

Kisumu County Secondary School Students' Preferences to Content Published In the Pulse Magazine in Retrospect to Negative Behaviour

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Abstract

Globally the print media has made strides in publishing content that is appealing to readers. The Kenyan mainstream newspapers have established colourful and sensational pullouts to attract youthful readers. Among the most popular free pullout entertainment magazines is the 'Pulse' which is accessed by the youth in secondary schools and its content may be having a behavioural impact on them. The objective of the study was to establish the preference secondary school students have to content published in the Pulse on negative behaviour that is likely to motivate students to engage in practices that contribute to cases of early pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases, and drug abuse. The study was guided by the Media Dependency Theory by Ball-Rokeach and DeFluer [1], showing audience dependency on media information. The study adopted a cross-sectional design targeting a population of 24,539 students. A sample size of 393 was drawn from the population of 24,539 students using Yamane [2], sample size formula. The study thereafter administered questionnaires to the 392 students. The study established that 356 respondents out of the 393 found content in the Pulse magazine appealing at a frequency rate of 90%. This was of concern due to the likelihood that the youth would engage in risky behaviour if given a chance leading to outcomes detrimental to their health and academic performance. The study will assist education policy makers, the media, and academicians in establishing ethical policies during the development of print media content.

Keywords: Secondary school students, youth, teenagers, Pulse magazine, media, negative behaviour, Kisumu County.

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INTRODUCTION

The media is viewed as an information dissemination vehicle with the primary functions of informing, educating and entertaining its readers [3]. Globally the print media has made tremendous strides in publishing entertainment content that is appealing to readers. For Kenya, the print media industry has seen some steady growth since independence to become one of the most vibrant in East Africa. The growth has been tremendous ranging from dominant print and broadcast industries such as Kenya Broadcasting Corporation, Nation Media Group, the Standard Media, Royal Media and Media Max which stretch to most of the countries in the Eastern region of Africa (BBC, 1st August 2017) [4]. For the print media, the most popular free pull-out entertainment magazines is the 'Pulse' which targets the youth ranging from 16 to 20 years of age (Pulse reporter 1st April, 2016) [5] and may be having a behavioural impact on them. Despite this growth, there have been concerns on whether the print media plays an integral role in reinforcing behavioural practices among

teenagers that motivates them to engage in practices such as premarital and unprotected sex; use of unconventional language in school such as sheng and slang; pornography; teenage prostitution; rape; consumption of alcohol and other drug substances that lead to cases of early pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases, poor academic performance in school; porn addiction and drug abuse. In Kenya reports undertaken by statutory bodies such as the National Authority for Campaign against Alcohol and Drug Abuse (NACADA) and the Kenya Films Classification Board (KFCB) have raised concerns over the increased cases of drug abuse, sexual transmitted diseases, sexual promiscuity among teenagers. In their respective reports [6]; (Kenya Films Classification Board, 2016) they pointed out the rise of negative behaviour such as sexual promiscuity, obscenity, teenage prostitution, profane language, violence and drug abuse particularly among the teenagers.

The focus on teenagers in Kisumu County was relevant to this study based on the influence that the print media may have on them emanating from the numerous reported cases of teenage pregnancies, prostitution rings, HIV and AIDS infections, STDs, and drug abuse emanating from research bodies such as the National Adolescents and Youth Survey (2015) [7], the Kenya HIV Estimates (2015) [8], and the Kenya HIV County Profiles (2016) [9] which indicate that the HIV prevalence in Kisumu is 3.4 times higher than the national prevalence at 19.9%. and that by the end of 2015, a total of 144,303 people were living with HIV in the County with 22% being young people aged 15 to 24 years. Scholars such as [10-12], all pointed out that despite the fact that there were numerous causes for these types of negative behaviour there was a high possibility that the media plays a fundamental role on influencing youth to engage in sexual promiscuity. For the above scholars' assertion to make sense, this study intended to focus on Print media and the appealing nature of its content in respect to elements of negative behaviour among secondary students in Kisumu County.

