

# “Media” impact on children and youth

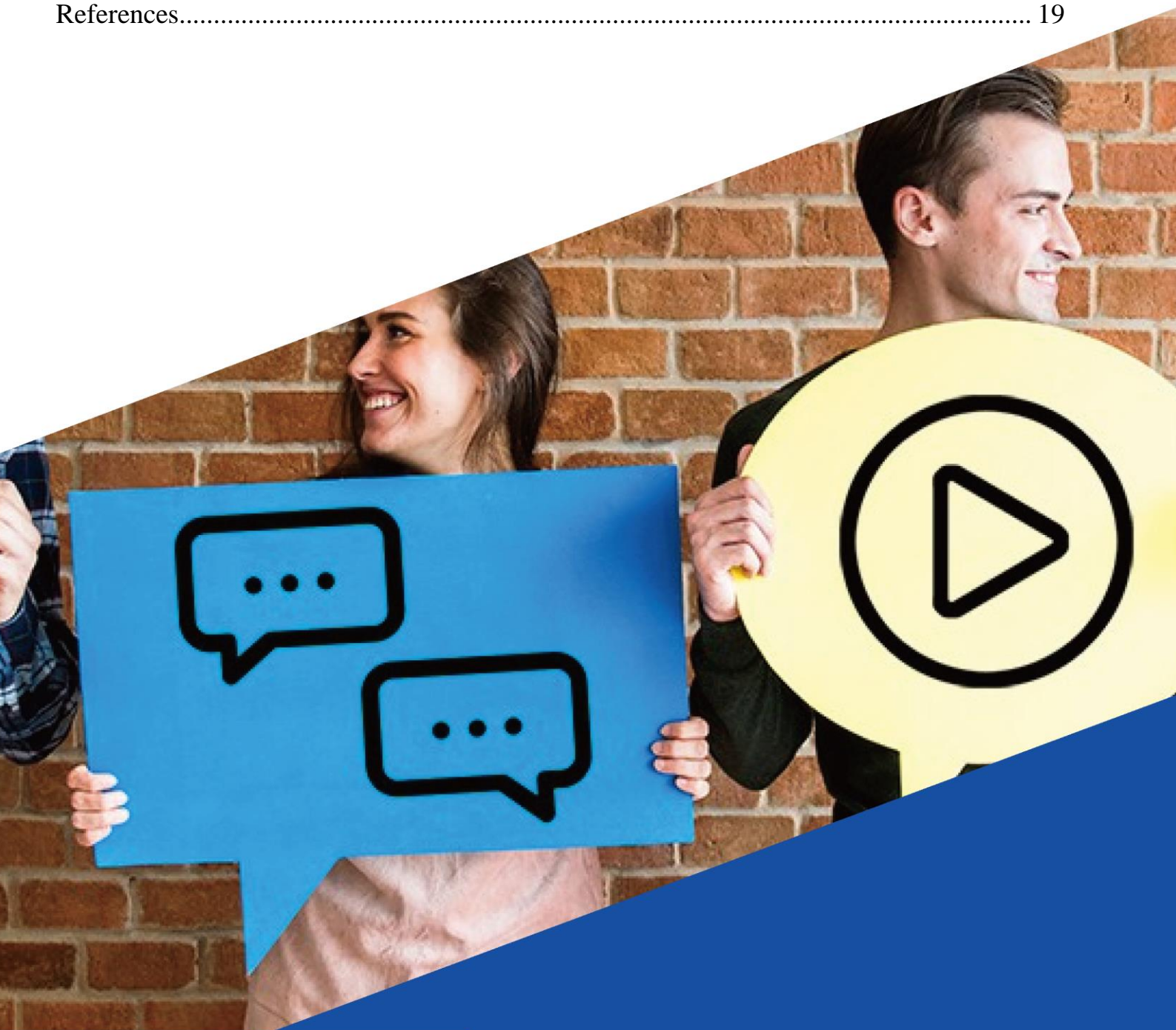
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Taiwan Alliance for Advancement of Youth Rights and Welfare - Children and Youth Report - Media Section

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# Motivation & introduction and report structure & media dimensions

