

## **MEDIA INFLUENCE ON PROSOCIAL BEHAVIOUR IN ADOLESCENTS: EXPLORING POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE IMPACTS**

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### **ABSTRACT :**

This study explores the intricate relationship between media consumption and prosocial behaviour in adolescents, aiming to understand how young people make sense of and navigate the diverse messages they encounter through various media platforms. Recognizing the limitations of simple cause-and-effect models, this qualitative research utilises online questionnaire to provide adolescents with a platform to share nuanced and detailed narratives about their experiences with media and its influence on their understanding of prosocial values and behaviours. This study will employ an online questionnaire designed to elicit rich, qualitative data. The questionnaire also will be structured around open-ended questions that encourage in-depth reflection and storytelling, allowing the participants to share their experiences in their own words. A diverse sample of 50 adolescent females aged 16 - 20 will be recruited to capture a range of media consumption habits, preferred genres, and socioeconomic backgrounds. The online questionnaire will explore media consumption practices, meaning-making interpretation and influence on prosocial values and behaviours. Participants will describe their engagement with various media platforms, including preferred genres, frequency of use, and social contexts surrounding their consumption. Open-ended prompts will encourage adolescents to reflect on how they interpret and make sense of the messages, values and behaviours portrayed in different types of media, focusing on both positive and negative examples. Participants will be asked to share specific examples and personal anecdotes illustrating how media has influenced their understanding of prosocial concepts like empathy, altruism, and helping, we well as how it has shaped their own behaviours in real-life situations. Data analysis will utilise the thematic analysis, drawing on the principles of qualitative research to identify and interpret patterns, themes and meanings within the adolescents' narratives. The study aims to uncover the complex interplay between media exposure, individual interpretation, and social context in shaping adolescent prosocialdevelopment. By providing a platform for adolescents to share their lived experiences through online narratives, this study will offer valuable insights for educators, parents and media creators seeking to promote positive social and moral development in young people's navigating an increasingly complex media landscape.

### **INTRODUCTION :**

Adolescence, characterised by rapid physical, cognitive and social development, is increasingly shaped by the widespread influence of media. This pervasive media presence has raised concerns regarding its effects on adolescents' behaviour, particularly in relation to their prosocial tendencies - actions aimed at benefiting others. Prosocial behaviour is essential for adolescent growth, playing a vital role in fostering a healthy and cohesive society. Media has the potential to be a powerful catalyst for encouraging prosocial behaviour, though its impact is both intricate and varied. Positive representations of empathy, moral challenges and uplifting real - life narratives can cultivate empathy, compassion, and a sense of social responsibility among adolescents (Gentile, Lynch, & Anderson, 2009). Research indicates that exposure to prosocial media content can enhance behaviours like helping others, sharing, and volunteering (Anderson, C. A., & Bushman, 2018). Despite its potential benefits, the media's impact on adolescent prosocial behaviour is not wholly positive. Exposure to aggressive, violent, or antisocial content can desensitise adolescents to violence and make harmful behaviours seem normal (Anderson et al., 2007). Studies have consistently found

