

# The Media's Influence to the Millenials: Retrospecting Academic Performance and Media Exposure

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**ABSTRACT** — *This paper presents the intertwining power of media in today's youth and the technological advances that brought a niche in their lives. More so, the social influence of media and the effects on their academic performance has not been studied thoroughly. The study has utilized descriptive research design. Moreover, this study was conducted among the Communication students in Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines. Furthermore, the study has employed survey questionnaire to ascertain their mass media exposure. It is within this premise that they are exposed to media studies and that they as such they are at edge in analyzing and understanding media effects.*

*As part of the results of the study, it was revealed that most of the respondents' spent 1-3 hours per day with the broadcast media (TV, radio) and electronic media (Internet). Home was regarded as the best place for reading print materials while Internet café was the best place for getting online. Additionally, electronic media (Internet) showed a significant relation to respondents' media exposure and academic performance. The integration of their exposure can boost their academic performance if appropriate study hours can be given enough attention. Study hours also revealed a positive relationship to their academic performance. Thus, new communication technology should be utilized so that students' can fully satisfy their learning potentials and students nowadays should equipped themselves with appropriate media literacy tools for as susceptible; they must be cautious and selective on what media presents to them. They should not only appreciate instantly but select appropriately on media's messages and contents.*

**Keywords** — media effects, youth, media, and academic performance

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Mass media play a vital role in the lives of the people in the society as a whole by transmitting different forms of communication. It offers all forms of communication media, namely television, radio, computers, magazines, cellular phones, books and the like. This term can be better viewed as a truncation of media communication, pertaining to those organized means of dissemination of fact, opinion, entertainment, and other information.

On a similar light, students of today especially college students studying communication, it is integral part of their curriculum to study mass media. In this area, students are exposed to the different form of media to expand their knowledge on this extent which include among others the ability to effectively and efficiently comprehend and utilizes any form of communication. Media, as a field of study, serves as their educational tool to further develop their academic performance and their abilities and skills in communication.

Moreover, students nowadays have a wide and varied exposure to these different forms of media. With this, their habits and preferences may vary according to their needs. Their choices or preferences may have a significant impact on their school or academic performance. At times, students do not even appreciate spending time studying their lessons. They are more preoccupied with media from the time they wake up until they set-off to bed. Given the prominence of mass media like that of electronic media in the student's lives, it is reasonable to be concerned about the potential effects of media to their academic performance. This also lies in the contemplation that to strike a balance between studying and their exposure is the optimum concern of college students.

## 2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study sought to discover the relationship of the academic performance of college communication students to their media habits and preferences in order to understand the factors that may affect their study habits and develop strategies to improve students' learning and academic performance.

The relationship between media exposure and school performance has not been studied extensively among the students. The purpose of this study is to ascertain if there is a relationship between academic performance and exposure to media.

On a similar note, the study's prime goal is to provide an approach in understanding the ways in which students perceive the relationship between media exposure and an ability to perform academic tasks. It is important to assess the ways in which students use media. An important consideration would also cover the guide that will be given to students and parents regarding students' exposure to media and to provide assistance on the use of all media, including but not limited to television, radio, cellular phones, and other similar mediums.

### **3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

This study aimed to answer the question, what is the academic performance in relation to mass media exposure among the college students in Cagayan de Oro City.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following:

- 1.) What is the number of hours per day spent by the respondents for studying?
- 2.) What is the academic performance of the college freshmen students in terms of their general weighted average?
- 3.) What is profile of the respondents in terms of mass media exposure:
  - 3.1 access;
  - 3.2 habits; and
  - 3.3 preferences?
- 4.) Is there a significant relationship between the respondent's media exposure and academic performance?
- 5.) Which among the variables under mass media exposure have significant influence on the respondent's academic performance?

### **4. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The results of the study will be significant to the school administrators, teachers, parents and students.

