ROLE OF TELEVISION IN THE SOCIALIZATION OF CHILDREN

1. Muhammad Hayat Khan, M.Phil Scholar Department of Peace and Conflict Study University of Peshawar
2. Imad Ali, M. Phil Political Science AWKUM

ABSTRACT

Television plays the most important and dominant role in children socialization because of the interesting contents and easy access. In the present world children are more in touch with Television than the other form of media. Television also plays a role in socialization of children therefore the present study is about the "Role of Television in socialization of children". The objectives of study were to find out the role Television in social learning of children, the role of television in children learning of manners and also to know the role of Television in children learning about custom/tradition of society

Key Words: Socialization, Television

1.1 Introduction:

Socialization refers to the preparation of newcomers to become members of an existing group and to think, feel, and act in ways the group considers appropriate. It is a process of seeing, hearing, remembering, understanding and applying these things in practical life. Socialization is the process by which people learn characteristics of their group's norms, values, attitudes, and behaviours. Through socialization we learn the culture of the society into which we have been born. In the course of this process, a personality develops. A personality is comprised of patterns of behaviour and ways of thinking and feeling that are distinctive for each individual. Babies are not born with the social or emotional tools needed to contribute to society as properly functioning social actors. They have to learn all the nuances of proper behaviour, how to meet expectations for what is expected of them, and everything else needed to become members of society. As new born interact with family and friends they learn the expectations of their society (family, community, state, and nation). Children learn how to talk, interact with others, share, manage frustrations, follow the rules, and grow up to be like older family and friends they know. When they live up to expectations they are big boys and girls, when they don't they are naughty. In the early years, tremendous attention is

required in the safety and nurturance of infants. As they begin to walk and talk they learn to communicate their needs and wants and also to feed and clothe themselves. Younger children do not have strong abstract reasoning skills until adolescence, so they rely heavily on the judgment of their caregivers. Most importantly, they form significant attachments to the older people who care for them. (Elkins, 2007) Socialization is a process in which a child learn how to eat how to walk what to wear how to interact how to be a man how to be a woman how to learn manners and customs/traditions of society where to act where to stay calm and most importantly how to live life in a social order where everyone consider you as a proper member of the society.

Television and children socialization this era of modern science and technology no one can deny the importance and influence of Television on children and especially in their socialization process because media is one of the four agents of socialization and Television is the most attractive form of media to children. In those days they were strongly attached to media most of the time they spent in front of television. As we all know that media has taken the position of sixth institution in the society so the influence of that institution is stronger than the others five. Now a days we see how children learn so many things from TV shows and programs, they adopt and copy how to listen how to speak how to react and how to understand. A child in one country can understand and know the norms and values of other country due to the TV channels and contents of that specific country. Television is a platform which connects people to various countries and cultures. Furthermore, most of the information people believe is now based on what they seen in Television screens, rather than on personal experience. Children learn things through watching television. Some of the things they learns is beneficial and some are not depending on the content they watch for example if a child is connected to some sort of educative content he may be good in education compare to those who are engaged to sport's content or other kind of entertainment content. Television is considered one of the powerful and influential forms of information in today's situation no one can't forget the importance of Television and the socialization of their children through it. In Television there is always new things which is appealing to children compare with the other forms of media available to children. Our country Pakistan is an under develop country most of the children are unaware of other form of media so they are mostly in touch with

television which socialize children in every aspect of life not in childhood but the rest of their life.

Electronic media, particularly television, have long been criticized for their potential impact on children. One area for concern is how early media exposure influences cognitive development and academic achievement. Heather Kirkorian, Ellen Wartella, and Daniel Anderson summarize the relevant research and provide suggestions for maximizing the positive effects of media and minimizing the negative effects. (Heather L. Kirkorian, Ellen A. Wart Ella, and Daniel R. Anderson 2008)

One focus of the authors is the seemingly unique effect of television on children under age two. Although research clearly demonstrates that well-designed, age-appropriate, educational television can be beneficial to children of preschool age, studies on infants and toddlers suggest that these young children may better understand and learn from real-life experiences than they do from video. Moreover, some research suggests that exposure to television during the first few years of life may be associated with poorer cognitive development.

