

Media Literacy in Youth: Media usage in youth on Secondary School Level

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Abstract

Media literacy, the ability to access, analyze and use media, is of increasing importance in the digital age, particularly for young people who are actively engaging with media to access and disseminate information and represent themselves in online communities. The youth of today have become "prosumers" of media content, meaning they are not just passive consumers but also produce content themselves. Consequently, it is essential to examine the media practices of young people. This study investigates the media practices of secondary school students by conducting a survey. The results, analyzed using SPSS, reveal that students are well-informed about current media platforms and are increasingly engaged in creating content. This shift from consumption to production suggests that young people are becoming more media literate and developing important skills that will enable them to participate more effectively in the digital world. The findings of this study can help educators and policymakers in developing strategies to enhance media literacy among young people and promote responsible media use.

Keywords: Media literacy, digital world, prosumers, youth media usage, responsible media

Introduction and Literature Review

The skill to gain access, assess, and generate messages on any sort of media is called media literacy. Media literacy in youth and its relation to political and civic education is analyzed through a longitudinal survey of schools and colleges during 2006-2010. Researcher found that students who have access to online digital platforms actively participate in political discussions and campaigns. Media literacy in youth helps them to represent themselves by creating content like documentaries (Kahne et al., 2012). Media literacy has developed skills in youth to interpret the media message in the context of historical and cultural knowledge. There is a significant difference between media literacy in the use of Print or television media and the use of internet-run media. Media literacy has also increased the critique on policy-making (Livingston, 2004). Jones-Jang, Mortenson, & Liu, (2019) contrast media literacy from news or information literacy. The first one is the skill to understand and work with media and media messages. However, the latter one is to identify, evaluate and locate accurate information. Information literacy is the identifier skill of fake news from authentic ones. Social media literacy is not to be confused with participation in social media platforms. It is a broader and technical term that needs to be evaluated technically. Social media literacy is a skill that encompasses all fields of social sciences. Online survey revealed that fields of medicine and marketing are two unrelated fields, the media literacy practices in both are also different. These practices are to be converged to get a basic practice around social media literacy in youth (Manca & Gleason, 2021). A media literacy campaign on TikTok was created and analyzed on the themes of Fact-checking and opinion-making, news credibility, and biasness. The users did not agree to the use of TikTok as a medium of a campaign because of the language and style of the videos. The medium also defines the tale of youth on media

literacy. Political or social information was all criticized for being given through TikTok. Users did not accept the medium for intaking information (Literat et al., 2021).

Research on rural media literacy focus on the representation of rural youth and their issues through media like documentaries (Pyles, 2016). A study conducted on youth to recognize the link amongst social media and political understanding suggested that increased social media literacy generates less political skepticism. However, the type of content viewed can reverse the results (Fawzi et al., 2021). The media literacy approach helps children in making healthier food consumption decisions. Austin, et al., (2020) suggests that media literacy-based learning with the intervention of the subject's family develops a better understanding of obesity and healthier food choices. The influence of media literacy on political and civil efficiency was measured through survey questionnaire in educational intercessions in schools. The results indicated that media literacy programs as a part of educational programs enhance public awareness and participation among youth. The students which take part in news production activities showed a more positive response towards media literacy as compared to others (Geers et al., 2020).

As information and technology spreads with rapid pace all over the world, digitally advanced media have influenced our living. Advanced media technology has changed the way information is produced and disseminated (Gialamas, 2013). Viewing media can be influential and relatively provide guidance. These mediums can be digital technology, television, films and other mediums as well that assist youngsters to understand the world. Hobbs (1998) is of the view that youth can make better sense of these mediums when they got to use them to expand their concepts and develop advanced intellectual skills. To critically analyze the mediums knowledgeable thinking is required (Boske, 2011). Media literacy of digital media is taken a proficient factor for perceiving media texts (Ferrari, 2013). The importance of mediums, including traditional and new media in the lives of youngsters raised the issue of their message perceiving and actions caused by it and whether there is any guidance to direct their literacy practices (Gainer, 2010).

