Youth, Media and New Technologies in Brazil

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Introduction

This chapter discusses the media and new technologies from the perspective of Brazilian adolescents and parents as part of an international study[2]. It intends to investigate how children and adolescents interact with new media within their social environments, such as family, school and groups of friends. In Brazil, the study was conducted in the city of Rio de Janeiro and involved young people, from 11 to 17 years of age, from five different schools. The authors focused the data analysis on the use of three audiovisual apparatuses: TV, computers and *videogame consoles*[3]. Computer games, educational CD-roms and the internet will also be analyzed. Data on cell phones were also included, although the focus of the study was kept on the previously mentioned media.

According to Levy (1999), new communication technologies are disseminated throughout society. Their use was incorporated either directly by accessing these new media (internet or television, for example) or indirectly through services that make use of these media, such as ATM machines, supermarkets, distribution of electricity, among others. The impact of new communication technologies in the everyday lives of children, adolescents and their families has given rise to an intense debate in the last few years. The analyses presented in these debates, however, stem, most of the time, from perceptions centered on adults (Casas, 1998), without considering the viewpoint and judgment of younger users.

Questions have been posed both in Brazil and in the world that reflect upon society's path and its future transformations. How do adolescents make use of different communication media available nowadays? Do these media influence their lifestyles and socialization? How do adolescents view the electronic equipment they make use of? What kind of TV shows do these adolescents watch? Are they important to their lives? Are these adolescents communicating with their parents and other adults about these electronic media? These and other questions concerning different communication media and the adolescent population will be further discussed based on the data collected.

As agreed on with the international team, a consistent sample of adolescents of the middle stratum of the population was investigated, in order to avoid extremes such as the very poor or rich[4]. We therefore sought schools that mirrored the social and economic characteristics of the average population, thus choosing

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[2] Coordinated internationally by Dr. Ferrán Casas, from the Catalan Interdisciplinary Network of Child Researchers, in a partnership with the Childwatch International Research Network, with data collected on five countries (South Africa, Brazil, Spain, India and Norway). In Brazil, the research was coordinated by Dr. Irene Rizzini, from the International Center for Research and Policy on Childhood (CIESPI).
[3] We will be referring to it, from now on, simply as videogames, as it is done in Brazil.
[4] This facilitates comparative analyses with other countries presenting different social and economic realities.

good quality public schools, located in privileged neighborhoods of the city, as well as economically accessible private schools.

The methodology used combines both quantitative and qualitative approaches in order to reveal a greater scope of interactions and relations that occur in children and adolescents. Questionnaires mainly contain closed questions for quantitative analysis and also contain a few open questions. The youth's parents were also objects of the study: 282 questionnaires were thoroughly filled out either by the students' parents or guardians.

Correlations among the data were made by analyzing the mean, mode, standard deviation and values for each variable, for example, between answers given by adolescents and by their parents. Similar questions in both questionnaires (for parents and for adolescents) were analyzed together, for example, adolescents' interest in audiovisual media and the idea parents have of their interest.

1. A few characteristics of the sample and questionnaires

Of the 1004 delivered questionnaires, only 949 we considered valid. The sample was composed mostly of girls (53.3%). The youngest age groups, from 11 to 14, are comprised mainly of girls, while boys were the majority in age groups between 15 and 17. Table 1 shows the characteristics of the population sampled.

Table 1: Adolescent sample divided by gender and age

Age	Gender		Total
	Boy	Girl	
11	20	34	54
	37.0	63.0	100.0
	4.5	6.7	5.7
12	79	99	178
	44.4	55.6	100.0
	17.8	19.6	18.8
13	103	135	238
	43.3	56.7	100.0
	23.3	26.7	25.1
14	119	133	252
	47.2	52.8	100.0
	26.9	26.3	26.6
15	87	82	169
	51.5	48.5	100.0
	19.6	16.2	17.8
16	26	16	42
	61.9	38.1	100.0
	5.9	3.2	4.4
17	9	7	16
	56.3	43.8	100.0
	2.0	1.4	1.7
Total	443	506	949
	46.7	53.3	100.0
	100.0	100.0	100.0

As mentioned before, parents of students involved in the study also received a questionnaire. The return rate was of 29.7%, that is, 282 of the total of 1004 questionnaires were returned and validated. The percentage is not small, considering there is no direct contact with the researcher, and is found within the standards established by the international team.

The majority of responders were mothers (64.9% of the returned questionnaires), while fathers represented 15.2%. Mother and father together responded to 12.8% of the questionnaires sent home. The rest of the questionnaires was responded by relatives, notably aunts/uncles and grandparents. The large number of mothers that responded suggests that either mothers are more involved than fathers in matters related to children or that duties related to children are more attributed to mothers.

Closed questions were the vast majority in questionnaires destined to both parents and children, examining activities related to the media and the youths' perception on the future in terms of the use of audiovisual media. The questionnaire also touched on general values, on satisfaction in different aspects of life as well as on life in general. However, only the data on the use of media and the relationship with parents will be herein analyzed due to space and to the organization of this article.

2. Access and use of equipment by adolescents

Table 2: Access and use of equipment by adolescents (distinguished by gender).

	Has access at home			Uses most of the time			Uses at friends' homes			Uses at school			Uses in other places		
	Gender		Total %	Gender		Total %	Gender		Total %	Gender		Total %	Gender		Total %
	boy %	girl %		Boy %	girl %		boy %	girl %		Boy %	girl %		boy %	girl %	
TV set	99.1	99.8	99.5	96.7	97.4	97.0	53.5	69.5	62.0	21.2	32.5	26.7	39.2	52.1	45.6
Computer	51.0	42.6	46.5	44.4	36.2	40.3	55.4	63.6	59.6	36.4	50.3	43.8	34.3	40.3	37.3
Internet Access	42.0	30.8	36.2	29.5	24.5	26.9	46.9	48.9	48.0	10.8	17.5	14.3	25.1	29.2	27.2
Educative CD-roms	45.2	42.5	43.7	14.1	10.1	12.1	22.6	29.7	26.3	17.3	24.5	21.0	17.6	19.5	18.6
Videogame	86.7	58.9	72.0	69.5	38.7	54.9	83.4	68.0	75.8	10.4	5.6	8.0	45.5	33.6	39.7
Computer games	53.1	43.0	47.8	42.2	30.0	36.2	59.9	56.3	58.0	23.3	26.0	24.7	25.5	29.6	27.5
Cell phone	69.0	73.3	71.3	36.1	52.8	45.1	37.0	61.8	50.4	20.4	43.9	33.1	42.2	66.6	55.2

The first few questions gather information about the adolescents' access to some media equipment and to new technologies. Table 2 summarizes this information, organized by gender and by the different media studied.

