



RESEARCH PAPER

Perception of Pakistani Youth Regarding Mediated Sexual Health Education

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PAPER INFO	ABSTRACT
Received: March 11, 2022 Accepted: June 13, 2022 Online: June 15, 2022	This paper is an attempt to examine the perception of Pakistani youth regarding sexual health education and to analyze the extent to which the youth is exposed to Pakistani media content regarding this. The objective of this study is to explore the exposure, awareness level of Pakistani youth towards sexual health education. For this purpose, the researchers used pretest posttest experimental method with structured questionnaire consisting of closed ended questions. A sample of 150 young people of the age 18- 25 was analyzed under the light of 'social cognitive theory'. The findings of this study conclude that there is a notable difference between the mean score of Pakistani youth on sexual health awareness before and after the intervention. Media exposure and sexual health education are not positively related to each other as Pakistani media content lack in creating awareness and education on sexual health issues regarding Pakistani youth. The study recommended that Pakistani media can design such content which educate youth how to manage their sexual health problems keeping in view the social and ethical standards and traditions.
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Introduction

Sexual health is an integral element of the health of all human beings. It can be stated as, Sexual wellbeing could be a state of physical, enthusiastic, mental and social wellbeing related to sexuality; it isn't only the nonattendance of infection, brokenness or ailment. Sexual wellbeing requires a positive and aware approach to sexuality and sexual connections, as well as the plausibility of having pleasurable and secure sexual encounters, free of impelling, separation and savagery. For sexual wellbeing to be achieved and kept up, the sexual rights of all people must be regarded, ensured and satisfied. (WHO, 2002)

Its analysis and discourses, both in the course of recent decades have indicated that communication relevant to sexual health education is an issue that requires intense attention. While in Pakistan sexual health is basically a taboo lacking awareness. The word "sex" is considered as a taboo in Pakistani society as it is a filthy or an unnatural thing or something associated with negative connotation.

Amid youthfulness, youngsters are presented to information regarding sex from a group of sources including mass communication. (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2001). Youngsters mostly refer mass media as a principal source of data about sex (Sutton et al., 2002). Actually, youthful adolescents ages from 13-15 classify entertainment media as their best hotspot for information regarding sexuality and sexual welfare. (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2001).

The aim of this study is to examine and analyze the perception of Pakistani youth regarding sexual health education given by media especially by Pakistani media. Sexual

health education is considered as a taboo in Pakistani society as Pakistani society is considered as traditional society. But it is also the need of the time, to educate young generation about their sexual health and the issues regarding this. At present, most of the Pakistanis has approach to incalculable channels at the snap of a catch. Media can give an extensive variety of outlets, from amusement to education. In spite of that, social media becomes the mouth piece of youth. To teach and mindful the majority about the rising trends, diseases, issues etc. is also the fundamental function of media. So with the inundation of sexual content on television, individuals, particularly adolescents, are demonstrated sexuality in shifting circumstances. Past investigations have analyzed how the predominance of sexual media messages impacts on youth.

Although, there is a lack of or scarce of research in Pakistani perspective to show how Pakistani youth interpret and perceive these messages and how it helps shape their perspective of standard in regards to sexual conduct and how these messages provide awareness to literate and illiterate audience. As Pakistan is traditional society so the social and cultural aspect of such media messages giving and illustrating sexual health awareness and education must be analyzed and interpreted.

Media Exposure and Sexual Health Education

According to a report published in the Dawn, 63% Pakistani population is under the age of 25. 75% of this young adult has no knowledge about its sexual health and rights. Guardians too have constrained information around pre-adult sexual wellbeing, and in Pakistani society mostly adolescent and pre-adolescent have poor communication with their families. But it is essential for healthy body and positive attitudes, the exposure and knowledge regarding sexual health issues is important. Absence and lack of this information leads to sexual abuse and sex related problems and sometimes detracted youngsters. Further this report stated that, almost fifty percent of Pakistani female got married before 18 years of age. 1 out of 10 girls have their first child between the ages of 15 and 19. Death rate for pregnant women beneath the age of 15 years is 5 x times higher than the above 20 age (Dawn, 2015).