During the present time, media literacy has been frequently imagined by means of an objectively concerned cycle, by which youngsters and grown-ups are educated and prepared to advance their insight, social mindfulness and abilities identifying with media and its values and ethics. However, in the financial and legislative setting, the concentration can change according to the viewpoints on government, culture to development and advancement. With time media literacy has progressively derive to be utilized regarding strategy goals, systems and scholarly review (Carlsson, 2019).

According to Vygotsky (1978), education should have aim of development. This exists among the levels of definite evolving and possible progress and that require supervision. For efficiently lout digital media platforms, empathizing an extent of media literacy of students about digital media is thought to be a primary requirement (Arke & Primack, 2009). A previous research also explored new media literacy of students in Chinese secondary schools. According to the research their capabilities were satisfactory (Li, 2010). The significance of educating them about media literacy is broadly explored in scientific literature from many outlooks as it have several implementations in diverse settings (Schmidt, 2013). The job of media literacy development is highlighted particularly with regards to the education of youngsters. Regardless of the fact that youngsters utilizes new technologies and various communication forms easily, the youth certainly not have the capabilities for entirely examining and assessing the content on media. Media literacy assists youth for grasping media texts accurately, to basically analyze the structures of media and subsequently to get advantage from media shrewdly (Suminas & Jastramskis, 2020).

Media literacy information is of paramount importance. While few scholars oppose that media literacy authorize people to have information access (Fedorov, 2003). Media literacy education is critical for media students as they will be in-charge for media content. Katherine (2018) contends for the important consideration of advanced media literacy into educational program identified with TV and radio with regards to a outlook change in the current media scene. Accordingly, media literacy abilities remain fundamental as far as instructing individuals to turn out to be more basically mindful of the media so they can shield them from inappropriate communication, have a well comprehension of the media and knowledge improved their satisfaction (Potter, 2008).

Research Question

What are the practices related to Media Literacy for youth at secondary education level?

Methodology

The study was quantitative in nature and survey method was adopted to collect the data. For this research study secondary school students will be selected for present research. The present study follow descriptive quantitative method, in which the subjects are measured once and the only intention of research is to find out the practices related to Media Information Literacy for youth at higher Secondary Education. Probability purposive sampling will be used to collect data through survey method. The results then calculated by using SPSS to analyze the responses of research survey.

Population of research were the secondary school students of Rawalpindi. The sample for collecting data will be the students of 10th class from The Educators School, senior branch Rawalpindi. The present research conduct surveys from 15-20 students to know their media information literacy related to social media platform Instagram.

Questionnaire

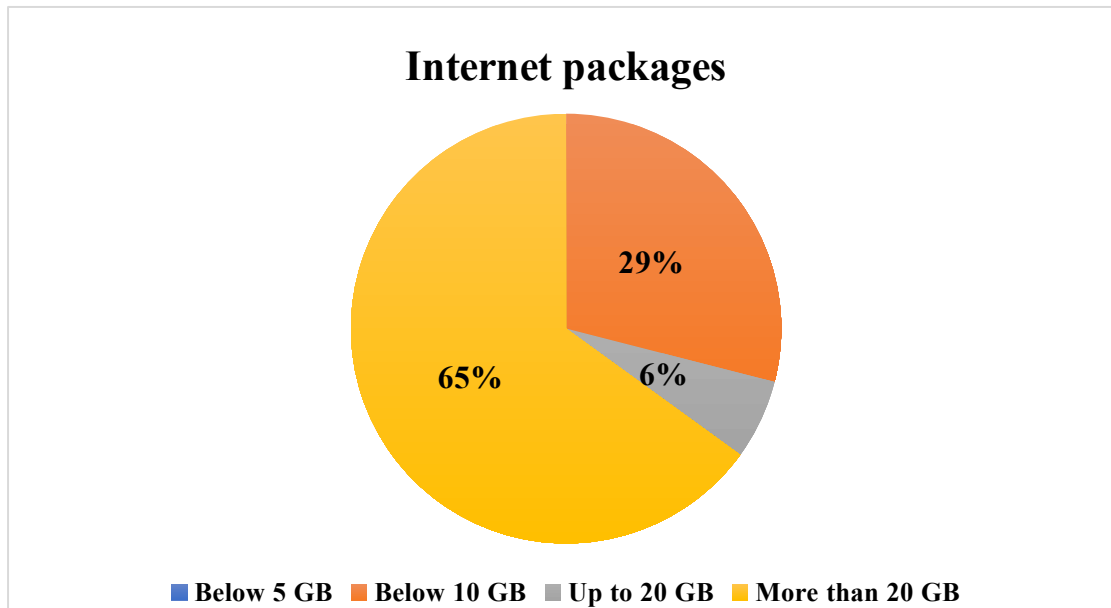
The questionnaire consisted of 6 items including closed-ended questions. Questionnaire was divided into two parts. In first part, 2 questions were used as screening questions about the device used by the respondents to access media and their internet usage. Second part of the questionnaire comprised of 4 questions related to their time consumption, apps and content.

