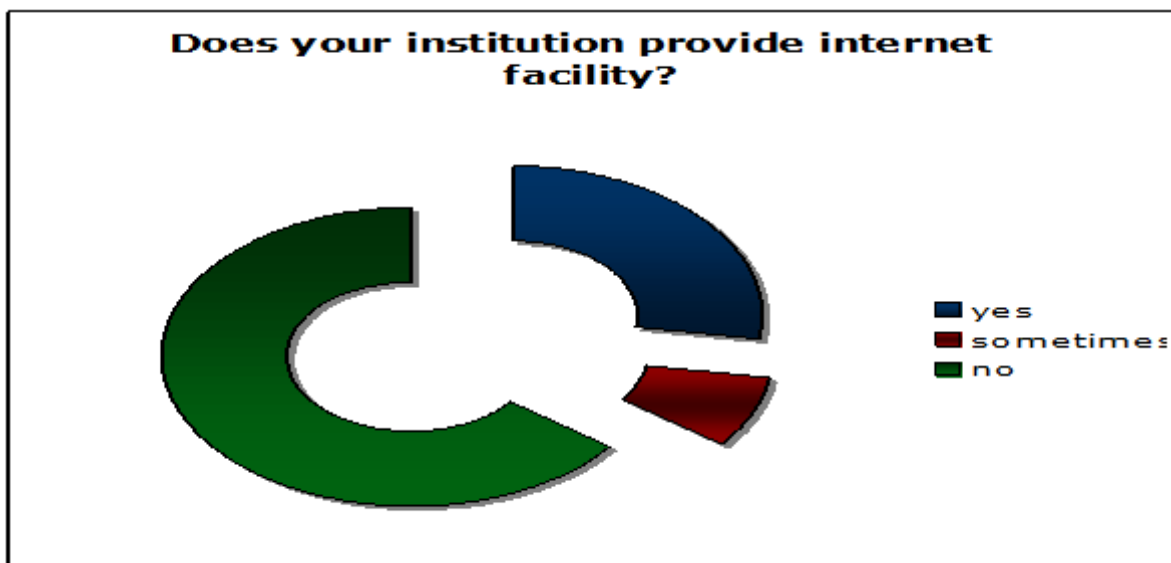


Interpretation of statement no. 2

- According to thirty percent students they watch cartoon channel.
- According to seven percent students they watch sports channel.
- According to thirty three percent students they watch informative channels
- According to thirty percent students they watch entertainment channels

Table 12

Sr.No.	Statement	Yes %	Sometimes %	No %
3.	Does your institution provide Internet facility?	28	8	66



Interpretation of statement no. 3

- Twenty eight percent students said that their institution provide them internet facility in computer labs.
- Eight percent students said sometime internet is provided to them in computer lab during computer class for some practical work.
- Sixty six percent students said that they are not provided internet facility in their institutions.

Table 13

Sr.No.	Statement	%
4. Which websites do you visit regularly?		
•	Google	28
•	Youtube	16
•	Facebook	40
•	Others	16