that exposure to violent media is associated with increased aggressive behaviour in adolescents, which may result in a decrease in prosocial tendencies (Anderson, Bushman, & Huesmann, 2003). The influence of the media on adolescent prosocial behaviour is a complex issue. While it can foster positive social skills through empathetic characters and inspiring stories, it can also hinder the development of these traits. Adolescent conduct includes prosocial behaviour which includes acts like sharing, lending a hand and demonstrating empathy with the intention of benefiting others (Anderson, C. A., & Bushman, 2018). Prosocial tendencies may be hampered by the normalising of negative behaviour and the possibility of unpleasant social interactions online, such as cyberbullying. Constant media exposure can also result in aggressive and antisocial behaviours (Smith, J., & Lee, 2020). Recognising the dual impact of media on adolescent prosocial behaviour is essential for crafting strategies that encourage positive social development in adolescents. By thoughtfully monitoring the content adolescents consume and offering appropriate guidance and support, parents, educators, and policymakers can leverage the positive aspects of media minimising negative influences (Walch & Sabey, 2020). Parents can actively shape their children's media consumption by setting limits on screen time, monitoring the content they watch or play, and discussing media messages with them. Open communication about the potential impact of media can help adolescents develop critical thinking skills and make informed choices. Parents can also model responsible media use by demonstrating their own healthy relationship with technology (Walch & Sabey, 2020). Educators can play a vital role in media literacy among adolescents. Through the integration of media analysis and critical thinking abilities into the educational program, instructors may facilitate students' growth in comprehending media messages and their possible influence. Teachers may also provide a safe space in the classroom where students feel free to voice their ideas and debate media material. (Swart, 2023). Policymakers can also contribute to fostering positive media environments for adolescents. By implementing regulations that promote responsible media content and protect children from harmful content, policymakers can invest in initiatives that support media literacy education and research on the impact of media on adolescent development (Amber, 2024). Adolescents who want to make educated decisions about the information they consume and navigate the complicated media environment must possess media literacy skills. Media literacy involves understanding how media is produced, distributed, and consumed, as well as being able to analyse and evaluate media messages critically. By developing media and better equipped to resist the negative influences of harmful content (Mrisho & Dominic, 2023). The uneven access to technology and the internet, known as the "digital divide," might worsen the influence of media on the prosocial conduct of adolescents. Adolescents from low-income or marginalised communities may have limited access to positive media content and fewer opportunities for online learning and engagement. In order to close the digital gap and guarantee that all teenagers have equal access to the tools and resources they need to improve their media literacy, educators and policymakers should collaborate (Liu, 2021). The influence of media on adolescent prosocial behaviour is a complex and multifaceted issue. While the media has the potential to be a powerful force for positive social change, it can also contribute to negative outcomes. Understanding the dual nature of media's influence and taking proactive steps to promote positive media consumption is essential for fostering healthy social development in adolescents. By working together, parents, educators, policymakers, and the broader community can create a media environment that supports adolescent growth and well-being (Chima Abimbola Eden et al., 2024).

#### **AIMS OF THE STUDY :**

The study aims to explore the intricate relationship between media consumption and female adolescent prosocial behaviour. The main research question is "How does exposure to different types of media content affect prosocial behaviour in female adolescents?." following a subsequent research question asking "What are the positive and negative impacts of media on female adolescent behaviour?" By examining the diverse range of media content female adolescents are exposed to and

understanding how they interpret and make sense of these messages, the study seeks to shed light on the complex interplay between media, individual interpretation, and social context on shaping adolescent social development. Specifically, the study aims to identify the types of media content that female adolescents are most exposed to and how this varies across different demographic groups. Although, there is substantial evidence of media influencing prosocial behaviour in research, it has been observed that there is a research gap in understandings of the influence on female adolescent prosocial behaviour. This study also seeks to understand how female adolescents interpret and make sense of the messages, values, and behaviours portrayed in different types of media, including positive and negative examples. Additionally, the study will explore the ways in which media consumption influences adolescents' understanding of prosocial concepts like empathy, altruism and helping, as well as their own behaviours in real-life situations. Furthermore, the study aims to provide insights for educators, parents, and media creators on how to leverage the positive aspects of media and minimise negative influences on adolescent social development.

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE:**

The profound impact of media on adolescent development has become a focal point of contemporary research. As young people increasingly immerse themselves in the digital landscape, concerns have arisen regarding its influence on their behaviour, particularly their prosocial tendencies. This literature review examines the complex interplay between media consumption and female adolescent prosocial behaviour, exploring both positive and negative outcomes. Research suggests that media can exert both positive and negative influences on adolescent prosocial behaviour. On one hand, positive media content, such as prosocial video games and empathetic characters, has been shown to foster empathy, compassion, and a sense of social responsibility (Gentile, Lynch, and Anderson, 2009). Adolescents, especially girls, have a tendency to be very empathic, which makes them emotionally invested in characters and plots. Young viewers may feel strong emotions like grief, rage, or fear when these characters encounter hardships or injustices because of the tragic circumstances or perceived unfairness shown (Peng et al., 2023). Studies have demonstrated that exposure to prosocial media content can enhance behaviours like helping others, sharing and volunteering (Anderson, C.A., Bushman, 2018). Conversely, exposure to aggressive, violent or antisocial media content can have detrimental effects on adolescent prosocial behaviour. Studies have consistently found that exposure to violent media is associated with increased aggressive behaviour in adolescents, which may result in a decrease in prosocial tendencies (Anderson Bushna&Huesmann, 2003). The issue of cyberbullying in particular is really serious. Because of the anonymity and reach of social media platforms, bullying behaviours may become more common, which might have a negative impact on the victims in many ways. Adolescent girls who encounter cyberbullying could have anxiety, loneliness, and poor self-worth. Because online harassment is continuous, it may worsen these conditions and result in more serious mental health difficulties including depression and, in the worst situations, suicide ideation (Tao et al., 2024). Poor self-esteem and feelings of inadequacy may result from being exposed to carefully selected images of other people's purportedly perfect lives on a regular basis. This conduct, which is often referred to as "social media envy," may make a variety of psychiatric issues worse, including as anxiety, depression, and illnesses related to body image (Ngien, 2020). Moreover, exposure to harmful content can desensitise adolescents to violence and make harmful behaviours seem normal (Anderson et al., 2007). The content and context of media exposure can significantly influence its impact on adolescent prosocial behaviour. For example, exposure to prosocial media content within a supportive and engaging environment may be more effective in promoting prosocial behaviour than exposure in isolation. Considering the dual nature of media exposure, it is important to think about how to best educate young girls to optimise the positive aspects of media while avoiding its negative consequences. Maintaining this equilibrium is crucial to guarantee that media intake enhances their growth and welfare (FabrizioSantonniccolo et al., 2023). Another serious problem linked to excessive

