

The Role of Media Education in Combating Forms of Cybercrime A Field Study on a Sample of Families in Biskra City

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Abstract:

This study aims to explore the role of media education in combating electronic crime. The research community consists of a sample of families in the city of Biskra, selected through purposive sampling based on the presence of their children's use of communication technology. The study adopts a descriptive approach to provide both quantitative and qualitative descriptions of the study results. A questionnaire was used as the data collection tool. After presenting and analyzing the data, the study concludes that media education plays an informative and educational role in combating cybercrime through media programs and family involvement.

Keywords: Media Education; Cybercrime.

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ملخص:

تهدف هذه الدراسة الى الدور الذي تلعبه التربية الاعلامية في مكافحة من الجريمة الالكترونية، حيث تكون مجتمع البحث من عينة من الاسر الموجودة على مستوى مدينة بسكرة من خلال تطبيق العينة القصدية لاختيار عينة المبحوثين الذين تتوفر فيهم استخدام أبنائهم لتكنولوجيا الاتصال، وتم الاعتماد على المنهج الوصفي لكي يتمكن من الوصف الكمي والكيفي لنتائج الدراسة، واستخدمنا أداة الاستبيان لجمع البيانات، وبعد عرض وتحليل البيانات توصلنا الى النتيجة التي مفداها أن التربية الاعلامية لها دور توعوي ودور تعليمي للمكافحة الجريمة الالكترونية من خلال البرامج الاعلامية والأسرة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التربية الاعلامية، الجريمة الالكترونية

1. INTRODUCTION

Media education is considered one of the crucial methods in dealing with the content of media in all its fields and specialties. This approach has become more necessary than ever, especially given the advancements witnessed in the media and social media platforms. The content is no longer limited to conventional movies, television programs, or simple news bulletins that solely focus on conveying facts and events. Instead, it has evolved to become more complex, infiltrating various aspects of social and human life.

Addressing the merits and drawbacks of media and communication technology leads us to discuss usage patterns, exposure habits, and the interactive communication style adopted by the audience. It is noteworthy that the proliferation of electronic crime, a phenomenon previously unknown to the public before the digital explosion, has created a new type of

attacks and methods beyond the control of international security institutions.

Most global companies today are grappling with cybercrimes that continuously breach their databases. This has necessitated the reinforcement of their defenses to fend off electronic attacks on the international network level. To address the role of media education in reducing cybercrime, this study takes a sample from some families in the city of Sidi Khaled, Ouled Djellal province, and examines how they apply media education methods and mechanisms.

2. Problem Statement

In the midst of the media and digital invasion witnessed worldwide, there is an urgent need to discuss the upbringing of individuals regarding the responsible use of media. This involves providing appropriate tools and skills for the new generations to understand the workings of media and enable children to interact with it in a proper and rational manner. The education of upcoming generations aims to ensure their responsible utilization of media, avoiding its potential risks. Thus, the term "media education" has gained prominence, becoming the focus of attention for sociologists, psychologists, and communication scholars in recent decades due to its utmost importance in preparing a suitable foundation for understanding and perceiving the content of media and communication.

Media education relies on a set of tools and principles that individuals need to be taught. This education aims to raise awareness about the positives and negatives of traditional and modern media technologies. It also informs individuals about the

many opportunities provided by the vast flow of information in the digital space. The potential dangers of media on the public have made media education an urgent necessity for dealing with this new reality.

The digital environment, with all its characteristics and platforms, represents the new outlet for a generation eager to navigate a vast world of news, information, and saturated links. This has facilitated quick and high-quality access to information. In recent decades, media and communication channels have undergone significant changes that were absent in traditional media. Notably, features such as asynchrony, non-location dependence in browsing electronic news platforms, and the constant updating around the clock have emerged.

These advanced media have given rise to modern patterns of cultural exchange worldwide, transforming the digital space into a cosmic room characterized by cultural and linguistic diversity. Users participate in dense usage while also grappling with the phenomena of cybercrime and piracy. This has led to the fragmentation of the audience into independent units that share some trends and diverge in others. Controlling this type of virtual audience with precision or entirely limiting electronic crime images is challenging due to the absence of sufficient legal mechanisms and academic studies to contain this contemporary form of diverse and flowing electronic communication.

