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Perception of Parents and Youth on Web Content

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ABSTRACT

The world today has become completely digital. Every step we take is being recorded digitally. Be it any sector, everything today is happening online. With so much exposure to the digital world, the new generation has become very much addicted to this digital world. In some ways this has helped them to learn many things and become updated with the world, but on the other hand many side effects have also been observed. Increase in cybercrime, money hoax, and other crimes have also been recorded. Other than this a major change has been observed in the behavior of the youth with the increased exposure to the digital world. This paper deals with the perception of parents towards the changes observed in youth.

Keywords: Digital, Online, Youth, Parents, Perception

INTRODUCTION

The world today is running on the web, the digital revolution has taken over in such a way that within no time each one of us has become dependent on it in some or the other way. Our lives are actually running on internet now. Each work, big or small, can today be done through the internet. Be it making friends, choosing life partner or doing shopping. The web provides us with all, we just name it and we get it. The internet has made our life very easy and provided us with everything at our doorstep. Be it any business, it can be spread with the help of the internet. The internet has literally changed the entire market today.

Not only the shopping system has changed, internet has also provided us with lot of entertainment facilities. The entire era of electronic media has actually been clubbed into a single unit through the internet. Now we can have the entire media in our mobile or computer at once, all we need is an internet connection. Be it a radio show or T.V. show, the web provides us with all. The role of internet is providing us with entertainment did not stop here. Video sharing websites have a huge content, which includes every possible thing we can imagine. Be it songs, music videos, movies, cooking videos, tutorials on anything, study material, everything is available on YouTube. These video sharing websites not only provide so much of content but also allow the users to generate a lot of content of their own and show it to the world.

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The digital platform provided by the internet has given the common people a chance to become celebrities by showing their talent to the world through the internet. This being the cheapest medium with the maximum reach of audience has helped many people to become digital celebrities. In the recent times, a new mode of entertainment has come up, which is the concept of web series. Web series is a series of scripted or non-scripted videos, generally in episodic form, released on the Internet and part of the web television.

Unlike the traditional T.V serials, which are almost endless with almost same content in every daily soap, the web series provide a fresh and new content to the audience. These series are short and available on the internet, which allows the audience to watch them according to their convenience, unlike the T.V. shows which have a specific time of telecast. The web series are mostly youth oriented and the content in them is very much raw. Since there is no censorship on the content of the web, the story line of these web series include – Adult content, abuses, slang language and they openly show drinking and smoking. While some people think that these things are very common now a days and the people in our country should be more open to these things, there is a huge population which is against this and thinks that this type of content is destroying the Indian culture and values. Many even feel that access to websites and magazines with mature, adult content being readily available is inappropriate and unsafe for viewing by an immature audience.

The youth has altogether different take on this; they think that it is high time that we open up about the topics we have been shying about. The content shown on the web is after all inspired from real life and is what is happening around us. But a big question arises here, that, is the web promoting bad habits and by watching them the youth is adopting all those things. To become cool and in peer pressure the youth today is following a completely wrong path. And maybe the content shown on the web is a big reason for the youth in doing all the wrong things.

This is a big topic of debate and is difficult to tell who is right. On one hand, it is true that lack of sex education to the children is a big reason for a lot of problems the children or youth land up into and on the other hand, the way things are being portrayed on the web is correct or not is difficult question to answer.

This focus group study was done to compare what the youth and the adults think about this; do they have a contrasting thinking or similar thinking?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Uses and Gratification theory

Katz (1955) first introduced the uses and gratification theory, when he came up with the notion that people use the media to their benefit. This theory explains how people use media for their need and gratification. In other words, we can say this theory states what people do with media rather than what media does to people. According to uses and gratification theory, people make use of the media for their specific needs.