With respect to children over two, the authors emphasize the importance of content in mediating the effect of television on cognitive skills and academic achievement. Early exposure to age appropriate programs designed around an educational curriculum is associated with cognitive and academic enhancement, whereas exposure to pure entertainment and violent content in particular, is associated with poorer cognitive development and lower academic achievement.

The authors point out that producers and parents can take steps to maximize the positive effects of media and minimize the negative effects. They note that research on children's television viewing can inform guidelines for producers of children's media to enhance learning. Parents can select well-designed, age-appropriate programs and view the programs with their children to maximize the positive effects of educational media. The authors' aim is to inform policymakers, educators, parents, and others who work with young children about the impact of media, particularly television, on preschool children, and what society can do to maximize the benefits and minimize the costs.

The influence of the mass media is a contentious issue when it comes to childhood socialization. The nature and degree of media influence on children's behaviour has been extensively addressed at some time or other, with the bulk of decades of research focusing on the relationship between the exposure to media programmers and social behaviour of children. (Okafor 2013).

While the issue of media has been extensively investigated, the "third parent's role as a socializing agent has been overlooked. When one considers that the media is a significant source of values and that it has the ability to impact on the thoughts, feelings, and behavior of individuals, the media's role in the inculcation of deviant values is of relevance if one is to fully understand how this social system has increasingly become a source of values. The mass media especially the visual media (television, films, and now the new media) are widely believed to be uniquely effective because of their visual advantage which enables the retention of attention among audiences, as well as „pre-occupying especially for children and adolescents, even among some adults. One cannot talk of socialization without mentioning children because primary socialization occurs in children age. Socialization is responsible for the transformation of a helpless infant, described as „a biological being into a thinking, acting and talking normal human being, described as "a social being" Childhood on the other hand is a period of information seeking when the child's central concern lies in defining a coherent picture of the world.

For the 20th century child, the picture is to be broad and complex. The mass media especially the pictorial media to which they have access very easily expose them to the world far and beyond the limits of his immediate environment" But unlike our own society where presently, the trend has been to screen primary and secondary school children in traditional dancing costumes. However, children are actually portrayed as entertainers to televisionviewers. "It is worrisome that if new strategies are not adopted whereby children would be exposed to a more expanded use of the media, they might grow into tradition directed, dance-oriented and violent adults" Living in a media-saturated world, the media has become an integral part of everyday life and children are spending between 35-55 hours per week on the different forms of media. However, with this constant exposure to media contents, it is not surprising that the question most often asked when a child behaves in a particular manner is: "what role did the media play in childhood socialization?" thus the thrust of this study.

Spending time watching TV can take time away from healthy activities like active play outside with friends, eating dinner together as a family, or reading. TV time also takes away from participating in sports, music, art or other activities that require practice to become skillful.TV viewing starts earlier than other forms of media—often beginning before age two. In recent years, TV, video and DVD programs geared to babies and toddlers have come on the market—and now even a cable channel for babies. We don't know yet what effect TV-viewing by babies may have on their development. We do know that time spent watching TV replaces time spent interacting with caregivers and other children. Social interaction is critical to a baby's healthy development.

The rapid expansion of research on media effects has increased our understanding of the roles media play in the socialization process. Media have significant socializing influences across a wide range of domains, such as aggression, stereotyping, helping, sexual behaviours, education, social networking and identity development. In sum, a broad research literature demonstrates that media is powerful socializing agent that can lead to numerous positive and negative outcomes. Given the extraordinary amount of time of children and adolescents spend interacting withmedia; increasing our understanding of both positive and negative media effects is an important research goal for practical reasons.

The research showed that TV is indeed an attractive medium that commands audience attention and loyalty, which is translated into the high levels and frequency of exposure. However, the research also proved that not all audiences are passive who have simply become receptacles of the idiot box, as what the Powerful Media Effects (Noelle-Neumann, 1973) and Cultivation Theory (Gerbner, 1980) warned. Rather, some children and parents are capable of selective exposure -- choosing only programs they think are consistent with their values and answer their needs. Likewise, some children appear to remain unperturbed by the media violence or objectionable content since they exercise selective perception and they come from families with a relatively secure family attachment. Thus, they enjoy watching the thrills in an action movie but not necessarily imitating it as the Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1994) predicted. Furthermore, results validate the Uses and Gratifications Theory (Katz, et al., 1973) that parents and children seek programs they believe provide them entertainment function (cartoons and MTV), or catharsis (action, drama, or sitcoms), and instrumental function (intellectual enrichment from National Geographic Channel, Animal Planet, and TV news).