The utmost priority now is to understand the social and economic dimensions surrounding the phenomenon of cybercrime, its scale, and to analyze the human and

psychological reasons and motivations that have turned this space into fertile ground for various forms of digital crime.

Therefore, the only available approach in this situation is to invest in the media education system and employ it, at least to some extent, to mitigate electronic crimes. This is where the importance of this study comes in, as it focuses on the role played by media education in combating various forms of cybercrime and working towards their reduction.

Based on what has been mentioned, the following question is posed:

What is the role of media education in combating various forms of cybercrime in the city of Biskra?

From this main question, the following sub-questions emerge:

1. What is the awareness role of media education in facing different forms of cybercrime in the city of Biskra?
2. What is the educational role of media education in confronting various forms of cybercrimes in the city of Biskra?

By addressing these questions, the study aims to provide a deeper understanding of the impact that media education can have in enhancing awareness and providing necessary skills for individuals to confront and combat the phenomenon of cybercrime in a specific environment, such as the city of Biskra.

3. Stuy Objectives:

This study aims to shed light on the role of education in combating cybercrime by achieving the following objectives:

- Identify the awareness role of media education in confronting various forms of cybercrime.
- Identify the educational role of media education in confronting various forms of cybercrime.

4. Study Significance:

The significance of this study lies in addressing the crucial phenomenon of the role of education in combating cybercrime. With the recent proliferation of various types of cybercrimes, and the notable advancements in information and communication technology, the importance of understanding the impact of media content on the audience, particularly children who may lack sufficient awareness of the risks posed by these media, becomes evident. The contents and influences of these media on the audience, especially the children, highlight the need for media education to rectify and address the situation. By employing a range of awareness and educational methods, media education plays a pivotal role in preventing the spread of such crimes and mitigating their consequences on society.

• Media Education:

Researchers have generally agreed on the concepts surrounding media education, emphasizing its connection to media with its technologies and presented content. The goal is to understand media in terms of objectives and purposes, aiming to create media-aware individuals. Researchers highlight the crucial role of media and its prominent role in contemporary societies. Therefore, media education is seen as a parallel project to these

ongoing changes, creating a balance between the use of these media and the individual's needs.

Media education can be defined as the preparation of media professionals for the educational process. Journalists not only need to master media skills but also align them with the values and goals of the society declared in its written policies. It aims to achieve collaboration between media professionals and educators, particularly in a time marked by internal and external intellectual deviations leading to disturbances that challenge the functions of media and educational institutions in meeting individual needs. These needs include social security, ethical behavior, and the need for balanced information (Al-Hamdani, 2015, pages 89-93).

Media education encompasses all the efforts and purposeful media activities broadcasted through various media channels, aiding in the holistic development of individuals morally, mentally, spiritually, socially, and economically. Media education cannot be achieved directly but can be facilitated by conveying educational and moral values in media content. Its impact is gradual and indirect, yielding its fruit as it influences individuals over time. Media education acts as a system or educational framework responsible for developing media literacy among citizens at various stages of life.

As defined, media education involves processes related to the knowledge of mass media and communication technologies, encompassing the abilities to manage and utilize media in households, critically analyze their content, form, and structures, and understand the economic, social, and political context through which these messages are constructed. It also involves

evaluating the impact of media on individuals and society (Boukhnouka, 2003).

It is the type of education that specializes in dealing with all media and communication tools, including words, printed materials, sound, still images, and moving images, delivered through various types of technologies. It enables members of society to gain an understanding of the media and communication tools used in their community, how these tools operate, and subsequently acquire the skills to use media for effective communication with others. (Zaitoun, 2005)

Countries around the world differ in their approach to media education as follows:

Advanced countries in this field: These countries have established strong and systematic media education, setting its foundations, general guidelines, and curricula, while preparing and training teachers and providing educational resources for teaching media education. Examples include Canada and most European countries.

Countries with school-based media education: In these countries, media education exists but is irregular and incomplete, such as in Italy and Ireland.

Countries where media education is still in the realm of non-formal education: In these countries, media education is offered through youth programs, women's groups, and places of worship, such as the United States and third-world countries.