2.1 – Television

Data collected in the research confirm that the TV is the most broadly disseminated mass communication equipment. According to the 2000 Brazilian census, 95.4% of the population in the southeastern region had a TV set. The TV is present in the homes of almost all of the sampled adolescents; 99.5 % claimed to have at least one TV set in their homes:

> "Since the TV came into our homes, a lot of things about our intimate spaces have silently been changing: habits, ways of relating interpersonally, the information about the world, forms of entertainment, etc. Nowadays, no one can doubt that the TV had a very large social impact, that a lot of things cannot be seen the way they where before." (Casas, 1995, 17-19)

According to 97% of responders, TV is one of the media they use most of the time. This does not happen solely at home, since 62% of them declared watching TV at friends' homes, 45.6% in other places and 26.7% in school. There is no gender differentiation concerning access and time spent watching TV.

The TV is a form of communication and information that can be shared by different genders and age groups. It is common for children and adolescents to watch TV in the company of their parents, friends, siblings and relatives. They state that the TV helps them become informed and understand reality: "… I see what happens in the world!" (boy, 13), "… I become more informed and learn a little bit more about the world…" (girl, 13). They also show how much they value TV: "I think it's the best form of communication" (boy, 13).

2.2 - Videogame

Videogames are very widely disseminated. It is the second most present equipment in the homes of adolescents: 72% claim to have them. It is also the second most used equipment (54.9%). Even though only a few of the responders claimed to use it in school[5], 39.7% stated they used videogames in other places and 75.8% claimed to use them at friends' houses. As observed in table 2, as to videogames, boys represent the greatest number of users. They have more access to them at home, mention them frequently as an equipment they use most of the time, use them more habitually at friends' homes, in other places or in school.

The low cost and the constant evolution of videogames allow a larger access to this type of medium. Children and adolescents, especially in the selected social strata, gather more and more in closed and restricted environments such as shopping malls, schools, clubs and condominiums. One could suppose that the use of this equipment at friend's homes leads to other forms of adolescent socialization, which would be facilitated by the game. It should be noted that the survey showed a high percentage of boys using computer games at friends' houses (58%) and in other places (39.7% of boys claimed to use lan houses and to rent games in specialized stores).

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[5] Eight percent declared to use videogames at school. We can only imagine they are talking about cell phone games and/or games played in portable devices, which they would be allowed to play in recess.

2.3 – Computers

Computers may be a vehicle for other media. The access to the computer and to other related media was also analyzed in this study. Of all responders, 46.7% declared having computers at home. A slightly larger number (47.8%) claimed to have computer games at home, 43.7% have CD-roms and 36.2% have internet access in their homes. While 40.3% of responders mentioned the computer as being the equipment they use most of the time; computer games were mentioned by 36.2%, internet by 26.9% and CD-roms by only 12.1%. Almost 60% of adolescents affirmed using computers at friend's homes, 58% used computer games, 48% accessed the internet and 26.3% made use of CD-roms.

The computer is the equipment most responders declared to use in school (43.8%); CD-roms and the internet, although very potentially interesting tools in the learning process, are used by a relatively small number of responders in their schools (21% and 14.3% respectively).

It is interesting to note that both boys and girls claim to have educational CD-roms at home – the percentages were very similar: 45.2% for boys and 42.5% for girls. Only about 12% of these, however, use it most of the time (14.1% of boys and 10.1% of girls). These data should be compared with the 36% of adolescents that use computer games – predominantly boys (42.2% for boys and 30% for girls).

The computer is still expensive and inaccessible for most of the population in Brazil. There are government projects intended to disseminate the use of computers in public schools. However, generally speaking, this tool, although it has been considered very important in modern education, is still not accessible to most of the students.

2.4 – Cell phones

It is worthy to mention that 71.3% of all responders claimed to make use of cell phones. The cell phone was mentioned by 43.1% of them as being the piece of equipment they use most of the time. Contrary to videogames, cell phones are more present in the life of girls. Although the access to it is equal among boys and girls, a larger number of girls affirm that this is the equipment they use most of the time.

Differently from other countries also participating in the research, the cell phone has become very popular in Brazil lately. Competition among telecommunication companies has made the price more accessible and has disseminated the use of the cell phone among the urban population. Compared to other countries, a difference in use is observed. Most Brazilians use the equipment solely for oral communication. The same does not occur in more developed countries. In 2001, the year the data were collected for this study, Spanish and Norwegian youths used the cell phone to send messages via e-mail, to shoot pictures and for other multimedia resources. In Brazil, these resources are still being disseminated but are not accessible to the lower social strata.

3 – Adolescents' evaluation of the use of equipment: differences in gender and age group

Adolescents were asked to give their opinions on certain aspects related to the use of the equipment studied. For this article, the data presented will concern only TV, videogames and computer games. Let us remind ourselves that less than one third of the sample group has internet access at home.

Participants were asked to grade the media on a scale of 1 to 5 on entertainment, good use of time, usefulness and possibility of learning (with 1 being the worst possible evaluation and 5 the best). The means and standard deviations related to the selected media are found on Table 3.

