Medium Preferences of Children and Adolescents for Content Distributed by the Media

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## Sample

The sample included 345 Israeli children and adolescents. The age range was
8-18, with a median of 15 (M = 14.41, SD = 2.86), and there were slightly
more girls (52.4%) than boys. Participants were divided into two age groups:
children (up to 8th grade or age 14; 46.2% of respondents), and adolescents
(9th-12th grade, 53.8% of respondents).

# Abstract

Children and adolescents are exposed to a huge variety of communication channels. In this study, we examined the relationship between medium preference and content consumed, and the factors of preference by Israeli children and adolescents, with reference to socio-demographic characteristics. This is a quantitative, mixed-method study with a qualitative element. A total of 345 participants from Israel completed questionnaires, of whom 90 were also interviewed. The findings indicate that the key factors in choosing a medium are availability, interactivity, diversity, and the ability to surf while performing other functions (Internet), and convenience (TV). The leading content are music and video clips, followed by reality shows, entertainment programs, satire and comedy, movies, and drama series. Participants use the Internet most often, but when they can choose to watch certain content on the Internet or on TV, TV is the favorite medium for most content. Some content is preferred by boys, other by girls, some by young children, other by adolescents. Viewing by children and adolescents is not random or casual, but rather an informed choice driven by familiarity with the characteristics of each medium, and by the selection of content that meets their needs.

# Outcome

Findings (Zilka, 2018) indicate that the media indeed is a significant portion of the
children’s and adolescents’ routine. The findings show that children and adolescents make informed choices of media, and that their choice is the result of their awareness of the unique characteristics of each type of medium, its capabilities, and its advantages over other media. At the same time, their choice is influenced by the various types of content being consumed. As far as content is concerned, we found that certain means of
communication are related to specific types of content, as for example, the use of smartphones is related to social communication and the use of YouTube is related primarily to music consumption. We found a wide range of content preferences among children and adolescents. The leading types of content among children and adolescents are music and video, followed by entertainment content such as reality shows, entertainment programs and shows, movies, satire, comedy, and drama series. By contrast, preference for sports, news, nature, science, art, cooking, fashion, and games is relatively low. Children and adolescents use the Internet more than any other media, but when it comes to media preference for specific types of content, they prefer to consume most content on television. Indeed, with the exception of video clips, which respondents prefer to consume on YouTube, and of music, which they prefer to consume both on YouTube and on television, it was found that television was the preferred medium for most content. In addition, it was found that girls preferred to consume content related to entertainment, as well as content associated with thematic niches such as fashion, art, cooking, health, etc. more than boys did. By contrast, it was found that boys showed a higher preference for sports than girls did. we found that the older age group preferred to consume entertainment content, as well as news and current events content more than the younger age group did, whereas the younger children preferred to consume more sports content than did the older age
group.