The contemporary media and secondary school students who can be classified as the youth ranging from 14 to 18 years of age are inseparable entities who share a symbiotic relationship revolving around commercialization, entertainment and personal preference [13]. For the youth who are consistently adapting to new trends, their dependence on the media is salient, a notion supported by Rogers [14], who alludes to the fact that the modern youth is virtually compelled to be up to date with trending social affairs in society ranging from entertainment to fashion and other lifestyle matters. He pointed out that the media provides that anchorage where they feel safe in the knowledge the media keeps them abreast with current affairs, hence being at par with their peers regarding information acquisition.

According to Zemmels [13], the youth not only rely on the media for entertainment but also for information purposes where they are able to grasp information on the trending issues and latest events and activities taking place in society. The media on the other hand heavily rely on the youth as an audience for commercial purposes based on the fact that the youth provide a fertile ground for the media to market their products that package content ranging from entertainment, showbiz to sports and other social activities.

In their research on minors usage of media technologies, Heim *et al.*, [15], pointed out that, in as much as entertainment was the overriding factor that defined the usage of media among teenagers, identity also played a significant role since most of the youth between the age of 14 to 18 years were usually in the stage or process of shaping their characters and identity

during their teenage or adolescent years. This study posited that the media could play a critical role in enhancing character traits of youth based on the content that was watched, read or heard. However, the fundamental issue was whether everything depicted in the media would determine preference and later influence the process of behavioural development. Commercialization was observed to be one of the major factors leading the Kenyan media to focus on developing content attractive to the youth. As a matter of fact, the youth are viewed as a commercial commodity by the media which has majority of its content, except for politics based on entertainment, a product revered by the youth [16, 17]. For the print media, the question that arose from the above assertion was whether publications freely accessed by teens were bombarded with content related to sexual promiscuity hence was appealing and preferential to the youth. As observed by Lumun [16] and Larson [17] the study sought to understand whether content in the media such as images; of girls dressed in sexually explicit and provocative outfits exposing a greater part of their bodies, consumption of alcohol in music videos and use of non-conventional language such as slang and sheng could be considered preferential teenage content and have a negative effect on them as depicted through the print media.

Bleakley *et al.*, [18], gave an eye opener for more research to be conducted on the preference of the youth in seeking media content with elements of negative behaviour. Their study reported that adolescent between the age of 13 to 18 were exposed to sexual content at an exceedingly early age through media technologically advanced devices such as phones, computers, television radio and graphic oriented publications. From their research they indicated that adolescents were exposing themselves to sexual media content but were however not able to verify the respondents' reason for seeking such content. They ideally did not know how much of the difference in total exposure to sexual media content could be accounted for by seeking behaviour. This study posited that, understanding youth preference would be key in unearthing the reason for seeking content with elements of negative behaviour in the media. In addition, the fact that Bleakley *et al.*, [18], primarily focused on sexual content was not sufficient enough to get a better understanding of youth preference to content with elements of negative behaviour since there were other salient media content such as night partying and alcohol consumption which the researchers did not discuss about yet the youth might also be seeking or were exposed to. This study intended to place emphasis on the type of print content the teenagers found appealing.

The study was guided by the Media Dependency Theory which shows how audiences depend on media information to meet needs and reach goals. Ball-Rokeach and DeFluer [1], defined

dependency as a relationship in which the satisfaction of needs or the attainment of goals by one party was contingent upon the resources of another party. The media dependency theory primarily has three distinctive characteristics that underpin its very existence as a communication theory namely; cognitive, affective and behavioural changes which are derived from the tripartite relationship between the media, audience and society.

This study focused on the affective effect characteristics which was derived from the impact of media messages on an audience's feelings and emotional responses. It was hypothesised that prolonged exposure to specific media content arouses certain emotional responses from the audience such as fear, excitement, anxiety, appeal, morale and alienation that would affect certain members of society who were new to specific types of activities, trends and occurrences in society and heavily rely on media information to bridge that gap of knowledge.

