

# Impact of YouTube on Television Audience

**Dr . Hemant More**

Associate Professor , Mass Communication department  
Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune.

**Ramdas Nehulkar**

Assistant Professor , Mass Communication department  
Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune.

## ABSTRACT

Today's youth is raised in an era of smart phones and do not remember a time before social media. Most of the youth is active on social media starting at the age of 10. According to a study by Variety Magazine (2014), six out of ten influencers for 13-18-year-olds are YouTubers.

Today's youth find YouTube influencers and shows more relatable than traditional content.

This research shows that YouTube has become part of the daily life of many such youngsters which has a significant effect on the traditional Television audience.

This descriptive research describes the effect, YouTube made on the Television audience. Further research could focus on more detailed reasoning and findings on the geographical and gender basis.

**Keywords:** YouTube versus Television, YouTube vs TV viewers, Web Content vs TV Content, YouTube Influence, TV audience depletion, TV audience 2018.

### **Introduction**

Couple of decades back there was a time when as a kids we all had our favorite television shows and cartoons and not only us, but the elders, the youngsters, everyone had their own favorites.

Few shows were as such that entire family used to gather in front of the television set in order to

watch a specific television program and even neighbors used to gather there at the time when

television sets were rare. Watching cricket match was not less than an event where not only youngsters, their friends, siblings but everyone from the kids to the senior citizens gathered in front of the television in order to watch and enjoy the cricket match. But now days, since half a decade, a new media has taken over all the traditional media entirely and has brought a revolution in the entertainment & video industry, which is YouTube. YouTube is an online media (specifically video) streaming platform pioneered in February 2005 by three former PayPal employees Chad Hurley, Steve Chen and Jawed Karim. It is a website,

or an online place where you can upload and share your videos and also can watch the videos uploaded by millions of other chan-

nels / people. YouTube was bought by Google in November 2006 and currently the second highest used browser in the world. Being free (internet charges apply though), it gained its popularity in the entire world and was used to share many funny videos, music videos and compilations.

Though YouTube was introduced in 2005, it was used just as a casual medium to watch funny videos and music videos and as it was not organized and the YouTube channels never functioned in an organized way, it was not seen as an option to the regular traditional media like Television or theatrically released films. There were several channels and personal YouTube accounts who kept creating content regularly but as most of them were from foreign countries and the internet and mobile phone technology was not up to the mark in India, the content was not regularly watched here. Roughly during 2011 to 2012, several YouTube channels were formed like The Viral Fever

Videos, All India Bakchod, East India Comedy, etc. which not only started creating entertaining and quality video content, but also in an organized way which lead the Indian audience to subscribe their YouTube channels and look ahead to watch and check out their content regularly. This was the time when the revolution was taking place and most of the youth started turning from Television towards the next big thing, which was YouTube!

## Importance of the Study



If the arrival of the new media is affecting the already popular traditional media, it is very important to study that how powerful the impact is. Also what are the reasons for the impact and that what is leading the audience to change their preferences.

There was a time when as a kids we all had our favorite television shows and cartoons and not only us, but the elders, the youngsters, everyone had their own favorites. Few shows were as such that entire family used to gather in front of the television set in order to watch a specific television program and even neighbors used to gather there at the time when television sets were rare. Watching cricket match was not less than an event where not only youngsters, their friends, siblings but everyone from the kids to the senior citizens gathered in front of the television in order to watch and enjoy the cricket match. But these days, such kind of scenarios have

went missing and people are preferring more of a personal kind of entertainment which can be available for them whenever required or on demand rather than depending on specific time schedules and specific devices and places to watch their favorite shows.

Even most of the bachelors say that they can survive without Television and they don't even mind if the television goes extinct tomorrow. Most of such people are dependent fully on their cell phone or computer / laptop devices with internet connections and getting their daily dose of entertainment, news, informational content from the internet. Thus, this raises the question that if the YouTube came at the level of Television in terms of production value and the internet connection became so common like how the cable or dish TV has become, will the Television sustain its presence? And is there a possibility of Television getting extinct from our lives and YouTube taking its

place. Thus, this study is important in order to understand that whether there is significant amount of impact on Television due to YouTube, and what the reasons are if the impact is too heavy.