Table 3: Average evaluation of equipment by gender

$\overline{x}$	TV						Videogames						Computer games					
	Gender				Total		Gender				Total		Gender				Total	
	boy		girl				Boy		girl				boy		girl			
		SD		SD		SD		SD		SD		SD		SD		SD		SD
Bores/Entertains	4.1	0.7	4.0	0.8	4.0	0.8	4.4	0.8	3.8	1.1	4.1	1.0	4.4	0.8	3.9	1.0	4.1	1.0
Makes bad/good use of time	3.8	1.3	3.9	1.2	3.8	1.3	3.9	1.3	3.4	1.4	3.7	1.4	3.9	1.3	3.6	1.3	3.7	1.3
Useless/useful	4.1	0.9	4.0	0.9	4.1	0.9	3.5	1.2	2.8	1.3	3.2	1.3	3.6	1.2	3.1	1.2	3.3	1.2
Learns nothing/learns something from it	3.4	1.1	3.1	1.1	3.2	1.1	2.4	1.4	1.7	1.0	2.0	1.3	2.7	1.4	2.1	1.2	2.4	1.3

Computer games and videogames have high averages in terms of how entertaining they are. The TV is not far behind, with an average of 4.0. There are no relevant differences between boys and girls as to evaluating TV as a good source of entertainment.

The TV was better rated than games in other aspects, especially as to usefulness and the possibility of learning from it. Videogames presented the worst averages in terms of usefulness and learning. Computer games averaged 3.3 in usefulness and 2.4 in learning. The evaluation of the media did not differ in terms of use of time: the TV was better evaluated (3.8 on average), closely followed by videogames and computer games, with averaging 3.7.

There are significant differences on how adolescents from different genders and age groups evaluated the equipment. The first thing to be noted is gender difference as to videogames and computer games: the differences between groups is significant in all aspects studied. Boys consider videogames and computer games more entertaining and more useful than girls. They also better ranked these media in terms of use of time and learning.

Boys represent the great majority of videogame users. Since most games usually involve themes such as confrontation or hunting, there can be a connection between masculine social values and the use of videogames. This means these games are set upon society's cultural values, which distinguishes the social functions of men and women. Men would be responsible for the public sphere (labor, politics, entertainment,

sports) and confrontations (such as wars) that would possibly result from contentious matters such as politics or economics. Women would be traditionally responsible for the private sphere. They would be characterized as fragile and sensible and, as an extension of their ability to give birth, they would also be identified with home labor.

It should be mentioned – although the data is not presented in the article – that there are significant differences among age groups as to entertainment and use of time concerning the TV. Adolescents claim to be less entertained by TV and increasingly believe, as they grow older, not to be making good use of time while watching it. This linear negative relationship was also observed concerning the use of time regarding videogames, that is, the older adolescents get, the less they think they're making good use of time playing videogames. The more mature they become, the less satisfaction these media can offer them.

Besides inquiring about their interest and how much they knew about these equipments, the questionnaire also asked children and adolescents about their levels of satisfaction in discussing media and general matters with relatives (father, mother, siblings), friends (older and of the same age) and teachers. Parents were also asked to indicate the level of satisfaction they believed their sons and daughters had in talking to them (that is, their parents, siblings and friends) about this equipment. The parent questionnaire responder should also indicate his/her level of satisfaction in discussing the equipment with his/her sons and daughters. The five point scale was used in all questions, (with 1 being the worst possible evaluation and 5 the best)[6]. Table 4 shows means and standard deviations both in total numbers and distinguished by gender, for adolescent responders.

Table 4: How much do you like to speak with .... about TV, videogames, computer games and matters in general, divided by gender.

$\overline{x}$	TV						Videogamed						Computer games						Matters in general					
	Gender				Total		Gender				Total		Gender				Total		Gender				Total	
	boy		Girl				boy		Girl				boy		girl				boy		girl			
		SD		SD		SD		SD		SD		SD		SD		SD		SD		SD		SD		SD
Father	3.4	1.2	3.1	1.3	3.2	1.2	2.9	1.5	2.7	1.5	2.8	1.5	3.0	1.5	3.0	1.4	3.0	1.5	3.0	1.3	2.8	1.3	2.9	1.3
Mother	3.7	1.2	4.0	1.1	3.9	1.1	2.9	1.4	2.7	1.4	2.8	1.4	3.0	1.4	3.0	1.4	3.0	1.4	3.5	1.2	3.8	1.1	3.6	1.2
Siblings	3.7	1.3	3.8	1.3	3.8	1.3	3.8	1.4	3.6	1.4	3.7	1.4	3.8	1.4	3.6	1.4	3.7	1.4	3.3	1.4	3.4	1.4	3.4	1.4
Teachers	2.4	1.4	2.6	1.3	2.5	1.4	1.7	1.1	1.9	1.2	1.8	1.2	1.7	1.1	1.9	1.2	1.8	1.2	1.9	1.2	2.1	1.2	2.0	1.2
Friends	4.0	1.2	4.3	1.0	4.2	1.1	4.3	1.1	3.5	1.5	3.9	1.3	4.2	1.1	3.7	1.3	3.9	1.3	4.0	1.2	4.2	1.0	4.1	1.1
Older friends	3.6	1.3	3.7	1.2	3.7	1.3	3.5	1.4	3.1	1.5	3.3	1.4	3.5	1.4	3.3	1.3	3.4	1.4	3.3	1.3	3.3	1.3	3.3	1.3

Adolescents prefer to talk about media or general matters with friends of the same age. Discussing these issues with their fathers (and teachers above all) did not please adolescents. Mothers are the second best interlocutors for adolescents to discuss TV and general matters; siblings are the second most satisfactory interlocutors when the themes are videogames or computer games. Siblings come in third place as to TV and

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[6] The adolescents' questionnaires also had na alternative answer ("I don't talk to him/her about it"), but it was left out in the analisys made for this article.