media use is sleep deprivation. According to the research, spending a significant amount of time on social media might disrupt sleep cycles, especially if teenage girls are using these platforms late at night. Sleep deprivation may severely effect an individual's physical and mental well-being, resulting in weariness, trouble focussing, and heightened sensitivity to stress and anxiety. Prolonged sleep deprivation may ultimately result in more serious health problems including depression and immune system impairment. (Chattu, Vijay Kumar, and others, 2018). Additionally, the cultural and social context in which adolescents consume media can shape their interpretation and response to media messages. Developing solutions that promote healthy social development requires an understanding of the dual effects of media on prosocial behaviour in adolescents (Hui, Singh, Lin, and Dillon, 2024). Collaboratively, parents, educators, and lawmakers must maximise the positive impacts of media while mitigating its negative consequences. Parents and educators may assist teenagers in developing a critical knowledge of media messages and the ability to make intelligent decisions about the information they consume by carefully monitoring the content they consume, providing appropriate advice and support, and encouraging media literacy skills (Swart, 2023). Several theoretical perspectives have been applied to understand the relationship between media and adolescent prosocial behaviour. Social learning theory suggests that adolescents learn prosocial behaviour by observing and imitating models in media content (Bandura, 1977). Cognitive-developmental theory emphasises the role of cognitive development in shaping adolescents' understanding and interpretation of media messages (Piaget, 1962). Cultivation theory posits that prolonged exposure to media can shape adolescents' perceptions of reality and their own behaviours (Gerber, Gross, Morgan, Signorielli and Shanahan, 1986). The limitations and challenges noted from previous research on the impact of media on adolescent prosocial behaviour has yielded mixed results. Some studies have found positive associations between exposure to prosocial media content and prosocial behaviour, while others have found no significant effects or even negative associations (ChristofferLysenstøen et al., 2021). These discrepancies may be due to variations in specific media content studied, the age and development stage of the adolescents, the cultural and social context, and the research methodologies employed. There are difficulties and restrictions associated with research on the impact of media on prosocial conduct in adolescents. One significant challenge is the difficulty of establishing causality between media exposure and prosocial behaviour. Correlational studies, which are common in this area of research, cannot definitively prove that media exposure causes changes in prosocial behaviour. Longitudinal studies can track individuals over time and can help address this issue, but they are often time-consuming and resource-intensive. Another limitation is the diversity of media content and platforms that adolescents consume. The rapid evolution of the media landscape makes it difficult to keep up with the latest trends and to study the impact of merging technologies on adolescent development (Li, 2023). Additionally, the cultural and social context in which adolescents consume media can vary widely, making it difficult to generalise findings across different populations. Despite these challenges, there is a growing need for further research on the impact of media on adolescent prosocial behaviour (Mumtaz et al., 2023). Future studies should focus on the long-term effects of media exposure, the role of social context in shaping media influence, and the effectiveness of interventions aimed at promoting positive media consumption among adolescents (AmritKaurPurba et al., 2023). Additionally, researchers should continue to explore the potential benefits of prosocial media content and develop strategies for leveraging these benefits to foster positive social development. The impact of media on prosocial conduct in adolescents is a multidimensional and intricate matter. Although media may have both beneficial and detrimental impacts, it is crucial to comprehend the subtleties of this connection in order to design tactics that support constructive social growth (Khalaf et al., 2023). By conducting rigorous research and implementing evidence-based interventions, we can help adolescents navigate the digital landscape in a way that fosters empathy, compassion and a sense of social responsibility.