## Motivation & introduction

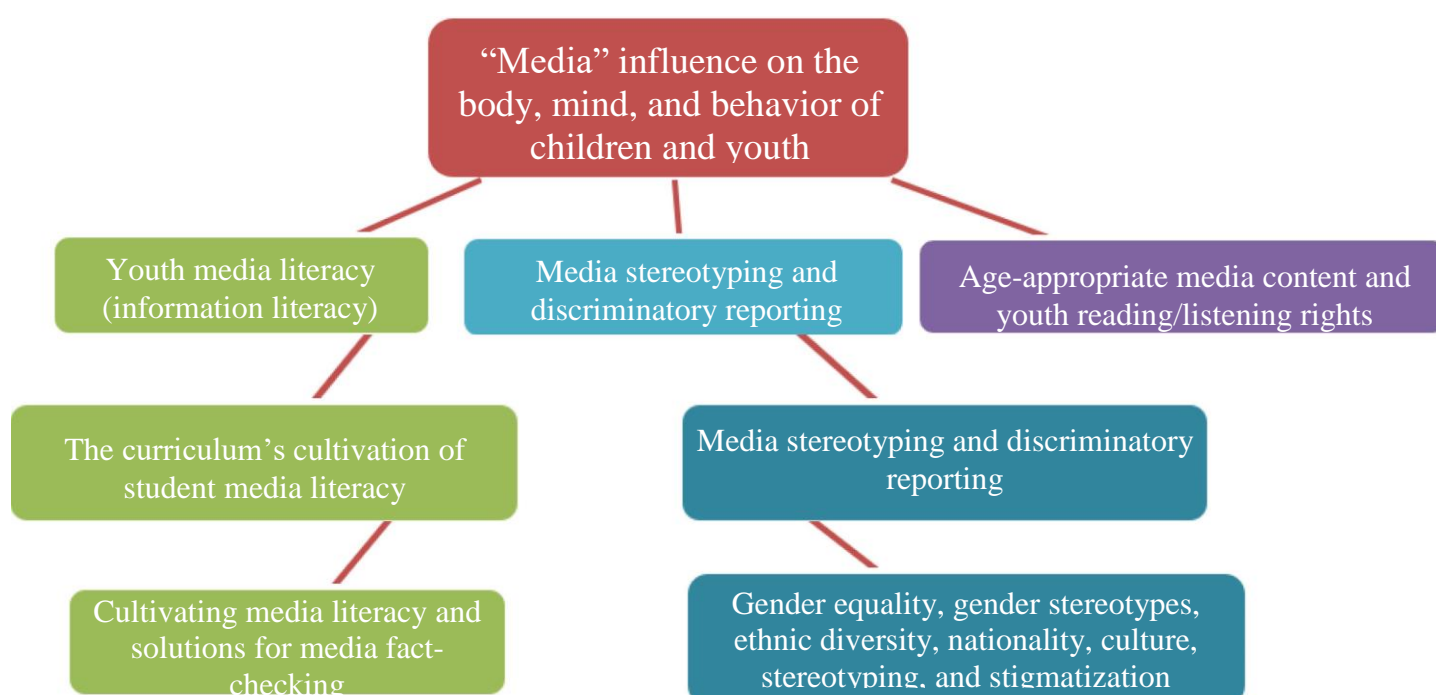
The first globalized “Generation Z” (referring to the emerging generation born between 1995 and 2010 and aged 10-25) is gradually coming rearing its head, while media companies and major brands in other industries are also entering the era of online marketing on digital platforms. According to a survey by Forbes in May 2021, 98% of all youths aged between 16 and 24 worldwide owns a smartphone, and spends at least 4 hours on social media, not including time spent online and on electronic games. Compared to traditional media, many younger generations opt to obtain information from social media, while the big data operations of social media have become a hotbed for disseminating false news/disinformation and forming echo chambers.

An enormous amount of news information and for-profit advertising is already influencing how we perceive the world, and media with a standpoint and bias has become the status quo. Besides bolstering the relevant government organizations’ awareness toward media and pointing out existing problems associated with media, we also hope to propose solutions to endow youth with media/information literacy, so that it is no longer the sole responsibility of the media fact-checking center but the basic knowledge of citizens. Aside from advocating media/information literacy, the children and youth report also explores the audiovisual rights and interests of children and youth, as well as the privacy protection of children and youth when using media. As digital natives of Generation Z, we hope to provide “frequent social media users” with the most ingenuous advice from the perspective of youths.