general matters. When the subject of the conversation is videogames or computer games, older friends are the third most satisfactory option. Older friends are in fourth place as to conversations about general matters or TV. The adolescent's mothers are the fourth preferred subject to talk to when the issue is videogames and computer games. Their fathers and teachers are in the fifth and sixth place respectively as to conversations about all the media and general matters.
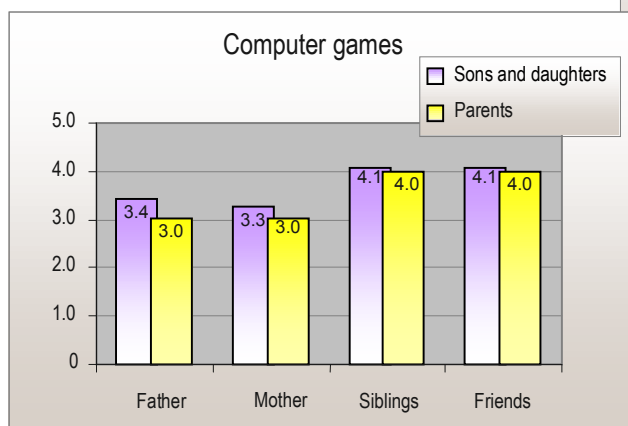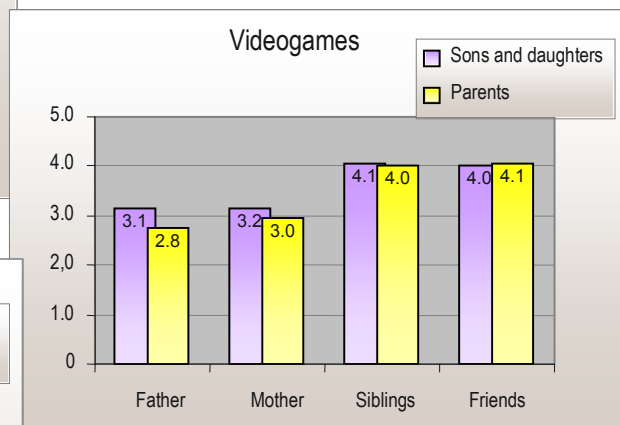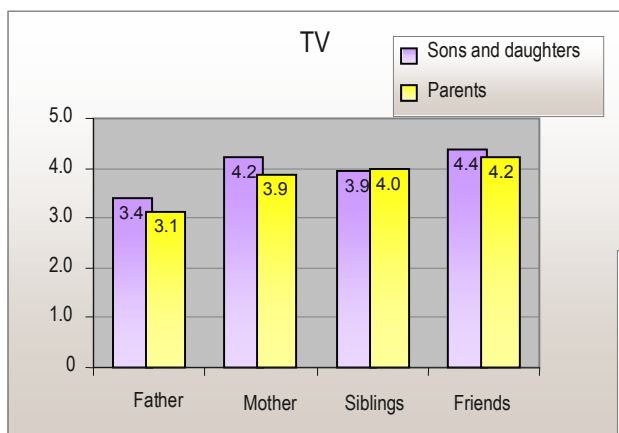
There is also a gender difference as to adolescents' responses concerning who they prefer to talk to. About general matters, boys usually have a greater level of satisfaction talking to their fathers. On the other hand, girls find it more satisfactory to talk to their mothers. No significant difference between the evaluation made by boys and girls was observed when the interlocutors were their siblings, friends the same age, older friends or teachers.

There are, however, a few relevant differences between age groups that were not shown in the present work. The older the adolescent, the higher is his/her tendency to show a low level of satisfaction in talking to his/her father and a high level of pleasure in talking to friends the same age and older. Boys and girls are also different in terms of the pleasure they have in talking about TV with different interlocutors. Girls tended to rate their mothers, same-age friends and teachers better while boys claimed to have more satisfaction talking to their fathers then girls do. As to TV, older adolescents described a higher level of satisfaction in talking to older friends.

Boys and girls do not significantly differ in terms of their pleasure in talking to their fathers, mothers, siblings and teachers about videogames; both groups show low rates for this issue. Boys tend to have higher satisfaction levels in talking about videogames with older friends and especially with friends the same age. Concerning the total means, adolescents seldom enjoy discussing videogames in conversations with their parents. Considering age differences, the older the adolescent, the lower the pleasure he/she has in talking to his/her parents about videogames.

Age differences show the same pattern as to satisfaction in discussing computer games, that is, the older the adolescent, the lower the pleasure in talking about this subject with their fathers and, in this case, siblings too. As to computer games, boys and girls also show differences in how they rate their interlocutors. Both groups found conversations with teachers not very satisfactory (2.0 average), although boys tended to give these conversations a lower rate. The opposite occurs in the case of friends: both boys and girls claimed to enjoy talking to friends about computer games a lot, although boys tended to enjoy it even more.

Graphs: **Adolescents' level of satisfaction in talking to ... about TV, videogames and computer games according to their own evaluation and their parents'**

TV

	Sons and daughters	Parents
Father	3.4	3.1
Mother	4.2	3.9
Siblings	3.9	4.0
Friends	4.4	4.2

Videogames

	Sons and daughters	Parents
Father	3.1	2.8
Mother	3.2	3.0
Siblings	4.1	4.0
Friends	4.0	4.1

Computer games

	Sons and daughters	Parents
Father	3.4	3.0
Mother	3.3	3.0
Siblings	4.1	4.0
Friends	4.1	4.0

The graphs above show adolescent's average satisfaction levels (according to them and to their parents) on having conversations on TV, videogames and computer games with their fathers, mothers, siblings and friends. There are no relevant differences between parents' answers and the adolescent's answers. Apparently, parents' opinions on issues and interlocutors are very similar to their sons' and daughters'. However, attention is drawn to the fact that parents tend to believe that they are better rated as interlocutors about TV, that is, parents overrate their adolescent sons' and daughters' satisfaction levels on conversations about the TV.