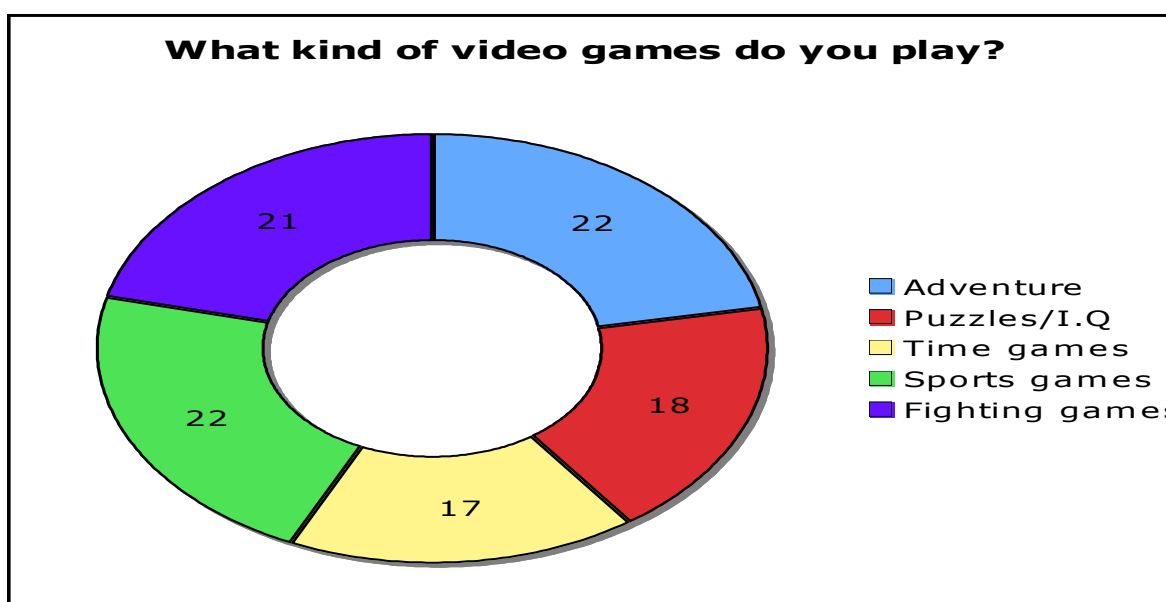


Interpretation of statement no. 4

- Twenty eight percent students said they visit Google regularly.
- Sixteen percent students said they also visit Youtube regularly.
- Forty percent students said they visit Facebook on daily basis.
- Sixteen percent students said they visit various other sites like Ilmkidunya, hotmail, tweeter etc on regular basis.

Table 14

Sr.No.	Statement	%
5. What kinds of video games do you play?		
•	Adventure	22
•	Puzzles/ I.Q games	18
•	Limited Time games	17
•	Sports games	22
•	Fighting games	21

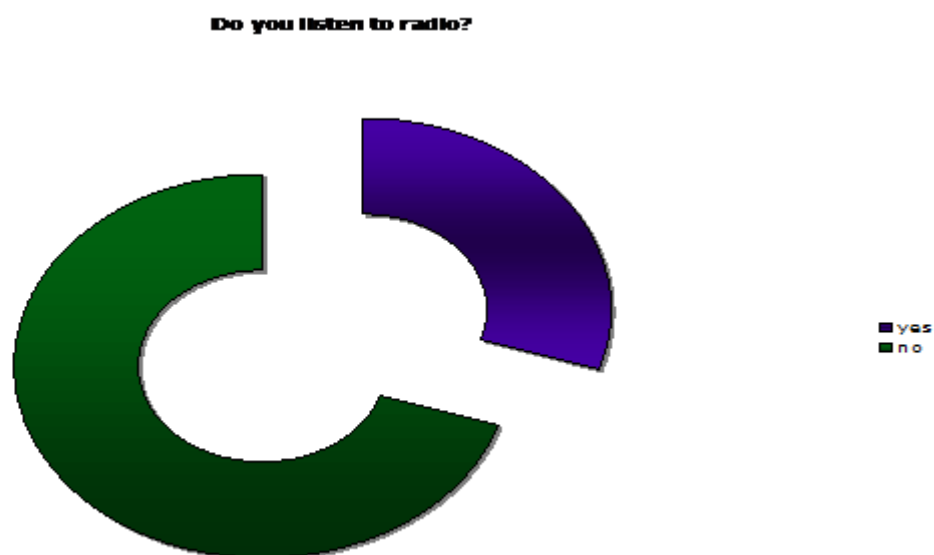


Interpretation of statement no. 5

- Twenty two percent students said they like to play adventure games.
- Eighteen percent students said they like to solve puzzle video games and I.Q games.
- Seventeen students said that they like to play limited time games.
- Twenty two students said that they like to play sports games.
- Twenty one students said that they like to play fighting games.

Table 15

Sr.No.	Statement	Yes %	No %
6.	Do you listen to radio?	30	70



Interpretation of statement no. 6

- Thirty percent students said that they listen to radio for keeping themselves up to date, for entertainment.
- Seventy percent students said that they do not listen to radio because they do not have time.