# Motivation & introduction and report structure & media dimensions

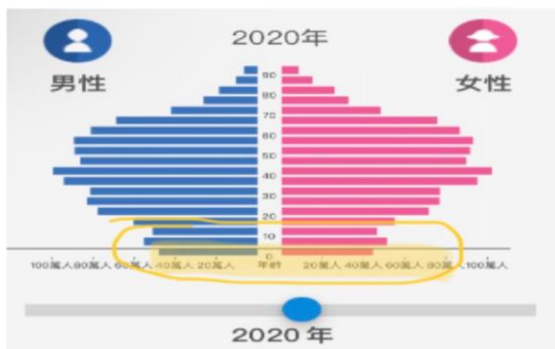
## Report structure and media dimensions

The children and youth's report focuses on the media's influence on the body, mind, and behavior of children and youth. This is complemented by 4 major media dimensions to explore children and youth's media rights across different levels: youth media literacy (information literacy), media stereotyping and discriminatory reporting, age-appropriate media content and youth reading/listening rights, and children and youth's privacy protection:

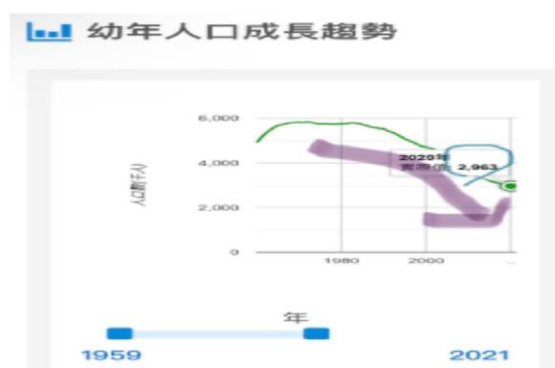


# Social conditions of youth media literacy/electronic equipment access rights

**I. Introduction:** In recent years, **the number of children and youth with electronic equipment and media access rights in Taiwan has reached nearly 2.5 million (accounting for 30% of the total population)**



**Fig. 1 Children and youth population pyramid**



**Fig. 2 Children and youth total population chart**

(Information disclosure: National Development Council)

**II. Goal description:** “In regards to the impact of media literacy electronic equipment on children and youth, the following is stated: ‘Within the current national legal framework of children and youth’s rights, there are no binding regulations that are recognized by all parties, which is inconvenient and unfavorable for the independent career development of children and youth in the future. For instance, there is limited electronic equipment selection for children and youth, and as far as children and youth’s reading and listening is concerned, media literacy has not improved their media access rights.’ Written and photos are used in conjunction with captions.”

Feedback from our friends: Q: Your understanding of the increased amount of big data in we media?

A: As a producer of social and cultural messages, social media has also come to shape cultural diversity awareness and gender values among children and youth. Bandura’s Social Learning Theory explains that listeners will learn and imitate the behaviors of social roles in media by observing various media. Before children and youth develop sound judgment, the media should maintain the diverse and equal audiovisual rights and interests of children and youth. (Reference: Keyword: AI, technology, media)

# Social conditions of youth media literacy/electronic equipment access rights

**III. Motivation:** To implement electronic equipment access rights for children and youth. In particular, the wide range of charging specifications for electronic equipment on the market is not conducive for promoting the children and youth's electronic equipment access rights, hence the project was proposed to address this issue.

**IV. Goal:** Enhance the efficiency of CSR feedback, interact with children and youth and allow them to exercise their right to express themselves. Implementation: Engage in discussions with credible public and private organizations such as the Consumer's Foundation and Consumer Protection Officer, as well as visiting legislators.