### **Review of Literature**

Before we can proceed and take a survey on the base of people's preferences about which media they consume the most, Television on YouTube and knowing the reason behind it, it is first important to review the literature. Here reviewing of literature means reviewing or doing the study of the research on similar topic if ever done before. Thus, research was done in order to find such case studies or surveys done before which directly spoke about the impact of YouTube on Television and its audience.

#### **1. 'How YouTube TV will kill Cable' blog post by Mike Elgan (4th March, 2017)**

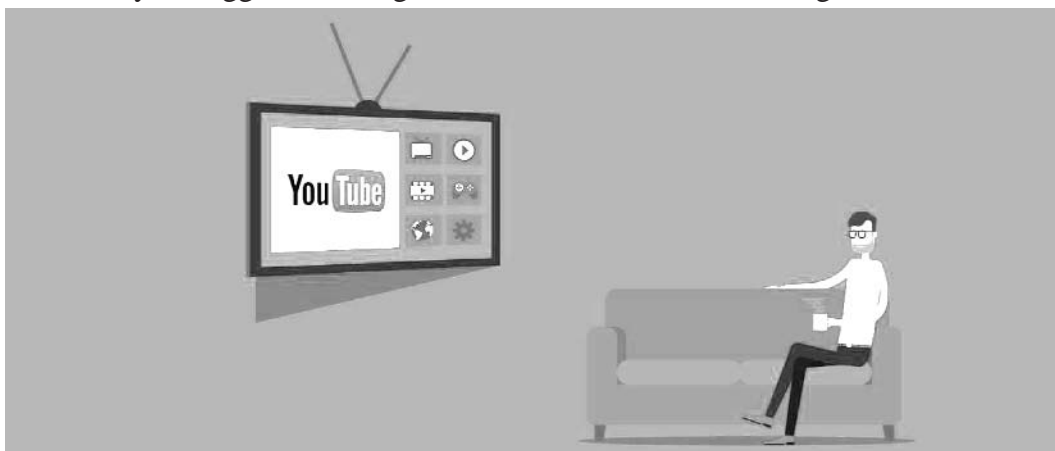
On March 4, 2017, one such blog was written by a blogger Mike Elgan

which was titled, 'How YouTube TV will kill Cable'. The blog was more focused on how YouTube TV function will replace the cable or dish TV subscription, it also gave a glimpse of that how slowly YouTube is trying to replace the Television, or how people have started getting a better option than Television.

In the blog, Mike states that, it prices \$35 per month for a family and in order to start broadcasting 40 channels for a month. These channels are, CBS, NBC, Fox, the CW, ESPN, USA, Bravo, E, MSNBC, Fox News, film producer Channel, FX and native stations. (Members also can add some extra channels for the unannounced additional fee.)

This Subscription does not include: CNN, HBO, AMC, MTV, VH1, ET, Comedy Central, Discovery, Cartoon Network, TNT, PBS, TBS or The Food Network.

On the other hand, YouTube TV can play on dedicated iOS and smart phones on the application and on the tv.youtube.com website. It also can be streamed to full-fledged TVs with



Google's \$35 Chrome cast electronic device, or TVs with Chrome cast support inbuilt. Later this year, YouTube TV is supported by several TV sets called as "TV-streaming devices" and recreation consoles, consistent with Google.

As a bonus, YouTube TV comes with content from YouTube Red, the ad-free subscription service, and Google Play Music.

shows us that how YouTube is stepping ahead technologically and challenging the Television media, thus, impacting on the Television audience.