## **METHODOLOGIES:**

### **Research Design: Case Study Design :**

The purpose of the research was to look at how female adolescents between the ages of 16 and 20 consume media. To learn more about the preferences and media platform involvement of a sample of fifty participants, an online questionnaire was sent to them. The questionnaire was designed using two specifications: first, the guidelines provided by American Psychological Association for Psychological Assessments and Evaluation, and second, a previous study that has designed its own pro-sociality scale as there is currently no official APA scale for prosociality. The research's conclusions provide insightful details on how media affects this group's daily life.

A qualitative research approach called case study design entails a thorough examination of a specific instance or event. This approach is particularly well-suited for exploring complex issues, understanding individual experiences, and gaining insights into real-world contexts (Yin, 2014; Stake, 1995). Case studies are characterised by their in-depth exploration of a specific case or phenomenon, allowing researchers to examine it from multiple angles and perspectives. They emphasise the importance of understanding the context in which the case occurs, recognizing that individual experiences and events are shaped by broader social, cultural and historical factors (Yin and Thomas, 2014). Data for case studies is usually gathered from a variety of sources, including observations, interviews, documents, and artefacts. The study results' validity and dependability are improved by this data triangulation. Moreover, case studies seek to provide a comprehensive grasp of the case while encapsulating the subtleties and complexity of the phenomena under investigation (Yin, 2014; Stake, 1995). While case studies are often exploratory, they can also be guided by a theoretical framework. This can help to focus the research and provide a lens through which to interpret the findings. Data collection in case study design typically involves a combination of interviews, observations, document analysis, artefact involved in the case, while observations can provide valuable insights into behaviours, interactions and the physical environment. Data analysis in case study design often involves a process of thematic analysis, where researchers identify patterns, themes and meanings within the data. This can be done through coding, memoing and constant comparison techniques (Yin, 2014, p. 45). Case study design offers several advantages, including the ability to provide in-depth understanding of complex phenomena, explore contextual factors, generate rich and detailed data, and develop or test theories. However, case studies also have limitations, such as lack of generalizability due to the focus on a specific case, the time-consuming nature of the research, and the potential for researcher bias (Yin, 2014; Stake, 1995). Case study design is particularly suited for exploring complex phenomena that cannot be easily studied through quantitative methods, understanding individual experiences and perspectives, developing theories or testing existing ones, and gaining insights into real-world contexts (Yin, 2014, p. 45). The case study design is a potent research technique that may provide insightful information on a variety of phenomena. Through meticulous case selection, multi-source data collection, and rigorous analysis, researchers may develop a comprehensive and nuanced knowledge of the topics they are studying. (Yin, 2014, p. 45)

**Ethical Considerations:** The American Psychological Association (APA) Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct

The American Psychological Association (APA) Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct provides a robust framework for ethical research in psychology. These guidelines address various kinds of research, including informed consent, confidentiality, and the treatment of participants (American Psychological Association, 2017). A fundamental component of ethical research is informed consent. The nature of the research, any possible risks or benefits, and the participants' ability to withdraw at any time must all be disclosed to them. The participant should be able to comprehend the language used to provide this information (American Psychological Association, 2017). Confidentiality is another critical ethical principle. Researchers must protect the privacy of participants' data. This includes ensuring that data is stored securely and that identifying

information is kept confidential. Confidentiality may, however, not always apply, for example, when there is a danger to oneself or others (American Psychological Association, 2017). According to the ethical precepts of Beneficence and Non-Maleficence, researchers must enhance participant benefits and limit participant damage. This indicates that the research's potential advantages need to exceed its drawbacks. Additionally, researchers must take action to lessen participant suffering or anxiety.(American Psychological Association, 2017). Justice requires that research participants be treated fairly and equitably. This means that researchers should avoid exploiting vulnerable populations and should strive to represent diverse groups in their studies. Fidelity and responsibility are ethical principles that require researchers to establish and maintain trust with participants. This includes being honest and transparent about the research and fulfilling commitments made to participants. In addition to these core principles, the PA Code of Conduct also addresses specific ethical issues such as deception, debriefing and publication. Researchers are expected to be aware of and comply with all relevant ethical standards in their work (American Psychological Association, 2017). By adhering to the APA Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct, researchers can ensure that their work is conducted ethically and responsibly. These guidelines help to protect the rights of participants and maintain public trust in psychological research.

