Volume : 1 | Issue : 5 | Oct 2012 • ISSN No 2277 - 8160

Research Paper | Economics

Indian Media and Positive youth Development

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ABSTRACT

The influences of media on development seem to be positive, in the context of youth development it seems to be rather negative particularly in in the Indian context. Contemporary media or movies over the past few decades have become an integral part of our society. It has forever changed the way that many people across the globe receive information, news and entertainment. Now with a quick push of the button we are instantly connected to the current events of a country thousands of miles away, as well as the events of our local community just miles down the road. Corporations spend millions to advertise their products on television in the hopes of increasing sales and the face of politics will forever be changed as publicly televised debates and news conferences. Many questions have therefore been raised regarding the impact of that content seen on television shows, news broadcasts and commercials, namely violence and violent images, may be having on adults and children.

KEYWORDS: Media, Youth, Development, Positive Youth Development, Negative Youth Development

Introduction

The terminology of youth has developed over time. Youth is a period within which one develops his or her identity and adopts a personal value system. How young men and women negotiate their future varies depending on cultural and national context. Similarly race and ethnic relations shape youth experience in ways which reflect on their development. Media which is a combination of content – music, films, etc, has both extended and proliferated. While media is generally agreed as a vehicle that promotes development in any society, this article examines whether the media (cinemas/movies) produced in India affect positive youth development.

Positive Youth Development

Positive youth development refers to an ongoing growth process in which all youth endeavour to meet their basic needs for safety, caring relationships, and connections to the larger community, while also striving to build academic, vocational, personal, and social skills.[1] Positive youth development strives to help young people develop the inner resources and skills they need to cope with pressures that might lead to unhealthy and antisocial behaviours. It aims to promote and prevent, not to treat or remediate. Prevention of undesirable behaviours is one outcome of positive youth development, but there are others including the production of self-reliant, self-confident adults who can become responsible members of society.Positive youth development is a strengths-based macro concept that directs the programs and services available in communities to all young people, rather than targeting only those with defined problems or in high-risk situations. Services and activities are voluntary. They provide formal and informal opportunities and experiences that support youth in making a successful transition to adulthood. This differs significantly from current systems that prioritize and fund problem-prevention and crisis intervention services.Positive youth development strives to help young people develop the inner resources and skills theyneed to cope with pressures that might lead to unhealthy and antisocial behaviours. It aims to promote and prevent, not to treat or remediate. Prevention of undesirable behaviours is one outcome of positive youth development, but there are others including the production of self-reliant, self-confident adults who can become responsible members of society.[2]In the late 1990s and early 2000s psychological science paid increased attention to the concept of positive psychology. However the roots of positive youth development emerged in the work of comparative psychologists and biologists.[3] Positive youth development contrasts with approaches that have focussed on problems that some young people encounter while growing up.[4] The goal of positive youth development is to build and strengthen assets that enable youth to grow and flourish throughout life.[5] Positive youth development refers to intentional efforts of other youth, adults, communities, governmental agencies that provide youth to enhance their interests, skills and abilities into their adulthood. Although, the term youth can be used synonymously with child adolescent or young person, the phrase youth development or positive youth development is usually used in scientific literature and by practitioners who work with youth to refer programs designed to optimize these processes.

Best Practices in Positive Youth Development

Positive youth development is a policy perspective that emphasizes providing the necessary opportunities that support all young people in developing a sense of competence, capability, usefulness, belonging and empowerment. While individual programs can provide development activities, the youth development approach is most effective when youth are involved in creating a continuum of services and opportunities that youth need to grow in happy and healthy adults. Youth development strategies focus on giving young people the chance to form relationships with adults, build skills and exercise leadership. Youth development is both a philosophy and an approach to policies and programs that is directed to serve young people. The underlying philosophy of youth development is holistic, preventative and positive, focussing on the development of assets and competencies in young people. Key elements to youth development could be as follows:

- Youth are viewed as valued and respected asset to society;
- Policies and programs focus on the evolving departmental needs and tasks of adolescents and involve youth as partners rather than clients;
- Families, schools and communities are engaged in developing environments that support youth;
- Adolescents are involved in activities that enhance their competence, connections, character, confidence and contribution to society;
- Adolescents are provided an opportunity to experiment in a safe environment and to develop positive social values and norms;
- Adolescents are engaged in activities that promote self-understanding, self-work and a sense of belonging and resiliency.[6]

Media and Youth Development

Media has often been thought to influence those who consume it and more often than not its effect has been considered negative.It is a significant driver of growth in many economies. The business of producing content generates substantial income flows and jobs that contribute directly to the economy. Increased access to knowledge spurs higher levels of literacy, which strengthenshuman capital for higher productivity. The media are also important contributors to social and cultural life and key components of democratic structures. These contributions to development are often deliberately embodied in the media system. Some of the areas in which media can influence development are listed as follows:

- Strengthening democracy, social development, gender equality, nation building, education provision, and the spiritual and moral fibre of society.
- Safeguarding, enriching, and strengthening the country's cultural, political, social, and economic fabric.

Indian Cinema and Youth Development

While the influences of media on development seem to be positive, in the context of youth development it seems to be rather negative particularly in the Indian context. Contemporary media or movies over the

past few decades have become an integral part of our society. It has forever changed the way that many people across the globe receive information, news and entertainment. Now with a quick push of the button we are instantly connected to the current events of a country thousands of miles away, as well as the events of our local community just miles down the road. Corporations spend millions to advertise their products on television in the hopes of increasing sales and the face of politics will forever be changed as publicly televised debates and news conferences. Many questions have therefore been raised regarding the impact of that content seen on television shows, news broadcasts and commercials, namely violence and violent images, may be having on adults and children.

While most movies which are produced in India showcase violent justice being rendered by the hero over the villain in the cast, such showcasing seems to have negative impact on youth who watch them. To reiterate a recent movie 'Singham' (which when translated means Lion) here the hero a police officer is in a movie theatre challenging the crowd to face him. In the following sequences of the scene the hero chases the offender at the movie theatre and makes him apologise to the victim a girl. The scene seems to be positive, however, what the audience fails to realize is that the hero is a man of authority vested with even shooting powers if necessary. To the audience the movie portrays him as any other individual in the society. Youth who watch such scenes are inspired to practice such activities in their daily life as it is appealing to them to show off their prowess in order to achieve some personal gains possibly form the other sex.

Conclusion

At a very early age, humans begin imitating other humans. This observation of others' behaviours is a likely source of youth's motor skills. Every habit we form when we are younger indicates the outcome of our childhood and adult life. The influence of the media is especially dangerous considering media violence which stimulates the heart rate, and other physiological indicators of arousal. Arousal can energizeand strengthen an individual's dominant action tendency at the time. This can make youth behave aggressively in response to such aggressive or violent movies. Behaviour of Indian youth in society is widely influenced by media which reflects negative consequences for their future development. While theories of positive youth development speak about youth making full use of available resources, the media in India seems to be contributing to negative development of youth and other forms of high risk behaviour. Thus the media in India seems to be contributing to negative youth development.

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