## **2.Variety.com blog post by Todd Spangler**

Also in a blog article written by Todd Spangler on Variety.com, the study was performed in order to understand

# YouTube TV

YouTube TV won't need a contract or commitment and may be canceled without charging a fee. It also can be paused and can even pause mechanically if no one logs into it for 3 months from their home postal code, then you can resume it later. If you or your members of the family do not log in from your home postal code for 3 months, YouTube TV can stop charging you till you re-activate it. Thus, he says that YouTube TV seems like it's half as good as a cable subscription. It's roughly half the cost, thus there is a fear for the cable Televisions to go extinct. Though this blog doesn't directly proves our study that how the Television audience is getting affected by the online media streaming platform like YouTube, it literally

that what people preferred, YouTube, or Television and they concluded that people find YouTube content more relatable and entertaining than of the Television.

They also concluded that younger audiences watch more hours of video on YouTube and other digital outlets than TV - simply because they find it more enjoyable and relevant to their lives, according to a the study. They stated that, as per the study conducted by Hunter Qualitative Research commissioned by digital media firm Defy Media, the consumers aged 13-24 spend roughly 11 hours weekly watching the on-line video content compared with approximately 8 hours for the traditional Television. The study also states according to their survey that, 62% of

survey respondents said that digital content makes them "feel good" about themselves. About 40% said so for the TV. Also, according to the survey, 67% of people said digital delivers content they can relate to while only 41% said that for the TV. In the similar survey, 66% said that they turn to digital content to relax while 47% of the people told that they turn towards TV for doing so.

### **3. Blog post by Brian Moylan (23rd April, 2015)**

On 23 April 2015, Brian Moylan also wrote in his blog that, YouTube has developed its own culture and its own genres. They have some exclusive content like, various tutorials, song parodies, GoPro skateboard videos, video logs, travel videos, gadgets unboxing videos and so on. Television should not worry about the YouTube ripping off their shows, because YouTube has plenty of shows of its own. YouTube even started calling their accounts on which the videos are been uploaded as "channels". Also in 2011 Google spent almost \$200 million to launch their own original channels with partners like Madonna, Pharrell Williams, VICE and The Wall Street Journal.

As per the blog post written by Risto Kuulasmaa on 6 December 2017 on huffingonpost.com, he states that the fame and popularity of YouTube celebrities, or the stars among the young generation has

grown significantly compared to the mainstream celebrities, and the rise of YouTube stars shows us that internet stars are now more important to teenagers than mainstream celebrities. He also informed that the survey was ran by an independent research company, who interviewed 500 Finnish teenagers aged 13 years to 17 years and asked them to name 3-5 celebs that they follow regularly. According to that survey, 12 out of top 20 were the YouTube celebrities and only 3 of them were the traditional Television celebrities. In the same article he states that, according to another survey, the 15 year old to 29 year old Finnish young adults watch YouTube on the average of 1 hour per day and fifty seven of them follow YouTube on a routine. Over half of the complete Finnish population views YouTube videos weekly. He writes that The same type of study among American teenagers shows almost the same relationship between the popularity of YouTube stars in relation to traditional mainstream celebrities. He further makes a statement that, "We are currently in the middle of a global phenomenon where YouTube stars are leading a major power shift in the future of entertainment."

### **4. Article published by telegraph.co.uk on 8th October 2014, by Christopher Williams**

Also in an article published by telegraph.co.uk on 8th October 2014, by

Christopher Williams, it is stated that Television consumption by the young generation between the ages 16 to 24 years has significantly depleted. As per the survey and the data, they watched Television for about 148 minutes per day in 2013, compared with 169 minutes in 2010. It is also stated that in the last one and half years, viewership by the 4 year olds to 15 year old kids has come down by 22% and the viewership among 16 year old to 34 year old people has come down by 15%, according to the analysts, which is a fearful thing for the broadcasters.