#### **RESEARCH METHODS: QUESTIONNAIRE :**

Questionnaires are a widely used data collection tool in social science research, providing a structured and efficient means of gathering information from a large number of participants. This paper outlines the key steps involved in designing and administering effective questionnaires, from defining research objectives to analysing the collected data. The first step in questionnaire design is to clearly define the research objectives. By identifying the specific information sought, researchers can focus their questions and avoid irrelevant information. The next step is to determine the target population, which will help tailor the questions and language to the characteristics of the respondents. The questionnaire's format must then be decided upon, either structured with closed-ended questions or unstructured with open-ended questions (Young, 2015). Developing clear and concise questions is crucial for questionnaire design. Jargon, double-barrelled questions and leading questions should be avoided in favour of simple language that is easy to understand. The order of questions can also influence respondents' answers, so it is important to start with easy, non-threatening questions and group related questions together (Dougherty, 2021). Once the questionnaire is designed, it is essential to pilot test it with a small group of individuals similar to the target population. This helps identify potential problems or areas for improvement before the questionnaire is administered to a larger sample. The choice of distribution method depends on the characteristics of the target population and the resources available to the researcher. Providing clear instructions, and ensuring confidentiality can help increase participation rates (Charlton, 2000). Common mistakes in questionnaire design include using jargon or complex language, asking leading questions, using double-barrelled questions, failing to pilot test, and not providing clear instructions. By avoiding these pitfalls and following guidelines that will provide valuable data for research (Brownback and Novotny, 2018).

#### **DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION:**

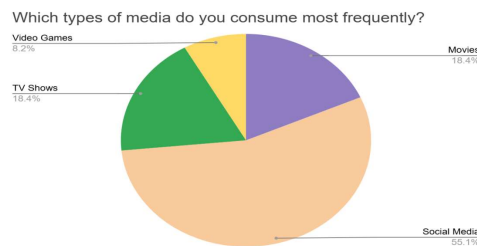
A qualitative research technique called "thematic analysis" involves finding, examining, and interpreting patterns or themes in data. When studying the influence of media on adolescent behaviour, this method can provide valuable insights into therecurring themes that emerge across different types of media and their impact on prosocial and antisocial behaviours (Ozuem, 2023). To conduct a thematic analysis of media influences, researcher would typically collect data from a variety of sources, such as interviews, questionnaires, observations, or content analysis of media content. Once the data is collected, it is systematically coded and analysed to identify recurring patterns or themes. These themes might relate to the specific content of media, the way the content is

presented, or the individual characteristics of the adolescent viewers (Aziz Qaissi, 2024). Researchers may learn more about the elements that lead to prosocial and antisocial conduct in adolescents by detecting recurring patterns in the ways that various media kinds affect teenage behaviour. For example, they might find that exposure to violent content is associated with increased aggression among adolescents, while exposure to positive role models is associated with increased prosocial behaviour (Jowsey et al., 2021). Additionally, thematic analysis helps to identify the nuances and complexities of media influence. It can reveal how different types of media influence female adolescent behaviour. Researchers may design evidence-based treatments to enhance good outcomes and get a greater knowledge of the variables contributing to prosocial and antisocial behaviours by finding common themes and patterns(Ozuem, 2023).

**RESULTS :**

Social media is the most frequently mentioned category across responses, showing its widespread usage. They have also mentioned that Instagram, Snapchat, YouTube, and Twitter were prevalent in their daily lives. Other entries mention other types of media such as movies, TV shows, podcasts and print media.

**Figure.1 Showing the types of media consumed by female adolescents.**



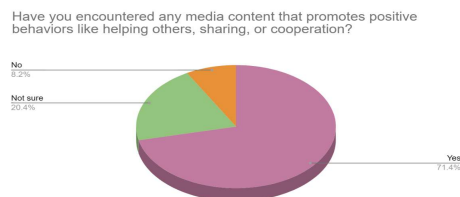
The 1-3 hours and 3-5 hours categories are the most frequently reported durations. A notable number of respondents report spending more than 5 hours per day on media. A small number of respondents report minimal media (about an hour).

**Figure.2 Provides information on how many hours respondents spent on different types of media.**



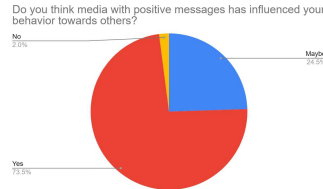
71.4% of respondents have reported that they have encountered media content promoting pro-social behaviour such as helping, sharing or cooperation. 20.4% of respondents were unsure whether they had encountered such content. Only 8.2% of respondents indicated that they had not encountered any media content promoting positive behaviours.

