

Media

[Media](#), [Advertising](#)



In the last 50 years the media influence has grown exponentially with the advance of technology, first there was the telegraph, then the radio, the newspaper, magazines, television and now the internet. Before discussing the influence of mass media on society it is imperative to explain the three basic functions of mass media; they are providing news/information, entertainment and education. The first and foremost function of the media in a society is to provide news and information to the masses, that is why the present era is some time termed as the information age as well. People need news/information for various reasons, on one hand it can be used to socialize and on the other to make decisions and formulate opinions. Entertainment would be the other function of the mass media where it is mostly used by the masses to amuse them in present day hectic environment. Educating the masses about their rights, moral, social and religious obligations is another important function of mass media, which needs no emphasis. In present era of globalization, majority of people in the society depends on information and communication to keep moving in the right direction, to remain connected with the world and do our daily activities like work, entertainment, health care, education, socialization, travelling and anything else that we have to do. We need to be conscious of the reality that most of our decisions, beliefs and values stem from not only what we know for a fact, but also from the values that the media feeds us, whether it be a violent show or current news, telling us what we should be aware of. We have put our trust on the media as an authority to give us news, entertainment and education. However, the influence of mass media on kids, teenagers and society is so big that we should know how it really works. The media makes billions of

dollars with the advertising they sell and that we are exposed to, every single moment. We buy what we are told to buy by the media. After seeing thousands of advertisings we make our buying decisions based on what we saw on Tv, newspapers or magazines. These are the effects of mass media especially in teenagers, they buy what they see on Tv, what their favourite celebrity advertise and what is acceptable by society based on the fashion that the media has imposed on them. There are some positive and negative influences in young people of our society due to these ad campaigns in the media. Here is a positive influence example, if there is a quiz show on education that is getting a lot of attention by the media and gains popularity among your friends and society, you will more likely want to actively participate and watch these quiz shows. These activities are good for the society and will promote literary activities in the youth. However a negative influence in teenagers is the use of guns and ammunition by celebrity movie stars, the constant exposure of which would seduce the teen to replicate the same behaviour in the real life. When we watch tv or a action movie we usually see many images of violence and people hurting others. The problem with this is that it can become traumatic especially in our children as they see it more and more. Our kids that are starting to grow and are shaping their personality values and beliefs can become aggressive or they can lose a sense of distinction between reality and fiction. Another problem is that real war is used as a form of entertainment by the media, we should make our kids and teen aware that war is not a form of entertainment and that there is no win or lose like in video games, in real war everyone lose. Teens, youngsters are in a stage of life where they want to be accepted by their

peers, they want to be loved and be successful. The media creates the ideal image of beautiful men and women with all the ingredients of a successful person, you can see it in movies and tv. It's a subliminal way to persuade the masses that if you want to be successful and look like them then you have to buy that particular brand or product. Another negative influence in teenagers, especially in the USA, that has grown over the last years is obesity. There are millions of adolescents fighting obesity, but at the same time they are exposed to thousands of advertisements of junk food, while the ideal image of a successful person is told to be thin and wealthy. The media has a huge impact on society in shaping the public opinion of the masses. They can form or modify the public opinion in different ways depending of what is the objective. For example, Pakistani media influenced the public opinion against the Taliban in Swat by repeated telecast of a video clip showing whipping of a woman by a Taliban. Before that the public opinion over the military action against the Taliban in Swat was divided, but repeated telecast of this short video clip changed the public opinion over night in the favour of the government to take action. Other ways to influence are with polls and trends, especially in political campaigns. The candidates that can pay for more tv and media exposure have more influence on public opinion and thus can receive more votes.