Results and analysis

For present research a total of 20 questionnaires were distributed among the students of 10th class of The Educators senior branch Rawalpindi. 17 responses of research survey were received. The response rate of research survey was 85 percent.

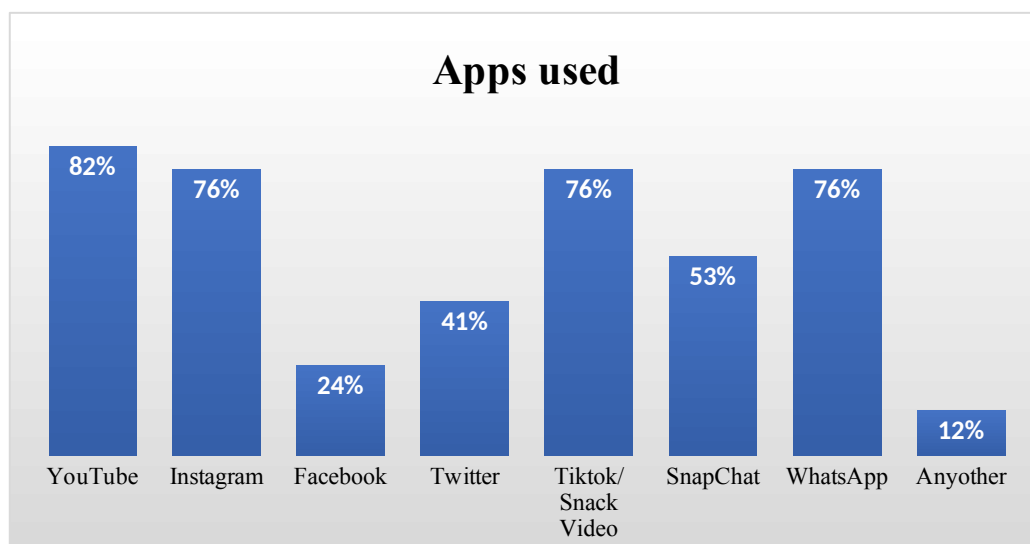
The respondents ranged in age from 14-15 years. As per the type of medium used is concerned, 17 respondents claimed to be using smart phones while only 2 respondents were using computer and no one accessed newspaper or magazines. Only 2 of the respondents accessing media through more than one device i.e. smart phones and TV.

