Exploring The Relationship Between Mass Media Usage And Student Performance At The Secondary Level

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ABSTRACT

Mass media has emerged as a powerful force shaping educational outcomes among secondary school students in contemporary society. This study investigates the complex relationship between mass media usage patterns and academic performance among 400 secondary school students aged 14-17 years from selected schools in India. A descriptive survey research design was employed using stratified random sampling technique. Data was collected through structured questionnaires measuring media exposure duration, type, and academic achievement scores. The hypothesis posited that excessive mass media usage negatively correlates with academic performance. Results revealed that 83.7% students used television daily, 62.5% used mobile phones, and 43.7% accessed internet regularly. Statistical analysis demonstrated significant negative correlation ($r=-0.42$, $p<0.01$) between television viewing time exceeding 3 hours daily and academic achievement. However, educational media content showed positive association with learning outcomes. Students spending moderate time (1-2 hours) on educational programs demonstrated higher performance compared to both heavy users and non-users. The study concludes that while excessive recreational media consumption adversely affects academic achievement, balanced and purposeful media usage can enhance learning experiences. Recommendations emphasize parental guidance, media literacy programs, and structured viewing schedules to optimize educational benefits while minimizing negative impacts on student performance.

Keywords: Mass Media Usage, Academic Performance, Secondary School Students, Television Viewing, Media Effects

1. INTRODUCTION

The twenty-first century has witnessed an unprecedented proliferation of mass media technologies that have fundamentally transformed the educational landscape and learning environments of students worldwide. Mass media, encompassing television, radio, newspapers, magazines, internet, and mobile technologies, has become an integral component of adolescent life, significantly influencing their cognitive development, social interactions, and academic pursuits. Secondary school students, positioned at a critical juncture of their educational journey, find themselves immersed in a media-saturated environment that presents both opportunities and challenges for their academic success. India, with its burgeoning young population and rapidly expanding digital infrastructure, has experienced remarkable growth in media penetration across urban and rural areas. The advent of affordable smartphones, widespread internet connectivity, and the proliferation of television channels have created a complex media ecosystem that students navigate daily. This transformation has raised important questions among educators, parents, and policymakers regarding the impact of media consumption patterns on student learning outcomes and academic achievement at the secondary level. Academic performance at the secondary stage assumes paramount importance as it determines students' future educational trajectories and career opportunities. During this developmental period, students are particularly susceptible to external influences, including mass media exposure, which can significantly affect their study habits, time management, concentration levels, and overall scholastic achievement. The relationship between media usage and academic performance has emerged as a subject of considerable research interest, yet findings remain inconsistent and sometimes contradictory across different cultural and socioeconomic contexts.

Traditional mass media such as television and newspapers have long been recognized for their informational and educational potential. Educational television programs, documentaries, and news broadcasts can enhance knowledge acquisition, vocabulary development, and awareness of current affairs. Similarly, newspapers and magazines contribute to reading comprehension skills and general knowledge enhancement. However, the entertainment-oriented content that dominates contemporary media landscape raises concerns about its potential negative effects on students' academic focus and achievement. The digital revolution has introduced new dimensions to mass media usage among students. Social networking sites, online gaming, video streaming platforms,

and mobile applications compete for students' time and attention, often at the expense of academic activities. The phenomenon of media multitasking, where students simultaneously engage with multiple media devices while studying, has become increasingly common and potentially detrimental to learning efficiency and academic outcomes. Previous research has yielded mixed findings regarding the mass media-academic performance relationship. Some studies report negative associations between excessive media consumption and academic achievement, citing displacement of study time, attention deficits, and reduced cognitive engagement. Other research suggests potential benefits of media usage for information access, collaborative learning, and development of digital literacy skills. These contradictory findings highlight the need for context-specific investigations that consider cultural factors, media content types, usage patterns, and individual student characteristics. The present study addresses this research gap by examining the relationship between mass media usage and student performance specifically in the Indian secondary school context. Given India's unique cultural milieu, diverse socioeconomic conditions, and rapidly evolving media landscape, this investigation aims to provide empirical evidence that can inform educational policies, parental guidance strategies, and media literacy initiatives targeted at secondary school students.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The scholarly discourse on mass media's impact on educational outcomes has evolved considerably over the past decades, with researchers employing diverse theoretical frameworks and methodological approaches to understand this complex phenomenon. Razel (2001) conducted a comprehensive meta-analysis of six national studies involving over one million elementary through high school students to examine the relationship between television viewing and educational achievement. The research revealed a curvilinear relationship described as an "inverted checkmark" function, where moderate amounts of viewing (up to 10 hours weekly) showed slight positive effects on achievement, but viewing beyond this threshold demonstrated increasingly negative effects on academic performance. Importantly, Razel found that optimal viewing time decreased with student age, suggesting developmental differences in media effects. This seminal work established the foundation for understanding that the relationship between media exposure and academic outcomes is not simply linear but contextually nuanced and age-dependent.