This theory has a audience centric approach; it does not consider the power of media. A positive point of the uses and gratification theory is that it focuses attention on individuals in the mass communication process.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Kamanth (2017) in her paper “To study the effect of Branded Entertainment in Web Series on the Brand Sales” said that, when it comes to taboo breaking and thoughtful video content, web shows have been playing a vital role in India since the last couple of years. In a country where television and different movie industries are strangulated by tight censorship, web shows have been the go to source of thought provoking entertainment for the millennials. The web series are being made with the content being totally youth oriented to which the young audience can relate to. These web series resolve around the lives of youth and how they deal with their day to day activities. There has been a tremendous increase in the viewership as the youth are being targeted with content that is no longer related to the Indian soap operas.

Monaghan (2017) says that over the past two decades, television has moved rapidly into an era marked by increased choice, flexible and greater diversity of representation. Coinciding with this is a rise in new storytelling forms, such as web series, which have gained traction online and via traditional means. These developments have also manifested the phenomenon of the web series to television crossover.

Joseph (2016) in the article “*Catch all the drama, Online*” says that if you are tired of mother-in-law who plots and daughter-in-law who dotes then turn off the television set and turn into web series which gives breather from contrived saas bahu weepathons on cable networks. For content creators in the online space, web series are a way to keep an audience engaged and come back for more. With this medium, there is enough space for everyone’s content and much scope for innovation.

OBJECTIVES

1. To study parent’s perception of web content
2. To study youth’s perception of web content.
3. To do a comparative analysis of both the perceptions.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

An exploratory study has been done using Focus Group Discussion.

Tool

Open-Ended questions were used for the group discussion

Sample size

8 youth of the age group 18-25, and 8 parents participated in the group discussion.

Sampling method

Purposive sampling method was used.

Universe

Bhopal

DATA ANALYSIS

Youth's Response

Q1. Which web series have you seen?

Respondent 1	What's your status, adulting
Respondent 2	Sacred Games
Respondent 3	Series of Timeliners and Dice Media
Respondent 4	Twisted
Respondent 5	Sacred Games
Respondent 6	Permanent Roommates
Respondent 7	Permanent Roommates, TVF Pitchers, Tripling, Sacred Games
Respondent 8	Sacred Games

Q2. What do you think about the content of web series?

Respondent 1	Content is better and entertaining than TV serials
Respondent 2	New generation content
Respondent 3	Content is very real; they show what actually happens
Respondent 4	Interesting content and short duration. Audience does not lose interest.
Respondent 5	They maintain and continue a theme
Respondent 6	It is very interesting
Respondent 7	Web series content has versatility
Respondent 8	Well written. Not stretched.

Q3. How is the content of web different from that of film of T.V?

Respondent 1	T.V should adopt the style of web content
Respondent 2	There is a lot of variety
Respondent 3	Web shows real emotions. TV shows extra emotional drama.
Respondent 4	Web content is not stretched unnecessarily which is done on TV
Respondent 5	Web series depend on a specific content and have particular time and episode. TV daily soaps frustrate people.
Respondent 6	Web content is fresh and more practical.
Respondent 7	Major difference is creative difference, which other medium does not have.
Respondent 8	No pressure for extending the story line because of TRPs and possibility of taking break by way of giving different seasons. Helps refreshing the creativity of the team working behind the scenes.

Q4. What do you think about the adult content in web series?

Respondent 1	It's very normal, not at all offensive.
Respondent 2	It is needed so that people become open minded.
Respondent 3	Those contents at times help us to get educated.
Respondent 4	It's ok to have adult content in web series.
Respondent 5	Adult content depends on story and target audience. I don't think it's wrong.
Respondent 6	It should be there, but to a certain limit.
Respondent 7	It is important as other mediums do not show it at all and web content is like a mirror of the society.
Respondent 8	Gives freedom of speech and helps reduce societal taboos

Q5. Do you think the adult content is in any way helping towards sex education among youth?

Respondent 1	Not really
Respondent 2	Yes definitely
Respondent 3	Yes, it helps in sex education.

Respondent 4	Depends on how the content is being presented but somehow, yes, it is.
Respondent 5	Yes, lots of time it does help in sex education.
Respondent 6	In some cases, it does and this is right
Respondent 7	The content does not really work as a sex educator, but web is a very good medium for sex education if someone uses it properly.
Respondent 8	Not quite. It does help in being open to talk about the issues.