**Figure. 3 Showing whether female adolescents have come across display of positive behaviours on social media**



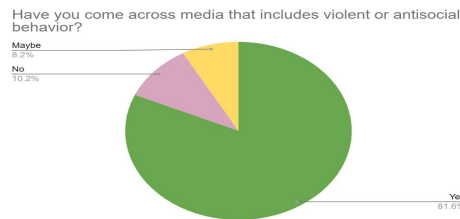
73.5% of respondents believe that media with pro-social behaviour has influenced their behaviour towards others. 24.5% of respondents are uncertain about whether media with positive messages has influenced their behaviour, answering with “maybe.” Only 2% of respondents feel that media with pro-social has not influenced their behaviour at all.

**Figure.4 Showing response of participants whether media has influenced their pro-social behaviour.**



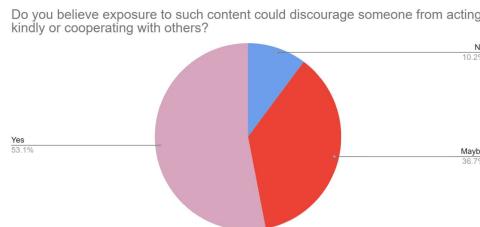
A significant majority of respondents (81.6%) have come across media with violent or anti-social behaviour. A smaller portion (10.2%) reported not encountering such media. The “Maybe” responses (11.4) indicate some uncertainty or variability in experiences with media content.

**Figure.5 Shows how many adolescents encounter violent or antisocial behaviour**



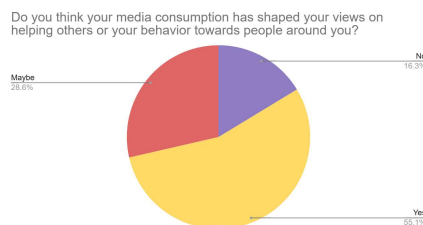
53.1% believe that exposure to certain media content could discourage them from being pro-social. 36.7% are uncertain whether certain media content affects their pro-social behaviour. 10.2% of the respondents believe that media exposure does not discourage pro-social behaviour.

**Figure. 8 Shwoing whether respondents believe exposure to certain content could discourage someone from acting kindly or cooperating with others**



“Yes” is the most common response (55.1%), suggesting that a majority of respondents believe that their media consumption has influenced their views on pro-social behaviour. “Maybe” (28.6%) indicates some uncertainty or varied opinions on whether media consumption has had an impact. A smaller percentage of 16.3%, do not believe their media consumption has shaped their views or behaviour.

**Figure. 9 Showing how media consumption has shaped views on helping others or behaviour towards people**





## **DISCUSSION :**

The study aimed to investigate the media consumption habits of young females aged 16 - 20. An online questionnaire was administered to a sample of 50 participants to gather insights into their preferences and engagement with various media platforms. The findings from this research provide valuable information about the role of media in the lives of this demographic. The following were the themes that were identified from the responses that were incurred: behavioural impact of the media consumption, ethical consideration in media consumption, content filtering and age-appropriate media, safety and respect in media and misinformation and content control.