Sexual violence in youngsters is increasing day by day in Pakistan. For example, the number of reported cases are 10,726 during the 2007-11. It is reported that only 1/3rd of adolescents discuss their health issues with their parents. Most adolescents acquire information from the peers, family, alternative health providers(Quacks, Hakeems) and other sources including online sources etc.

Youngsters should be equipped with proper guidance and education in order to manage their own lives and make healthie decisions. Sexual Health education should be given at secondary school level also and media should play its interpretative ad informative role in providing proper sexual health education in an adequate way.

As media directly affect youth recognitions. Regardless of whether this effect is sure or negative eventually relies upon the circumstance of the individual how they depict the media messages they are accepting. Notwithstanding the level of sexual presentation, the insignificant reality that media can change youth mental self-portrait merits some acknowledgment by media control (Berry et al., 2008). Therefore, improving media literacy or creating awareness and imparting education regarding the sexual health to youth by media is a significant one but it must be according to Pakistani societal norms, values and traditions.

Literature Review

Ciesynski (2013) analyzed the influence of media on teen sexual health and Ward (2003) find out that amusement is related to the sexual socialization of American youth. They both conclude that youth receives valuable information regarding sexual health education via media while some misconceive these messages too. Batchelor, Kitzinger and Burtney (2004) also analyzed the effect of media messages on the sexual behaviors and attitudes of youth and indicated that the media is providing information on sexual health.

Strasburger (2010) analyzed that media becomes an important factor in the initiation of early sexual activity among US adolescents. Media, rather than advocating about safe sex practices and use of contraceptives portray sex and sexuality with no consequences. Media only promotes abstinence content and rare content is available on safe sex practices so there is a need to address this issue. Gruber, Grube (2000) also concluded that the exposure of youth to sexual substance through media and its potential impacts on their behaviors and convictions but introduction to sexual substance will not make youngsters deny or disregard values and data they have ingested from families, school, devout lessons, and other regarded grown-ups.

There's a tall predominance of misguided judgments around female sexuality among Pakistani youthful men. This circumstance become more antagonistic within the society where instruction is less and individuals have a place to the lower socio-economic lesson. Qidwai strongly recommended sex education for Pakistani youth. (Qidwai, 2000). Talpur (2012) also proposed an educational program that is based on sexual health education, executed in scholarly establishments and educational institutions.

Esere (2008) explored the effect of sexual education on Nigerian youth via pretest posttest quasi experimental design and concluded that after the intervention of the specially designed sexual health education program the control group has diminished risky sexual behavior in youth. In the light of this conclusion, it was recommended that sexual health education should be brought into the educational programs of secondary school education in Nigeria.

Derbie, Assefa, Mekonnen and Biadlegne (2016) investigated the risky sexual behaviours among students and uncovered hazardous sexual practices among them. Dadi and Teklu (2014) also assessed risky sexual behavior and related components among youth and concluded that significant extents of students were occupied with hazardous sexual conduct

The review of the above mentioned studies describes that there is extensive research by western scholars on the part of media in forming and reforming youth sexual behavior and in imparting sexual health education to adolescents and pre-adolescents. But in Pakistan, as it is considered as a taboo so there is a lack of comprehensive research on sexual health education regarding Pakistani youth perception. Although Some Pakistani scholars in this genre have addressed the issues of sexually transmitted diseases and infection and knowledge of Pakistani youth and found that there's a need of sexual wellbeing instruction and awareness in Pakistani society. But still there is a need of media campaigns and development communication campaigns in Pakistan that mitigate this social stigma and reduce vulnerability. This, this study will also fill the gap of the literature and is a good addition to literature.

Social Cognitive as a Theoretical Underpinning

To examine the perception of Pakistani youth regarding mediated sexual health education, this study is conducted under the umbrella of social cognitive theory. The birth of social cognitive was the effort of Albert Bandura. Bandura (1986) early working was on the learning from watching others which he labeled as Social Learning theory. Afterward

on he included cognitive components such as convictions, self-perceptions, desires, and his hypothesis is called as Social Cognitive theory .SCT is evolved from social learning theory. It states that there are three variables that are one of a kind to people. Vicarious results included show and mimic others. Self- viability implies self-reflection and self-regulation which incorporates the capacity to control one's possess behavior.