**V. Possible challenges:** Inability to reach consensus, insufficient observation samples.

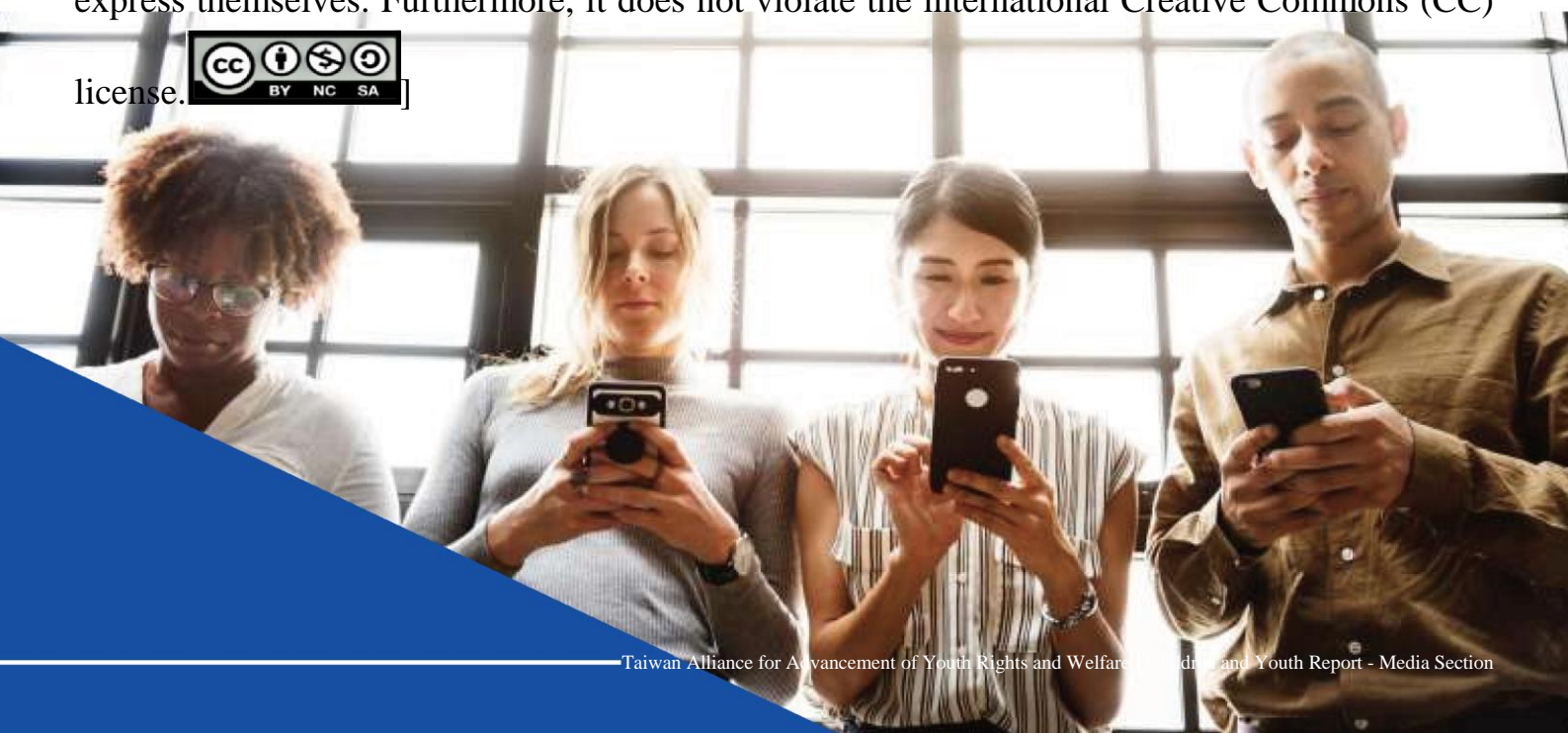
**VI. Budget allocation:** Investigation fee, interview with Consumer's Foundation, survey children and youth users.

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(Proposed budget: NT\$20,000 for product design and personnel; NT\$200,000 for lobbying enterprises to adopt children and youth-oriented designs.

[The above data/law/case study collection and utilization comply with point 4 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), the right to be heard and the right to express themselves. Furthermore, it does not violate the international Creative Commons (CC)

license. 







## **Cultivating youth media literacy and media fact-checking solutions**

Since cell phones and computers have become indispensable tools for modern people, they also have a significant impact on children and youth. Sending and receiving messages has become more convenient. As information becomes more readily available, disinformation also becomes more variegated. In 2019, the National Development Council conducted a survey of Internet users over the age of 12 to determine how they responded to unidentifiable messages. The results showed that 44.9% of them did not verify the information, and 26.8% forwarded the unidentifiable message or news. Long-term exposure to disinformation causes anxiety and distrust toward society, inflicting serious harm to the physical and mental wellbeing of children and youth.

# Media goals

- (1) Leverage the government's power to cultivate media literacy among children and youth
- (2) The government should reinforce media (information) literacy education in Taiwan
- (3) Create a sound media structure in Taiwan, expand the scale of public media, and allow high-quality media to shape news media in the country.