One of the key revelations from the study is that a significant portion of the participants spends one to three hours daily consuming content on social media platforms and online web series. This finding is indicative of the central role that digital media plays in the lives of young females. As shown in Figure.1, for many, social media is not just a pastime but an essential part of their social interactions, information consumption, and entertainment choices. Sleep deprivation is another significant issue associated with excessive media consumption. The study suggests that the substantial time investment in social media can interfere with sleep patterns, particularly if young females are staying up late to engage with these platforms. Sleep deprivation may negatively impact an individual's physical and mental well-being, resulting in exhaustion, difficulties concentrating, and heightened vulnerability to stress and anxiety. Chronic sleep deprivation might eventually lead to more severe health issues, such as depression and impaired immune system. (Vijay Kumar Chattu et al., 2018). The high engagement levels suggest that these platforms have become embedded in their daily routines, influencing their behaviours, thoughts, and social dynamics (Azzaakiyyah, 2023). For young women who may be looking for support, affirmation, or a feeling of belonging, this sense of community can be very helpful. (Castillo et al., 2019). Harmful comments and unhealthy comparisons are also prevalent on social media. Platforms like Instagram, which are heavily image-driven, can foster unrealistic standards of beauty and success. Young girls who are still developing their identities might feel under pressure to live up to these expectations, which could make them unhappy with how they look and how their lives are going. Continually being exposed to well-chosen pictures of other people's supposedly ideal lifestyles might lead to poor self-esteem and feelings of inadequacy. This behaviour, which is often called "social media envy," may exacerbate a number of psychological problems, including as anxiety, sadness, and body image disorders (Ngien, 2020). A significant proportion of respondents believe that exposure to violent content impacts their pro-social behaviours, reducing their likelihood to act kindly or cooperate with others. Studies indicate that media may impact adolescent prosocial conduct in both good and negative ways. Positive media material has been shown to cultivate empathy, compassion, and a feeling of social responsibility (Gentile, Lynch, and Anderson, 2009). Examples of this kind of content include prosocial video games and sympathetic characters. Research has shown that exposure to prosocial media material may improve altruistic, sharing, and volunteer behaviours (Anderson, C.A., Bushman, 2018). Many respondents reported feeling emotionally affected by media, particularly when they witness others being upset or in distress. This highlights the role media plays in shaping emotional responses and empathy. Many respondents called for limiting exposure to violent and adult content, especially for younger audiences. They also emphasized the harmful impact of violent media on prosocial behaviour, cooperation and kindness. Furthermore, adolescents who are exposed to hazardous information may become desensitised to violence and may begin to see harmful actions as normal (Anderson et al., 2007). On the other hand, teenage prosocial conduct may suffer by exposure to violent, aggressive, or antisocial digital material. Research has repeatedly shown that teenagers who are exposed to violent media exhibit more aggressive behaviour, which may lead to a decline in prosocial inclinations (Anderson Bushna&Huesmann, 2003). The way that media exposure is structured and what it contains may have a big effect on how prosocial adolescent conduct is. For instance, prosocial activity may be encouraged more successfully when prosocial media information is exposed in a welcoming and stimulating setting than when it is exposed alone (Anderson et al.,

2007).The spread of false information was seen as a major concern. Respondents want media platforms to focus on balanced, nuanced reporting rather than sensationalised or inaccurate content. There is a demand for media to spread messages of humanity, unity, and goodness, rather than focusing on divisive or negative themes. Respondents also expressed the desire for media to help cultivate empathy and awareness of social issues. Media content often perpetuates traditional gender roles and expectations by depicting women in submissive or objectified ways. These representations can be especially upsetting for teenage girls, as they may not see themselves reflected in strong and diverse female characters, leading to feelings of frustration and isolation. Additionally, adolescents, particularly females, typically exhibit high levels of empathy, causing them to form deep emotional connections with characters and storylines. When these characters face difficulties or injustices, young viewers may experience intense emotions such as sadness, anger, or anxiety in response to the perceived unfairness or tragic circumstances portrayed (Peng et al., 2023). Responses to the questions of what needs to be changed in the media highlight several critical areas that warrant attention which include implementations of age restrictions on social content, the elimination of negative comments and thoughts, addressing issues like body shaming, and tackling problems related to fake accounts and account hacking. Some respondents want media to present issues more objectively, helping audiences view situations without bias of sensationalism. Media consumption, particularly through social media and online platforms, has several positive implications for young females. These platforms offer a space for self - expression, allowing users to create and share content that reflects their identities, interests and values (Falola, 2021). For young females, this can be empowering, providing them with a voice and an audience, and enabling them to explore and express their individuality in ways that were not possible in previous generations (Graham, 2016). Moreover, the study highlights the exposure to positive content, such as inspirational messages, motivational quotes, and narratives of humility and charity. Such content can have a profound - influence on young females, encouraging them to adopt prosocial behaviours and shaping their views towards others in a positive light. This is particularly important during adolescence, a critical period of social and emotional development. Furthermore, social media platforms provide young girls the chance to create groups and interact with others who share their interests. Through various platforms, individuals may interact with others who have similar interests or experiences by following influencers, joining online groups, or taking part in discussions. Given the dual nature of media exposure, it is crucial to consider how young females can be guided to maximise the benefits of media while minimising its harmful effects. This balance is essential for ensuring that media consumption contributes positively to their development and well-being (FabrizioSantonico et al., 2023).A significant number of respondents emphasized reducing toxicity in online interactions, especially to make platforms more child-friendly. This includes curbing abusive behaviour, cyberbullying and body shaming. Online groups may provide a secure setting for exchanging stories, giving counsel, and getting support—all of which are advantageous for mental health. The research highlights the possible drawbacks of media usage in addition to its numerous benefits, especially when it comes to social media, as the literature review notes. The predominance of negative remarks, unwholesome comparisons, and cyberbullying are some of the negative effects of media exposure that may seriously impair young girls' mental health. (Zhu et al., 2021).Cyberbullying, in particular, is a significant concern. Social media platforms' anonymity and reach have the potential to encourage bullying practices, which may have a variety of detrimental effects on the victims. Young females who experience cyberbullying may suffer from low self- esteem, feelings of isolation, and anxiety. The persistent nature of online harassment can exacerbate these issues, leading to more severe mental health problems, such as depression and, in extreme cases, suicidal thoughts (Tao et al., 2024). Respondents expressed a strong need for stricter age-appropriate content filters, particularly to protect young children from inappropriate or harmful content. They also advocated for platforms that focus on children's education and positive learning. Working together, legislators, parents, and educators must harness the benefits of media while minimising its drawbacks. (Swart, 2023)There is