The dependency theory played an integral role in this study by explaining how the youth would likely depend on media information as a result of the nature of their socio-cultural systems, in regard to showbiz and other forms of entertainment that are centrally unique and important to them in the society they live in. By assessing the preferential content secondary school students' focus on when reading the Pulse magazine, the theory gave an understanding in explaining why the students choose the Pulse to fulfil their individual needs based on social and cultural practices they tend to see when reading the magazine. This was explained through examining affective effects of the dependency theory which bring out the fact that that prolonged exposure to specific media content arouses certain emotional responses from the audience such as fear, excitement, anxiety, appeal, morale and alienation which are prone to affect secondary school students who heavily rely on media information. Of course, in doing so, emotions such as appeal and excitement were likely to enhance a sense of preference in the choice of media information and also create a sense of alienation based on the possibility that they feel that media information is specially designed for them as youth.

The discourse of this study focused on review of literature associated with youth preference to media content with the significance of getting an understanding on media content the youth find appealing when accessing media products. The opinion of researchers such as Gakahu [19], is that the contemporary radio and television programming seems to act as an impediment to the society's agenda of youth's socio-economic growth and development. The general argument was that content such as radio shows, music videos, movies, concerts, soap operas and reality shows targeting the youth in radio and television seem to be generated from the modern perspectives with

limited concern on moral and ethical principles factored in during production Gakahu [19].

These shows, Gakahu [19] argued were based on the aspect of modern trends that take place globally of which the media purpose to update a modernised audience who are assumed to want to catch up with those very societal trends. The challenge to Gakahu's [19] assertion was the limited information on youth preference to the content they consume. Gakahu [19], did not involve the youth directly in his study by establishing whether they deliberately seek particular media content over another. For instance, are the youth being merely being exposed or is this content they are seeking? This was a salient question that needed to be addressed since the media could probably be giving the youth what they wanted to read, see or hear. This implied establishing whether such programmes and other media products targeting the youth were actually as a result of preferential youth content.

According to Okere & Oguchi [20], youths have more time at their disposal, and with their adventurous spirit, they would like to maximize the opportunity of spending this abundant time, exploring and connecting with persons of social worth. In their research study titled: 'Magazine Celebrity Features, Youth Modelling and Career Aspirations', they argued that the 21st century was witnessing an increasing wave in youth fascination with celebrity idolisation. They further pointed out the youth at large fall victim too easily to popular opinion and social tastes which were characterized by the way they patronized the various media through which celebrities were presented to the society [20]. They posited that media constituted a ready means through which youths accessed their celebrity heroes in terms of career development. In their findings, they noted that 77% of the Nigerian youth interviewed admired the career lifestyle of the celebrity personalities they read about in magazines.

Their study [20], however had emerging gaps; firstly, their research focused on youth who were near completion of the tertiary studies and on the verge of choosing their careers. From the perspective of this study, this was an already biased position since the questions being sought by Okere and Oguchi [20], were directed at career development and not content the youth at the age of 14 to 18 might be seeking in the media specifically on behavioural norms. Secondly, Okere & Oguchi [20], described the youth as innocent victims and unsuspecting personalities who were vulnerable, and at most times absorbed whatever content the media offers them without question. This current study postulated that further examination needed to be done to establish whether it was true the youth consumed whatever the media offered or whether there was media content which eventually was prioritized by the youth based on content preference.

The study also reviewed research work done by Redcross and Grimes [21], which advanced the notion that teenage magazine content tends to complicate decision making in the communication of the young, impressionable girls who read them. Their research work titled: 'Teenage Magazines and Their Focus on the Superficial' intimated that magazines created an inferiority complex to adolescent girls who perceived that their value and worth was based on them copying what was depicted in the publications. Redcross and Grimes [21], posited that teenage magazine editors offered a sense of insecurity in the psychological and physical growth of young teen girls through the content they published in the magazines. They contended that magazine publishers created a superiority complex of the models and celebrities they featured in their publications thus making the teens feel compelled match up to how ladies were depicted in magazines. They stated that the editors of teen magazines were usually in a powerful position to influence and impress upon the teenage girls their values and worth through publishing information with topics and themes such as celebrity gossip, beauty oriented articles, dating and socialization [21].

