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Abstract

This research delves into investigating the impact of children's TV content exposure on the academic performance of children through parental perceptions. It has also examined the moderating role that a mother's education and occupation, family setup, and income have in the association between school-age children's academic performance and content exposure. Parents' perceptions about the impact of content exposure on the academic performance of children were investigated through a survey (N = 520). Respondents were selected through a multistage sampling technique. The role of mothers' education, occupation, family income, and setup were studied as moderators between children's content exposure and academic performance. The findings showed a positive association between children's content exposure and their academic performance according to their parents. Furthermore, findings also showed that education, occupation of the mother, and family income are positive moderators in the relationship between children's content exposure and academic performance.

Keywords: Content Exposure, Academic Performance, Parental Perceptions, Mother's Education and Occupation, Family Income, and Setup

Authors:

Muniba Fatima Zahra: (Corresponding Author)

Assistant Professor, Department of Media and Communication Studies, Government College University, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.
(Email: munibafatima@gcu.edu.pk)

Ali Ashraf: Assistant Professor, Faculty of Media and Mass Communication, University of Central Punjab, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.

Muhammad Irfan Ali: Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science and International Relations, University of Central Punjab, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.

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Title

Children's Content Exposure and Academic Performance: A Quantitative Study to Explore Parental Perceptions

Authors:

Muniba Fatima Zahra: (Corresponding Author)

Assistant Professor, Department of Media and Communication Studies, Government College University, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.

(Email: munibafatima@gcu.edu.pk)

Ali Ashraf: Assistant Professor, Faculty of

Media and Mass Communication, University of Central Punjab, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.

Muhammad Irfan Ali: Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science and International Relations, University of Central Punjab, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.

Keywords:

[Content Exposure](#), [Academic Performance](#), [Parental Perceptions](#), [Mother's Education and Occupation](#), [Family Income](#), and [Setup](#)

Abstract

This research delves into investigating the impact of children's TV content exposure on the academic performance of children through parental perceptions. It has also examined the moderating role that a mother's education and occupation, family setup, and income have in the association between school-age children's academic performance and content exposure. Parents' perceptions about the impact of content exposure on the academic performance of children were investigated through a survey (N = 520). Respondents were selected through a multistage sampling technique. The role of mothers' education, occupation, family income, and setup were studied as moderators between children's content exposure and academic performance. The findings showed a positive association between children's content exposure and their academic performance according to their parents. Furthermore, findings also showed that education, occupation of the mother, and family income are positive moderators in the relationship between children's content exposure and academic performance.

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Introduction

Media has ingrained itself into people's daily lives in the modern era, especially for school-age

children (Soumi, [2016](#)). The pervasiveness of media, from video games and television to the internet and social media, begs important concerns



about how it can affect several facets of children's development (Dwivedi & Pandey, 2013). Moreover, TV in particular serves as a major source of information, entertainment, and education for individuals of all ages (Swinburn & Shelly, 2009). An average person uses various forms of media for more than 490 minutes of the day, according to data by Zenith Optimedia. Their results suggest that television is still the most popular medium, followed by the internet (Karaian, 2020).

Children consume a lot of different kinds of content on television, and that content has a big impact on them (Dennison et al., 2002). When given specialized television programming to meet their educational needs, children are more likely to acquire particular vocabulary and abilities (Mares & Pan, 2013). Children's development is significantly aided by early childhood education. Early exposure to media and reading habits leaves a lasting influence on children, who utilize them throughout their lives (Burke, 2000; Penn, 2000; Evans et al., 2000). One could argue that television programming is a significant informal education and enrichment source for children (Zahra et al., 2022). Studies on the benefits of media indicate that children's learning is positively impacted by media content created with an educational goal (Kirkorian et al., 2008).

The Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (2017) reports that 43.40% of Pakistan's population is under the age of fifteen. This indicates that children make up more than one-third of Pakistan's total population. The media – from television to new media – proves to be a major influence in the lives of children. TV is the primary channel for new technologies, despite their increasing popularity (Strasburger & Hogan, 2013). Children in Pakistan watch their favorite content on TV for over five hours a day, on average, from afternoon to night (Bhatti, 2016).

Researches show that children's academic performance is significantly impacted by television (Milmine, 2015). TV watching negatively affects children's academic performance in Kenya (Ahinda et al., 2011). However, Ondara (2018) asserts that there is a favorable correlation between TV viewing and academic performance. In a similar vein, Ocharo and Karani (2015) found that there is a favorable correlation between students' increased TV viewing and their academic progress.