Among Arab countries, the Republic of Lebanon stands out, teaching students five sessions titled "Media Education" as part

of the subject "National Education and Social Development" in the first year of middle school. Additionally, four sessions titled "Media and Public Opinion" are provided to third-year high school students within the same subject. (Al-Shumairi, 2010, p. 20)

Procedural Concept: Media education is a set of mechanisms and methods adopted by media institutions, as well as social development institutions, to disseminate awareness and educate users of media and communication about the risks associated with their misuse.

• **Electronic Crime:**

There is no consensus on the definition of electronic crime in terms of how it is defined or what constitutes electronic crimes. The field of electronic crime lacks a consistent definition, often using terms such as virtual, computer-related, electronic, and digital, all of which reflect significant gaps in defining electronic crime. Definitions of electronic crime typically revolve around crimes committed using any digital equipment.

Cybercrimes are defined as a set of crimes associated with the science of logical information processing. Abdel Fattah Murad defines cybercrimes as: "A series of unlawful acts and actions carried out through electronic equipment, devices, or the internet, or broadcast through it. These crimes require specialized knowledge of computer techniques and information systems to commit them, investigate them, or prosecute their perpetrators." (Salem, 2020)

Others define cybercrimes as: "A series of informatics-related acts that may be punishable."

They are also described as "legal violations committed through informatics for the purpose of making a profit." (Youssef, 2009, pp. 701-702)

Definitions of electronic crime largely depend on the purpose of using this term. They include specific acts against confidentiality, integrity, and the availability of computer data. However, the essence of electronic crime goes beyond this description. Actions related to computers used for personal purposes, financial gain, or causing harm, including identity-related crimes and actions related to computer content, all fall within a broader definition of electronic crime.

It is also defined as: a set of illegal actions and activities conducted through electronic devices, computer systems, the internet, or broadcasted through them. Electronic crime is a type of crime that requires expertise in computer technology and information systems for its commission, verification, and prosecution (Mourad, 2007, page 38).

• **Procedural Concept:**

Electronic crime is considered a set of criminal actions and activities that exploit digital media to lure victims, relying on a range of illegal methods.

5. Previous Studies:

First Study: Asia Reda and Rima Sayoud, titled *The Role of Media Education in Protecting Adolescents from the Dangers of*

Modern Communication Technology: A Study of a Sample of Secondary School Students in Jijel Who Use Facebook.

Main Question: What role does media education play in protecting adolescents from the dangers of modern communication technology?

- What are the motivations for adolescents to use modern communication technology?
- What are the risks of modern communication technology on adolescents?
- What are the mechanisms of media education in protecting adolescents from the risks of modern communication technology, according to the participants?

The study adopted a descriptive approach and used a purposive sample through a questionnaire. It was conducted in the city of Jijel and reached the following results:

- Most of the sample spend more than 4 hours using modern communication tools, especially at night.
- Most of the sample rated the impact of using modern communication technology on their psychological state, behaviors, and academic results as moderate.
- The majority of respondents had no prior knowledge of the concept of media education and did not follow programs related to media education presented in the media.
- Most of the sample considered that activating the role of parents in media education, blocking unethical websites, and incorporating it into educational curricula are the

main mechanisms to protect them from the dangers of this modern technology.

Commentary:

This study aligns with the current study in terms of the first variable, which is media education, the type of approach, the tools used, and the sample type.

Degree of Benefit from Previous Studies:

We benefited from this study in building the problem, formulating the questionnaire, and the methodological procedures.

6. Study Population and Sample:

The research community consists of the set of households targeted for study, residing in the city of Biskra. The sample is represented by 120 families living in Biskra. Communication was established with parents, both fathers and mothers, who have children and use media and the internet at home. Due to the large size of the research community and the difficulty of numerically enumerating its constituents, the sample was chosen as a method for inspection through purposive sampling. Potential participants were approached, and data collection took place in January 2024.

7. Research Methodology:

The study adopted a descriptive methodology as it relies on both quantitative and qualitative descriptions of the studied phenomenon. This aligns with the current study, which embraced the descriptive approach to uncover the role of media education in combating electronic crime.

8. Study Type:

This research falls under the category of descriptive studies, aiming to reveal current facts related to a phenomenon or situation by recording its indications, characteristics, and classifications. The objective is to provide a detailed and comprehensive description of all aspects of this phenomenon. Descriptive studies go beyond merely collecting data and facts; they involve classifying, analyzing, and interpreting these data to extract their meanings, presenting them quantitatively and qualitatively, with the goal of achieving generalizable results.

