

Example of research paper on media and development

[Family](#), [Parents](#)



In a home where there are children, watching cartoons and other television commercials is an integral part of everyday life. In the contemporary world, the outdoor children games of the past are no longer favorites among children. This marks the critical difference between the child of this generation and a child from the past two or three generations. Currently, children get exposed to media at the tender age of six months. Parents for instance buy the kids' music for their children at this age. A child may listen to the music in bed and after the sixth month, the little one is attracted to audio-visual forms of entertainment; this is where the television come into discussion. Typically, all parents will expose their children to cartoons first. At the age of two to three years, the child is already a fervent viewer of the television. Then the questions come: what do children learn from the cartoons and commercials in the television? What do they portray about the family as the most basic social institution? This paper answers these questions in light of cartoons watched by children below the age of six years.

A cartoon program involving a family unit will in most cases bring out the family style so conspicuously. The cartoon programmers know that the target audience is made up of children almost fully. As such, they design the cartoon programs in the context of the institution that the child is conversant with- family and to some extent, school. In most of these programs, the kind of life is ideal. For a child, understanding the complexities of life may not be remarkably easy, and this is why the programmers contextualize the programs to reflect the home setting. This way, the children are able to perceive the family style. Usually, a family will consist of the parents and a

few children. In most cases, the family in the cartoon program is the nuclear family and style of the family is brought out as one where the father is the head of the house assisted by the mother in dispensing all the activities around the house. The family setting is brought out very clearly.

The cartoon programs and commercials as well explain the roles of the family. A lot is explained on the roles of the various family members. The roles shown on the television may make the child understand why his or her parents behave the way they do. The cartoons will usually bring out the father as the breadwinner of the home. In most cartoon programs, the father is brought out as the sole breadwinner with the mother playing the role of bringing up children. The other roles that are clearly apparent in the cartoon programs are those that take place around the home. When focusing on the house setting, the children are capable of learning that the father is the one that executes those duties that are thought of as being tough. These roles may include such chores as mowing the lawn. The roles of the mother are perceived as being those that revolve around the kitchen. Cooking and cleaning as well as other simple indoor chores are left to the mother as the children play and study.

Stereotype behaviors have been defined to those unexplainable tendencies that are self-stimulating. Such mannerisms have been associated with autism in children. A good example of stereotype tendencies is the act of a child sucking the thumb always. These are associated with children that are serious television or cartoon addicts. The behaviors, according to psychologists, portray some form of inner inefficiency, illness or some unsatisfied desire. It has not been established exactly why such tendencies

are related to the cartoon programs but psychologists argue that the ideal, and sometimes violent world portrayed in these programs, interferes with the feelings of a teenager to the point where they may be insensitive to the suffering of others.

Undeniably, it may be difficult to explain ethnic groups in the context of cartoon programs but using the various heterogeneous groups of characters used to perform different roles we can gain some understanding. In the cartoon world, violence is gradually creeping in at a tremendous pace. The violent character is usually brought out as being different in appearance. The fact that most of the opposing parties in the cartoon programs are of different colors creates a lot in the minds of children. For example, the famous Tom and Jerry program, the fact that Tom, who is perceived as the bad character is dark, and Jerry, who is a favorite among children is light in color, sends a heavy message to children as far as ethnicity is concerned.