Q6. What do you think, the slang language used in the web content is affecting the youth's language or the youth already used this kind of language and that's why the web adapted it?

Respondent 1	The web adapted it, the youth has been using it way before.
Respondent 2	Web adapted from youth.
Respondent 3	The language of the web affects the youth's language.
Respondent 4	Youth already uses it, web adapted to catch attention.
Respondent 5	They both adapted from each other
Respondent 6	Web adapted from youth to be able to connect more with the audience.
Respondent 7	Web adapted the language from the youth.
Respondent 8	While media reflects society, it does play a pivotal role in shaping its youth too.

Parent's Response

Q1. Which Web Series have you seen?

Respondent 1	Educational series
Respondent 2	CarryMinati, Nikhil Mumbaikar
Respondent 3	Crime Thrillers web series, Suits
Respondent 4	What's your status, Permanent roommates.
Respondent 5	Filmy Gyaan, Web Gyaan
Respondent 6	Sacred games
Respondent 7	TVF Series
Respondent 8	Timeliners

Q2. What do you think about the content of web series.

Respondent 1	It helps to educate
Respondent 2	Has variety of content so everyone gets to watch something of their choice.
Respondent 3	Good content
Respondent 4	Content of web series is youth oriented
Respondent 5	Content are according to story and theme of the web series.
Respondent 6	Bold and direct. Explicit in words, actions and scenes. Challenging the taboos of society.
Respondent 7	The content teaches many things that too in short duration
Respondent 8	The content is very interesting

Q3. How is the content of web different from that of film or T.V?

Respondent 1	T.V content is more effective and repetitive; web content is easily adaptable and is of short duration.
Respondent 2	Variety of content in web and separate content in separate series; in TV all content is mixed up in one serial.
Respondent 3	Web content is better, has many varieties. TV serials have limited variety.
Respondent 4	Content of web series is very bold and youth oriented, which is not the case with TV, the reason for which may be that TV had censor on it.
Respondent 5	TV serials have a limited time and web has no time limit. This is the major reason for difference in content as TV tries to show everything in those 30 min.
Respondent 6	TV still carries traditional value content, more of cultural exhibition kind in nature.
Respondent 7	In web series there are short series for every age group and for every gender. TV serials rarely have content which attracts the men, they are mostly watched by the women.
Respondent 8	Web has content related to our day to day life.

Q4. What do you think about the adult content in web series.

Respondent 1	Depends on what type of content it is.
Respondent 2	It is necessary for the youth to have knowledge about this type of content also but not all the adult content of the web series gives the knowledge properly.
Respondent 3	The adult content in web series is not very vulgar and it does teach the youth something, so it is correct
Respondent 4	The adult content in the web series are depiction of what is happening in current society, but there should be censor on the bad language and too much vulgar content.
Respondent 5	There is a lot of adult content in the web series. They are very open which kids below certain age should not watch alone.
Respondent 6	Content more than often gets too bold and explicit, which is not the norm conventionally and not healthy for small children; many a times confronting with the values of the grown ups also.
Respondent 7	The web having adult content is in a way good thing
Respondent 8	Yes, there should be adult content in the web but to a certain limit.

Q5. Do you think the adult content is in any way helping towards sex education among youth?

Respondent 1	Yes, it helps in sex education as the kids of puberty age should know about it.
Respondent 2	Sex education through online series may not be a very good idea to teach the kids or the youth about it.
Respondent 3	Yes, content in web series is helping the kids but it also depends how the kids are taking it.
Respondent 4	Adult content is not helping the youth in sex education in any way; content is very explicit.
Respondent 5	Yes, it sometimes helps in sex education
Respondent 6	I don't see prevailing content is in any way helping towards sex education among youth; it does not have any educative value, rather it is harsh in nature.
Respondent 7	Yes, it gives sex education but not to a very large extent; it is

	limited.
Respondent 8	Yes, it can be said, but again the content should not have too much of adult content.