So much television programming is aimed at young children. Much of it appears to be educational: teaching the ABCs and life skills. When is it appropriate to introduce a baby to television, and what do parents need to know about this topic? A great deal of research has been done on the effects of television on children's lives. The first step in making the decision is to get the facts. Because nearly all of us have one or more TV sets in our home, and since most of us watch some TV nearly every day, we may not want to hear what research tells us, but these are things parents need to know (McGraw-Hill, 2003).

Experts suspect that babies younger than two years old view TV as a confusing array of colours, images, and noises. They don't understand much of the content. Since the average TV scene lasts five to eight seconds, your baby or toddler doesn't have enough time to digest what's happening. Cartoons and many children's shows are filled with images of violence. If you find this hard to believe, surf the TV on Saturday morning. The realism portrayed in today's cartoons has moved light years beyond the Bugs Bunny type of violence. Many children's shows almost are animated versions of adult action films. Research shows that exposure to this type of programming increases the risk of aggressive behaviour and desensitizes children to violence.

Babies and toddlers have a very literal view of the world. They can't yet tell the difference between real and pretend, and they interpret what they see on TV as true life. Research has demonstrated that many young children believe that TV characters actually live inside the TV set. This can confuse young children's understanding of the world and get in the way of their learning what's right or wrong.

In home viewing, television can entertain children and excite curiosity about the world around them. It can also help children learn important information, skills, values, and behavior. For example, watching "Mister Rogers' Neighbourhood" and "Sesame Street" teaches task persistence, imaginative play, and letter and number (Children's Television Act of 1990, Section 303a; Federal Communications Commission, 1996). While television may teach basic facts or behaviors, mediation during viewing by a knowledgeable adult can influence critical skills, such as comprehension and reflection of content (Dorr & Rabin, 1995). For instance, when mothers and their children watch Sesame Street together, the children understand more of the program's messages; the prompting and guidance that parents offer can lead children to think outside the program's content, to understand how the knowledge can be applied to other situations (Salomon, 1977).

Parents might be able to help their children learn if they are given the proper guidelines and scaffolding tools (Gleason &Schauble, 2000). During television viewing, mediation by knowledgeable viewers influences children's understandings of program content (Dorr & Rabin, 1995; Salomon, 1977). Therefore, parents who have a better understanding of how and why particular programs are used to teach might play a more beneficial role in their child's television viewing.

What can parents do? Movies, television shows, computer and video games are created for users of different ages and maturity levels. Parents can protect children from exposure to violence on television, movies and other electronic devices by knowing what their children are watching. Before purchasing or allowing children to view media, parents are encouraged to preview the media; read video game reviews; ask other parents their opinions of new and popular video games; and check the rating symbols and content descriptions. Talking to older children about what they are viewing is also important. Some television shows have content that may not be suitable for children. Parents can manage what shows children have access to by utilizing parental control options, which allow customers to restrict access to specific programs based on ratings, titles or channels. Further information on parental controls can be obtained from the cable provider or any other agency which have the authority to restrict those contents.

CONCLUSION:

From the following study we concluded that the role of Television in children socialization is very much true. before undertaking that study our view was change because in the living social setup most of the people consider media and Television against the custom/tradition and the culture we have, but the fact is all these technologies and digital artifacts are neutral you can use it for good as well as for bad it depends upon the user choice whether he or she use it positive or negative and same is the case with the role of Television if a child watch good contents his or her

socialization will be good and positive and if a child watch vulgar or any other kind of explicit content so result will be in the form of bad and negative socialization.

In the light of our research findings we concluded that children learn so many good things with the help of Television, it has a greater part and responsibility in children day to day social learning and personality development such as learning ethics and manners and learning about education and basic academics, religious information and knowledge also learning about custom/tradition of society. So Television socializes children in every aspect of life not in child age but the rest of life.

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