Social Learning Theory + Cognitive Factors = Social Cognitive Theory

As social cognitive theory is relevant to health communication and is helpful in designing health education and health behavioral programs. As this research aims to examine the perception of Pakistani youth about sexual health education so under the umbrella of this theory it is explored that how Pakistani youth perceive the media messages and content about sexual health education. As modeling is explained by SCT involves symbolic modeling which suggests that an individual learned from the society he/she lives in, through socialization and peer groups and then accept the new changes and innovations in the society and adopts them which become his behavior. So youth is learning from the society about the sexual health and interpret this according to their perceptions. But it is the vital function of media to inform and aware youth about their health and hygiene so that they will become more healthy and aware. Keeping in view above SCT this study will be explore how Pakistani media give education to youth on sexual health issue which is not still widely and open heatedly accepted in Pakistan society.

Hypotheses

- H1. There is a significant difference between the mean scores of Pakistani youth on sexual health awareness before and after the media exposure.
- H2. Greater the media exposure, greater will be the sexual health education among Pakistani youth

Material and Methods

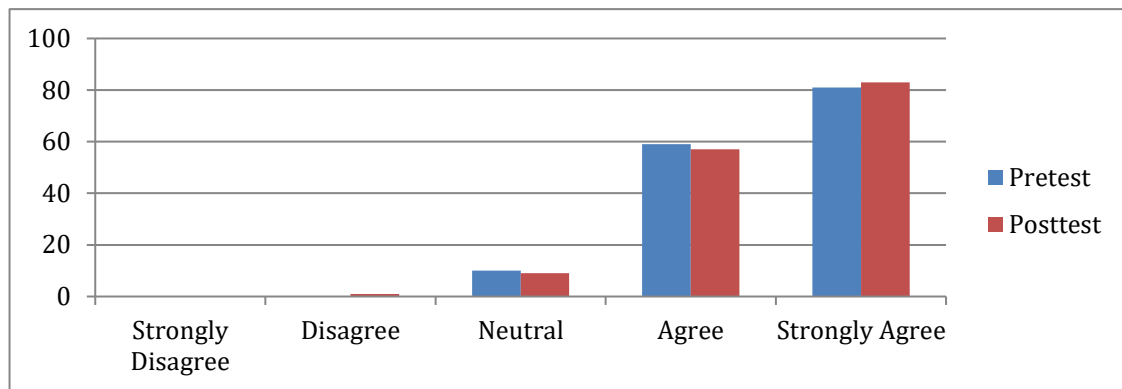
Experimental study is designed to analyze the perception and understanding of Pakistani youth about sexual health education. Pretest and Posttest experimental research design is used to collect data from the desired sample. The sample size was 150 and was taken from different universities of Lahore. The researcher used the method of Purposive Sampling for the selection of sample because researcher collected data from the youth who were media users and whose ages lie between 18-25 years. An intervention is introduced between the pretest and posttest studies and a gap of one month is taken between these two studies due to time constraint. A stimulus consisting of some videos from Pakistani media content regarding sexual health awareness and education is used for intervention. The pretest posttest questionnaire employed Likert scale and questions were close ended. The data was analyzed by using SPSS 19. The hypothesis were tested by using Pearson Bivariate correlation and paired sample T tests.

The pretest was conducted to gather the data from the respondents regarding their demographics, media exposure knowledge and view about sexual health education.