Table 5: Parents' satisfaction levels on conversation with their sons and daughters about TV, videogames and computer games

$\overline{X}$	Who answered the questionnaire						Total	
	Mother		Father		Father and mother together			
		SD		SD		SD		SD
TV	3.4	1.2	3.4	1.1	3.7	1.1	3.5	1.2
Videogames	2.1	1.2	2.4	1.3	3.0	1.3	2.3	1.4
Computer games	2.4	1.4	2.3	1.5	3.0	1.4	2.5	1.4

Parents have a much higher level of satisfaction in conversations with their sons and daughters about TV than about computer games and especially about videogames. The gender of the child or adolescent does not consistently change the satisfaction level parents have in talking to them. As to age variations, the older the adolescent son or daughter, the more pleasure parents have in talking to them about TV. A slight variation was observed depending on who answered the questionnaire. The only statistically relevant difference is, however, the level of satisfaction as to conversations about videogames. For videogames, mothers who responded the questionnaire by themselves tended to indicate lower levels of satisfaction than parents that answered the questionnaire together. This reveals a lack of interest of the parents in knowing how their sons and daughters are making use of such a device.

While examining the set of tables below, we noted that parents feel relatively well informed about what can be seen on or how to use the TV ($\overline{x}$ $\overline{x}$ = 3.65; sd = 1.01), about cell phones ($\overline{x}$ = 3.40; sd = 1.37) and about computers ($\overline{x}$ = 3.26; sd = 1.32). They consider themselves to be intermediately informed about the internet ($\overline{x}$ = 3.08; sd = 1.37) and believe to know less about what can be done with CD-roms ($\overline{x}$ = 2.94; sd = 1.44), computer games ($\overline{x}$ = 2.49; sd = 1.38) and mainly videogames ($\overline{x}$ = 2.29; sd = 1.36). Parents responding the questionnaire together presented significantly different levels of information on videogames compared to mothers who responded alone (p = 0.022).

Parents′ information on what to see on and how to use the equipment

Information about the equipment

	$\overline{X}$	**SD**
TV	3.65	1.01
Computer	3.26	1.32
Internet	3.08	1.37
CD-roms	2.94	1.44
Videogames	2.29	1.36
Computer games	2.49	1.38
Cell phones	3.40	1.37

Parents′ information depending on child′s gender

	Gender			
	Boy		Girl	
	$\overline{X}$	SD	$\overline{X}$	SD
TV	3.75	0.94	3.59	1,04
Computer	3,30	1.39	3.23	1.29
Internet	3.01	1.38	3.13	1.37
CD-roms	2.96	1.46	2.92	1.43
Videogames	2,45	1.46	2.18	1.27
Computer games	2,52	1.44	2.46	1.35
Cell phones	3,48	1.42	3.36	1.34

Parents′ information depending on child′s age

	Age													
	11		12		13		14		15		16		17	
	$\overline{X}$	SD	$\overline{X}$	SD	$\overline{X}$	SD	$\overline{X}$	SD	$\overline{X}$	SD	$\overline{X}$	SD	$\overline{X}$	SD
TV	3.71	0.85	3.57	1.12	3.74	0.93	3.57	0.99	3.87	0.96	2.00	-	2.50	0.71
Computer	3.14	1.35	3.36	1.22	3.44	1.28	3.00	1.40	3.33	1.42	2.00	-	1.50	0.71
Internet	3.00	1.36	3.23	1.27	3.11	1.46	2.96	1.43	3.14	1.36	2.00	-	1.50	0.71
CD-roms	2.93	1.53	3.02	1.38	3.09	1.46	2.64	1.51	3.07	1.39	2.00	-	1.50	0.71
Videogames	2.27	0.96	2.22	1.29	2.12	1.35	2.31	1.32	2.78	1.68	2.00	-	2.00	1.41
Computer games	2.71	1.27	2.48	1.37	2.56	1.45	2.38	1.39	2.53	1.43	2.00	-	1.50	0.71
Cell phones	3.36	1.22	3.37	1.42	3.35	1.44	3.35	1.35	3.71	1.34	2.00	-	3.00	0.00

4 – USE AND EVALUATION OF TV CONTENT IN TERMS OF QUALITY

Two open questions were included in the Brazilian version of the questionnaire: one about which TV shows children and adolescents preferred to watch and another about things they did not wish to be broadcast

on TV. The first question asked the responders to list the three shows they watched the most. The second inquired about what sort of things they would not allow to be broadcast.

The TV shows mentioned were categorized and subcategorized. A small number of subcategories have the name of the TV show. This occurred when the team observed that the show was frequently mentioned and was also destined specifically for the adolescent audience. The team opted for a more general classification in the rest of the cases. The main categories tried to comply with major types of programming of TV shows.

Some authors, such as the French sociologist Bourdieu (1997) point to a specialization of TV channels. These TV channels produce and adapt shows for specific audiences, which is suggested by surveys on the profile of families and audiences. This was also observed in our study. There are certain hours of the day, for instance, in which shows made especially for children and adolescents (using themes and language that are specific for this age group) are broadcast. The elevated number of answers concerning soap operas with adolescent-oriented themes can confirm the efficiency of this strategy.

Adolescents doubtlessly prefer watching fiction on TV, as mentioned by 62% of responders. Fiction was mentioned by both boys and girls, although girls mentioned it much more. The most subcategory referred to was soap operas (37.3%, in which girls are the majority) and *Malhação* (a specific soap opera for adolescents) mentioned by 25.9%, mostly boys. There were many cases of multiple answers (26.8%) – in which more than on subcategory was chosen.

Shows destined towards children are the second most enjoyed items in TV programming, mentioned by 33.3% of adolescents and most frequently by boys. Cartoons are the most mentioned subcategory (74.4%), largely surpassing other subcategories. Variety shows are the third most appreciated shows, mentioned by 28.5% of responders. In our sample, these shows have a mostly feminine audience.

The most mentioned subcategories were "programas de auditório" – shows with live audiences in the studio (19.2%, the majority of which were girls) –, quiz shows (17.2%) and game shows (12.4%, the majority of which were boys). The most mentioned categories were reality shows (21.6%), movies (20.1%), news programs (18.3%) and music videos (14.9%, mostly girls). Sports were preferred by 13.8% of the sample, mainly by boys. Comedy shows were mentioned by 10.9% of our sample and erotic shows were mentioned by 2% (mostly boys). Table 5 presents shows mentioned by adolescents classified by gender while Table 6 presents what they most like to watch depending on age.