School Administrators. The findings of the study will help them realize the strengths and weaknesses of the students on their media access, habits and preferences. The findings can be further used as a springboard in putting up faculty enrichment programs that will help enhance teaching strategies for improving the level of students' academic performance through the improvement of their media-based curriculum.

Teachers. Since teachers greatly influenced the development of their students, they may find this study useful in discovering ways and means to improve their communication degree program instruction and to enrich students' learning experiences through proper utilization of the different forms of media.

Parents. Results of this study will develop awareness of the importance of their role for the enhancement of their child's academic progress at home and for them to be able to guide them properly considering the number of hours they have accessed, spent and availed of media.

Students. They will surely benefit from this research work, as they will be able to realize the importance of proper time management which may include televiewing hours among others and study hours in order to improve their academic performance.

### **5. THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS/BRIEF LITERATURE**

Media effects can be positive or negative (Walsh, Goldman, & Brown, 1996). In one study, increase in media usage, (in terms of amount) is correlated with poorer social relationships, fewer school interactions, lower reading scores, and poorer school achievements (Dorr and Rubin, 1995: Stanford Institute for Quantitative Study of Society, 2000). However, several studies showed that increased usage of educational media has been shown to have beneficial effects. This is only a partial review of the effects media have on students.

Dorr and Rubin also cited a 1981 California study, which suggested a link between television viewing and poor school performance. The California Assessment Program (CAP), which tests academic achievement, has this question on an achievement test: "On a typical weekday, about how many hours do you watch TV?" The students were given a choice ranging from zero to six hours or more.

The results suggested a consistent relationship between viewing time and achievement. Students who said they have watched a lot television scored lower in reading, writing, and mathematics than students who did not watch any television. The average scored for students who have said they viewed six or more hour of television a day were six to eight points lower than children who said they watched less half hour of television a day.

Since the study did not include information about the IQ scores of the students, the results cannot be considered conclusive. The study may simply show that children who watch television a lot are not studying. But the results are interesting because of the number of children who were included in the study.

On the other hand, other research studies, which include Dorr and Rubin (1995) and Hoston, et al (1992) and Ballard (2003), have correlated a student's academic performance with their total media usage, suggesting that students who spend more time with media perform less in school.

Another interesting study is that Sharif and Sargent (2006) entitled, *Association Between Television, Movie, and Video Game Exposure and School Performance*. As part of the results, there were 4508 students who participated in the study; gender was equally represented, and 95% were white. In multivariate analyses, after adjusting for other covariates, the odds of poorer school performance increased with increasing weekday television screen time and cable movie channel availability and decreased with parental restriction of television content restriction.

Further, the study above said that as compared with children whose parents never allowed them to watch R-rated movies, children who watched R-rated movies once in a while, sometimes, or all of the time had significantly increased cumulative odds of poorer school performance. Weekend screen time and video game use were not associated with school performance. The study conducted by saying that both content exposure and screen time had independent detrimental associations with school performance. These findings support parental enforcement of American Academy of Pediatrics guidelines for media time (particularly weekdays) and content limits to enhance school success.

While Vermunt (2005) study on *Relations between student learning patterns and personal and contextual factors and academic performance* revealed that students learning patterns were indeed associated with personal and contextual factors such as academic discipline, prior education, age and gender, but the different learning had different sources. Secondly, students learning patterns proved to explain an important part of the variance in their academic performance.

When it comes to media use, boys spend more time with media than girls, mostly as a result of their greater interaction with video games, computers and television. While girls spend more time with print media than boys and after the age of 8 they also spend more time with music media such as radio, tapes and CD's (UNESCO Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen, 2000).

## 6. METHODOLOGY

The study has employed descriptive research design. The study was conducted among the Communication students in Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines. Particularly, the study has considered survey questionnaire among the communication students for they are exposed to media studies and they are at edge in analyzing and understanding media effects.