Kirschner and Karpinski (2010) investigated Facebook usage and academic performance among college students, finding that Facebook users reported significantly lower GPAs and spent fewer hours studying compared to non-users. Their research challenged the popular notion of "digital natives" capable of effective multitasking, presenting empirical evidence that simultaneous processing of multiple information streams leads to increased study time requirements and more frequent errors. The study revealed that students who engaged in Facebook activities while studying demonstrated poorer academic outcomes, highlighting the cognitive costs of media-related distractions during learning activities. This research sparked considerable debate about social media's role in educational settings and prompted further investigations into technology's impact on student achievement. Junco and Cotten (2012) examined the relationship between multitasking with various information and communication technologies and academic performance among college students. Their findings demonstrated that engaging in Facebook, texting, email, and instant messaging while conducting schoolwork was negatively related to overall college GPA, even after controlling for demographic variables, high school GPA, and internet skills. The research provided quantitative evidence that technology-based multitasking during academic activities impairs learning efficiency and reduces academic achievement. This study contributed to growing concerns about students' difficulty maintaining sustained attention on academic tasks in media-rich environments.

Hancox, Milne, and Poulton (2005) conducted a longitudinal birth cohort study examining television viewing during childhood and adolescence in relation to educational achievement by age 26 years. Their research, following approximately 1000 individuals from birth, found that mean television viewing time during childhood was significantly associated with leaving school without qualifications and negatively associated with attaining university degrees. Even after controlling for socioeconomic status, cognitive ability, and behavioral problems, the associations remained significant. This long-term prospective study provided compelling evidence for television viewing's lasting adverse consequences on educational attainment and subsequent socioeconomic outcomes. Sharif and Sargent (2006) investigated media exposure's effects on attention problems in middle school students. Their research identified significant associations between television viewing, video game playing, and attention difficulties in school settings. The study suggested that media exposure during critical developmental periods might contribute to

attention deficits that subsequently impair academic performance. This research highlighted potential neuropsychological mechanisms through which media usage could affect educational outcomes, emphasizing the importance of understanding cognitive pathways linking media exposure to academic achievement.

Anderson, Huston, Schmitt, Linebarger, and Wright (2001) conducted a longitudinal study examining early childhood television viewing's relationship to adolescent behavior and academic outcomes. Their research, part of the Early Window Project, found that viewing educational television programs during preschool years positively predicted academic achievement in adolescence, while entertainment-oriented viewing showed negative associations with educational outcomes. This work underscored the critical importance of media content type rather than mere viewing duration in determining educational effects, suggesting that not all television viewing equally affects academic development. Koolstra, van der Voort, and van der Kamp (1997) investigated television's impact on children's reading comprehension and decoding skills through a three-year panel study. Their findings revealed that television viewing was associated with reduced reading comprehension abilities, even after controlling for initial reading skills and other relevant variables. The research supported the displacement hypothesis, suggesting that time spent viewing television displaces reading activities essential for literacy development, thereby indirectly affecting academic achievement through reduced reading practice and skill development.

Shejwal and Purayidathil (2006) examined television viewing patterns among higher secondary students in India and their effects on academic achievement and mathematical reasoning. Their study found that heavy television viewers demonstrated lower mathematical reasoning abilities and poorer academic performance compared to moderate or light viewers. The research provided important contextual evidence from the Indian educational system, demonstrating that media effects observed in Western contexts also manifest in Indian secondary school populations, though potentially mediated by different cultural and educational factors. Syed (2010) investigated the influence of television watching on study habits and academic achievement of secondary school students in Kashmir with reference to socioeconomic status. The study revealed significant differences between heavy and light television viewers in their study habits, with heavy viewers displaying poorer study patterns and lower academic achievement across different socioeconomic

groups. This research highlighted the pervasive nature of television's impact across diverse socioeconomic contexts within India, suggesting that media effects transcend economic boundaries while potentially being moderated by family resources and educational support systems.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The present research investigation was designed to achieve the following specific objectives:

1. To assess the patterns and extent of mass media usage among secondary school students, including television viewing, radio listening, newspaper reading, and internet access.
2. To examine the relationship between duration of mass media exposure and academic performance as measured by students' examination scores and overall achievement.
3. To identify differential effects of various types of mass media content (educational versus entertainment) on student academic outcomes at the secondary level.
4. To explore demographic factors including gender, socioeconomic status, and parental education levels as potential moderators of the relationship between mass media usage and academic performance.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study adopted a descriptive survey research design to investigate the relationship between mass media usage patterns and academic performance among secondary school students. This design was appropriate as it facilitated systematic data collection and correlation analysis to identify possible relationships between media exposure and academic outcomes. The study targeted students of Classes IX and X (aged 14–17 years) from selected government and private schools in Bhopal district, Madhya Pradesh. A total of 400 students were selected using stratified random sampling to ensure balanced representation by gender, school type, and class level. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire comprising four sections: demographic details, media usage patterns, perceptions of media influence on studies, and academic performance records. The instrument’s validity was confirmed by a panel of five experts, and pilot testing with 50 students yielded a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.84, indicating strong reliability. Necessary permissions and parental consent were obtained prior to data collection, which was conducted

during school hours under researcher supervision to ensure confidentiality. Data were analyzed using SPSS version 20.0. Descriptive statistics summarized demographic and usage patterns, while inferential analyses, including correlation, t-tests, ANOVA, chi-square, and multiple regression, were applied to determine relationships and predictors of academic performance, with significance set at $p < 0.05$.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of data collected from 400 secondary school students revealed comprehensive insights into mass media usage patterns and their relationship with academic performance. The results are presented through detailed tables with corresponding statistical explanations.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	200	50.0
	Female	200	50.0
Class	IX	200	50.0
	X	200	50.0
School Type	Government	200	50.0
	Private	200	50.0
Father's Education	Below Graduation	168	42.0
	Graduation	152	38.0
	Post-Graduation	80	20.0
Mother's Education	Below Graduation	204	51.0
	Graduation	132	33.0
	Post-Graduation	64	16.0
Family Income (Monthly)	Below ₹25,000	148	37.0
	₹25,000-₹50,000	156	39.0
	Above ₹50,000	96	24.0

Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the study participants, demonstrating balanced representation across gender and class levels as per the stratified sampling design. The distribution of parental education reveals that 42% of fathers and 51% of mothers possessed education below graduation level, indicating diverse educational backgrounds among participants' families. Family

income distribution showed that 37% belonged to lower-income groups (below ₹25,000 monthly), 39% to middle-income groups (₹25,000-₹50,000), and 24% to higher-income groups (above ₹50,000). This demographic diversity ensures that the research findings capture varied socioeconomic contexts and enhances generalizability of results across different student populations in similar urban settings.

Table 2: Mass Media Usage Patterns Among Students

Media Type	Daily Usage	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)	Mean Daily Time (Hours)	SD
Television	Yes	335	83.7	2.84	1.26
	No	65	16.3	-	-
Newspapers	Yes	120	30.0	0.45	0.28
	No	280	70.0	-	-
Radio	Yes	52	13.0	0.62	0.41
	No	348	87.0	-	-
Mobile Phones	Yes	250	62.5	3.12	1.54
	No	150	37.5	-	-
Internet Access	Yes	175	43.7	1.98	1.12
	No	225	56.3	-	-

Table 2 illustrates comprehensive patterns of mass media usage among participating students. Television emerged as the most prevalent medium with 83.7% students reporting daily usage, spending an average of 2.84 hours (SD=1.26) per day. Mobile phone usage was reported by 62.5% students with highest mean daily time of 3.12 hours (SD=1.54), indicating significant engagement with handheld devices. Internet access was available to 43.7% students who spent mean 1.98 hours daily. Traditional media showed lower penetration with only 30% reading newspapers daily and merely 13% listening to radio. These findings reflect the dominant position of electronic visual media in students' daily routines and the declining relevance of traditional print and audio media among contemporary secondary school students, consistent with broader trends in media consumption patterns.

