

Question no 1: What kind of national and international sources for information and material do you have access to in your country/region and how are children and youth represented in these sources? (Connected to article 17 in the Convention on the Rights of the Child)



Karlstad Youth Council

We have access to all sorts of media and information in Sweden. We have internet, radio, television, newspapers and in our town we can also visit a library. At the library you can use computers/internet, read newspapers and books, for free. In our schools we all have access to computers/internet and a smaller library.



Kuala Lumpur Youth Council

Kuala Lumpur also has quite easy access to media and information, the youth out here is "tech savvy", made quite easy by the use of social networks like facebook, myspace and now twitter which are popular with the youth. Schools here have a good internet and other information structures. Although things like campus radio stations are not that well established here (we are just at initial stages of establish our own station at Limkokwing University) schools promote some sort of internal information systems.

Libraries are also widely available to all for use throughout the city and most of the country, they offer services such as internet and material for research purposes.



Gambia Youth Council

We at the Young People in the Media, The Gambia, have the firm beliefs that young people has the capacity, potential, courage and expertise to made greater headways in the media if they are given the maximum support and encouragement by government, the private sector and all sectors of society. The media plays a major role and it can help children to make well-informed decisions thus enhance the effective participation of children in such fora. The media fraternity of our dear country The Gambia has always been vigilant when it comes to issues relating to children. In the Gambia, there are lots information materials and various sources were young people have access to information, such as newspapers, there are about eight newspapers in the Gambia, we have radio station both private and government, we have only one TV station and is a state owned TV station.

We do also have newsletters, journals and documentary, we have online websites that provide information to the masses both within and outside the Gambia.

Most of the radio stations create free air time for children durings the ICDB with funding from the UNICEF Banjul office some provide weekend slots for children were children come up with the own programmes. A children private radio station Kids with Talents (K W T) provides daily radio shows for young people throughout the year. This is indeed a laudable and commendable initiative that other broadcasting stations should emulate to give young producers enough airtime and space in both the electronic and the print media.

There are lots of radio talk shows conduct by young people such as youth talk show on issues affecting them, there is also a children and youth programme on the national TV called, kids on the move and a youth programme called the limelight that showcase activities of young people in diverse fields and areas gears towards there participation in national development.

At regional and International level young people in the Gambia also participated in media related advocacy programmes such as the International Children's Day of Broadcasting, where we have

emerge as regional winner for West and Central Africa for two consecutive years, 2006 -2008.

We also participated in the 5th World Summit on Media for Children, held in South Africa, March 2007, thus this give us the opportunity to participated in the UNICEF one Minutes Jr Workshop, the Gambian delegate at this workshop come up with two sixty seconds films entitled Media Waves and article 17 of the UN CRC. All the above so how connected young people in the Gambia are when it's come to access to free flow of information of various kinds in relation to article 17 of CRC



Zambia Youth Council

In Zambia Children and the Youths have few channels of sourcing information. Among these sources is a radio where the majority of the youth have access to it. A small percentage have access to the Television, magazines and a very very small group of children have access to the internet.

In all these channels children are negative represented in the sense that if a child or youth is mentioned on the news it must be either he is lost, burn in the fire, drowned, killed, raped, etc. They do not rust to bring the successes of children and the youths in media. We feel cheated and robbed of our Rights according to the UNCRC where Zambia in our case is a Signitory. It ratified the UNCRC.

Our media are not child friendly, there is not room for us children and the youths to express our feelings and concerned as a way of Participating in media.

Main times programmes which are supposed to be for children and the youth are heavily dominated by the adults as they decide, plan, edit and only call on children and the youths to present their minds. This is misusing us children and the youth.

Children in the Southern Africa our region are treated the same. For example in Zambia we do not have a children or youth radio or television station where we may target or fellow children. This is wrong. We have been oppressed as far as our right to media is concerned.



Australia Youth Council

In Australia, both national and international sources are readily available to us, as the youth of the country. International sources include; the Internet, television, newspapers, movies and music. We have sources which are easily accessed by a local or national community. Some of the international sources mentioned also double as Australia's national sources, as they cover issues and events relevant to our country only. These include; television, newspapers, and also radio.

Within these sources, the children and youth of Australia are shown in varying ways, depending on the specific source. But in general, Australian media will usually cover events and topics that fit the Australian youth's stereotype. This stereotype is one that makes young people out to be rude, disrespectful people who do not care for the good of society or the improvement of life in the future.