## Specific strategies

- (1) Government media supervision platform (we-media or mainstream media) establishes a public grievance mechanism
- (2) Foster the creation of credible fact-checking organizations (Taiwan currently has the Taiwan FactCheck Center), and the media should employ dedicated fact-checking staff (for example, BBC has set up an exclusive page publishing disinformation circulating on social media.)
- (3) Besides strengthening teacher training courses, the Ministry of Education should also proactively form media literacy education guidance groups to provide teachers with professional assistance while conducting media literacy courses within the 2019 Curriculum Guidelines.



BBC has set up an exclusive page publishing disinformation circulating on social media





## The curriculum's writing on media literacy and youth media literacy

In light of the fast-changing times, media types are also transforming rapidly, and media literacy has become one of the essential skills of modern citizens. According to UNESCO's 2013 "Global Media and Information Literacy Assessment Framework: Country Readiness and Competencies", countries around the world can utilize the framework to create an advantageous environment and improve their citizens' skills. (Note 1 of this article)

Taiwan's Ministry of Education has also included relevant media literacy indicators into the general outline (Note 2 of this article), and the 2019 curriculum guideline has focused on "core literacy" as the main theme of course development to realize the curriculum's philosophy and objectives. In particular, media literacy is located in B2 of the 3 dimensions and 9 items, while core literacy is named "technology information and media literacy", and media literacy is incorporated into various textbooks.



# Social conditions of youth media literacy/electronic equipment access rights

**II. Problem:** According to research (Note 3 of this article), media literacy education in the country often encounters the following difficulties:

## (1) Insufficient teaching time

After the implementation of the 2019 curriculum, although room for flexible courses and club activities has been designed, they are often used as formal classes. Due to the crammed nature of the existing classes, teachers' willingness to implement the courses is diminished. After the 2019 curriculum incorporated media literacy into civic education, it's not possible to engage in-depth discussion due to the brief and crammed nature of the course.

## (2) Course arrangement and teaching materials

Media literacy encompasses a wide scope, hence it is difficult to set regulations for formulating course objectives. Also, media literacy courses lack overall planning and primarily rely on the practice of individual teachers. Numerous studies emphasize that media literacy teaching should be conducted based on the teachers' actual needs.

## (3) School facilities and policy planning

The software/hardware needed for media literacy education is dependent on the education budget and whether schools have sufficient equipment. It also indirectly affects the outcome of media literacy education. The cross-discipline education method of media literacy would not be adopted when the Education competent authority keeps ignorant of the importance of the related integration of education.

## (4) Teacher training

Media literacy is an emerging topic and there is an insufficient number of professional teachers capable of conducting media literacy education, hence it is difficult to teach students to understand media from a professional standpoint.



# Social conditions of youth media literacy/electronic equipment access rights

## III. Solutions:

- (1) Expand the chapter on media literacy in civic education textbooks
  - (2) Include flexible courses and diverse electives into media literacy
  - (3) Assist teachers to obtain the needed software/hardware through regular funding and equipment subsidies
  - (4) Provide teachers with training and course preparation guidelines to help them obtain the required media literacy expertise and skills
  - (5) Administer regular questionnaires to investigate whether teachers can successfully acquire the ability to teach students media literacy with the aid of the abovementioned resources. What other policies still need to be reinforced?
  - (6) Administer regular questionnaires to investigate students' feedback and evaluation of media literacy education and teachers' professionalism.
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Notes in this article:

Note 1:

(Global media and information literacy assessment framework: country readiness and competencies, 2013)