However, in as much as their study highlighted the possible influence such information may have on the youth, their work lacked knowledge on one fundamental component, the voice of the teenage girl. This study observed that Redcross and Grimes [21], did not have primary data on responses, comments, opinions or remarks from female teens regarding their perception and preference to information contained in teenage magazines. Their research method was primarily directed at magazine publications, and not the teenagers whose response to the above hypothesis was not sought. The fact the teen voices were not heard yet descriptions such as them feeling desperate, being in dire need and susceptible to influence from such magazines led this study to go further and engage the adolescent in order to get opinion and comments on their preference to media content. Further research was needed in establishing teenage attitudes and perception towards content that would most probably be targeting them as an audience. Understanding content preference would give insight into why the mainstream print media such as the Nation and the Standard have developed free pull-out publications such as the Pulse Magazine, EVE and Zuqka. It was therefore important to establish whether specific content disseminated through the media was sought by the youth. This study deduced that there was a possibility that most of these free pull-out publications were widely read by boys and girls, particularly during their formative pre-teen years. It was therefore significant for this study to assess the kind of media content the youth consider preferential in the Pulse magazine.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

This study adopted quantitative research which enables in-depth exploration of the phenomenon under investigation, interaction with study participants and hearing their multiple perspectives, opinions and ideas about the issues [22]. In this case quantitative research was applied to determine the student's preference to specific content published in the Pulse magazine and whether there was a likelihood of them emulating what they read and see in the magazine through use of questionnaires.

The study area comprised of Kisumu County as the geographical area. Kisumu County was selected as the study area because it had one of the highest levels of teenage pregnancies, HIV infections and drug abuse among the youth (Kenya National Adolescents and Youth Survey, 2015) [7]. According to the Kenya HIV Estimates (2015) [8], the HIV prevalence in Kisumu is 3.4 times higher than the national prevalence at 19.9%. The Kenya HIV County Profiles (2016) [9]. In addition, Kisumu County was also selected because it is one of the three counties with a city status that is heterogeneous and has one of the highest readerships of the Standard Newspaper in Kenya [23].

The study population also comprised of 176,000 students from the 220 schools in the entire Kisumu County (MoEST, Kisumu County report 2017) [24]. Purposive sampling was used to select 31 secondary schools out of the total of 220 secondary schools in Kisumu County. These are the National, Extra County and County schools. The choice of selecting the 31 National, Extra County and County schools was arrived at based on the Ministry of Education Science and Technology's criteria that National, Extra County and County secondary schools should be high performers and have well established physical and academic infrastructure, for instance, in the case of this study, well-equipped libraries that were fully accessible by students [25].

The 31 secondary schools selected comprised of a population of twenty-four thousand five hundred and thirty-nine (24,539) secondary school students (MoEST, Kisumu County report 2017). The respondents were both male and female students aged between 14-18 years. The students comprised of boarders and day scholars from; Form one to Form four. A sample size of 393 was drawn from the population of 24,539 students using Yamane [2], sample size formula. The population of twenty-four thousand, five hundred and thirty-nine (24,539) secondary students was drawn from the 31 secondary schools (MoEST, Kisumu County 2017) [24]. The sample size will be calculated using the formulae: $n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$. For this study, n = sample size, N = the size of the population 1 = the constant and e = the degree of error expected. Therefore, the sample size n needed for the proposed study was:

$24,539/1+224,539$ (0.0025) = 393 with a margin of error of +/-5%.

The 393 respondents were subdivided using stratified random sampling whereby the thirty one (31) schools were categorized in six (6) strata namely; boys' boarding schools, girls' boarding schools, boys' day schools, girls' day schools, mixed boarding schools and mixed day schools.

The study then applied simple random sampling in order to get the respondents from the respective classes of form one to form four. Questionnaires were administered to the 393 students. The above procedure was significant in addressing the study objective which was to establish secondary school students' preferences to content published in the Pulse magazine.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The study intended to establish the preference secondary school students, have to content published in the Pulse magazine.' To achieve this objective, the study categorised the content based on the following themes namely, fashion and modelling, movies and music, celebrity gossip, night partying, sexual provocative stories, sheng and slang and sports related stories. The study then distributed a total of 393 questionnaires out of which 392 were returned. This gave a response rate of 99% which according to Babbie, E [26]; and Mugenda and Mugenda [27] a 50% response rate is adequate, 60% good and above 70% rated very good. From this assertion, the response rate of 99% was exceptionally good. The table below indicated the response rate in figures based on the following school categories.