Nonetheless, Pakistani children who watch TV more often perform poorly academically (Khan, 2012). According to research by Pagani et al., (2010), Canadian children who watch TV more often had poor performance in school. According to Sharif and Sargent (2006), there is a positive correlation between extensive TV watching and poor performance in school. Similarly, prolonged TV viewing affects children's academic performance. According to Jordan et al., (2006), viewing television for no more than two hours a day is beneficial since it allows people more time for studying, doing well, and getting good marks. However, Ahinda et al. (2011) found that children's academic performance and language in Kenya were negatively impacted by excessive television watching.

The research explored the impact of content exposure on the academic performance of children according to parental perceptions. Furthermore, examining the moderating effect of mothers' characteristics i.e. education and occupation, and family characteristics i.e. setup and income, and the relationship between content exposure and academic performance. Keeping all aforementioned research a piece of evidence, this study puts forward these hypotheses:

H1. Children's content exposure negatively affects academic performance.

H2. There is a difference between the academic performance of Primary school children based on their viewership.

Since children spend most of their time with their mothers, it is a reality that children have a stronger bond with them than they do with their fathers. Similar to this, most underdeveloped nations, including Pakistan, believe that mothers are primarily responsible for raising their children. For this reason, the mother's education has an impact on the children as well (Almani, et al., 2012). Rauf and Shahid (2015) discovered a positive relationship between children's academic performance and their moms' level of education. According to Ara (2012), Academically, children of working mothers outperform those of non-working mothers.

Compared to women who do not work, working mothers tend to be better educated, financially secure, and more empowered, which

means that they help their children more with their schoolwork (Zahra et al., 2022). Therefore, this study explores the following:

H3. There is a difference in the academic performance of children on the basis of their mothers' occupation.

H4. The education of mothers positively moderates the relationship between children's content exposure and their academic performance.

H5. Mothers' occupations positively moderate the relationship between children's exposure to TV content and academic performance.

Similarly, family characteristics such as family income and family set up i.e. nuclear and joint also have an impact on the academic performance of children as Ella et al. (2015), concluded that the type of family in which they were raised significantly influences a student's academic performance. According to Rauf and Shahed (2015), children with financially successful parents outperformed as compared to children without any income at all. Similarly, Faaz and Khan (2017) discovered positive correlations between family income and the academic performance of children in the upper primary stage.

Gabriel (2013) discovered that the type of household significantly influences children's academic performance. Thus, the following theories have been proposed:

H6. There is a difference between the academic performance of children belonging to nuclear and joint families.

H7. Family income is a positive moderator in the relationship between children's content exposure and academic performance.

H8. Family setup is a positive moderator in the relationship between children's content exposure and their academic performance.

Methodology

Survey

This study purports to explore the effects of children's content exposure on their academic performance according to their parents' perceptions. A survey of 520 parents of primary school children was conducted.

A survey questionnaire was distributed among the respondents to collect data. A questionnaire has three parts i.e. demographic information, children's content exposure, and academic performance of children. A pilot study was conducted with 80 participants and the reliability value was .88.

Sample

The population of the study was parents of students in school between the ages of six to twelve years belonging to Lahore. The respondents were chosen using a multiphase sampling technique. Using a systematic sampling method, 4 towns in Lahore were selected as the first step. From the official list of the town of Lahore, every 2nd town was selected. The same website was used to obtain a list of every union council (UC) in the second step. Twenty parents of children and 26 union councils were chosen from each of the five units using systematic sampling. A total of 580 questionnaires were sent out to parents, and 540 of those were returned. All of the incomplete and incorrectly filled-out questionnaires were returned. 520 surveys were therefore deemed final (response rate = 89.6%).

Measures

Children's content exposure was an independent variable while academic performance was a dependent variable. The education and occupation of the mother, family setup and income were moderating variables.

Content Exposure

How much time kids spent watching TV throughout the week and on the weekends with parental permission was used to gauge their exposure to the media. Response categories of this question were less than an hour, one to two hours, two to three hours, three to four hours, and more than four hours. Numerous researchers have consistently employed this method to gauge children's content exposure (see (Anderson et al., 2007); Gentile et al., 2014).

Academic Performance

Parents were questioned about their children's average grade points from the previous school term in order to gauge the academic performance of the

children. The question was open-ended, with a maximum score of 100 percent and a minimum of 0%. Many scholars used this approach (see Duff et al., 2004; Herrero Lozano & Fillat Ballesteros, 2006; Li et al., 2019) to measure the academic performance of school-going children.

Results and Discussion

The sample's demographics revealed that most respondents were educated (368, 74.2%), among them 273 (52.5%) were 31 to 40 years old. The majority of children (337, 64.8%) that were recorded were boys, and the majority (379, 72.9%) were between the ages of 6 and 9.