Sexual Health Education

It was found that the Pakistani youth apprehend the importance of sexual health education as the graph illustrates the results of pretest shows that before the intervention, 0 means no respondents strongly disagree, 0 again no respondent disagree, 10 remain neutral, 59 agree and 81 strongly agree to the statement. It means that most of the youth comprehend that the sexual health education is important for them. While after the posttest 0 respondents means no one strongly disagree, 1 disagree, 9 remain neutral, 57 agree and 83 strongly agree to the statement. This data critically evaluates that after intervention more respondents are likely to strongly agree to the importance of sexual health education

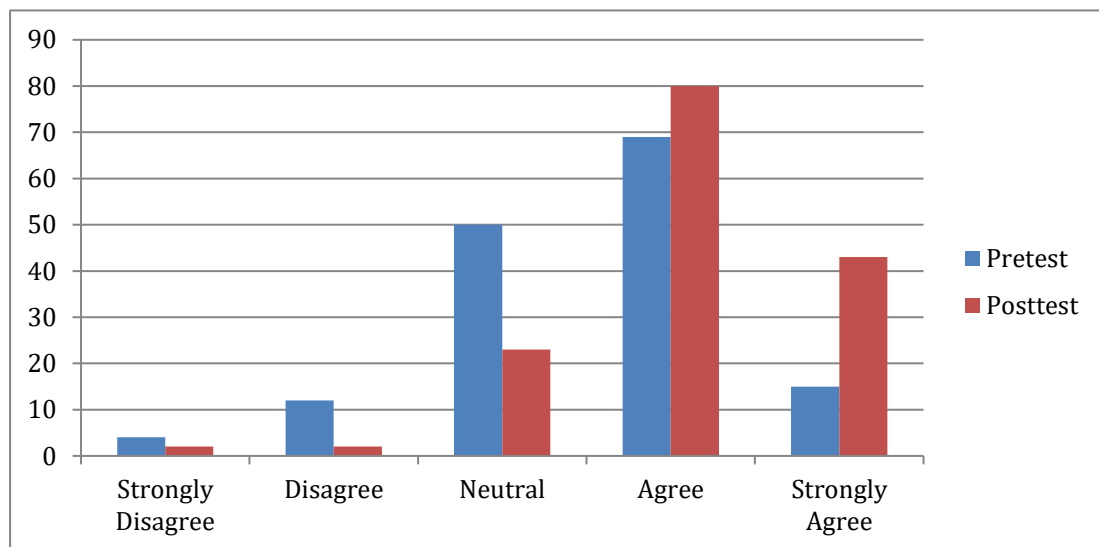
in Pakistani society. The results reveals that after the media exposure the youth is more likely to recognize the importance of sexual health education.



Graph 1 Importance of sexual health education

Role of Media and Sexual Health Education

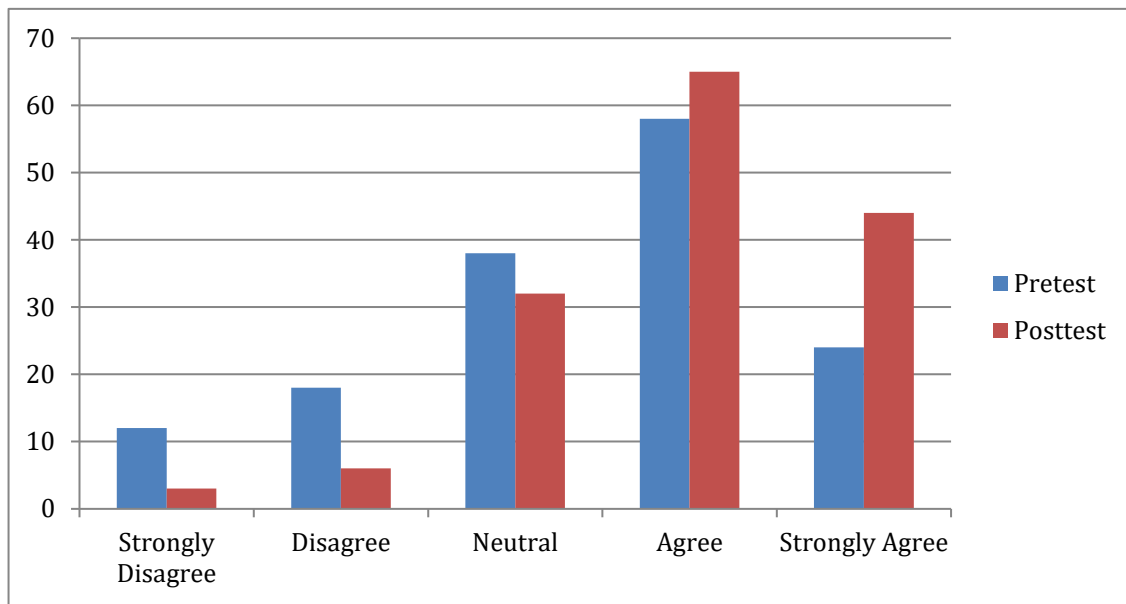
This graph illustrates the role of media in providing sexual health education and the results of pretest suggest that before the intervention 4 respondents disagree, 12 disagree, 50 remain neutral, 69 agree and 15 strongly agree to the statement. While after the posttest 2 respondents strongly disagree, 2 disagree, 23 remain neutral, 80 agree and 43 strongly agree to the statement. It is critically evaluated that after posttest the respondents are more likely to agree towards the statement so it can be concluded that the media exposure and media content can play a vital role in providing sexual health education to Pakistani youth.