Table-1: Response Rate on Questionnaires Distributed

Questionnaires Distributed					
School Type		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Boys Day	32	8.2	8.2	8.2
	Girls Day	12	3.1	3.1	11.2
	Boys Boarding	148	37.8	37.8	49.0
	Girls Boarding	152	38.8	38.8	87.8
	Mixed Day	12	3.1	3.1	90.8
	Mixed Boarding	36	9.2	9.2	100.0
	Total	392	100.0	100.0	

In order to achieve the objective on students' preference, the study needed to establish the familiarity of the Pulse magazine among secondary students in Kisumu County. This observation was based on the results from the 392 questionnaires responded to by the students. The study asked the respondents whether they

were familiar with the Pulse. The results indicated that 372 out of the 392 students were familiar with the Pulse magazine. This registered a frequency rate of 95% thus informing the study that the popularity of the magazine amongst the students was very high. This information is indicated on the table below.

Table-2: Students' familiarity with Pulse Magazine

Familiarity with Pulse					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	372	94.9	94.9	94.9
	No	20	5.1	5.1	100.0
	Total	392	100.0	100.0	

During the administering of the questionnaires the study noted that students admitted being familiar with the themes such as: Sexual provocative stories; celebrity stories and gossip; fashion and modelling; night partying; alcohol related stories; movies and music updates and sports roundup. The study also found it essential to establish whether the students found the Pulse magazine enjoyable. This was salient because after establishing their readability, the study needed to

know how entertaining the magazine was to them as readers which would establish their preference to content in the magazine. The number of students who responded to enjoying reading the Pulse was 368 while the number of students who responded by that they did not enjoy the Pulse was 24. This registered a 94% rate against a 6% rate respectively as indicated on Table-3 below.

Table-3: Secondary students who find reading Pulse Magazine enjoyable

Enjoy Reading					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	368	93.9	93.9	93.9
	No	24	6.1	6.1	100.0
	Total	392	100.0	100.0	

The above data indicated that students in secondary schools found the content in the Pulse magazine enjoyable leading to the high levels of readership noted in the preceding tables. The results on finding the magazine enjoyable coincided with scholars such as Dennis and Merrill [28], who in their research work argued that the depiction of modernised cultural practices in the media such as language, dressing, and music was on the rise and was depicted through soap operas, music videos, movies and radio content. This current study further established that the modernised

culture depicted in the Pulse ranged from elements of entertainment such as modelling, music and movie updates, celebrity stories alcohol and night parties. This study noted that the existence of such entertainment content in the media deemed as sensational and exciting was the reason why the youth found the magazine interesting. When asked whether topics such as fashion and models, celebrity stories, night partying, alcohol related stories, sexual provocative stories, movies, music video updates and sports roundup were trending with their friends in school the responded as follows.

Table-4: Topics trending among friends in school

Trending Stories		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	371	94.6	94.6	94.6
	No	21	5.4	5.4	100.0
	Total	392	100.0	100.0	

From the above data the study noted that 371 (95%) students indicated the Pulse magazine was popular amongst peers in school because of the entertaining content. Only 21 (5%) students indicated that they did not find the topics trending amongst their friends. The trending topics included: sex related stories, celebrity scandals, alcohol and night partying stories the above data also gave the probability that the youth regarded the Pulse magazine as an important

source of information about sexuality, fashion, slang language and other forms of behaviour.

When asked whether they would recommend the Pulse magazine to their friends, a total of 361 out of the 392 students responded to the affirmative, while 30 students indicated that they would not recommend the Pulse to their friends. This registered a frequency rate of 92% against 8% as indicated on Table-5 below.

Table-5: Secondary students who would recommend Pulse Magazine to their friends

Recommending to Friends		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	362	92.3	92.3	92.3
	No	30	7.7	7.7	100.0
	Total	392	100.0	100.0	

During the analysis undertaken to determine student's appeal to content with elements of negative behaviour as published in the Pulse magazine, this study established that 356 students out of 392, found activities such as provocative dressing, night partying,

sex stories, consumption of alcohol and other substances and the use of slang language as depicted in the Pulse magazine appealing. This registered a frequency rate of 90%.