Figure 1

Time Spending in Front of TV for Watching Children's Content during Weekdays and Weekends.

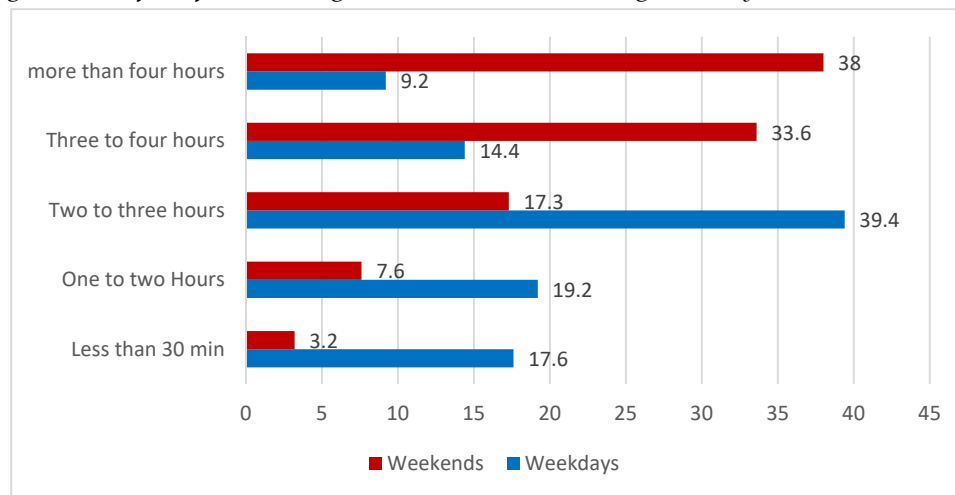


Figure 1 shows how much time kids spend watching TV on the weekends and during the week.

Analysis of findings shows that the majority of children (39.4%) spend 2-3 hours in front of the TV

on weekdays. Whereas on weekends the majority of children (38%) spend more than 4 hours in front of the TV watching children's content. Therefore, the results clearly show that children watch TV more on the weekends than they do on the weekdays.

Table 1.

Frequency Distribution of Children's Viewing Various TV Programs

Program	Don't watch	1-2 days	3 days	5- 4 days	6-7 days
Cartoons	47 (9%)	100 (19.2%)	112 (21.5%)	119 (22.9%)	142 (27.3%)
Movies	66 (12.7%)	21 (4%)	201 (38.6%)	113 (21.7%)	119 (22.8%)
Dramas	57 (10.9%)	113 (21.7%)	120 (23.3%)	150 (28.8%)	80 (15.3%)
Quiz shows	75 (14.4%)	142 (27.3%)	149 (28.7%)	108 (20.8%)	46 (8.8%)
Travelogues	81 (15.6%)	155 (29.8%)	157 (30.2%)	110 (21.2%)	17 (3.3%)
Science & Art Shows	77 (14.8%)	134 (25.8%)	162 (31.2%)	119 (22.9%)	28 (5.4%)
Reality Shows	75 (14.4%)	134 (25.8%)	119 (22.9%)	181 (32.8%)	11 (2.1%)

N=520

Table 2 presents the findings regarding the proportion of children who, according to their parents, watch certain kids' TV show genres on a

regular basis. Children's preferences for movies and cartoons over other genres are displayed in this table.

Figure 2.

Time Spending on Watching TV Content through YouTube.

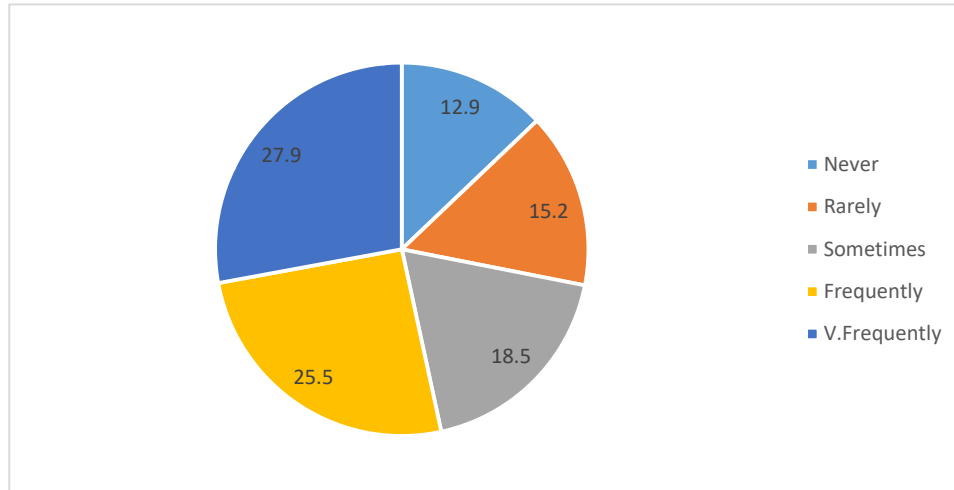


Figure 2 shows the percentage of children’s usage of YouTube for watching children's content that was already telecasted on TV channels. The results

show that the majority of children watch that content through YouTube very frequently (27.9%) and frequently (25.5%).