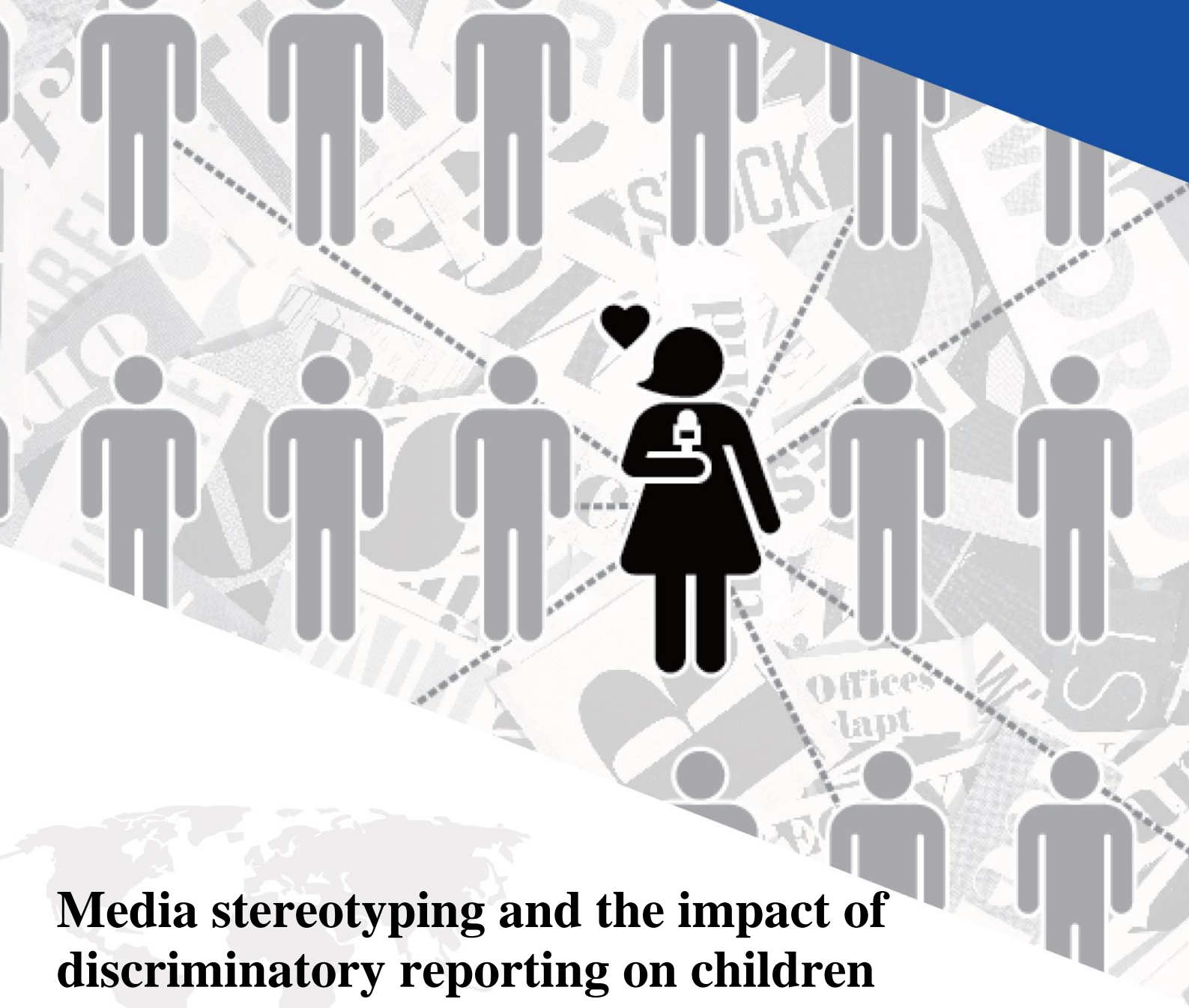
Note 2:

(General Curriculum Guidelines of the 12 Year Basic Education was promulgated in November 2014 and revised in February 2021)

Note 3:

(Survey Study of the Implementation of Media Literacy Education by the Trained Teachers for Media Literacy in Elementary Schools, 2009)





## **Media stereotyping and the impact of discriminatory reporting on children and youth's behavior/psychology**

As a producer of social and cultural messages, social media has also come to shape cultural diversity awareness and gender values among children and youth. Bandura's Social Learning Theory explains that listeners will learn and imitate the behaviors of social roles in media by observing various media. Before children and youth develop sound judgment, the media should maintain the diverse and equal audiovisual rights and interests of children and youth.

# Gender equality, gender stereotyping, and children and youth's gender awareness

## I. Media objectification and stereotyping:

Case study 1: Online game developers market their products to consumers by objectifying women and men. The slogan of the online game “Meizi” is: “Let Mei realize men’s dreams.” The online game “Wind Fantasy” also features the slogan “Please be my master” at the end of the advertisement.