South Africa Youth Council

We took a sample of 35 young people a majority was from peri-urban areas. 15 of our candidate were between the ages of 8 – 13, the remainders were from 17 – 22 years old. There was a racial bias to this as most of the candidates were black and had regular access to the urban areas – as most of them go to school/university in the urban areas. There was no representation of rural children due to constraint of us reaching these areas but we will try to do so for the next question, where possible.

The majority of the children interviewed found television as the most accessible source of information. They feel they are represented through the various children's programmes available on local television. The boys were more into sports and felt that television needed more sports-oriented content. Most of the children did not read newspapers but were very knowledgeable on current affairs and politics, both from television news and a children's news programme called Kids News and from listening to older family members. Magazine are also very accessible to them but generally belong to older family members. These magazines are actually not specifically for children but still contain information that interests them such as soccer news, general sports news. Girls wanted more social awareness content about helping other children who are in need or seeing children who have overcome various social adversities. Very few children (less than 6) had access to the internet, this is due to the lack of affordability – most have no computers at home and do not have money to go to internet cafés, which are used by older people. Those who did, it was at school and they used this to access music more than doing school work. Both girls and boys wanted more entertainment, animation and sports as part of their information. Their viewing patterns and access to print media is controlled by their parents – so they generally read and watch what their parent watch. They wanted more international programming and animation. They only read at school and at home for school work, books are associated with school more than leisure.

The older participants used the internet primarily for research for their academic work, Facebook and Youtube. Computer access is fair as they have access to internet café and computer centers within the university/colleges. They still do have to pay for the internet if they use it outside of their academic institutions. Cellphones are extremely accessible as all participants owned a cellphone and most of them were on on Mixit which is accessible and allows them to communicate with their peers. They read newspaper which they mostly get from home and some from the library – these they find to be mostly sensational and about politic, which does not interest them. They generally think they are not represented by newspapers, magazine or television. They find magazines sell products more than content that's relevant and affects their daily lives and feature contradictory information, e.g. healthy eating but near-anorexic models advertising fashion and beauty products. Most found that gender stereotyping was still rampant with girls being portrayed sexually and guys as being macho and (possible perpetrators of wrong doing – in newspapers). Most participants dislike television for its perceived low quality and limited variety of content. Most participants felt that the dramas were better than the other content though. They want more locally produced content of high quality, more objective and well-researched reporting. They want the media to feature more issues that affect young people but also want more entertainment such as movies, entertainment programming, local sports and fashion. They have access to books at the libraries but these are more for academic work than social reading – which rarely featured. Radio is widely available but did not feature in any of our discussions which was interesting. - you will find the sample that we took in the next post:

Please find the following samples: Various people contributed to these findings. the sample was small though and is still not conclusive enough to be representative of what all South African children and youth think.

Age Group: 8 – 13 year Olds (Girls and Boys)

Sample: 15

Areas: Township (Midrand) – Peri Urban

Demographic: All black

Place: Sci-Bono Science Centre (New town Johannesburg – inner city)

Generally have limited internet access, but will have an hour lesson of computer classes at school, which the boys use for downloading music.

The boys were very knowledgeable on current affairs and this was learned from watching the evening news with their parents and picking up conversations from their parents. They do not read news papers though and do not read books aside from schools material. This speaks to the inaccessibility of books due to the high cost of books at local retail stores. They also mentioned that they read sports

magazines (soccer for the boys) magazines such as Kick Off magazine as older male family members who are interested in sports will have these lying around the house.

Both groups watched TV, and liked similar programming such as Hectic Nine-9, YO TV (Live tweens show), international animation, Kids' News which are children's programmes catering for their age group. Kid's News was very popular with both groups as they felt it showed children in realistic settings. It also showed children in various countries (also within the continent) doing various commendable things. One child cited an episode of a child headed house hold and how she was sad that children lived like this but she was even more inspired by the fact that a child her age could be so resourceful – these kind of stories seemed to be very popular with the girls. They wanted to see most of this kind of stuff on TV.

Both groups seemed to face problems with the TV remote being controlled by their parents at certain times thus they also were forced to watch what their parents watch – prime time Dramas such as Generations, Rhythm City – and the evening news.

The boys were emphatic about having more sports programming which they felt was still limited – they are active in soccer outside of their school activities. They have their own amateur soccer team. However, they aspire to having cable television as they feel it offers a wider variety of programming – including sports, animation and music programmes. In the girl's group two girls had access to cable television and one (8 years old) watched Nickelodeon, Disney Channel, Boomerang and Cartoon Network for the animation, the other girl mostly went for the music programmes such as Trace and MTV Base for the music (13-year old). The girls were generally did not aspire towards getting cable television as the boys did.