### **Data Analysis & Interpretation**

#### **Data Collection Method**

In order to collect the data, a questionnaire was made in such a form, or the questions were prepared in order to not only know that which media the audience prefer more in order to consume their daily dose of entertainment, information, news, etc. but also to understand that how much time people spend watching the respective media, what device they use to view it, are they happy with the content and so on. Age and occupation of the audience of whose survey was conducted was also taken into consideration.

Tools used for data collection is Google Forms. A systematic questionnaire has been prepared by using the Google form and it was distributed to the people of whose survey was conducted through the link through WhatsApp mobile phone application.

Finally, when people submitted their forms, data was collected and decoded in the Google forms inbuilt section. Data is interpreted in the form of pie diagrams, bar diagrams, charts and pictorial representations. As the survey questions were mostly given multiple choices to choose, the analysis was quite helpful and simple.

### **Collected data Analysis**

Following are the questions which were asked in the questionnaire to the audience. How often do you watch TV in a week? Do you watch web shows or series on YouTube? What kind of content would you like watching on TV?

What kind of content do you search & watch OR would like to watch online on YouTube?

Are you happy with the TV content produced these days?

Are you happy with the video content available on YouTube?

On what device do you watch video content the most?

Finally, if you have to choose just one, what will it be?

Total 106 responses were received.

Data collected is as follows:

-Individuals who got surveyed were mostly between the 18 to 37 years of age. More than 25% were between 22 to 26 years of age. 69.8% were Males while 30.2% were females. Around 37.1% people whose survey was taken were students while rest of them were free lancers, self employed, employees, etc.

Answers to the survey questions were as follows :-

1.How often do you watch TV in a week?

- a.Less than 1 hour : 46.2%
- b.Do not watch TV : 30.2%
- c.5 to 6 hours : 17.9%
- d.More than 6 hours: 5.7%

2.Do you watch web shows or series on YouTube?

- a.Yes : 84%
- b.No : 16%

3.What kind of content would you like watching on TV?

- a.Reality Shows : 38.7%
- b.News & Educational Content: 32.1%
- c.Fictional Entertaining Content : 29.2%

4.What kind of content do you search & watch OR would like to watch online on YouTube?

- a.Entertaining & Fun Content : 46.2%
- b.Experimental Work : 30.2%
- c.Educational & Informative Content : 17.9%
- d.Adult Content : 5.7%

5.Are you happy with the TV content produced these days?

- a.No : 60.4%
- b.Yes : 39.6%

6.Are you happy with the video content available on YouTube?

- a.Yes : 86.8%
- b.No: 13.2%

7.On what device do you watch video content the most?

- a.Mobile Phone / Tablet : 47.2%
- b.Laptop / Desktop : 29.2%
- c.Television Screen : 23.6%

8.Finally, if you have to choose just one, what will it be?

- a.YouTube : 76.4%
- b.Television : 23.6%

### **Interpretation of the Data**

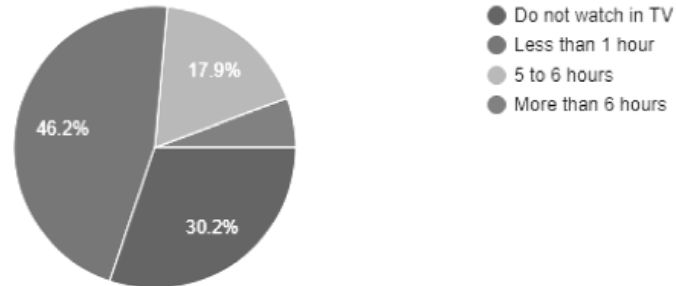
Now, as the data was collected from enough number of people i.e. 106, interpretation can be done and the analysis can be made on the basis of their answers. Following is the interpretation of the data:

1.When the question was asked regarding how much Television is watched by every individual, it is seen that almost few less than half people watch the Television for less than half hour every week which tells us that the watch time of Television and its popularity especially amongst youngsters has depleted significantly. About 30% people say that they don't watch Television at all, which is a very fearful report for the Television content producers and the broadcasters.