In addition, the statistical tools use includes – Simple Percentage and Mode which determined the profile of the respondents while Weighted Mean identified the representative student profile, and standard deviation determined the distribution of scores. Both tools were used to categorize students as below average, average and above average.

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) – general linear model was employed to determine if mass media exposure and study hours have significant effects on academic performance; and also whether students' media exposure have significant effects on academic performance.

## 7. HIGHLIGHTS OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

**Table 1** PROFILE of the respondents in terms of their Number of Study Hours

Number of Study Hours	Frequency	Percentage
More than three hours per day	12	12.5%
Two to three hours per day	42	43.75%
One to two hours per day	33	34.38%
Less than one hour per day	9	9.38%
<b>Total</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Table 1 illustrates the study hours of the respondents. The highest number of study hours was identified as two to three hours per day. It was 43.75% out of the total respondents. This signifies that less than majority of the communication students in Cagayan de Oro City devotes two to three hours a day for studying their lessons. On the other hand, only twelve (12) respondents are studying for more than three hours in a day.

The above findings confirm the posted requirement by College Parents of America, that the general rule of thumb regarding college studying is, and has been for a long time, that for each class, students should spend approximately 2-3 of study time for each hour that they spend in class. The same source added that students come to

college expecting it to be harder than high school, and expecting to spend more time studying. However, they may not realize the degree of difference with which they will be confronted. These students want to do well; they simply do not yet understand what is required from them to do well.

**Table 2 A GENERAL Weighted Average of College Freshmen (by school)**

School	Mean	SD
School A	1.77	0.44086
School B	2.35	0.49546
School C	2.15	0.48027
School D	2.10	0.43589
School E	2.00	0.46076
<b>Overall</b>	<b>2.23</b>	<b>0.4985</b>

Table 2 A shows the general weighted average of the communication students' from five schools offering communication-related courses. In this study, School A got the mean of 1.77, followed by School E (2.00), and School D (2.10) came in third. On the other hand, School B (2.35) came out the last. This result can be attributed to the variations of the grading system since different schools have varying grading systems.

**Table 2 B GENERAL Weighted Average of College Freshmen**

Range	Interpretation	Frequency	Percentage
1.73 and up	Above Average	17	18.68%
2.72 – 1.74	Average	65	63.74%
2.73 and below	Below Average	16	17.58%
<b>Total</b>		<b>98</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 2 B presents the general weighted average of the freshmen communication students in Cagayan de Oro City. Findings reveal that 63.74 percent of the respondents can be classified in the average category. This was trailed by the 18.68% who are above average and closely came were the 17.58% in the below average category.

The data revealed that majority of the respondents have average weighted grade average. As such they can be classified as average achievers, with grades ranging from 2.72 – 1.74.

**Table 3 MEDIA Exposure (Access)**

Media	Number of Respondents
<b>Time Spent watching TV per day</b>	
Less than an hour	13
One to three hours	43
Four to six hours	28
Seven hours or more	9
<b>Time spent listening to radio per day</b>	
Less than an hour	27
One to three hours	52
Four to six hours	11
Seven hours or more	9
<b>Places for reading printed materials</b>	
Home	88
Office	4
Library	38
Neighbor	3
Others	11
<b>Places for Internet use</b>	
Home	29
School	40
Office	6

Friends	7
Internet café	81
Others	2
<b>Time spent on the Internet per day</b>	
Less than an hour	23
One to three hours	59
Four to six hours	15
Seven hours or more	1

Table 3 A displays the media access among the freshmen communication students in Cagayan de Oro City. On time spent for watching TV forty-three (43) respondents answered **1-3 hours** while only nine (9) claimed watching TV for 9 or more hours.

The result is a little far from the American Academy of Children and Adolescent Psychiatry (2001) which states that an average person after graduating from high school spends an average of three to four hours of television a day.