Figure 1: Medium Used



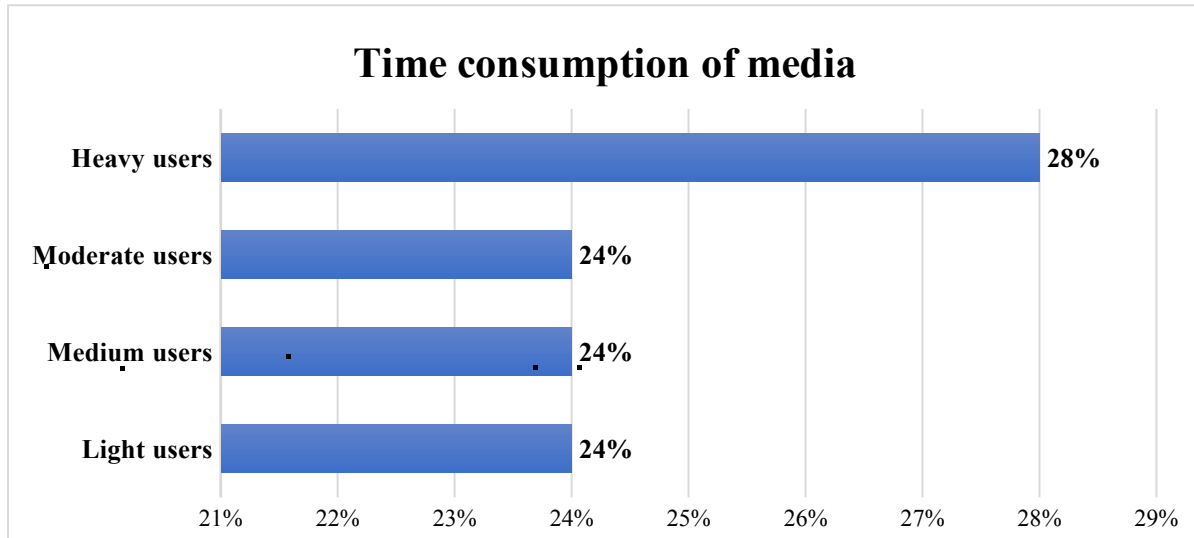
For the extent of their internet usage, the respondents were asked about their internet packages they generally use. 5 respondents claimed that they use internet up to 10 GB, only 1 of the respondents said that he used internet up to 20 GB while the internet usage of 11 respondents was more than 20 GB.

Figure 2: Internet Packages



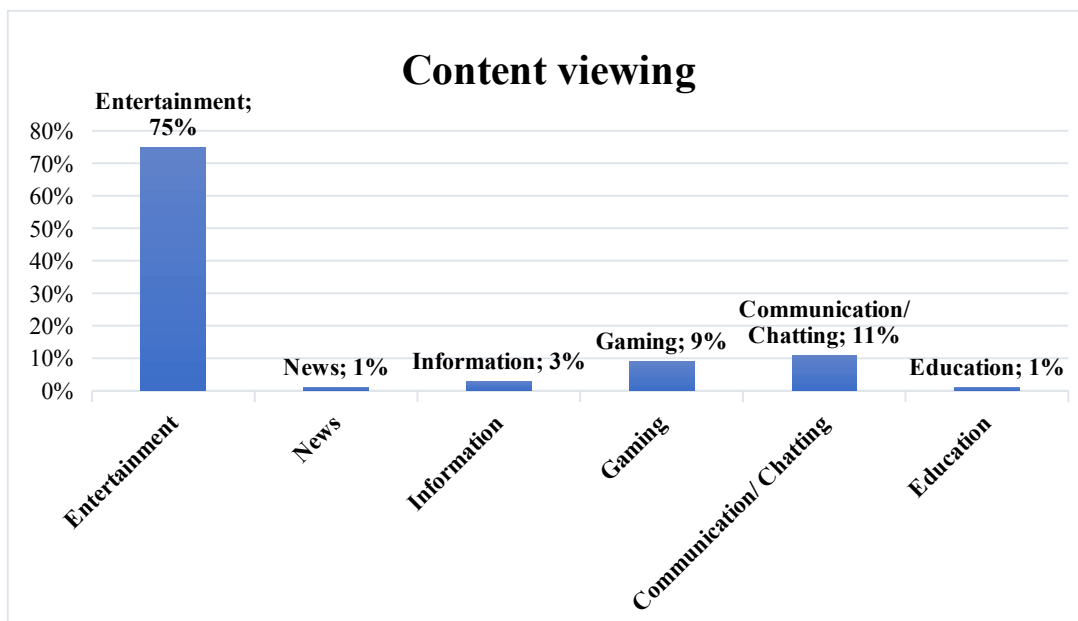
Now a days social media applications are quite popular among youth like, Youtube, Facebook, Twitter, Tiktok, Snack Video, Snap chat and WhatsApp etc According to the conducted survey, 71 percent of respondents use more than 3 social media apps while the remaining 29 percent of the respondents use up to 3 apps in general routine. Youtube is the most used application by the respondents while instagram, Tiktok and WhatsApp is the second highly used app by the respondents. On the other hand Snapchat was much more used app than Twitter, Facebook or any other app.