## How often do you watch TV in a week?

106 responses

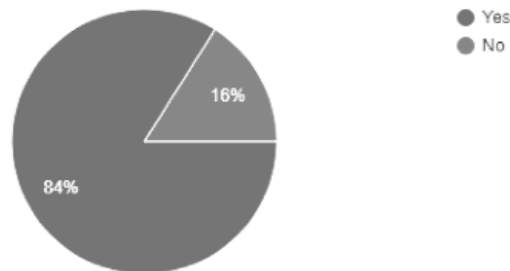


2. When asked about whether people watch web shows on YouTube or internet, almost 84% people said 'yes', which literally shows the popularity of this new medium in youngsters instead of Television.

3. When asked about the type of content people would like to watch on Television, there was a mixed response to all the types i.e. Reality Shows, News & Educational content and Fictional Entertaining content, but

## Do you watch web shows or series on YouTube?

106 responses



## What kind of content would you like watching on TV?

106 responses



more preference is seen to the Reality Shows when it comes to the Television.

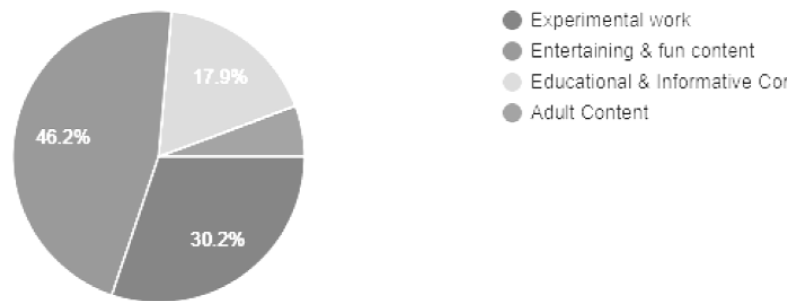
4. When asked the similar question regarding the content people would like to watch on YouTube, most of the people voted for Fun and entertaining content which shows that people turn towards YouTube to watch more fun on the go content. But, there were also considerable amount of people who voted for the experimental work and few voted for the adult content.

5. When asked whether the people were happy with the content produced by Television today, almost 60% said that they were not happy with the content. This gives us an idea that why Television is been watched lesser and lesser daily especially by the youth.

6. When asked the same question about the YouTube, almost 86% were happy with the content produced on YouTube, thus, the popularity.