Q6. What do you think, the slang language used in the web content is affecting the youth's language or the youth already used this kind of language and that's why the web adapted it?

Respondent 1	Web adopted youth's language and is promoting it more which is wrong.
Respondent 2	Adopted from the youth, youth speaks it that's why web is using it to attract audience.
Respondent 3	Adopted from the society and from what is more popular.
Respondent 4	Web adopts from youth's language.
Respondent 5	Youth has adopted from the web and are using those terms in daily life.
Respondent 6	Such languages are already prevalent in society.
Respondent 7	Youth's language has changed from the web.
Respondent 8	Web has affected the youth's language a lot.

Q7. Have you observed any change in your child's behaviour after he/she started watching web series especially full of profanity?

Respondent 1	Adopted from the society, these series are very much responsible for the change in youth's behaviour. The youth starts behaving the way they see the stars behaving in the web series as they think it is very cool. This should not happen.
Respondent 2	Behaviour change had occurred to a great extent and the youth is forgetting the Indian culture.
Respondent 3	It is changing the behaviour a lot, but then it also depends on the youth how much to change themselves. Sometimes the changes are positive also.
Respondent 4	There are changes but very subtle changes. They are not very obvious to us.
Respondent 5	Yes, I have observed changes in my own daughter who is just 10 years old. She has started calling pai from papa, so kids are adapting lifestyle from web series very quickly

Respondent 6	I have sensed a kind of casualness and frankness in them while they talk about things considered as taboos in society.
Respondent 7	Yes, I have observed a lot of changes in the behaviour of the youth; they have become too frank with everyone, even with their elders.
Respondent 8	Yes, the youth's behaviour has changed a lot and the changes are negative.

CONCLUSION

Development in the world of entertainment is happening very rapidly. Everyday people come up with some or the other innovative and creative idea to entertain the public. Gone are the days when television was the only source of entertainment. Today is the era of web entertainment. Web series have gained a lot of popularity among youth as well as the elders in the past couple of years. One of the main reasons of this popularity is content of the web. Where the content of the TV soap operas are more women oriented and liked only by middle aged and old women, the content of the web has something or the other for everyone be it males or females and of every age group. The content of the web has a lot of variety and the best thing about web series is that they are of short duration unlike the TV soap operas which keep on dragging the storyline. The study was done to compare the perception of youth and the adults on web series and its content.

From the group discussion, it was clear that both the parents and the youth consider the web series better than the TV serials because of many factors like – web content is more versatile, more thematic, to the point and deals with the issues and happenings of the society unlike the TV serials whose story line is not at all real and is over dramatized. One of the major differences between the web content and the content of any other medium is that web series at times contains a lot of adult content. On this point, there was a difference in the view of the youth and the parents. The youth thinks that what is shown in the web series is very normal and it is something that the youth should know, since other mediums are not allowed to show such contents the web is a great medium to create awareness about all this and since it has a wide reach, web series are very useful for sex education which otherwise is not talked about in a country like ours. And the youth thinks that yes, the web series are giving sex education.

On the other hand, the parents think that the youth should know about all this but at times the adult content of the web series goes too far and is too bold which children below 18 years should not watch. But since there is no gatekeeping on the internet, audience cannot be stopped from watching them. Talking about sex education through web content, half the parents agreed and half disagreed with web content providing sex education among youth. According to the youth, the language that web series uses

was already used by the youth and the web just adopted it from them so that the youth feels more connected with the content. To this some of the parents think that the youth adopted it after watching the web series. Lastly, a question was asked only to the parents that if they have observed any changes in the behaviour of their children, to which all the parents agreed that they have observed several changes. They think that their children's behaviour has changed a lot and also their attitude; towards Indian culture, responding to their elders, and maintaining relationships all have changed a lot and not in a very good way. The youth has become more casual about even the most serious things of life and the parents clearly think that a lot of negative changes are occurring.

Thus, it can be said that there was a contrast in the thinking of the youth and the adults regarding the content of the web. They both like it but the perception of the post effect is different in both the groups. Thus, it can be said that benefit through the content of the web series depends on how the audience adopts it.

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