Tabela 5: Shows children and adolescents most like to watch, categories and subcategories, by gender.

SHOWS CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS MOST ENJOY WATCHING						
	Gender				Total	
	Boy		Girl			
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Fiction*	**204**	**46,8**	**378**	**75,3**	**582**	**62,0**
Soap Operas	43	21,1	174	46,0	217	37,3
Malhação	82	40,2	69	18,3	151	25,9
American TV series	28	13,7	11	2,9	39	6,7
Sandy e Jr.	-	-	9	2,4	9	1,5
Multiple	43	21,1	113	29,9	156	26,8
Other	8	3,9	2	0,5	10	1,7
Children shows	**177**	**40,6**	**135**	**26,9**	**312**	**33,3**
Cartoons	134	75,7	98	72,6	232	74,4
Shows	18	10,2	26	19,3	44	14,1
Comedy	11	6,2	4	3,0	15	4,8
Multiple	14	7,9	6	4,4	20	6,4
Other	-	-	1	0,7	1	0,3
Variety shows	**101**	**23,2**	**166**	**33,1**	**267**	**28,5**
Shows with live studio audiences	21	20,8	57	34,3	78	29,2
Quiz shows	18	17,8	28	16,9	46	17,2
Game shows (competitions)	26	25,7	7	4,2	33	12,4
Sensationalist shows	14	13,9	17	10,2	31	11,6
Interviews	4	4,0	12	7,2	16	6,0
Multiple	16	15,8	34	20,5	50	18,7
Others	2	2,0	11	6,6	13	4,9
Reality Shows	**95**	**21,8**	**108**	**21,5**	**203**	**21,6**
Movies	**93**	**21,3**	**96**	**19,1**	**189**	**20,1**
News	**77**	**17,7**	**95**	**18,9**	**172**	**18,3**
Daily news	46	59,7	61	64,2	107	62,2
Sensationalist news	12	15,6	9	9,5	21	12,2
news stories/documentaries	5	6,5	8	8,4	13	7,6
Gossip	3	3,9	5	5,3	8	4,7
Multiple	10	13,0	9	9,5	19	11,0
Others	1	1,3	3	3,2	4	2,3
Music/videoclips	**48**	**11,0**	**92**	**18,3**	**140**	**14,9**
Sports	**111**	**25,5**	**18**	**3,6**	**129**	**13,8**
Matches	27	24,3	8	44,4	35	27,1
Shows	67	60,4	7	38,9	74	57,4
Extreme sports	2	1,8	2	11,1	4	3,1
Multiple	15	13,5	-	-	15	11,6
Other	-	-	1	5,6	1	0,8

Tabela 6: What children and adolescents most enjoy watching on TV, by age

	Age														Total	
	11		12		13		14		15		16		17			
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Fiction	**35**	**64,8**	**111**	**62,4**	**135**	**56,7**	**155**	**61,5**	**114**	**67,5**	**22**	**52,4**	**10**	**62,5**	**582**	**62,0**
Soap Operas	16	45,7	50	45,0	51	37,8	50	32,3	40	35,1	7	31,8	3	30,0	217	37,3
Malhação	4	11,4	22	19,8	31	23,0	47	30,3	35	30,7	8	36,4	4	40,0	156	26,8
American TV series	1	2,9	6	5,4	12	8,9	14	9,0	6	5,3	-	-	-	-	151	25,9
Sandy e Jr.	1	2,9	4	3,6	3	2,2	1	0,6	-	-	-	-	-	-	39	6,7
Multiple	13	37,1	27	24,3	36	26,7	40	25,8	31	27,2	7	31,8	2	20,0	9	1,5
Other	-	-	2	1,8	2	1,5	3	1,9	2	1,8	-	-	1	10,0	10	1,7
Children shows	**21**	**38,9**	**80**	**44,9**	**96**	**40,3**	**71**	**28,2**	**31**	**18,3**	**8**	**19,0**	**5**	**31,3**	**312**	**33,3**
Cartoons	16	76,2	59	73,8	72	75,0	55	77,5	23	74,2	7	87,5	-	-	232	74,4
Shows	2	9,5	11	13,8	12	12,5	9	12,7	5	16,1	1	12,5	4	80,0	44	14,1
Comedy	1	4,8	4	5,0	4	4,2	4	5,6	2	6,5	-	-	-	-	15	4,8
Multiple	2	9,5	6	7,5	7	7,3	3	4,2	1	3,2	-	-	1	20,0	20	6,4
Other	-	-	-	-	1	1,0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	0,3
Variety shows	**17**	**31,5**	**52**	**29,2**	**67**	**28,2**	**71**	**28,2**	**45**	**26,6**	**10**	**23,8**	**5**	**31,3**	**267**	**28,5**
Shows with live studio audiences	2	11,8	20	38,5	17	25,4	19	26,8	16	35,6	3	30,0	1	20,0	78	29,2
Game shows (competitions)	6	35,3	6	11,5	13	19,4	10	14,1	7	15,6	1	10,0	3	60,0	46	17,2
Sensationalist shows	3	17,6	4	7,7	7	10,4	8	11,3	7	15,6	3	30,0	1	20,0	33	12,4
Talk shows	2	11,8	7	13,5	8	11,9	11	15,5	3	6,7	-	-	-	-	31	11,6
Interviews	-	-	3	5,8	4	6,0	7	9,9	2	4,4	-	-	-	-	16	6,0
Multiple	2	11,8	11	21,2	14	20,9	14	19,7	7	15,6	2	20,0	-	-	50	18,7
Other	2	11,8	1	1,9	4	6,0	2	2,8	3	6,7	1	10,0	-	-	13	4,9
Reality Shows	**10**	**18,5**	**36**	**20,2**	**46**	**19,3**	**54**	**21,4**	**44**	**26,0**	**7**	**16,7**	**6**	**37,5**	**203**	**21,6**
Movies	**9**	**16,7**	**40**	**22,5**	**44**	**18,5**	**49**	**19,4**	**34**	**20,1**	**10**	**23,8**	**3**	**18,8**	**189**	**20,1**
News	**5**	**9,3**	**27**	**15,2**	**48**	**20,3**	**48**	**19,0**	**36**	**21,3**	**7**	**16,7**	**1**	**6,3**	**172**	**18,3**
Daily news	3	60,0	16	59,3	28	58,3	25	52,1	29	80,6	5	71,4	1	100,0	107	62,2
News stories/ documentaries	1	20,0	3	11,1	7	14,6	6	12,5	4	11,1	-	-	-	-	21	12,2
Gossip	-	-	2	7,4	4	8,3	6	12,5	1	2,8	-	-	-	-	13	7,6
Sensationalist news	1	20,0	3	11,1	2	4,2	1	2,1	1	2,8	-	-	-	-	8	4,7
Multiple	-	-	3	11,1	4	8,3	9	18,8	1	2,8	2	28,6	-	-	19	11,0
Other	-	-	-	-	3	6,3	1	2,1	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	2,3
Music/videoclips	**1**	**1,9**	**21**	**11,8**	**38**	**16,0**	**42**	**16,7**	**24**	**14,2**	**10**	**23,8**	**4**	**25,0**	**140**	**14,9**
Sports	**4**	**7,4**	**20**	**11,2**	**26**	**10,9**	**38**	**15,1**	**31**	**18,3**	**8**	**19,0**	**2**	**12,5**	**129**	**13,8**
Shows	-	-	9	45,0	17	65,4	23	60,5	21	67,7	2	25,0	2	100,0	35	27,1
Matches	1	25,0	5	25,0	7	26,9	10	26,3	8	25,8	4	50,0	-	-	74	57,4
Extreme sports	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2,6	2	6,5	1	12,5	-	-	4	3,1
Multiple	2	50,0	6	30,0	2	7,7	4	10,5	-	-	1	12,5	-	-	15	11,6
Other	1	25,0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	0,8
Comedy shows	**5**	**9,3**	**20**	**11,2**	**30**	**12,6**	**28**	**11,1**	**16**	**9,5**	**2**	**4,8**	**1**	**6,3**	**102**	**10,9**
Erotic	**-**	**-**	**3**	**1,7**	**2**	**0,8**	**8**	**3,2**	**4**	**2,4**	**-**	**-**	**2**	**12,5**	**19**	**2,0**
Other	**3**	**5,6**	**6**	**3,4**	**5**	**2,1**	**10**	**4,0**	**5**	**3,0**	**1**	**2,4**	**1**	**6,3**	**31**	**3,3**
Did not answer	**-**	**-**	**3**	**1,7**	**6**	**2,5**	**6**	**2,4**	**2**	**1,2**	**4**	**9,5**	**-**	**-**	**21**	**2,2**