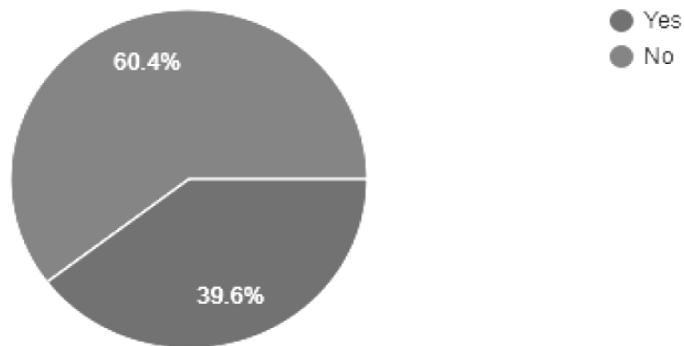
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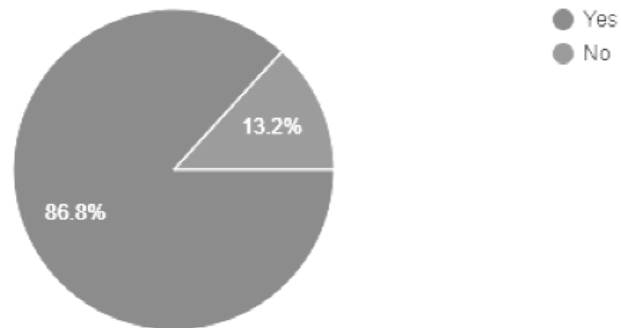
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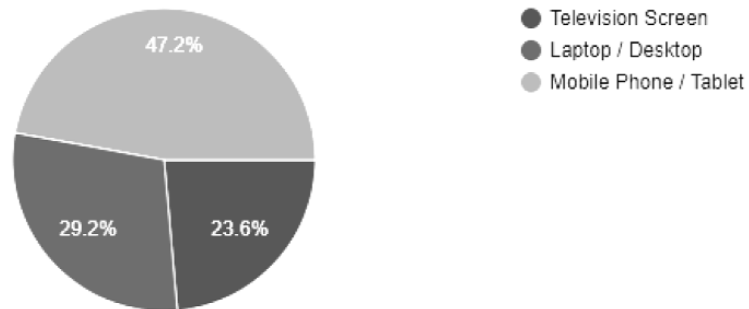
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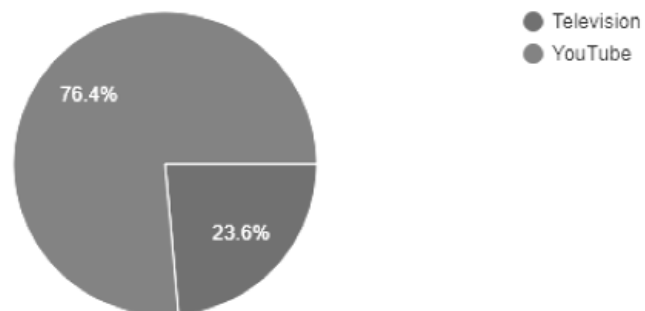
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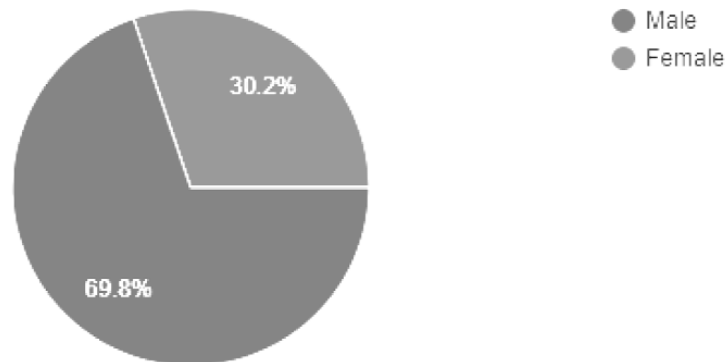
## Finally, if you have to choose just one, what will it be?

106 responses



## Gender

106 responses



7. When it comes to the device on which people prefer to watch either YouTube videos or their favorite Television shows, almost 47% of the people said that they use cell phones or the tablets to watch the video content, around 29% uses their laptops or computers while only 23.6% people use their Television screens. This shows that people are behind the convenience and not the quality in order to enjoy or consume their daily video content.

8. Now, this was a very important question in order to know that what people liked and wanted the most. They were asked that if you were to choose only one, what that would be. And almost 76.4% people responded that they will always prefer YouTube over Television and this literally gives us an direct idea that only 23.6% people give their

preference to the Television and rest of them are heading towards the newly risen media i.e. YouTube.

9. In order to understand the role of the occupation and gender on the choices or the preferences of the people or the audience for either YouTube or Television, we also asked the participants to disclose their information before filling the survey. But as per the analysis, no such difference was seen though, only 30.2% female responses were collected and the men were 60.8%. Also most of the people were either students, or the employees, thus not much comments can be made on that aspect.

10. Nowadays, the new generation of social influencers can be found online. Although YouTubers can be compared with celebrities in traditional media, there are appealing aspects that make YouTube celebrities even more popular and admired than their

the Television celebrities. Social influencers like YouTubers are used to spread messages rapidly among their large-scale networks of loyal followers against relatively low costs. This thing explains the use of YouTubers in marketing and the influence YouTubers have on teenagers' behavior.