9. Data Collection Tools:

The study employed a questionnaire as the most suitable tool for this research. A field research form was prepared, including both closed and open-ended questions, organized based on the study's data and objectives. The questionnaire was distributed to the studied sample, and a personal communication approach was adopted.

The questionnaire included the following axes:

Axis One: Personal information about the sample.

Axis Two: The awareness role of media education in reducing electronic crime in Biskra.

Axis Three: The educational role of media education in combating electronic crime in Biskra.

Axis Four: Tables illustrating the personal data of the sample individuals.

10. Presentation and Analysis of Data:

Axis One: Personal information about the sample

Table 1. illustrates the distribution of the sample individuals according to the gender variable

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Males	50	42%
Females	70	58%
Total	120	100%

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Table 2. illustrates the distribution of the sample individuals according to the age variable

Age	Frequency	Percentage %
23 to 33	20	17%
34 to 44	80	66%
45 and above	20	17%
Total	120	100%

It appears that this table illustrates the distribution of sample individuals by age. The highest percentage of respondents is estimated at 80% for the age group ranging from 34 to 44 years, followed by a 20% ratio for each of the remaining two age groups.

Table 3. illustrates the distribution of the sample individuals according to the educational level ef education

Educational Level	Frequency	Percentage %
Primary	10	8%
Middle School	40	33%
Secondary	20	17%
University	50	42%
Total	120	100%

It is evident from this table that the majority of the respondents have a university education, accounting for 50%. Following that, 40% of the respondents have a middle school education. Next is the group with a secondary education, constituting 20%. Lastly, the smallest percentage is represented by those with a primary education, amounting to 10%. This indicates that the majority of the respondents are educated individuals.

Axis Two: The Awareness Role of Media Education in Combating Electronic Crime

Table 4. illustrates the primary role of media programs in raising awareness among children about the risks they may face due to the misuse of media, from the perspective of the sample individuals

The nature of the role	Frequency	Percentage%
Positive	30	25%
Negative	90	75%
Total	120	100%

It is evident from the table that the majority of parents believe that the media does not play a proper role in educating

their children, accounting for 75%. On the other hand, 25% of parents consider that the media contributes to the upbringing of children, depending on the type and strength of the media and the child's engagement with it. This indicates that parents perceive the media as more of a threat to the values, attitudes, and behaviors of their children than a benefit, especially given the significant advancements in media and communication technologies.

Table 5. illustrates the viewpoints of different segments of the sample regarding the media and its complementary role to families in educating children

There is a complementary role.	Frequency	percentage %
No	40	33%
Yes	80	67%
Total	120	100%

This table illustrates that media contributes, according to the sample individuals, by a percentage of 67% in complementing the role of the family in raising children. Meanwhile, 33% of parents believe that the media has no role in raising children. This interpretation of the results is at a level that prevents it from fully assuming its role in education. Media influences children's behavior and may lead them to acquire certain behavioral patterns through media programs such as cartoons, movies, and their specific shows, etc.

Table 6. illustrates the age at which the children in the sample started engaging with media

Age	Frequency	Percentage%
4 years	50	42%
7 years	30	25%
10 years	40	33%
Total	120	100%

This table is now presented in a tabular format for better readability.

The results of the above table shed light on the age at which the children in the study sample began using or interacting with media as follows: the age group of 10 years leads other age groups by 33%, followed by the 4-year-old group with a percentage of 42%. Both the 7-year-old and 4-year-old groups are the most avid consumers and the first age groups to show interest in media, followed by the 7-year-old age group at 25%. This may be attributed to the void experienced by these age groups, leading them to turn to the virtual world to compensate for the emptiness they feel. Additionally, this age group is drawn to media and its auditory and visual influences.

Table 7. Illustrates the electronic media used by the children in the study sample.

Medium	Frequency	Percentage
Phone	70	58%
Computer	30	25%
Tablet	20	17%
Total	120	100%

The above table indicates that the majority of children use the phone at a rate of 58%, while the lowest percentage is 17% for those using tablets. This leads to the conclusion that the smartphone is one of the most significant devices used by children for accessing the internet, given the convenience and combined services it offers, especially when connected to the internet.