In terms representation the boys felt that they were generally well represented in most of the media they accessed – mostly television and magazines. The girls wanted to see more girls that look and dress like them – they felt some of the girls dressed too well than them or girls they know. The girls also felt that sometimes television sold them stuff e.g. The Brats and Barbies, they felt this was punting how girls should look whereas they are taught to have more conservative clothing from home – which they are happy with. A lot of the family conservatism came across here as the views the girls expresses seemed to be influenced by how they are raised at home and their parents' view of how young people dress in the media.

Age Group: 17 – 18year Olds (Girl and Boy)

Sample: 2

Areas: Township and Inner City

Demographic: Both black

Place: Sci-Bono Science Centre (New town Johannesburg – inner city)

These two candidates were in their first year of tertiary. The guy is not media inclined that much, he only listens to radio as it is more accessible to him, he is interested in working in the music industry and thus this is a valuable platform for him. He doesn't really watch television as he finds that the shows don't depict real people and do not depict young people as himself. He will only watch reality TV series such as Let's Fix It and Zola 7 as these show real people in believable situations. He felt that news papers were sensational and showed more gossip than any useful information. He only uses the internet for Facebook and research for school projects. He dislikes the fact that he has to pay to access internet as he feels this should be more widely available and cheaper (instead of having to use internet cafés that often have slow transmission.) He felt that with woman getting more media coverage not only on television but in various sectors within the corporate and business sectors, men are not being given much coverage. He felt that men are still shown as perpetrators of crime more than women – which play on racial gender stereotyping.

The girl watches television a lot, mainly primetime television (women talkshows, music programmes)

she feels these have relevant issues that she can relate to e.g. health care, emotional health and other various issues that affect women her age and older. She likes magazine, for tabloid and gossip and feature stories. She feels that women are represented for their achievements in the workplace and sports etc and he is happy with this.

Both are on Mixit, which works for them as most of their peers are on it and it's affordable.

Age Group: 19 – 22year Olds (Girls)

Sample: 3

Areas: Township and Semi- suburbia

Demographic: Black

Place: Wits University (Johannesburg city)

Do not have any print media that speaks to them – they find politic irrelevant to their lives. They read magazine accidentally (True Love – One member reads her older sister's copies) Find information on magazines consumer based than informative on relevant issues. There are more sex tips than constructive health information, the beauty and health info is more westernized and there is a lack of coverage on ethnic beauty. Information generally over-sexualised women and play to stereotypes of women as sex objects, as often potraying skinny girls, this contradicts the health features that advocate positive eating habits and body image. They found TV to compromise quality although it raised some relevant information that they needed – but there were not keen on local media. Very critical of all content they receive. Read Cosmopolitan and True Love. Watch little TV – local dramas Place Called Home, Scandal, Rhythm City. Internet – YouTube and Facebook, research for school projects. Radio Station – YFM. They felt that there still needs to be a youth radio station that truly speaks to the youth on things that affect them in their daily lives.

Age Group: 18year Olds (Girl and Boy)

Sample: 2

Areas: Semi-Surbabia

Demographic: Both Indian

Place: Wits University (Johannesburg city)

Don't have time to watch TV. Not into local media that much as credibility of the information is questionable and often sensationalist reporting e.g. Zuma trial. The girl thinks television needs more fashion, movies, sports, entertainment programmes. They are aware of sexualisation of the body in the media but they do not fall for this as it's mostly used to sell products. Both found that magazines of the opposite sex are very informative and help with understanding the opposite sex. E.g. Men's Health and Cosmopolitan. Both felt that they are represented in programmes such as Eastern Mosaic (TV) and Sunday Times Extra (Newspaper) but are not really interested in seeing Indian people on TV just because of representation as they are racial intergrated and have grown up with people of all races.

Age Group: 17 – 22 year Olds (Girls and Boys)

Sample: 5

Areas: Surbabia

Demographic: 3 Coloured, 1White and 1 Black

Place: Wits University (Johannesburg city)

They hate adverts!!!! They know what they are for but they disrupt their programming especially dramas and movies. They feel local TV is dubious in terms of production and content quality. They feel it undermines the viewer and lacks originality in terms of content. They feel there is too much licensed programming Fear Factor, Big Brother, Idols etc. The news tends to be biased and state-oriented and sensational. They felt it was there right as viewers to interrogate whatever information they receive. They felt there was no variety in content on radio, TV and print. They disliked local soapies – they are generic and give you what you know and are predictable.

Magazines – Zoo/FHM and Topgear (guys read this). Cars, girls and money were a high interest!