## Case study 2: Advertising that stresses stereotypes of family roles and gender roles

Case study 3: Online news readers click on the inciting headline “Inside Scoop”, which is designed to report mainly the netizens’ malicious comments on “‘Celebs can also be ugly’ Fake v-shaped body? Trump’s daughter Ivanka’s ‘private swimsuit photo’ leaked. Netizens: Image shattered”. The false report on public figures or characters has resulted in biased values.

Case study 4: News reports on sexual assault or sexual harassment often blame the “proliferation of pornography”, where the youths’ bottled-up sexual desires lead to the imitation of pornography actors and deviant behaviors such as sexual harassment or sexual assault. With “common sense” as its argument, its “educational” benefits are limited.



**Fig. 1 “Celebs can also be ugly” Fake v-shaped body? Trump’s daughter Ivanka’s “private swimsuit photo” leaked. Netizens: Image shattered**



**Fig. 2 “Adultery Film” A child sees his mother having sex with his grandfather, resulting in the murder of the child by his mother**



**Fig. 3 17-year-old girl engages in prostitution with 100 johns, 67 of them were introduced by her classmate's boyfriend in exchange for a commission**

# Gender equality, gender stereotyping, and children and youth's gender awareness

## II. Sexual violence in reports becomes a sex scandal, attracting click-through rates through the eyes of the perpetrator at the expense of the victim

Case study 1: “‘Adultery Film’ A child sees his mother having sex with his grandfather, resulting in the murder of the child by his mother”

Case study 2: “17-year-old girl engages in prostitution with 100 johns, 67 of them were introduced by her classmate's boyfriend in exchange for a commission”

### Laws and data:

National Communications Commission (NCC) Guidelines Governing the Production and Broadcasting of Gender-Related Radio or TV Programs

2. Avoid inappropriate presentation
3. Avoid causing bias, discrimination, objectification, stereotyping, or biased gender concepts

Women are mentioned in 24% of all newspaper, television, and radio news programs; in particular, women are mentioned in 35% of science or health-related news themes. Women are mentioned in 16% of politics or government-related news.

Women are mentioned in 26% of all online news reports and Twitter news reports. The most frequent women-related news themes in Asia and Africa are crime and violence, accounting for approximately 40%.

A University of Tübingen professor conducted a study on media impact on children and youth's physical and mental health with a sample of 335 fifth-grade students in Germany by applying the expectancy-value theory of motivation and harmful gender stereotypes. The results demonstrated that the children and youth identified with stereotypes, but men has demonstrated lower degree of identification in this regard.



# Stereotyping and stigmatization of ethnic, national and cultural diversity by the media

Stigmatization of news headlines concerning new immigrants, Indigenous peoples, and ethnic minorities -> Inadvertently revealing one's stereotyping or values toward certain groups through naming to let readers generate different views of the groups.

Case study 1: "Riots started by foreign workers in Kaohsiung - Houses burnt and cars torched throughout the night", "Indigenous junkies steal luxury cars overnight"

Case study 2: "Loser earning NT\$15,000 a month wants unprotected sex, girlfriend called 'gold digger' for dumping him", "Looking for Ukrainian girls? Taiwanese student studying abroad claims Ukrainian girls 'do not get hitched easily' and discloses his experience in pickup up girls: Exact opposite of Taiwanese girls". Such stigmatization and labeling tactics are used in news headlines to undermine the audience's understanding of transnational relations.

## Stigmatization of underprivileged groups and ethnic minorities by the media



**Fig. 1 Riots started by foreign workers in Kaohsiung - Houses burnt and cars torched throughout the night**

想娶烏克蘭女生？留學生直言「不好娶」 曝把妹守則「跟約台灣女生剛好相反」



示意圖(來源: Pexels)

圖片來源: 蘋果新聞網

一名在烏克蘭喀達遜研究所的台灣留學生，分享經驗說跟烏克蘭女生交往，沒有告白這件事，告白你一個女生都得不到，而且約會方式「跟約台灣女生剛好相反」。

**Fig. 2 Looking for Ukrainian girls? Taiwanese student studying abroad claims Ukrainian girls "do not get hitched easily" and discloses his experience in pickup up girls: Exact opposite of Taiwanese girls**

- (1) Stigmatization of people with disabilities and mental health conditions without verifying and confirming their medical history
- (2) Stereotyping, stigmatization, and labeling of LGBTQ groups