Table 8. illustrates the motivations of children for using the internet from the perspective of the sample

Motivations	Frequency	Percentage
Education	70	58%
Upbringing	50	42%
Total	120	100%

From the table, it is evident that children use modern media for entertainment at a rate of 58%, while the percentage of their usage for educational purposes varies at 42%. The results suggest that entertainment is the most significant service provided by media, considering the widespread availability of these programs on websites and platforms designed for children.

Table 9. indicates the most commonly used networks by children from the perspective of the sample

Networks	Frequency	Percentage
YouTube	60	50%
Games	50	42%
Other Networks	10	6%
Total	120	100%

From the table above, it is observed that 50% of the children in the sample use YouTube, while games are used by

42%. This leads to the conclusion that YouTube is the most prevalent and commonly used social media network among children due to its entertaining and easily accessible videos, especially considering the continuous evolution of this platform.

Table 10. indicates whether the individuals in the sample guide their children in dealing with media

Parental Guidance	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	110	92%
No	10	8%
Total	120	100%

The table indicates that parents guide their children in dealing with media at a rate of 92%, while 8% do not provide guidance to their children. This is likely attributed to our interaction with educated families who recognize the dangers of improper media use on their children.

Table 11. indicates whether the individuals in the sample guide their children in dealing with media

Parental Guidance Method	Frequency	Percentage
Allocating Time for Media Learning	30	25
Introducing Educational Programs	90	75
Enrolling them in Specialized Schools	0	0
Total	120	100

The table above indicates that parents guide their children in using the internet, with placing educational programs at the forefront as the method used by 75% of parents. This is achieved by equipping media with applications that contribute to teaching

children how to use the internet properly. Meanwhile, 25% of the study sample allocate specific hours for teaching their children how to use media.

Table 12. illustrates the sample's perspective on the role of media content in raising awareness among their children about the risks of media

Media Content Role	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	70	58%
No	50	42%
Total	120	100%

Through the table, it is observed that 58% of parents view media and its content as a tool for educating their children about the risks of technology. Meanwhile, 42% of parents believe that media content does not prioritize broadcasting informative programs about the dangers of media on their children. This indicates that media outlets should place more importance on addressing these risks.

Axis Three: The educational role of media education in combating electronic crime in Biskra.

Table 13. Illustrates the average hours of children's media usage daily

Time Range	Frequency	Percentage
From 1 to 2 hours	100	84%
From 2 to 4 hours	10	8%
More than 4 hours	10	8%
Total	120	100

Reading through the table, we find that the average percentage of children using media daily for one to two hours is

estimated at 84%. For those who use it from two to four hours, the percentage is 8%, and for children using media for more than four hours daily, their percentage is also 8%. While we note that the highest percentage falls within the range of one to two hours, the other percentages should not be overlooked, highlighting the potential risks associated with prolonged exposure to media and its health, psychological, and social implications on the child's well-being.

Table 14. Illustrates whether parents monitor their children when using media

Monitoring	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	120	100%
No	0	0%
Total	120	100%

The results of the table indicate that parents monitor their children when using media, with a percentage of 100%. This leads us to conclude that parents are actively monitoring their children and the content they are exposed to, aiming to protect them from the potential negative impacts of these media.

Table 15. Illustrates how parents monitor their children when using media

Monitoring Method	Frequency	Percentage
Connecting to the device	30	25%
Reviewing the content	90	75%
Using Google Kids	0	0%
Total	120	100%

The table above indicates that parents who prefer to monitor their children's use of media see the necessity of implementing controls. The primary method chosen is content monitoring, with 75% using filters on devices to block inappropriate and unwanted content. Meanwhile, 25% of the study sample prefer the continuous monitoring of their child's device by connecting it to the parent's device.