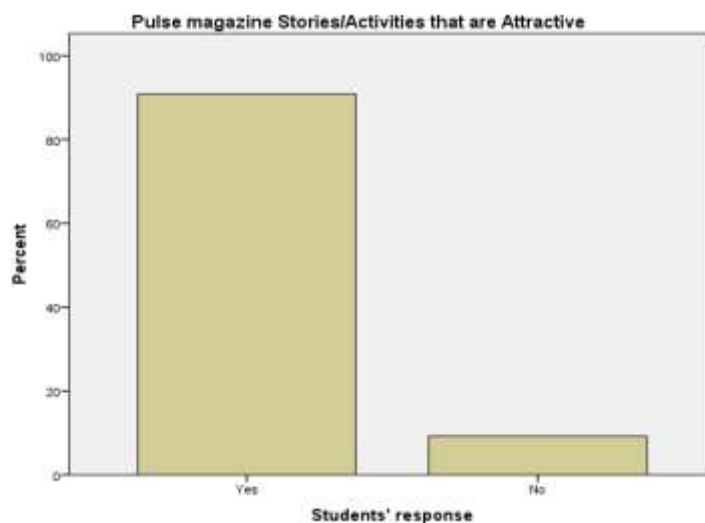


Fig-2: Graph showing students' appeal to stories and activities in the Pulse magazine

From the above data the study established that the Pulse depicting entertainment content such as modelling, sexual provocative dressing, celebrity stories, sexual related stories, music shows, alcohol and night parties aroused the interests and appeal of the students since such content portrayed themes such as night partying, casual sex, provocative dressing, provocative dancing and alcohol consumption appealing and exciting. The breakdown on content preference was as follows: Out of the 392 respondents, 282 (72%) found sexual provocative dressing appealing, while 72 (28%) did not. The findings on celebrity stories and gossip showed that 323(82%) respondents indicated they found the stories as depicted in the Pulse magazine appealing while 69 (18%) did not. In night party activities the study established that 265 (68%) students found night partying activities appealing while 127 (32%) students indicated that they did not find these activities as depicted in the Pulse magazine appealing.

On students' appeal to alcohol consumption the results showed only 103 (26%) indicated that they found activities related to alcohol consumption appealing while 289 (74%) students did not find the activities appealing. When the respondents were asked whether they found sexual related activities published in the Pulse magazine appealing 258 (66%) admitted to being attracted to sexually related activities while 134 (34%) indicated they did not find sexual related activities appealing. When asked about their preference to music reviews and movie updates, 375 (96%) students found the content interesting while only 17 students (4%) found the content not interesting. When analysing use of slang and sheng language the study established that 280 (71%) students indicated that they found use of slang and sheng language appealing while 112 (29%) did not. On students' preference to sports section in the Pulse magazine, the study established that 271 (70%) students showed interest in sports roundup while 121 (31%) did not. In their response to finding the activities depicted in the Pulse magazine appealing, the students indicated that they not only saw these activities as enticing and appealing but also trending mainly because they viewed the Pulse as publishing stories, images and articles that they had a strong affinity for such as dressing, celebrities, partying and sexual related issues which was evident by their comments and remarks. Below are a few of their responses.

Respondent No. 6: *"Celebrity stories make you know what is happening around the world. I really like their sex scandals and stories and I just love how hot the female celebs look like in their sexy fashion clothes."*

Respondent No. 118: *"Provocative Dressing-Am a teen, I want to look hot, trendy and up to date. Night partying-If you didn't hear about the party at your place or at club you are*

doomed. Celebrity stories-I love music and of course the artists that's why I cannot take the risk of not knowing what is happening to them and when. Provocative dancing- In school you have to dance the latest styles that is during entertainment and such events and I can't be left behind since everyone is doing it (influence)."