## CONCLUSION

Youth has been depleted as a part of regular Television audience with the rise of online media streaming platforms like YouTube because of the convenient, more personal and updated medium YouTube which is serving them the content which Television failed to.

### Suggestions and Recommendation

From the above data, we can conclude that YouTube is getting popular amongst the people, especially the youngsters as their primary source of entertainment and the craze or the popularity of the Television is been depleting significantly. We have also come to know the reasons behind it, which are mainly 2 reasons : -

"People are not happy with the Television content

"People are watching video content mostly on their Phones, instead of Television screens

Thus, here we can make suggestions based on what people want. The first thing is that people are searching for Fun & Entertaining content online while they are preferring reality shows, news & educational shows as

well as fictional entertaining shows on Television.

"Thus, it is a responsibility of the Television producers to focus on quality content which will prove worth to the Television viewers. They should focus mainly on the higher production values as well as the entertaining and rich content.

"Second thing they can do is that improve their online presence.

As we have seen that people are watching video content mostly on the mobile phone devices, if the Television channels also come on mobile applications or computer applications (which slowly few are already coming), then the chances that the mobile phone users also checking out the Television shows will increase, if and only if the quality content is maintained.

"Also crossovers can be done by the appearances of Television stars on YouTube shows and YouTube stars on Television shows, which will familiarize both the audience with the popular culture going in both the media.

### Recommendation

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the Television viewers. They should focus mainly on the higher production values as well as the entertaining and rich content.

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"Thus, based on this, the recommendation of this case study will be made for the people wanting to study this aspect in mass communication and also the video content creators.

Limitation of the Study Although during the research and the study, the limitations are minimized as much as possible, several limitations of this study can be taken into account for the future research.

"First of all, this research is conducted with limited time and capabilities. Though 106 people were surveyed, only a limited number of interviews have been conducted if the subject is considered. As the subject is much of a generalized subject and related to the mass audience.

"This research focused only on youngsters, though belonged to different occupations or age bars. Further research would likely benefit from a larger sample of interview

participants and another population to make the results more reliable.

"Also another limitation was regarding the localities. That is, in order to study the impact of the online media which is YouTube, on traditional media like Television, consideration should have been taken about from which cities or states or even countries the participants were. As, the city or the country have their own influence over their people over the media. Also the part of urban area vs. rural area is important and should have been taken into consideration as in India, many rural areas though not all, don't even have a proper internet connection or the network, thus Television must have been the only source of entertainment there and YouTube might not even be much familiar.

"Thus, categorized groups and large number of participants of various ages should be taken into consideration for the further study.

### **Future Scope of Research**

As there have been certain limitations in this research, there is a future scope of study for the similar topic. The future study can be done in order to find the influence of any other medium like Netflix or Amazon Prime on YouTube or Television. Also as per the limitations, the subject is much of a generalized subject and related to the mass audience. Also the research focused only on youngsters, though belonged to different occupations or

age bars. Further research would likely benefit from a larger sample of interview participants and another population to make the results more reliable. Also another limitation was regarding the localities. That is, in order to study the impact of the online media which is YouTube, on traditional media like Television, consideration should have been taken about from which cities or states or even countries the participants were. As, the city or the country have their own influence over their people over the media. Also the part of urban area vs. rural area is important and should have been taken into consideration as in India, many rural areas though not all, don't even have a proper internet connection or the network, thus Television must have been the only source of entertainment there and YouTube might not even be much familiar. Thus, categorized groups and large number of participants of various ages should be taken into consideration for the further study. Thus, there is a future scope for the research in this topic in order to get the information about the media influences in various different categories in depth.

## References

1. 'How YouTube TV will kill Cable' blog post by Mike Elgan (4th March, 2017)
2. Variety.com blog post by Todd

Spangler

3. Study conducted by Hunter Qualitative Research commissioned by Defy Media

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6. Case Study - 'A role of YouTubers played in life of Teenagers' by Wilma Westernberg

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