Graph 2 Role of media in giving sexual health education

Sexual Health Education is Beneficial for Pakistani Youth

This graph illustrates the effectiveness of sexual health education in Pakistani society as respondents were asked about the stimulus or media content and the results of pretest shows that before the intervention, 0 means no respondents strongly disagree, 0 again no respondent disagree, 10 remain neutral, 59 agree and 81 strongly agree to the statement. While after the posttest 0 respondents means no one strongly disagree, 1 disagree, 9 remain neutral, 57 agree and 83 strongly agree to the statement. This data critically evaluates that after intervention more respondents are likely to strongly agree to the importance of sexual health education in Pakistani society.



Graph 3. Sexual Health Education is effective or beneficial for Pakistani youth

Discussion and Analysis

The results of hypothesis testing indicate the following results.

H 1- There is a significant difference between the mean scores of Pakistani youth on sexual health awareness before and after the media exposure.

Table 1
Paired Sample T-test

Variable	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	T	Df	Sign
Pretest sexual health education	11.9600	150	1.66237			
Posttest sexual health education	12.5733	150	1.73146	-3.292	149	.001

Table 1 shows that Paired sample t- test is conducted for the verification of the hypothesis and its significance value is .001 which is less than 0.05, the level of significance, so the hypothesis is accepted. So the results show that there is a significant difference between the mean score of Pakistani youth on sexual health awareness before and after the intervention or the media exposure.

In the table labeled Paired Samples Test in the final column, labeled Sig. (2-tailed)—this is probability (p) value. If this value is less than .05 (e.g. .04, .01, .001), it can be concluded that there is a significant difference between the two scores. In the table given above, the probability value is .001. This has actually been rounded down to three decimal places—it means that the actual probability value was less than .0005. This value is substantially smaller than our specified alpha value of .05. Therefore, we can conclude that there is a significant difference in the Fear of Statistics Test scores at Time 1 and at Time 2.

H2. Greater the media exposure, greater will be the sexual health education among Pakistani youth

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Media Exposure	4.41	1.795	150
Sexual Health Education	12.5733	1.73146	150

Table 3
Correlation

		Media exposure	Sexual Health Education
Media Exposure	Pearson Correlation	1	-.058
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.479
	N	150	150
Sexual Health Education	Pearson Correlation	-.058	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.479	
	N	150	150

The above tables display statistic values, Pearson correlation coefficients and significant values. The correlation coefficient of media exposure and sexual health education on P1 is $-.076$ which is not significant so it indicates that media exposure and sexual health education are not positively related so this hypothesis is not accepted. The relationship between sexual health education and media exposure is measured via correlation and it can be examined that there was no positive correlation between the two variables with the negative value of significance.

Conclusion

This study is an endeavor to explore media's role in creating awareness of Pakistani youth regarding sexual health education. The result of pretest and posttest experimental research suggests that before and after the intervention of media exposure there is a little difference observed in the results. As, in Pakistani media there are no programs, web series, advertisements on awareness of sexual health as compare to other countries of the world. The major findings rejected the basic assumption that there is no relation between media exposure and sexual health education. So this study recommended that Pakistani media content should design in such a way that help the youth regarding sexual health education in social and ethical limitations.

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