For the radio listenership, it was students shown that fifty-two (52) students claimed that they are listening to radio for 1-3 hours while there were nine (9) who said they listened to radio for 7 hours or more. This means that respondents devote their time for radio listening for 1 hour but not exceeding 3 hours. The result validates the American (TVB) survey (2006) that people spends an average of 126 minutes for radio listening or more than two hours.

Eighty-eight (88) respondents regarded home as the best place for reading printed materials. On the other hand, three (3) said that they read printed publications in their neighbor. This indicates that they considered home as place not only for relaxation and comfort of family members but as well as a place to enjoy reading their favorite magazines, pocketbooks or even comics. Again this has validated the survey of Ball State University (2006) that most of the respondents regard home as best the place for media usage.

On the other hand, eighty-one (81) students disclosed that the **Internet café** is the most common place for Internet surfing, chatting, and playing on-line games and the like. Nowadays, Internet shops are the common hang-outs of teenagers that even younger kids are hooked in going to this place for playing their favorite on-line games, chatting and checking their accounts at the famous site-friendster.com

Moreover, majority (59) of the respondents claimed that they are using the Internet for **1-3 hours**. This has corroborated the American survey (2006) that people spends 85 minutes or nearly two hours in the Internet. In addition, as Reuters (2003) reported that young people spent approximately 17 hours online each week.

In a nutshell, it can be inferred that respondents' mass media access can be attributed to Internet as indicated by 59 respondents, followed by radio (52), and TV (43) respectively. This implies that students have more access to Internet than other forms of media.

**Table 3 B Media Exposure (Habits)**

<b>Media Habits</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>
<b>Time of the day watching TV</b>	
Morning	16
Lunchtime	16
6:00pm – 9:00pm	71
10:00pm up	23
<b>Frequency of listening to radio</b>	
Often	48
Always	34
Everyday	17
<b>Frequency of using the internet</b>	
Once a day	25
Once every after two days	16
Twice a week	33
Once a week	13
Once a month	1
Twice a month	1
Once every after two months	0
Others	8

\*Students may have multiple answers.

Table 7 reveals the media habits of the respondents. For their exposure to TV, seventy-one (71) students watched TV from **6:00 – 9:00** in the evening while sixteen (16) respondents claimed watching during morning and lunchtime respectively. This backs up the fact most of the shows during 6:00 – 9:00pm are considered as primetime

programs ranging from *telenovelas*/soap operas to game shows, which are all entertaining and worthwhile watching. Similarly, for Americans it was shown in a survey that majority of the respondents (70) regularly watch TV in the evenings (<http://www.frankwbaker.com>)

On the other hand, forty-eight (48) students claimed that they listened to radio **often**, and seventeen (17) respondents answered every day. The answer often would mean that respondents could still do other pertinent things while tuning to their favorite music or commentaries on the radio. This was supported by Sachoff (2006) when he mentioned that young people now are likely to listen to music or watch TV at the same time. On the other hand, Reuters (2003) reported that young people spend an average of 12 hours listening to radio.

Lastly, on the frequency of Internet usage, thirty-three communication related students of Cagayan de Oro City declared that they are using this electronic equipment twice a week. As previously mentioned in Table 6 Reuters (2003) in their study found out that teenagers' spends 17 hours online each week. In a nutshell, communication students' media habits can be summed up as to one to three hours both TV (43) and radio (52). However, these data did not seemingly jibe with the results on their Internet access, as it revealed that they are on-line daily for one to three hours. On the other hand, when asked about their frequency using the same medium, it came out they are using the same twice a week.

Table 3 B showcases media preferences of communication students in Cagayan de Oro City. On printed materials, **books** (1.93) ranked as the number one choice while comics (3.40) was rated the least. This means that comics do not cater to the needs of the teenagers today. In addition, the results of the survey revealed that books were predominantly preferred for its entertainment, educational, and informational purposes.