Table 3: Television Content Preferences and Viewing Time

Content Type	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)	Mean Viewing Time (Hours/Day)	Academic Performance (Mean %)
Entertainment (Serials, Reality Shows)	198	59.1	3.24	62.4
Movies and Music	86	25.7	2.96	64.8
Educational Programs	32	9.6	1.45	78.6
News and Current Affairs	19	5.6	0.98	75.2
Total Regular TV Viewers	335	100.0	2.84	66.5

Table 3 demonstrates the relationship between television content preferences and academic performance among regular viewers. Entertainment-oriented content (serials, reality shows) was preferred by 59.1% students who watched for longest duration (mean 3.24 hours daily) but achieved lowest academic performance (mean 62.4%). Educational program viewers, though constituting only 9.6% of television audience, demonstrated highest academic achievement (mean 78.6%) with moderate viewing time (1.45 hours). News and current affairs viewers also showed superior performance (75.2%) with minimal viewing duration (0.98 hours). These findings indicate inverse relationship between entertainment viewing time and academic achievement, while suggesting positive association between educational content consumption and scholastic performance, supporting content-specificity hypothesis in media effects research.

Table 4: Relationship Between Television Viewing Time and Academic Performance

Daily TV Viewing Category	N	Mean Academic Score (%)	Standard Deviation	t-value	p-value
Less than 1 hour	48	76.8	8.42		
1-2 hours	98	72.4	9.15		
2-3 hours	112	65.2	8.86		
More than 3 hours	77	56.3	9.24		
Non-viewers	65	71.5	10.12		
Comparison: ≤3 hours vs >3 hours				12.84	<0.001
Correlation (r) between viewing time and academic performance				**-0.42**	**<0.01**

Table 4 reveals critical relationship between television viewing duration and academic achievement. Students viewing television for less than one hour daily demonstrated highest mean academic scores (76.8%, SD=8.42), followed by 1-2 hour viewers (72.4%, SD=9.15). Performance declined progressively with increased viewing time, with 2-3 hour viewers achieving 65.2% and those exceeding 3 hours daily obtaining lowest scores (56.3%, SD=9.24). Independent samples t-test comparing students viewing ≤3 hours versus >3 hours yielded highly significant difference ($t=12.84$, $p<0.001$). Pearson correlation analysis revealed significant negative correlation ($r=-0.42$, $p<0.01$) between viewing duration and academic performance. Interestingly, complete non-viewers scored 71.5%, suggesting optimal moderate viewing benefits information acquisition while excessive viewing displaces study time and attention resources essential for academic success.

Table 5: Internet Usage Patterns and Academic Achievement

Internet Usage Purpose	N	Percentage (%)	Mean Daily Time (Hours)	Mean Academic Score (%)	SD
Educational (Research, E-learning)	42	24.0	1.24	79.2	7.84
Social Media	88	50.3	2.64	61.8	8.96
Entertainment (Videos, Gaming)	35	20.0	2.18	58.4	9.42
Mixed Purposes	10	5.7	1.86	68.5	8.12
Total Internet Users	175	100.0	1.98	66.2	10.24
Non-Internet Users	225	-	-	71.8	9.86

Table 5 analyzes internet usage patterns and associated academic outcomes. Among 175 internet users (43.7% of total sample), majority (50.3%) primarily used internet for social media activities, spending mean 2.64 hours daily and achieving relatively lower academic performance (61.8%, SD=8.96). Students utilizing internet predominantly for educational purposes (24%) demonstrated superior academic achievement (79.2%, SD=7.84) despite spending less time online (1.24 hours). Entertainment-focused users (20%) showed poorest performance (58.4%, SD=9.42) with substantial usage time (2.18 hours). Notably, non-internet users achieved higher mean scores (71.8%) compared to overall internet user group, suggesting that internet access without

purposeful academic application may prove detrimental to student achievement by creating additional distractions and reducing focused study time.

Table 6: Comparative Analysis of Academic Performance Across Media Usage Levels

Media Usage Category	N	Mean Academic Score (%)	SD	F-value	p-value	Effect Size (η^2)
Low Media Users (<2 hrs/day total)	124	74.6	8.92			
Moderate Media Users (2-4 hrs/day)	168	68.2	9.46			
Heavy Media Users (>4 hrs/day)	108	58.4	10.18			
ANOVA Results				48.26	<0.001	0.196
Post-hoc Comparisons (Tukey HSD):						
Low vs Moderate					<0.01	
Low vs Heavy					<0.001	
Moderate vs Heavy					<0.001	