When asked about what they would keep from being broadcast on TV, 22% of adolescents frequently mention nudity, sex scenes or pornography. This is the only category in which gender difference was significant. They say that they would prohibit *"low level stuff"* (boy, 12) or *"naked women…"* (girl, 14).

The various forms of violence showed on TV also disturbed many adolescents in our sample (10.8%). An even greater number, nevertheless, would not prohibit anything on TV (16.6%). A few, however, would forbid everything to be shown on TV (2.8%). Others were concerned about their personal image and would not like to see themselves on TV (5.9%). There were no relevant differences among age groups.

Several studies show how important TV is in the life of Brazilian children and adolescents. A UNICEF study researched 5,280 adolescents all over Brazil showing that 52% use TV as their major source of entertainment and that around 70% consider shows on TV to be "very good" (UNICEF/Fator OM, 2002). Another recent qualitative and quantitative transversal study investigated what 746 students from fourth to eighth grades in Rio de Janeiro would do with their free time. Among the activities they do while alone at home, 91% mentioned watching TV, 85.2% listen to music, 51.1% play videogames and 40.5% read books (Barros et al, 2002).

In the United States alone, more than a thousand studies were carried out associating child health and the media, especially TV. Both Brazilian and foreign studies are frequently published with recommendations for parents describing the negative effects of TV in the health of children and adolescents and the participation of the medium in lower academic achievement[7] (Njaine and Minayo, 2003).

The purpose of the present study is to investigate how children and adolescents absorb media content and not discuss the negative effects the media has in child and adolescent development. It is true that, in our country, adolescents are exposed to a great deal of information considered inadequate through TV. It is also true, however, that children and adolescents can access quality information, culture and education through this medium. Let us remind ourselves that, if the child or adolescent watches something on TV that stimulates him/her reflect in any manner, that it would be very educational, whether or not formally part of an educational show. Strasburger (1999) affirms that the TV provides adolescents with images of how adults should act, teaching them about gender roles, conflict resolution, dating patterns and sexual gratification and ways to handle stress. The medium, by showing an abundance of attractive models of adults, present adolescents with a broad range of information related to the adult world and to adult behavior.

Aside from the scientific research, citizen-oriented discussion is carried out. The World Summits on Media for Children and Adolescents have become the most prolific international forum for discussions and for presenting concrete proposals for improving the quality of the media produced for the new generations of children and adolescents. The summits' target media industry professionals, governments and the organized society. These summits are also a good opportunity for an upgrade in what is being best produced in terms of media for children and adolescents worldwide. These meetings are an initiative of the Summit on Media for Children Foundation and the first edition was in Melbourne, Australia, in 1995. Since then there were other summits in London (1998) and Thessaloniki (2001).

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[7] The Brazilian Pediatric Society, following the example of the American Pediatric Society, lauched, in 2001, the document *Promoção de Segurança da Criança e do Adolescente frente à Mídia (TV, Internet)* [*Promoting Children's and Adolescents' Security as to the Media (TV, Internet)*]. The authos recomend parents to pay attention to their children's TV and Internet habits, seeking to restrict the amount of time they use it, to estimulate other forms of entertainment, to know the shows they watch and to discuss them with their children.