Table 16

Sr.No.	Statement	%
7. Which television program/ website/ video game/ book would you like your friend to see/ play/ read?		
•	Islamic Books	28
•	Angry Birds	16
•	Novels	16
•	Facebook	32
•	Ilmkidunya	8

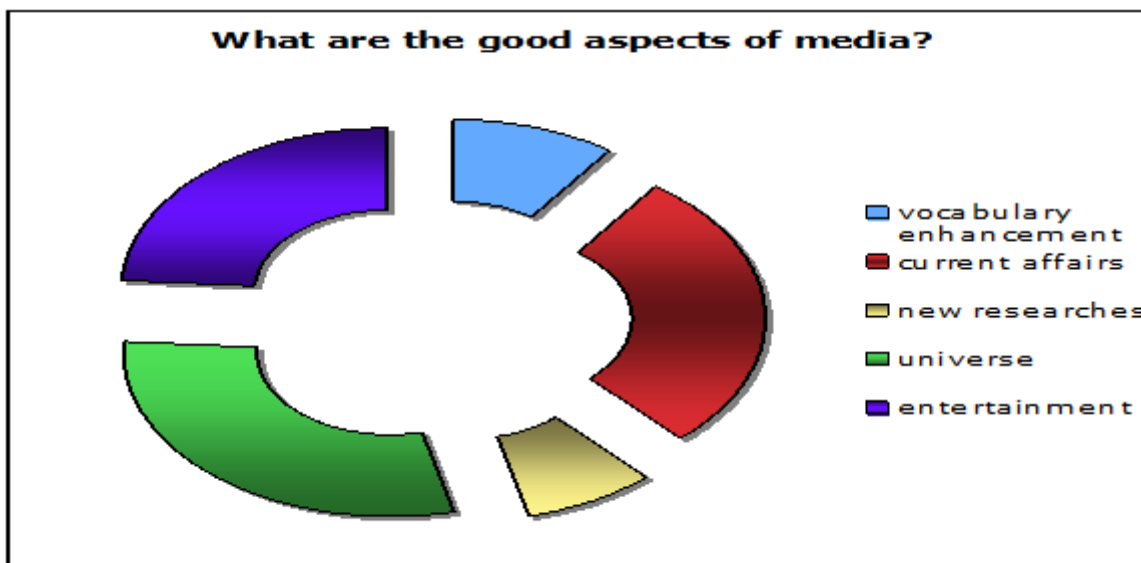
Interpretation of statement no. 7

- Twenty eight percent students said that they would like their friend to read Islamic books.
- Sixteen percent students said that they would like their friend to play Angry Birds.
- Sixteen percent students said that they would like their friend to read novels.
- Thirty two percent students said they would like their friend to join Facebook.
- Eight percent students said that they would like their friend to visit Ilmkidunya.

Table 17

Sr.No.	Statement	%
8. What are the good aspects of media?		
•	Vocabulary enhancement	10
•	Inform about current affairs	28
•	Inform about new researches	08

- Inform about universe 30
- Entertainment 24



Interpretation of statement no. 8

- According to ten percent students believe that media is a good source of vocabulary enhancement.
- According to twenty eight percent students good aspect of media is that it informs about different national and international current affairs.
- According to eight percent students media informs about recent researches which is its good aspect.
- According to thirty percent students one of the good aspect is that it also informs about universe.
- According to twenty four percent students one of the major good aspect of media is that it provides also entertainment to its viewers.