Table 2

Difference of Academic Performance among Heavy Viewers and Light Viewers

Variable	Light Viewers (n = 253)		Heavy Viewers (n = 267)		t (520)	P	95% CI		Cohen's d
	M	SD	M	SD			LL	UL	
Academic Performance	78.23	8.403	73.23	9.041	3.845	.001	-3.842	-1.620	0.572

Note. CI = Confidence Interval, LL= Lower Limit, UL = Upper Limit.

To determine the difference in the academic performance of heavy and light viewers, an independent sample t-test was used. The findings indicate that the academic performance of light viewers (M = 78.23, SD = 8.403) is better than the academic performance of heavy viewers (M = 73.23, SD = 9.041), $t(520) = 3.845$, $p < .05$, $d = 0.572$. Hence, H2 is validated. Literature also suggests, that watching TV for more hours affects the

academic performance of children (Khan,2012). Jordan et al., (2006) suggested that watching television for only 2 hours is good for children as it gives them more time to study perform well, and achieve good grades. On the contrary, Ahinda et al. (2011) have reported that spending a lot of time watching television badly affected children’s academic performance in Kenya.

Table 3

Difference in the Academic Performance of Children of Working Mothers and Nonworking Mothers

Variable	Working Mothers (n = 343)		Non-Working Mothers (n = 267)		t (520)	p	95% CI		Cohen's d
	M	SD	M	SD			LL	UL	
Academic Performance	74.29	9.712	72.03	12.36	2.118	.023	.160	4.361	0.203

Note. CI = Confidence Interval, LL= Lower Limit, UL = Upper Limit.

The study employed an independent sample t-test to examine any differences in the academic performance of children of working mothers and housewives. The findings further indicate that the academic performance of children of working mothers (M = 74.29, SD = 9.712) is better than the academic performance of children of housewives (M = 72.03, SD = 12.369), $t(520) = 2.118, p < .05, d =$

0.203. Hence, H3 is validated by the results. As working mothers are usually educated, economically strong, and more empowered so, they provide more assistance to their children in their academic tasks as compared to non-working mothers. It is also in line with the findings of Ara (2012) that working mothers' children perform better in studies.

Table 4

Difference between the Academic Performance of Children belonging to Joint and Nuclear Families

Variable	Joint Family (n = 371)		Nuclear Family (n = 149)		t (520)	p	95% CI		Cohen's d
	M	SD	M	SD			LL	UL	
Academic Performance	23.69	25.28	28.98	30.46	-2.030	.043	-10.387	-.16944	26.865

Note. CI = Confidence Interval, LL= Lower Limit, UL = Upper Limit.

To check the difference between the academic performance of children belonging to joint and nuclear families Independent sample t-test was applied. The findings indicate that the academic performance of children of a Nuclear family (M = 28.98, SD = 30.46) is better than the academic performance of children of a joint family (M = 23.69, SD = 25.28), $t(520) = -2.030, p < .05, d = 26.865$. These

findings have not only supported the H6 but are also consistent with the findings of Ella et al., (2015) that family setup has a significant impact on the academic performance of students. Research suggests that children's academic performance is significantly impacted by their family setup (Gabriel, 2013; Tabassum et al., 2014).

Table 5

Correlation Analysis of Children's Content Exposure and Academic Performance

Variables	Academic Performance
Children Content Exposure	-.55**
Correlation: ** $p < .01$.	

The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was utilized to determine the connection between children's content exposure to various types of content and their academic performance. The findings indicate a negative

relationship between children's content exposure and academic performance. This means that with the increased children's content exposure academic performance of children decreased as reported by the parents. These findings have validated the H1.

In Pakistan, children's content is not planned properly, and very little content is broadcast for children. Even telecasted content does not follow PEMRA guidelines. Secondly, most of the children

spend more time watching TV which is why they get less time for their study, which ultimately affects their academic performance (Ahinda et al., 2011; Khan, 2012; Sharif & Sargent, 2006).