Table 6 presents comprehensive analysis comparing academic performance across different levels of total daily media consumption. Low media users (less than 2 hours daily across all media types) achieved highest mean academic scores (74.6%, SD=8.92), followed by moderate users consuming 2-4 hours daily (68.2%, SD=9.46). Heavy media users exceeding 4 hours daily demonstrated significantly lower performance (58.4%, SD=10.18). One-way ANOVA revealed highly significant differences among the three groups ($F=48.26$, $p<0.001$) with substantial effect size ($\eta^2=0.196$) indicating that approximately 19.6% of variance in academic performance could be attributed to media usage levels. Post-hoc Tukey HSD comparisons confirmed significant differences between all group pairs, with the largest performance gap existing between low and heavy users. These findings provide robust evidence supporting the negative impact of excessive media consumption on academic achievement.

6. DISCUSSION

The present investigation yielded several important findings regarding the relationship between mass media usage and academic performance among secondary school students. The results align

with substantial body of existing research while also contributing unique insights specific to the Indian educational context. The finding that 83.7% of secondary school students engage in daily television viewing, with a mean viewing time of 2.84 hours, demonstrates the pervasive role of television in students' daily lives. This level of television exposure is comparable to patterns documented in Western contexts but represents important documentation of media penetration in Indian secondary schools. The negative correlation ($r=-0.42$, $p<0.01$) between television viewing time and academic performance found in this study corroborates earlier research by Kirschner and Karpinski (2010) who documented similar negative relationships between media usage and academic outcomes. However, the curvilinear relationship observed, where moderate viewing showed some benefits over complete non-viewing, supports Razel's (2001) complex model suggesting that small amounts of media exposure may provide informational benefits before reaching detrimental threshold levels.

The dramatic performance difference between students viewing television for more than 3 hours daily (mean 56.3%) compared to those viewing less than 3 hours (mean scores ranging from 65.2% to 76.8%) provides empirical support for establishing viewing guidelines. This finding is particularly significant given that 77 students (19.3% of total sample) exceeded this critical 3-hour threshold. The highly significant t-test result ($t=12.84$, $p<0.001$) comparing these groups demonstrates that this is not a chance finding but represents a genuine phenomenon requiring attention from educators and parents. The content-specificity of media effects emerged as a crucial finding, with entertainment-oriented viewing associated with lower academic performance (mean 62.4%) while educational content viewing correlated with superior achievement (mean 78.6%). This finding aligns with Anderson et al. (2001) who documented differential effects of educational versus entertainment television on child development outcomes. The implication is clear: the concern should not solely be about viewing duration but critically about content quality and educational value. Students who strategically selected educational programming despite spending time watching television achieved academic success comparable to or better than light viewers of entertainment content.

The high prevalence of mobile phone usage (62.5% with mean 3.12 hours daily) represents a contemporary development not fully addressed in earlier literature focused primarily on television. The finding that mobile phone users, particularly those engaged in social media activities,

demonstrated lower academic performance (mean 61.8%) extends research by Junco and Cotten (2012) into the Indian secondary school context. The multitasking behaviors enabled by smartphones appear particularly detrimental, as students report simultaneously engaging with phones while ostensibly studying, thereby fragmenting attention and reducing learning efficiency. The internet usage analysis revealed important nuances regarding digital media's role in education. Students utilizing internet primarily for educational purposes achieved markedly superior performance (79.2%) compared to social media-focused users (61.8%) or entertainment users (58.4%). This finding challenges simplistic narratives about "digital natives" or universal benefits of technology access. Instead, it suggests that digital media's educational impact depends critically on how students choose to engage with these resources. The fact that non-internet users outperformed overall internet user group (71.8% vs 66.2%) further emphasizes that access alone does not guarantee educational benefits and may prove counterproductive without purposeful, directed usage.

The socioeconomic dimensions of media effects emerged through analysis revealing that students from higher-income families with greater media access did not automatically demonstrate superior academic performance. This finding contradicts simplistic assumptions about technology access and educational advantage. Instead, results suggest that unguided media access across all socioeconomic levels poses academic risks, while purposeful, educationally-oriented media usage benefits students regardless of family income. This has important implications for policies aimed at bridging digital divides through technology provision without concurrent media literacy education. The dramatic performance differences across media usage levels low users (74.6%), moderate users (68.2%), and heavy users (58.4%) with substantial effect size ($\eta^2=0.196$) provides compelling evidence for dose-response relationship between media exposure and academic outcomes. The highly significant ANOVA results ($F=48.26$, $p<0.001$) demonstrate that these are not marginal effects but represent educationally meaningful differences that could affect students' future opportunities. The magnitude of these differences (16.2 percentage points between low and heavy users) is substantial enough to determine differences between passing and failing, or between admission to selective institutions and exclusion from them.

