Mass Media and its influence on Adolescents’ Sexual Attitude and Behaviour

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Sexual Content Present in the Mass Media

Strasburger (2010)

- 75% of programs contain sexual content

- Only 14% of sexual incidents in those programs give indication of risks or responsibilities of sexual activity.

“This programme contains very strong language throughout and scenes of a sexual nature, you’ll be delighted to know.”
Depictions of Sexual Acts in the Media

- Unrealistic.
- Stereotypical.
- Glorify the sexual acts.
- Real life issues such as contraception, STIs, morality, sexual dysfunctions, & regret are rarely discussed.
Music and Lyrics

Martino et al. (2006)
• Reported that an average youth listens to music 1.5 to 2.5 hours per day.

Arnett (2002) suggest that the music lyrics:
• Are sexually toned and the music videos more explicit.
• Show “Scantily” dressed girls
• Women are mostly just props
• Strasburger (2010) point out that magazines devote an average of 2.5 pages per issue to sexual topics
• Megazines focus:
  • “how to improve sex life”
  • “how to achieve orgasm”, “how to look sexy”
  • “how to please a man”
  • “losing Virginity”
Sex Sells? Advertisements and Sex

Jean Kilbourne in the video “Killing us Softly 4

• verge of becoming pornography

• females are objectified, and products are sexualized.
So What?

Albert Bandura’s Social Learning Theory

- Adolescents tend to use the actions of others in the media to decide proper behavior of themselves.

Even the mere exposure has been shown to have some effect on the decisions we make.
What adolescents learn from mass media?

Adolescents who viewed more sexual content

- more likely to initiate intercourse and progress to more advanced non-coital sexual activities – *Collins et al.* (2004)

- associated to a younger age of dating initiation and a greater number of dating partners- *Rivadeneyraa, & Lebob* (2008)

- associated with greater acceptance of stereotypical
  - casual attitudes about sex
  - higher expectations about the prevalence of sexual activity
  - higher expectation of certain sexual outcomes
What adolescents learn from mass media?

• RAND Corporation study
  – exposure to television programs that contain sexual content are twice as likely to be involved in a pregnancy over the following three years as their peers who watch few such shows
  – only about 15% who’ve seen the show believe it glamorizes teen pregnancy

• Acceptance of sexual and erotic violence.
What adolescents learn from mass media?

• Definition of self worth in terms of sexual attractiveness - decrease in Self esteem

• Eating disorders and discontentment with their own body

• Reinforce stereotypes of women as sex objects
Who is responsible?

- Parents,
- Teachers
- Policy makers
- Media Industry
- ADOLESCENTS

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0iFDdULwtzI&feature=related
Conclusion

• **Source**: TV, Music, magazines, and Advertisements.

• **Problem**: Mass media imply that sex is largely risk free, that everyone is doing it, and that planning for protection spoils romance.

• **Solution**: Media literacy and Sex Education!
Reference:

Thank you

Questions are guaranteed in life; Answers aren't.