The 4th World Summit on Media for Children, in 2004, occurred in Rio de Janeiro. The summit's objective was to set goals and alliances for good quality media. In terms of means of communication, there is no consensus about what is good quality; there is a consensus, however, on the concern about TV as a medium (Njane and Minayo, 2003).

According to debates and lectures with adolescents organized by our team for our analyses to be deepened, we believe that it is by listening to them that we'll achieve the good quality we want. They are the aim of all of this and are, in fact, able to evaluate what they watch. As for TV, if we desire to produce shows with interesting content, we need to listen to children and adolescents about this product.

It is necessary for us to understand that the quality we are talking about is not the one we adults judge to be best for youths based on our representations of the world, our ideologies and experiences. We have to learn to listen to them, both in schools and universities, in order to certify that the things we judge to be best for them are good or bad in fact or not. The participation of these citizens' in matters concerning their own lives is, after all, a statutory right. Although the Convention on the Rights of the Child as well as laws, such as the Children and Adolescent Act, have been sanctioned, adults seem to strongly resist the fact that boys and girls are present-day citizens and not merely future citizens (Casas *apud* Trilla e Novella, 2001).

5 – Possible dialogues: family, school, young people and the media

Both the child and the adult contribute to the production and the replication of culture (Sousa Filho, 2001). Collective practices of young people continuously redefine the media culture to which they are exposed. Their ease in following technological advances possibly helps them feel good about themselves, which, in turn, makes them feel even more capable of mastering these technologies and, in many cases, doing things that adults do not know how to do. The feeling of belonging, that is, to be part of something common to everyone or to certain groups refers to an ever-changing process of socialization, which opens the way for new generations, societies, and subjects. Children and adolescents, therefore, do not assimilate values and practices of the society they live in passively.

According to the data we collected, adolescents do not like to talk about the use they make of media equipment with their parents and teachers. Children and adolescents love talking about what goes around in the world. They are very always excited about any conversation on their lives, perspectives, dreams, sexuality, music, games, computers, dating, relationships, desires, etc. If they are heard, they will pass on their experience and ideas. Children and adolescents spend a great deal of their time in school. Why then don't they discuss these issues with their teachers? Since when have we teachers, who intended to guide, learn from and share ourselves with them, closed the doors to dialogue?

According to this study, TV is the most popular leisure activity among children and adolescents. Games are the second most popular alternative. Since TV and games take up so much of their time, why are they not sharing it with the adults?

Through these data, we find it necessary to broaden the discussion about these issues in spaces common to youths and to include parents and teachers in this discussion, seeking to facilitate the dialogue which, as you can see, has not been occurring at home or at school.

Conclusion

The data cannot be properly analyzed without putting it in the scope of city life. Rio de Janeiro is a six-million-people metropolis, marked by inequality: luxurious buildings live side by side with precarious slums in almost every neighborhood. Such contrast makes social tension more visible. In a country with manifest social inequalities, leading to a change in people's daily lives, such as the growth of private condominiums, which are like small towns containing a large scope of services and investments in security. City streets became mere dangerous passageways and cease to be environments for socialization.

Staying at home and remaining inside secure places generates new life styles and new designs for the city (Zamora, 1999). The socialization processes of youths are now confined to enclosed and restricted spaces, especially among the social strata sampled. It is possible, therefore, to say that adolescents relate to each other, to other people and to the city through watching TV, playing games and using cell phones.

The restriction of sociability has been related to the fear of violence. This complex phenomenon is studied over various perspectives. One of them is to establish possible links between the violence shown on media and the behavior of some children and adolescents.

We cannot deny that violent computer games and videogames may desensitize an immature player to violence and strengthen the belief that it is best to solve problems without creativity and ethics, but thoughtlessly. This study, however, does not intend to place judgment on this matter. We may presume that children and adolescents that prefer violent games are influenced by the fact that we live in a society where violence is excessively present. It is possible that adolescents seek these games hoping to find a way to deal with the phase he/she is going through in his/her life, producing a Kafkaesque understanding of the adult world (Trilla and Novella, 2001), transforming that which they don't comprehend into entertainment and fun.

One of the results (which is also a very disturbing piece of data) is the distance between the interests and the dialogue adults (parents and teachers) and adolescents have concerning the use of this equipment, certain aspects of sociability among family members and ways for children and adolescents to get closer to each other. TV and games seem to participate in the process of communication.

It seems clear that, by sharing information and their interests in the equipment, boys and girls develop networks in which they relate to each other and share an identity. Therefore, according to the data we presented, there isn't only a lack of interest of parents in the subject, but there's also the disinterest of boys in expanding the boundaries of their groups. What could this environment lacking conversations and sharing have created? What could be the consequence of this distance between parents and their children and between adults and youths?

Despite the fact that activities related to the equipment studied are very stimulating for both boys and girls, it became evident that there isn't much communication about this to parents. It may happen because of the fear, the lack of information or the feeling of incompetence adults have, since it is noticeable that children

are the ones who most like, know of and use this equipment (Casas, 1998; Estrada, no date). The matter seems to be more complex, however. Casas states that it is increasingly obvious that child and adolescent culture is relatively independent and frequently different from adult culture. Since boys and girls are either unable to talk to adults or judge their conversations unsatisfactory, they only speak to other boys and girls. Therefore, most of the worldview of adults is not taken into account. Aside from control and surveillance, a great part of the actions of adults on behalf of socialization may become lost, which increases the generation gap.

The data collected led us to believe that it is urgent to discuss new languages, forms of interaction and challenges posed by new communication technologies together with the community, the family and the school. These dialogues will facilitate the development of ideas and actions concerning education, so that all children and adolescents are socially included and have the proper means to develop. It is relevant for all countries to ask themselves what would be the impact of new technologies on all children and adolescents.

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