Figure 3: Apps Used



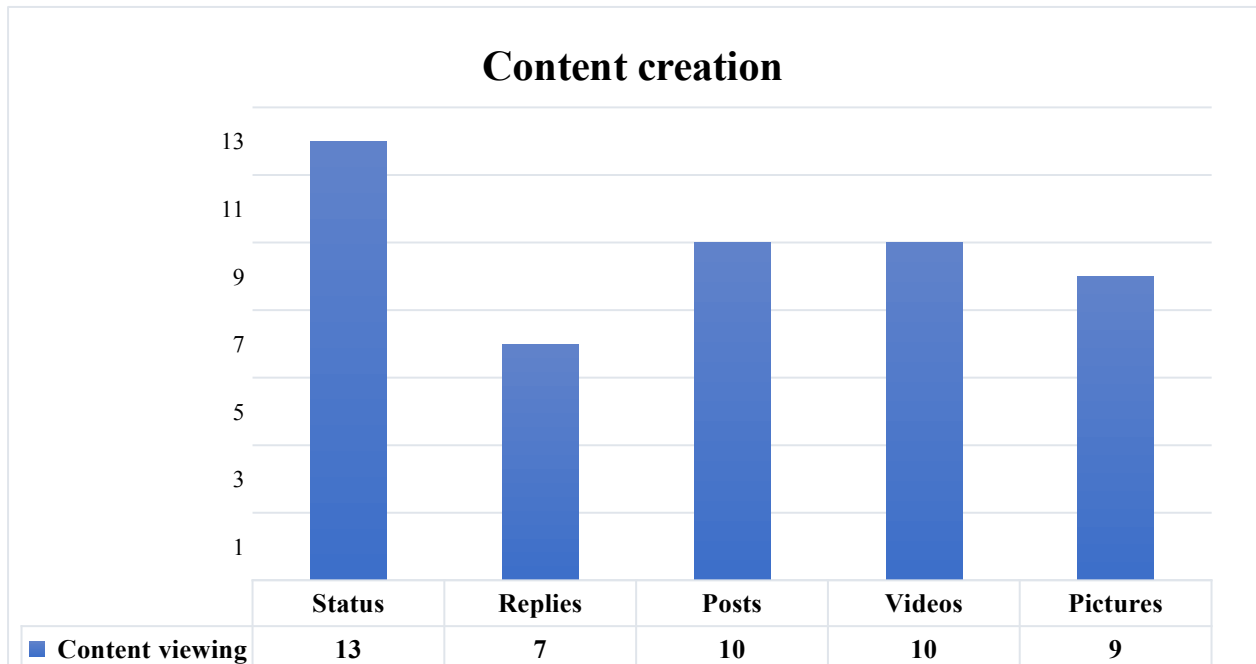
The time consumption of the respondents was categorized into light, medium, moderate and heavy media users. Among the respondents, 4 of them were light media users with their usage less than 4 hours, 4 respondents were medium users with up to 8 hours usage, 4 of them were moderate media users with less than 12 hours usage and 5 respondents were heavy media users with their usage more than 12 hours a day.