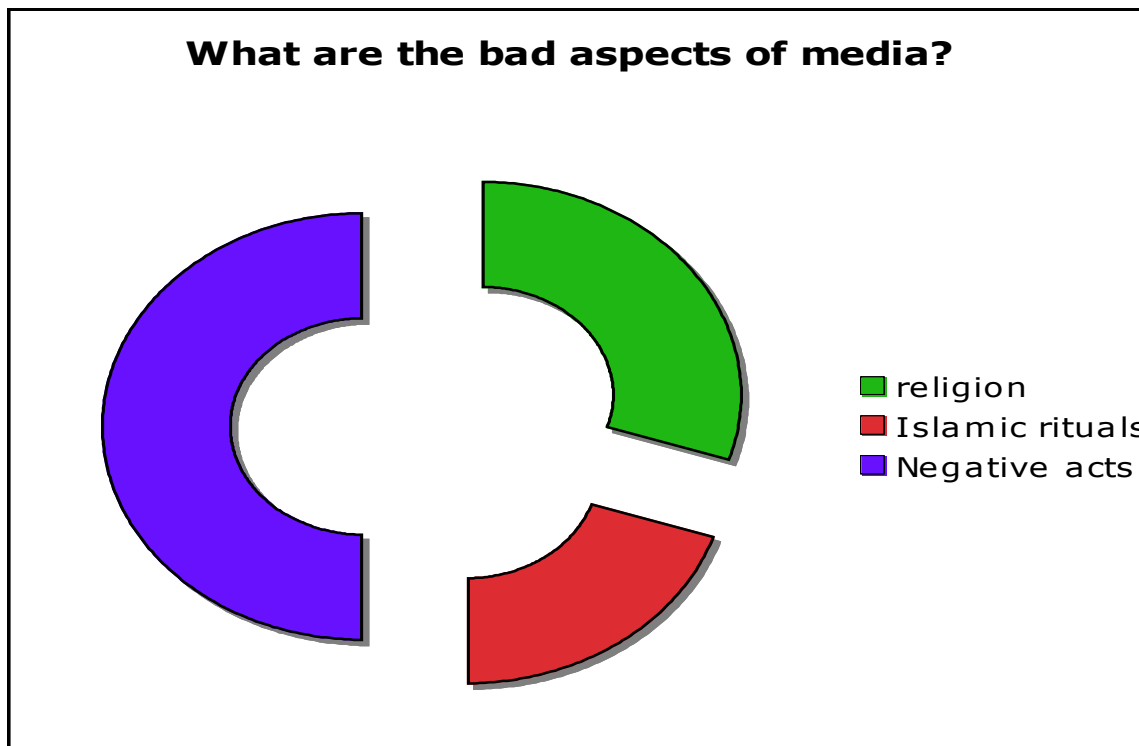
Table 18

Sr.No.	Statement	%
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9. What are the bad aspects of media?

- Less attention towards religion 30

- Motivates non-Islamic rituals & acts 20
- Highlights negative acts too much 50



Interpretation of statement no. 9

- According to thirty percent students media pays less attention towards religion which is its negative aspect.
- According to twenty percent students media motivates non-Islamic rituals and acts it is also its negative aspect.
- According to fifty percent students media highlights criminal and negative acts in society too much which creates a tensed environment in the society.

Interview from the member of administration

Interview with the Director of Education of a Semi-Government Institution was taken by the researcher to have a better view of the role of the administration in handling of media influence. According to the Director, there are two kinds of role the media. One, to some extent, is dedicated to education, where different programmes are being shown for the uplift of education. This helps out those who can not actually participate in regular classes and

workshops. This type of media is doing a good job. The other side of media is inculcating the negative effect on the society at large. The current media is just carrying out the coverage of events to create hype, postmortem of the breaking news but no specific long term policy is being laid down. Media can do a lot in case specific policy is being laid down, like the policy for economy, political policy, military policy etc.

According to him, media should discuss values and ethics along with the prevailing disparities like disparity of curriculums, fee structures, students' status, teacher training etc. Media should talk about different educational models of countries like Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Australia, etc.

If media is not covering media, then still it is doing something, and students are observing their language, body language and tone of discussion. These discussions are not structured as people show wrong behaviour on stage. The talk shows should spell out the scope of discussion to the panelists before the show starts for better and proper body language and language.

When talking about the role of administration in spreading media awareness in students, the director admitted that the administration is playing no role, rather it has never even thought of doing something about it. He then promised to work on the policy of handling media.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to find and evaluate the effects of media and the attitude of students, teachers and administration along with the contributions of schools towards these influences, both negative and positive.

In the questionnaire for teachers the first three questions are close ended just to see how much media is important in their lives and how much it should be part of a student life from teacher's point of view. While rest six questions are open ended questions. Q.4 has been placed to know that how teachers see the role of media in Pakistan, while Q.5, 6 are to reveal their perspective about the link among the influence of media on the culture of institutions

and student attitudes. While the rest three questions are about positive and negative effect of the media on school culture and teachers' way of dealing things with the current scenario.

In the questionnaire for students the first question is close ended to have a rough image that how much they are under the influence of media. While the rest are open ended questions, among which Q.2 is to find their interest criteria on television while Q.3 till Q.7 is all to find their daily involvement in different medium of media. And the last two questions are about students' likes and dislikes for media or how they want media to be like!

According to teachers and students television is the most powerful medium which affects our culture .it is because it is with in reach easily. As students of public sector can get much facilities like internet and English newspapers but TV is available in every home. One point raised by 40 percent teachers is that media plays a negative role in Pakistani society; This result is quite astonishing for us as only 30 percent teachers favoured the role of media.