Table 6

Hierarchical Moderated Regression Model of Academic Performance

Variables	Std. β	<i>t</i> -values	Std. β	<i>t</i> -values	Std. β	<i>t</i> -values
CE	.174	-3.245**	.186	-1.785	.879	2.420*
CE x Edu.			.241	3.427***	-1.420	-4.450***
CE x Occ.			.470	3.708**	-.201	-.457
CE x Income			.332	5.202***	.568	2.489*
CE x Setup			.103	1.763	-2.46	-1.238
Edu.					.825	3.814***
Occ.					.482	3.478***
Income					.421	2.482***
Setup					.321	1.861
R ² A.P. (%)	0.180		.224		.304	
Δ R ² A.P. (%)			.044		.080	

Notes: A: Basic Model; B: Moderated Model; C: Extended Model * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$; CE: Content exposure; Income: Family Income; Setup: Family Setup; Edu.: Education of Mother; Occ.: Occupation of Mother; A.P.: Academic Performance

The study employed a Hierarchical Moderated Regression Model to examine the moderating influence of a mother's education, occupation, family structure, and income on children's exposure to content and academic performance. According to Table 6, there is a noteworthy negative correlation between children's exposure to media content and their academic performance ($\beta = .174$, $t = -3.245$, $p < 0.01$). The findings also show that mother education and the content exposure that children receive have a substantial favorable impact on the children's academic performance ($\beta = .241$, $t = 3.427$, $p < 0.01$). The outcomes also show that the mother's occupation and the content exposure of the children had a substantial impact on academic performance ($\beta = .470$, $t = 3.708$, $p < 0.01$). Additionally, there is a substantial moderating outcome of family income on the association between children's content exposure and academic performance ($\beta = .332$, $t = 5.202$, $p < 0.001$).

The findings also indicate that there is no discernible relationship between a child's family setup, content exposure, and academic performance. The explained variation of academic performance increased significantly ($R^2 = .224$) with the addition of moderating variables. Children's academic performance was strongly impacted by

the mother's education as a moderating variable ($\beta = .825$ $t = -3.814$, $p < 0.001$).

Similarly, the mother's occupation is shown to be a major moderator and has a considerable impact on the academic performance of children ($\beta = .482$ $t = 3.487$, $p < 0.001$). The academic performance of children was strongly impacted by parental income as a moderating variable ($\beta = .421$ $t = 2.482$, $p < 0.001$). Nevertheless, the family structure does not show evidence of being a strong moderator and did not have a significant impact on children's academic performance ($\beta = .321$ $t = 1.861$, $p < 0.001$). The variation in academic performance was directly increased by these variables ($R^2 = .304$).

These results confirmed H4 that educated mothers positively moderate children's content exposure and academic performance. These findings have also supported the findings of Rauf and Shahid (2015) who studied the effect of parental income, educational and occupational status on the academic performance of kids and they found that the education of the mothers affects the academic performance of children. Results further show that the association between children's content exposure and academic performance is positively moderated by the mother's occupation. So H5 is validated by the

findings of the study. Additionally, it agrees with the findings of Ara's (2012) study in which she concluded that children of working mothers have better academic performance as compared to non-working mothers.

The results not only supported the H7 that family income is a positive moderator between children's content exposure and academic performance but also supported the findings of Rauf and Shahed (2015), Faaz and Khan (2017) that children belonging to high-income levels perform better in studies as compared to children with less income parents. It is also in line with the findings of Anderson et al. (2001) and Wright et al. (2001) who suggested that socioeconomic status serves as a moderator between television use and school performance of children. Children from poorer socioeconomic backgrounds may benefit most from watching TV, especially instructional programs, as it can improve their academic performance.

The results further stated that family setup positively moderates the connection between

children's content exposure and their academic performance. However, the study's results did not corroborate this hypothesis as results showed that family setup did not moderate the relationship between content exposure and the academic

performance of children. Simultaneously these findings have contradicted the findings of many researchers who inferred family setup as a positive moderator between content exposure and the academic performance of children (Ella et al., 2015; Gabriel, 2013, Tabassum et al., 2014).

Conclusion

According to the findings of this study, children's content exposure and academic performance were negatively correlated. The results of the study on the moderating effect of a mother's education and occupation demonstrated that these factors positively influenced the association between content exposure and the academic performance of children. Additionally, current findings demonstrated that family income had a positive moderating effect on the academic performance of children and content exposure, but family structure had no moderating influence on the association between the two variables.

Future researchers may investigate other research designs, such as observational, content analysis, and experimental studies. Further consideration should be given to other elements, such as the behavioral and cognitive effects of children's content on teenagers and its social ramifications.

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