Moreover, on broadcast media, **TV** (1.65) was the most preferred medium while computer (2.26) was the least. This confirms the 2003 Philippine National Statistics Office (NSO) survey that for both sexes aging 10-64 years, TV was rated 61.8%, which only means that more than a majority of the Filipinos owns a television set in their respective homes. This can explain the TV's purpose of entertaining and educating people across the globe. For TV programs, the students had chosen **News** (1.61) to be the top among the TV Programs, closely followed by Music Channel (1.64) and the least of their interest was Sport (2.38). In a similar American (TVB) survey (2004), it was revealed that TV remains to be the first medium Americans "turn to" and the one they considered "easiest to use."

**Table 3 B MEDIA Exposure (Preferences)**

<b>Media Preferences</b>	<b>Mean</b>
<b>Printed materials</b>	
Books	1.93
Newspaper	2.20
Magazine	2.26
Comics	3.40
<b>Broadcast</b>	
Television	1.65
Computer	2.26
CD/DVD player	2.88
Radio	2.90
<b>TV Programs</b>	
News	1.61
Music channel	1.64
Others	1.80
Drama	1.91
Variety shows	1.93
Cartoons	1.99
Talk shows	2.08
Movies	2.14
Public service announcements	2.33
Sports	2.38
<b>Radio Programs</b>	
Music	1.16
News	2.19
Opinion, Commentary, Interview	2.32
Public Service Announcement	2.32
Sports	2.37
Commercial	2.45
Others	2.56
Drama	2.69



Newspaper section/part	
Entertainment	1.43
News	1.73
Others	1.73
Features	1.75
Science and Technology	1.86
Opinion and editorial	2.06
Novel Stories	2.08
Advertisement	2.16
Sports	2.24
Business	2.52

\*Students may have multiple answers.

For radio programming, **music** (1.16) ranked as the most favorite type of radio program while the least was drama (2.69). This would only show that the youth of today adores music more than any other program. Since respondents preferred FM, it would follow that drama is now passé as this was the favorite past time over the last decades. This has validated the study of McClung (2007) which revealed that today's teen's use and perceive radio mainly for entertainment and pass time activity.

While for the newspaper section/part, **entertainment** (1.43) remained to be the top choice whereas business was the least (2.52). This indicates that the youth is focused on light and trivial topics rather than science and technology or sports and business.

**Table 4** CORRELATION Value between Media Exposure and Academic Performance

Media Exposure	Academic Performance	p-value	Interpretation
TV	-0.004	0.973	Not significant
Radio	0.114	0.263	Not significant
Print Media	-0.057	0.576	Not significant
Electronic Media	0.213	0.037*	Significant
Overall Media Exposure	0.099	0.330	Not significant

In the above table, academic performance is compared with various types of media exposure. The null hypothesis stating that there is no significant relationship between the respondents' media exposure and academic performance was rejected on the variables like TV, radio, print, so with the overall media exposure. This implies that electronic media has a significant influence on academic performance of the respondents.

Moreover, the table shows that TV and print media yield negative correlations with academic performance; while radio and electronic media produce positive correlations. Among the four media considered, only the electronic medium gave a significant effect toward academic performance with a *p*-value of 0.037, which is significant at the 0.05 level. This fairly implies that the electronic medium has a positive bearing on the students' academic performance. This positive effect can be attributed to the way students use this technology. Survey reveals that students use this medium for research-related purposes. Besides, Internet cafes are situated strategically near colleges and universities that provide venues for students' academic work. Moreover, Reuters (2003) claimed that Internet serves as a primary medium for information and is and is accessible among the young people of today.