Table 16. Illustrates the most common types of cybercrimes that children may be exposed to, from the perspective of parents

Types of Cybercrimes	Frequency	Percentage
Pornographic and Harmful Messages	60	50%
Identity Theft	40	34%
Electronic Sexual Harassment	10	8%
Drug and Prohibited Substance Sales	10	8%
Total	120	100%

The data in the above table indicates the types of cybercrimes that children may be exposed to from the parents' perspective. Pornographic and harmful messages ranked first with a percentage of 50%. Following in the second position is identity theft, accounting for 34% of the total sample. Drug sales crime also came with the same percentage, reaching 8%. This signifies criminals' focus on targeting children due to the ease of luring them without leaving a trace of their identity. Therefore, it is crucial for children to inform their parents of any actions from their virtual friends. This is something parents must educate their

children about to prevent them from falling into the trap of cybercrimes.

Table 17. Illustrates the appropriate response from the parents' perspective if their children are exposed to cybercrime

Type of Response	Frequency	Percentage
Depriving the Child of Media	40	33%
Tightening Surveillance	20	17%
Explaining and Discussing	60	50%
Total	120	100%

The table reveals that the opinions of the sample individuals vary regarding the behavior they would adopt if their children are exposed to cybercrime. The majority of respondents, 50%, prefer explaining and discussing the situation with their children. In contrast, 33% of parents choose to deprive their child of internet access. The remaining percentage, 17%, prefers tightening control over the media content that their children watch and follow. This confirms the practice of media education principles within Algerian families, especially when children are exposed to cybercrimes that may lead them to witness scenes that do not align with societal standards and Islamic values.

Table 18. Illustrates the impact of cybercrime on the child according to the sample individuals

Impact of Cybercrime on Children	Frequency	Percentage
Ethical deviation	110	84%
May experience shock	10	6%
Total	120	100%

The table clearly indicates that the majority of individuals in the study believe that the impact of cybercrime on children is primarily ethical deviation, accounting for 84%. This includes instances such as theft and the adoption of habits and behaviors contrary to Islamic and societal values. The remaining percentage, estimated at 6%, suggests that some individuals perceive potential psychological shock for children due to exposure to cybercrimes like neglecting studies or experiencing violence.

Therefore, it is essential for parents to safeguard their children from cybercrimes by intensifying monitoring when using media, raising awareness about proper media usage, and demonstrating care through spending time with them. Restricting internet usage for children to essential needs is also crucial in order to protect them from potential harm.

11. Study Results

1. Answering the first question: The educational role of media education in confronting cybercrime is manifested as follows:

- Media programs play a negative role in educating children about the risks they may face due to the misuse of media, according to the participants in the study.
- Media institutions complement the family's role in media awareness by 67%, as any shortcomings in media towards children can lead to deviations and misuse of these means.
- The majority of children start using media at the age of 4, accounting for 42%. YouTube is considered their most used platform due to its ease of use. This age group is generally considered unaware, so the family must play the primary role in their education.

2. Answering the second question: The educational role of media education to confront cybercrimes is as follows:

- The family is the primary guide in teaching children how to deal with media. This is because, at this age, children have limited scientific knowledge and cannot distinguish between what is beneficial and harmful, entertaining, and educational.
- Parents rely on various methods to teach children how to deal with media content. Most prefer placing educational programs on the media used by children, accounting for 75%, while 25% dedicate specific hours to teach them personally.

- The study results indicate that the most common types of cybercrimes children may face through media use are pornographic and harmful messages, accounting for 50%, followed by identity theft at 34%.
- The study's results highlight the potential effects of cybercrimes on children from the perspective of parents. These crimes may lead to moral deviation, such as theft and sexual harassment, and the adoption of values contrary to societal norms. Additionally, children may experience psychological shock, leading to dangerous behaviors.

12. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it can be said that all social development institutions, especially families, schools, media, and mosques, must integrate to fulfill their role in preparing a generation that adapts to this era. This can be achieved by reinforcing a culture of responsible and beneficial use of media and digital technologies through the dedication of both media and digital education to combat all types of cybercrime. The importance of media education is evident in facing the negative impacts and enhancing the positive aspects offered by media.

The technological revolution has made media education one of the most consumed media needs, especially in countries that have lost control over electronic crimes, which are among the contents presented by the media. The significance of media education emerges in aiding children to avoid the negative effects of these tools. Moreover, it involves developing critical

thinking skills and logical interpretation of media messages without deviating from the social, ethical, cultural, and psychological context towards dangerous media messages for diverse audiences. This enables them to handle what is presented positively in terms of quality and quantity.

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