They felt that coloured people were not represented in the media in general and felt that local media does not fully speak to the needs of young people – the information is trivial and impractical to use in their daily lives.



India Youth Council

The media today is omnipresent in every conceivable way. Be it the varied ideas and the many notions of modernity, the media has extended its reach to all so that the world is united in one common bond and that is via the uniform entity which is the media. Through various focus group discussions and simple content analyses we have come to the following conclusions.

Firstly to answer the question of access to the various kinds of national and international sources for information and material that we have access to and obtained the following important results:

- Access to various national and international sources of information include the access via various types of digital media including mainly cell phones, the World Wide Web, internet, video games and e-commerce as well as electronic business media.
- What is more omnipresent is the print media especially the newspapers and books.
- Most importantly the traditional media - an essential element of the national information sources- including folk lore, plays, dances and scriptures play a significant role in providing information not only to enrich our cultural knowledge but also to create a morally sound society

In a survey conducted by the Indian Youth Council's team in Guwahati where a sample size of about 250 students was analyzed, the following important results were obtained:

- 35% of children obtain most information and necessary material from the television by watching meaningful programmes. It is observed that about 70% amongst these children does not have cable facilities and watch the National channels. According to them, programmes shown in these channels are much high in standard compared to those shown in cable networks. However, most of the rural children living in remote areas of Guwahati city like Ahomgaon; Azara don't even have a television as electricity is a issue in these places.
- In contrast to the above situation, about 60% of children get information from newspapers. Several dailies are printed in various languages and it must be noted that for the rural students newspapers and radio are the only sources of information. Public schools and a few government schools provide newspapers to every classroom every day.
- Only 5% of children have a habit of listening to meaningful programmes on the radio. The youth feel that the quality of programmes is deteriorating, even though more FM channels have been initiated. Amongst these children about 2% listen to programmes that are aired by the 'Bibidh Bharati' while the rest prefer to listen to peppy songs and other entertainment programmes.
- A few children belonging to the well-off section of society have Internet facilities and use it to acquire information.

We also studied the trends of access to various sources of information in a unique study that was conducted in several cities including Hyderabad (Andhra Pradesh), Koraput (Orissa), Solan (Himachal Pradesh); rural areas of Belgaum (Karnataka); Delhi; Guwahati (Assam) and Bikaner (Rajasthan) in 2008 by our team of child reporters. The sample size varied from 30 to 150 children in the various cities.

- According to the study, as far as media habits are concerned, there was a great difference between

the rural and the urban children. In the rural areas of Belgaum Integrated Rural Development Society (BIRDS), Naganur, Belgam, only 15 per cent of the children had access to any newspaper, as the parents did not subscribe to newspapers. Only 33.3 per cent of the children had access to Television and the TV quotient of 6.1 per cent of them was limited to the National channel – ‘Doordarshan’. Only ten per cent had broadband cable connections.

- Significantly only one per cent children possessed radio sets and shockingly none of the rural children had access to the Internet. The talk about the world being a Global Village seems just another windpipe

- On the other hand, majority of the urban children and the children from Koraput district of Orissa said that they preferred to read newspapers for updating themselves on the latest happenings in the world. The percentage of those who preferred TV came close to second. Most of the households subscribed to at least one newspaper and most of them had cable connections for their televisions. The third most preferred media in the urban areas was the Internet, pushing radio to the least preferred position.

- Combining both the rural and the urban preferences, TV placed itself as the most preferred medium among the children. Interestingly, most of the children preferred watching News and educational programmes on TV rather than wasting time on the soap operas. The children of Hyderabad however preferred religious channels like Quran TV above all other programmes

The question of portrayal of children and youth in these sources is a highly debated one. Children are not portrayed as if they are individuals who form an integral part of a society’s present and future , but as inferior beings, which is in accordance to the established power hierarchy between children and adults. Most media products portray children either as achievers victims or actors doing exaggerated roles. Every year on children’s day , every one tries to have a section on children, but that is not to promote the participation of children in the media , which is standing today next to a precarious nil, but to make a song and dance of it. While children do try to participate in a lot of activities conducted online, these do not contribute significantly as internet facilities are used by an extremely tiny portion of society. Children are, as a rule kept out of the serious media , their views and ideas are in essence of no value in this current media scenario.



Slovakia Youth Council

We have access to internet, television, newspapers, billboards, literature, magazines, information walls, radio. Children and youth are represented mostly in children programs, educational and discussion programs. Children have a possibility to contribute to the columns dedicated to them in print media as well. Many schools publish their own newspapers or magazines, created by children only.