This is quite an eye opener for us and we must take some immediate steps to curb the negative influences of media on our society and school culture. For that purpose, we must investigate and look into the matter that what is the definition of bad and negative for those teachers, which are those negative things which are creating bad effects on our school culture. 20 percent teachers said that media has neutral effects on school culture in Pakistan. This again is something which is startling for us. How can it be neutral? We again need to look in to the matter to investigate the background of these teachers to know if they are those who do not cater to the importance of media for their professional grooming.

Another quite interesting fact came to the surface after this study is that mostly media affected the language of students in negative sense. Media brought Hindi language in vogue. Even there are students who use Hindi language in Urdu papers without being conscious of it. Many students use slang after watching American and British channels. This means, here media is not at fault but the aptitude of the students which needs counseling of the students and the proper guidance from school administration and parents. We need to know whether schools and parents are doing their part or not.

According to teachers, due to the negative influences of media, students have stopped respecting teachers and classroom values. The actual scenario is that the younger children

have an inclination to watch cartoons and play games related to the cartoon heroes, but then again what culture are cartoons inculcating – violence and disrespect! Girls of senior classes like to watch ‘Barbie’ related or the female-oriented movies and play games like ‘dress me up’. Is that appropriate? This influences the wrong fashion culture in them. There is no limit of vulgarity and self exploitation. Here, at this point again, we have a dire need for the contribution of teachers, parents and administration to counsel students.

A question arises here: Are schools doing anything to solve this issue or to train students or not? 70 percent teachers agreed that schools are arranging seminars and meetings for the awareness and counseling of students. This is a good sign for the better future of students. Schools are playing their part in imparting values among students, whereas the interview with the Director Education was an eye opener, not just for us but for him and his administration as well, because that area was truly neglected.

Another strong point of schools which came in to view is that Internet facility is provided to 56 percent of schools from both public and private sectors which mean that schools are aware of the need of inclusion of technology in the studies as a part of curricula. But yet again there are institutions that are simply shunning the idea of providing internet facilities to students and guide them in the right manner.

Conclusion

After doing whole research we came to the conclusion that such sudden and dramatic entrance of media in our lives has left more negative influences on our society rather than positive ones where youth and students as the major part of society and the main element in forming the school culture are the main victims of it. The students are damaged psychologically, physically and mentally which is such an irreversible loss of our society. In such scenario what types of schools’ culture one can expect? Youth and kids, who were the passive entity for the mass media, have now become the active entity. Students are now Media’s crucial buyers. So media is not playing the role it is supposed to play not only in Pakistan but all over the world. But this discussion of role of media regarding school culture is growing day by day all over the world, while in Pakistan we are still not taking it very seriously. Now we as parents, teachers, educational admin and institutions need to play a sensible part.

The worldwide discussion related to this topic has developed some terms such as *media literate, visual literate, Critical Viewer*. Media literate means to enable the students to understand the risk of exposure and teach them how to interpret critically and creatively whatever they watch on television, in movies, in reality shows including the Intent and the content of the commercials, while the visual literacy means to arm the students with the skills that they can skeptically and knowledgably treat visual and audio-visual materials. So students can behave as critical perceiver not only as the conveyer of content knowledge.

Then for teachers and parents different seminars and conferences need to be arranged at institutional level because we cannot wait for the media or government to act as a saver, already a lot loss has been done. Now-a-days students are called “digital native” and teachers and parents are considered as “digital immigrant”. To give the concept that how important is the “running discussion” in the class rooms between teachers and students and at home between parents and kids about what they watch, listen, do and about current affairs and things going on media. And talk about the things what our students and youth watch on media while parents and teachers avoid discussing and unfolding while now communication is the best way to break the barriers of generation gap. Media is playing a role of “weapon of construction” in the societies while at the same time it is acting as a “weapon of destruction” in the societies which let media command them. We have to act as a society which deals with media critically, logically and purposefully and give equal importance to other medium as radio and print media. So, we can get a balance and harmony back in our school culture and in our society as a whole.

To look is one thing,
To see what you look at is another,
To understand what you see is third,
To learn from what you understand is still something else:
To act on what you learn is all that matters.

--A Taoist saying

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