a desire for more realistic and authentic portrayals in media to counteract the sensationalism and unrealistic expectations that are often shown. By closely observing the content adolescents consume, offering suitable guidance and support, and promoting media literacy skills, parents and educators can help teenagers develop a critical understanding of media messages and the capacity to make informed decisions about the information they consume (Swart, 2023). Respondents believe that exposure to uplifting and constructive messages can reinforce values such as empathy, kindness, and social responsibility, which are crucial for personal growth and the development of healthy social relationships. Additionally, the cultural and social environment in which adolescents consume media might impact their perception and reaction to media messages. Understanding the dual impacts of media on prosocial conduct in teenagers is necessary to design solutions that support healthy social development (Hui, Singh, Lin, and Dillon, 2024).

### **CONCLUSION :**

Mixed findings have been found regarding the limits and difficulties identified in earlier study on the influence of media on teenage prosocial conduct. Prosocial conduct and exposure to prosocial media material have been linked positively in some research, while there have been no discernible benefits or even negative links in others. Social media has become a fundamental aspect of modern life, particularly for young people. For females aged 16 - 20, digital platforms provide valuable opportunities for connection, self-expression, and personal development. They also pose significant risks to mental health through exposure to negative elements like cyberbullying, harmful comparisons and body shaming. These issues can have severe consequences such as low self-esteem, anxiety, and depression. To navigate these challenges effectively, parents, educators and government officials all have a unique role in fostering a safer and more positive digital environment for young women. Parents can set healthy boundaries around media usage, encourage open conversations with their children about what they watch, and be ready to address any concerns about cyberbullying or negative influences. The variety of media outlets and information that adolescents consume is another drawback. It's challenging to stay on top of the newest trends and research how combining different technology affects the development of adolescents due to the media landscape's constant change. By engaging with their children about their social media experiences, parents can help them develop a critical understanding of the content they consume. Moreover, setting limits on screen time and monitoring online interactions can help reduce the likelihood of negative experiences. Educators also have an important responsibility in equipping young females with the skills they need to critically engage with the media which can include media literacy in their lessons. Media literacy involves the ability to critically analyse and evaluate media content, understand its potential impact, and make informed decisions about what to consume. Additionally, educators can create a support environment in schools and colleges that addresses issues like cyberbullying and promotes positive online behaviours, helping students develop healthy digital habits. Government officials can work to create safer online environments by implementing regulations that protect users from harmful content and promoting initiatives for digital well-being. This includes addressing key issues like cyberbullying, the spread of fake news, and the proliferation of misinformation. Strong measures like improved reporting systems, stricter content moderation, greater transparency and actions against harmful behaviours must be considered. Moreover, it is important to provide young females with access to support systems that can help them cope with challenges of media exposure. This could include counselling services, peer support groups, or online resources that offer guidance on dealing with issues like cyberbullying, low self-esteem or social media addiction. Adolescent prosocial behaviour and media influences are complex issues, but through evidence-based strategies and collective efforts, we can promote positive social development, empathy, and resilience in young females, helping them navigate social media safely while minimizing potential risks. While this study provides important insights into adolescents' perceptions of media influence on pro-social behaviour, improvements in research design-such as objective measures and longitudinal tracking

could enhance support of the findings. The results lay a foundation for future research to explore more deeply the complex relationship between media consumption and prosocial behaviour, with significant implications for creating a media landscape that encourages positive social values.

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