## 精神異常男子砍傷路人 四人受傷一命危

[Tweet](#) [分享](#) [分享](#) [讚 0](#)

By Central News Agency  
2006/08/15 11:32



**Fig. 1 Mentally ill man slashes people on the streets/Four passersby injured, one in critical condition**

批陳時中+呼籲勿約砲 確診健身教練認「多人連結」喊：不丟臉

【雙12】超級年終慶 品牌飼料限時特賣！

2,659

★ 讀



**Fig. 2 After criticizing Chen Shih-Chung and urging people not to hookup, a fitness instructor diagnosed with COVID-19 admits to multiple hookups but claims he is not ashamed of it**

Case study 1: “Mentally ill man slashes people on the streets/Four passersby injured one in critical condition”

Case study 2: “After criticizing Chen Shih-Chung and urging people not to hookup, a fitness instructor diagnosed with COVID-19 admits to multiple hookups but claims he is not ashamed of it”

## Laws and data:

Article 74 of the People with Disabilities Rights Protection Act: “When reporting on people with disabilities or those suspected with disabilities, no discriminative title or description shall be used by the media, and no non-factual or audience-misleading report is allowed to direct the audience to discriminate or prejudge against people with disabilities.” and “The mass media shall not blame the disease/morbid condition or impairment/disability of the litigant only because people with disabilities are involved in related lawsuits, or before the courts judge that the disease/morbid condition or impairment/disability of the litigant causes the incident.”

Article 23 of the Mental Health Act states: “Reports of communication media may not use any discriminative addressing or descriptions related to mental illness, neither may they produce reports incompatible with the facts or mislead the readers and listeners such that they develop discriminative attitudes against the patients.”

# Case studies on the influence of age-appropriate media content and youth's reading/listening rights on children and youth



**Fig. 1 Case study of an Elsagate cartoon**

(Photo obtained from the Internet)



**Fig. 2 DONA 도나 (Elsagate + livestream eating)**

## **Elsagate:**

Elsagate refers to the controversy surrounding videos on YouTube and YouTube Kids that are categorized as “child-friendly”, but which contain themes that are inappropriate for children. These include violence, sex, or fetishes that are uncomfortable for children or even the accompanying parents. Most videos in this category are either live-action or crude animation – although a few channels have been using more elaborate techniques such as clay animation. Despite YouTube’s age restriction policies, these videos are sometimes tagged in such a way as to circumvent the inbuilt child safety algorithms, even making their way onto YouTube Kids. These are difficult to moderate due to the large scale of the YouTube platform.

To appear on the search results page and attract the users’ attention, the videos’ title and description often contain names of animation characters such as Elsa from Frozen, Spiderman from MCU, as well as keywords like “education”, “learn colors”, “nursery rhymes”, etc., as well as using hashtags to lure children to watch the videos and click on the links. Furthermore, they usually feature vibrant colors to attract unsuspecting children. They also include automatically placed ads, making them lucrative to their owners and YouTube.





# Case studies on the influence of age-appropriate media content and youth's reading/listening rights on children and youth

Despite the repulsive and confusing nature of the videos, they can still attract millions of views. Although the behavioral effects of these videos have not been scientifically studied, many parents have published Elsagate-related reports on major social media websites discussing children's abnormal behavior after viewing videos on Elsagate-related channels. The New York Times also quoted the critique of Michael Rich, a professor in pediatrics.

Professor Rich has confirmed that these videos may be harmful to children because when they discover that the character they understand or trust exhibits inappropriate or violent behavior, they will become more depressed. According to Zhong Heng, a teacher and researcher in psychology at the Beijing Institute of Education, Xuanwu Branch, videos containing sexual content will affect children's understanding of sex and the healthy development of gender relations to a certain degree. Videos containing violence will give children a bad example and mislead them into thinking that hostile approaches can be taken to resolve problems in the future.

## Similarities to Elsagate

- (1) The video title and first half of the video appear harmless and suitable for children.
- (2) Extremely high number of views even for newly uploaded videos.
- (3) Many channels are uploading Elsagate, and new channels keep on emerging.
- (4) Similar content or identical videos can appear on different channels.
- (5) Messages below the video are often incomprehensible or scrambled.
- (6) The repetitive nature of the animations suggests that they originate from the same production team.
- (7) Exceptionally colorful.

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