

**INFLUENCE OF MEDIA ON CHRISTIAN TEENS:
A STUDY ON HOW MEDIA INFLUENCES TEENS IN WAYS THAT
CONTRADICT CHRISTIAN VALUES**

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ABSTRACT

Media appears to be a powerful tool used in our modern day to communicate certain beliefs, ideologies, attitudes, and values which are influencing people in their real world and day-to-day living. Largely affected and influenced are teenagers, who are at a transitional stage in life and experiencing a lot of changes in their bodies, emotions, hormones, and mentally as they are growing from childhood to adulthood. This research interrogated how media, in particular, South African television programmes influences Christian teenagers in ways that contradict Christian values, so that parents and the church can inculcate Biblical values to nurture the teens in today's society. A qualitative method and phenomenological research approach were employed in seeking to find out how teens at Brethren in Christ Church Entumbane are influenced by television medium. Questionnaires were distributed to three groups of people, which are teens, parents, and church leaders. All three groups admitted that television programmes influence teen's behaviour, character, beliefs and values both positively and negatively, with the latter predominant however. The respondents emphasised that South African television programmes influence teens sexually, in partying, drinking alcohol, taking drugs, homosexuality, dress code, language, music, cultural identity, and also spiritually. Since this problem is three-fold, meaning it involves teens, parents, and the church, recommendations are given to each group to help teens move away from the negative influences exerted by the media, so that they can model Christian values.

Key Words: Teenagers, Media, Christian values, Ubuntu, Brethren in Christ, South Africa