Respondent No. 164: *"Provocative dressing, night partying, provocative dancing and sex related stories are just the things which define my personality, am kind of a slayer but the simple one."*

Respondent No. 217: *"Provocative dressing, alcohol consumption and night partying and sex related stories may influence one and they may start imitating them."*

The above findings supported scholars such as [29, 30] who posited that due to the appealing modern lifestyles such as sexy dressing, sexual explicit content in the name of entertainment and adverse depiction of alcohol and drug use in the media may stir temptation and peer influence among teenagers to engage in activities like sex, drug abuse, prostitution and pornography leading to teenage pregnancies, sexual transmitted diseases, HIV and AIDs and poor academic performance in school.

These findings addressed the gap from Bleakley *et al.*, [18] study. Their study reported on the exposure of adolescent between the age of 13 to 18 to sexual content at an exceedingly early age through media technologically but were unable to verify the respondents' reason for seeking such content therefore not knowing how much of the difference in total exposure to sexual media content could be accounted for by seeking behaviour. This study addressed that gap by establishing that youth preference was key in unearthing the reason for seeking content with elements of negative behaviour in the media. The study also established the fact that Bleakley *et al.*, [18] primarily focused on sexual content was not sufficient enough to get a better understanding of youth preference to content with elements of negative behaviour since there were other salient media content such as night partying and alcohol consumption which the researchers did not discuss about such as night partying, alcohol consumption, sexual provocative dressing and dancing which the youth were also seeking.

The study also addressed the Knowledge gaps in research work from scholars like Gakahu [19]; Okere & Oguchi [20]; and Redcross & Grimes [21], which had limited knowledge on audience content preference. For instance, Gakahu's [19] work, which postulated that contemporary broadcast programming was an impediment to the society's agenda of youth's socio-economic growth because it never factored moral ethical principles during production, did not indicate

whether such programmes and other media products targeting the youth were actually as a result of preferential youth content. The study therefore established that secondary students between the age of 14 to 18 years old found content in the Pulse related to negative behaviour preferential.

While Okere & Oguchi's [20] research which argued that the 21st century was witnessing an increasing wave in youth fascination with celebrity idolisation only focused on career development of the youth and not preferential content the youth might be seeking in the media specifically on social behavioural norms. The study established the high appeal celebrity stories and gossip received among the students at 84% with some of the respondents even admitted to getting some sense of sexual satisfaction when viewing images of models and celebrities dressed in sexual provocative ways; others showing excitement when viewing night party scenes and use of sheng and slang language involving their favourite celebrities. This described how secondary students were attracted to the lifestyles of celebrities depicted in the Pulse. The teenagers not only looked up to celebrities as opinion leaders on matters of lifestyle and entertainment but also found the activities celebrities engage in exciting despite the fact that some of these activities such as sexual provocative dressing, sex, slang/sheng language and night partying were likely to entice them into activities that were deemed negative. This implied that their primary focus when reading the magazine was on the lifestyles of these celebrities based on articles and images depicting sex related stories, alcohol consumption, sexually explicit dressing, sexual poses and provocative dancing.

Redcross & Grimes [21], research work indicated that teenage magazine content complicated decision making in the communication of the young, impressionable girls who were likely to be influenced by celebrity content published in magazines. Their study gave a scenario where the media editors were perceived to be in powerful positions to influence and impress upon teenage girls their values and worth through dictating the information they published. Their work lacked one fundamental component, the voice of the teenage girl in describing her preference to specific content. Their work did not have primary data, responses, comments, opinions or remarks from female adolescents regarding their perception and preference to information contained in teenage magazines. Their research work only focused on the editors' choice of information and the likely effect that information may have on the adolescent. This study established that youth preference occurred because the students admitted to having prior knowledge of such activities since they were trending in society.

CONCLUSION

The findings revealed that secondary students not only found the Pulse magazine popular among

them, but they had preference to topics such as fashion, modelling, sex scandals, alcohol consumption, events, sports music and movies. Most of these topics contained elements of negative behaviour such as sexually explicit dressing, casual sex, night partying, consumption of alcohol and other drug substances, use of slang and sheng words to depict sexually explicit content and sexual provocative dancing. The fact that majority of students indicated that they would recommend the Pulse magazine to their friends but would not like their parents to know that they read such content implied that the students were aware that the content in the magazine was not suitable for them. Many of them even admitted that their parents would describe such content as immoral or promiscuous, detrimental to their academic success as it would deviate their attention from class work leading to poor performance in exams.

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