Figure 3: Media Consumption Time



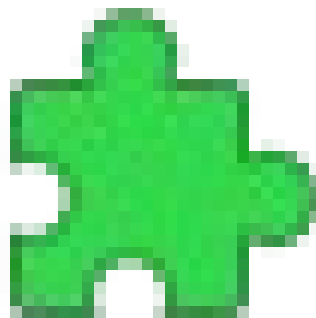
As far as the content viewing is concerned, respondents highly use media for the purpose of entertainment with 75 percent, 11 percent use their mediums for communication chatting, 10 percent of respondents use it for gaming, 3 percent of them prefer to use their mediums for information purposes while only 1 percent of the research respondents use their media devices for getting news and 1 percent of them access media for educational purposes.

Figure 4: Content Viewed by Respondents



Status creation was the highly created content among the respondents, videos making and social media posts were the second most content created. On third most created content was picture sharing and replies while replies is the least created content by the respondents.

Figure 5: Content Creation of Respondents



So, the overall results of the present research are given in table 1.

Table-1: Results

Mediums used	Smartphones	17
	TV	2
	Computer/ Laptop	0
	Newspaper	0
Internet usage	Below 5 GB	0



	Below 10 GB	5
	Up to 20 GB	1
	More than 20 GB	11
Apps used	Facebook	24%
	Twitter	41%
	YouTube	82%
	Instagram	76%
	Tiktok/snack video	76%
	Snapchat	53%
	WhatsApp	76%
	Any other apps	12%
Time consumption	Light users	4
	Medium users	4
	Moderate users	4
	Heavy users	5
Content viewing	Entertainment	75%
	News	1%
	Information	3%
	Communication	11%
	Education	1%
	Gaming	9%
Content creation	Status	13
	Replies	7
	Posts	10
	Videos	10
	Pictures	9

Conclusion

The use of media among students of secondary level education has shown a shift from the old to the new means of communication. Students are more inclined towards the use of mobiles and smartphones instead of newspapers, magazines, and television. Television content is also



now available through smartphones. The use of the internet has increased manifolds. The bigger internet packages represent the heightened use of the internet in daily life. Access to any sort of media is paved through internet availability. The present research was aimed to identify media literacy and usage among school going youth of Rawalpindi. The research addressed the questions of mediums used, types of content consumed, and applications used for media consumption. Data collected from students of private sector schools show that it has become part of the life of students. Students have access to all sorts of social media applications and are liberal in their choice of using different platforms relevant to their interests and needs. The survey results indicate that students of higher secondary education are familiar with all sorts of applications. They are aware of the need of use of every application and are using the applications that cater to their interests. Most of the school going students are using YouTube, Instagram, and Snapchat for entertainment purposes that include watching gaming videos, songs, and movies. Students are least interested in applications like Twitter or Facebook as it least caters to their interests. The applications that in one way or the other lead to news consumption are least in use of students. This shows that students use media for gratifying entertainment needs and for communication with each other. The information processing or news function is in the least or no interest of students. The participant's data shows that they are not interested to fulfill any news information or education need through social media. The content creation is less but is pacing up. The data shows that students like to create and share videos, pictures, and status updates through media. The posts on Instagram and comments and replies on posts of others is a common behavior. Students are more aware of video making and editing software. They are more learned in editing videos and pictures. The students of secondary level education are media literate. They have access to and are capable to use most of the social media applications. However, the data collected was from the students of a private sector and one school. Research on both government and private sectors can generate varied results. The results would be more generalizable. In a digitally mediated world, students not only need to be able to use media but also, they need to critically understand its use and learn to critically identify the meanings in the media messages. Students are using media and applications to cater their entertainment needs; however, it is a significant need that students must learn to use media for fulfilling their educational needs. They will be able to increase their knowledge based on media use. Media literacy is an issue with multiple dimensions. A few dimensions have been explored in this research and a lot more area available is the prospect research area of future.

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