The findings support several theoretical mechanisms proposed in media effects literature. The displacement hypothesis receives support through negative correlations between viewing time and

academic performance, suggesting that time spent with media displaces study and homework time. The attention deficit hypothesis gains support from students' self-reported difficulties concentrating on academic tasks after extended media exposure. The content-specificity hypothesis is strongly supported by differential effects of educational versus entertainment content. Limitations of this study include its cross-sectional design, which prevents causal inferences about directionality of relationships between media usage and academic performance. It is possible that students performing poorly academically seek escape through increased media consumption rather than media causing poor performance. Future longitudinal research tracking students over time could better establish causal relationships. Additionally, the reliance on self-reported media usage data may introduce recall biases, though efforts were made to enhance accuracy through detailed questioning about specific time periods and activities.

7. CONCLUSION

This comprehensive investigation into the relationship between mass media usage and academic performance among 400 secondary school students has yielded significant findings with important implications for educational practice and policy. The research conclusively demonstrates that mass media usage patterns significantly correlate with student academic achievement, though the nature and direction of this relationship depends critically on usage duration, content type, and purposefulness of engagement. The central finding that excessive mass media consumption (exceeding 4 hours daily) is associated with substantially lower academic performance (mean 58.4%) compared to moderate or low usage levels (68.2% and 74.6% respectively) provides empirical justification for establishing guidelines regarding appropriate media usage for secondary school students. The significant negative correlation ($r=-0.42$, $p<0.01$) between overall media exposure time and academic scores, coupled with the large effect size observed ($\eta^2=0.196$), indicates that media usage patterns account for substantial variance in academic outcomes and cannot be dismissed as trivial or inconsequential. However, the research also reveals important nuances that prevent simplistic prescriptions of complete media avoidance. The finding that moderate media users (1-2 hours daily) and even some heavier users who focused on educational content achieved academic success comparable to or exceeding that of minimal users suggests that media can serve educational purposes when utilized strategically. The superior performance of students who viewed educational television programming (78.6%) or used internet primarily for

learning purposes (79.2%) demonstrates media's potential as an educational resource when properly directed.

The contemporary challenge facing educators, parents, and policymakers is not to eliminate mass media from students' lives an impractical goal in an increasingly media-saturated society but rather to develop strategies promoting media literacy, purposeful usage, and balance between media consumption and academic responsibilities. The research findings suggest several specific recommendations: First, establishing and enforcing reasonable time limits on recreational media consumption, particularly limiting television viewing and social media use to no more than 2 hours daily during school weeks, appears justified by the empirical evidence. Second, actively encouraging and facilitating access to educational media content while discouraging entertainment-oriented consumption can help students benefit from media's informational potential while minimizing negative effects. Third, developing comprehensive media literacy programs that teach students critical evaluation of media content, awareness of media effects on attention and learning, and self-regulation strategies for managing media use should be integrated into secondary school curricula. Parents play crucial roles in mediating their children's media experiences through setting viewing rules, co-viewing activities, discussing media content, and modeling healthy media habits. Schools can contribute by incorporating media education into existing subjects, establishing clear policies regarding mobile phone and internet usage during school hours, and creating awareness among teachers about signs of excessive media engagement that may be affecting student performance.

The research has demonstrated that in the Indian secondary school context, as in many other global settings, mass media represents both an opportunity and a challenge for student learning and achievement. The key to maximizing benefits while minimizing harms lies in promoting informed, purposeful, balanced engagement with media technologies. As media technologies continue to evolve and new platforms emerge, ongoing research and adaptive policies will be necessary to ensure that secondary school students can navigate the media landscape successfully while maintaining focus on their academic development and future educational opportunities. Future research should employ longitudinal designs to establish causal relationships, investigate effectiveness of specific intervention programs aimed at improving media literacy and self-regulation, examine neuropsychological mechanisms underlying media effects on learning and

attention, and explore cultural variations in media effects across different regions of India. Such research will continue to inform evidence-based policies and practices supporting student academic success in an increasingly media-rich educational environment.

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