**Table 5** VARIABLES under Mass Media that have significant influence to Respondents' Academic Performance

Predictor	Coef	SE Coef	T	P
Constant	1.3163	0.3007	4.38	0.000
TV Exposure	-0.00610	0.04735	-0.13	0.898
Radio Exposure	0.04210	0.03657	1.15	0.253
Print Exposure	-0.01896	0.05124	-0.37	0.712
Electronic Exposure	0.04819	0.013590.02602	1.85	0.067*

\*Significant at the 0.05 level

The table above manifests the variables under mass media that have significant influence to respondents' academic performance. Based on the data presented, it showed that Electronic Exposure was noted to create a significant influence on respondents' academic performance. On the other hand, the rest of the variables under mass media like TV, radio and print exposure did not manifest a relationship toward the academic performance of the communication students from the five schools in Cagayan de Oro city.

It was reported by Reuters in 2003 that teenagers nowadays spend nearly 17 hours online each week. It was also added by this online source that this electronic medium functions for information and school needs of the students. Likewise, Mandase (2004) posted results of the media survey that revealed that Internet was deemed to be the most “informative” and perhaps more importantly, one that offers the “greatest control,” of all the media. This was significantly illustrated by Reuters report stating that when students use the Internet they are not only checking their e-mail, nor playing on-line games but also use the medium in researching and making their projects and assignments.

However, Kubey et al earlier study in 2001 manifested a significant percentage of students in the academically impaired subgroup reported that their Internet use had kept them up late at night, that they sometimes felt tired the next day, and that they missed class due to Internet use. The new nature of collegiate life for some young persons could result in a developmental retreat, as the Internet does offer a ready and convenient haven that the young college student, often living away from home for the first time and perhaps unable to control little elsewhere, can control when at the keyboard.

The same study above contemplated that contemporary first-year college students also often form small listservs of their high school friends to keep in touch and chat late at night, allowing them to keep a group of close friends much more in play than has any previous cohort of college students. This may be another element that contributes to some new students not entering more fully the social rough-and-tumble of their new college environments. As a sum, internet use can make or break students’ academic life.

## **8. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS**

The findings in this study indicate that generally, students are average in their academic performance. With this, they have recognized the importance of being exposed to mass media such as television, radio, internet and other media. These media have aided their acquisition of information and knowledge. Moreover, these media provided them possible learning which could enhance their academic performance.

Another vital finding is that most of the respondents had not fully maximized their time for studying. The respondents should do much in order to improve their study hours and even their study habits. For study hours can be associated with the college students’ academic performance.

The presence of electronic media particularly the internet has brought a lot of changes in the perspectives of students’ life. More so, it has tremendously modified their existence as its pivotal role in the aspects of emotional, social and even cognitive development. As such, the academic performance of the students was enhanced by their exposure of the students to electronic media. Hence, electronic media is a predictor of students’ academic performance.

## **9. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS**

On the basis of the findings of this study, the following are recommended:

1. Parents and teachers should emphasize to their students the wise use of media – broadcast: television, radio; print: magazines, books, and the like; and the electronic: Internet, social media, and the like, so that enhancement of their academic performance in relation to the use of these media be promoted. They should also remind their students to be more critical, more selective in viewing, acquiring and using these media. And they should also need to inculcate critical thinking and practice media literacy in their media usage.
2. Students have to make use of modern technology in a positive manner. Internet has to be used for research purposes such as assignments, projects and other academic endeavor and less on entertainment functions such as playing, downloading and other similar activities. This means that focus must be on educational content of social media rather than purely entertainment.
3. Furthermore, students can enhance their academic performance by striking a balance media use, specifically on internet use and with their study hours. This would mean that better study habits may results in good academic standing.
4. On the other hand, teachers could enhance students’ study habits by giving assignments, research and other activities that stimulate their academic performance. Since students devote much of their contact with their teachers, the latter should encourage students to avail of programs which will enrich their general information and media usage especially on its educational content can best serve this purpose.
5. The school being the second home of the students has to provide interventions, like symposia, seminars, and other related activities that would promote effective study habits.
6. Future researchers may make a similar study on the specific forms of media such as television, radio, print, advertising, social media, internet and other forms of media as to their influence to academic performance.



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