

The attitude of today's youth are affected by television programs.



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1. 0 INTRODUCTION

“Televiwing causes people to duplicate inappropriately, in other areas of their lives, behavior styles developed while watching television.” (Kottak, 1990, p. 3)

Television programs can be educational as well as entertaining. It can give people the opportunity to travel around the globe, expose them to new ideas that they might not have encountered from their community and also a chance to learn about different cultures. Pro-social messages from shows on television will give a positive impact on the behavior of today's youth. However, these youths are more likely to learn negative values from these television programs.

Television has now become a debatable issue as some question its influences on the attitude and psychological development of today's youth. Nowadays, the world of television has been discovered by children at very young age. As we know, television is an effective educational tool. With programs showcasing wildlife, scientific theories etc, it helps these children to be broad-minded and also have a better understanding about the world around them. However, we have to remember and be aware that the television also is seem to posses more negative effects than positive ones.

A day in a youth's life will generally be filled with activities such as playing with friends, reading, doing homework and being physically active but this can be easily replaced with the presence of television. This is detrimental to their physical and mental development because studies show that the first two to three years of a child's life is where he/she learns through observing,

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interacting, playing and also exploring new things. Thus if these children are glued and become addicted to these programs on television they will have lesser time to interact with human beings. This is crucial, as it can retard their normal physical and social development and skills. Hence, the burning question here is, do television programs affect the attitude of today's youth?

If we look further into the issue, television programs do indeed affect the attitude of today's youth as it enhances negative social development amongst youths, which may lead to aggressive or violent behavior, and they tend to affect self development and self esteem.

As we all know, youths are more likely to imitate and adapts ones behavior into their own because they can easily relate to what is shown on television. There surely will be a lot of behavioral changes in youths today if they are exposed to excessive violence shown on television. These kinds of programs will encourage these youths to be aggressive in both their behavior and in their thoughts. Not only that, they will also be more likely to be influenced with what they have seen regularly like smoking and drinking scenes which are shown frequently in these television programs and even commercials. This will encourage the development of such unhealthy habits at an early age (Bora, 2009).

This report shows the effect television programs have on the attitude of today's youth. These research findings are confined to the United States of America as the knowledge and collective behaviors of contemporary Americans are everywhere. Like any other problem, there is always a solution, in order to ensure that television is used as a source of knowledge

and healthy entertainment, one must be sure to watch it in moderation by setting a time limit when you sit down to watch it. Besides that, the government, the parents and the teachers should encourage today's youth to participate in other positive activities like playing outdoor and indoor games. Not only that, they should also encourage today's youth to watch programs that reinforce family values.

2. 0 TELEVISION PROGRAMS MAY LEAD TO AGGRESSIVE OR VIOLENT BEHAVIOR

Aggressive attitudes, values and behavior can be increased by watching entertainment violence, particularly in children. The effects are measurable and also long lasting. Some of the television programs will show violence scenes with hitting, punching, stabbing and any other type of violence. Television programs use fake guns and fake blood to represent the violent acts during acting and these make the violence shows on television fake (Kaufman, 2004). Violent scenes on television may not be a great deal for the adults because adults know the difference between reality and fantasy compared to children who know nothing about it or not clear about the difference between reality and fantasy. Most of the time, children will settle their problems in violence way as they see a lot of violence scenes on television. According to psychological research, youths can be negatively affected by the violence on television. Watching violence on television will give three major effects which youths will be less sensitive to pain and suffering of others, youths will be more fearful of the world around them and they might behave aggressively toward the others (Abelard, 2008). ACT Against Violence (cited in Kaufman, 2004) states that kids cannot give it a context even though they know what they are watching. They will react

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equally to animated violence and real violence due to the weak link between their fantasy and reality. They cannot judge commercials versus regular programs or reality versus fantasy. Hence, they will show more aggressive behavior after watching the violent scenes.

2. 1 THEY TEND TO IMITATE SUCH BEHAVIOR FROM WHAT IS SHOWN ON TELEVISION

Everyone knows that viewers may imitate positive and negative behaviors from the television programs. However, the Gerbner group has found that people will be more apt to perceive the real world as being similar to television programs if they spend more time on watching television (Kottak, 1990, p. 11). This situation will be faced mainly by the children as they do not have enough knowledge and experiences to differentiate between reality and fantasy. Since they only spend their time on watching television, they might have forgotten that they are watching something that is fantasy, not a reality. Hence, the innocent children will follow blindly what they have seen on television because they think that the characters on television programs can do so, why can't they. Violence on television programs may create blur images of good and evil. Kottak (1990) states that the distinction between heroes and villains is fading. This will cause the children to be more confused and lead them to do anything they want. For example, if they adore a character from one movie, they might just imitate the behavior of that character without knowing that behavior is a good behavior or a bad behavior. Most of the shows on television are using violence as the central to the storyline, where the heroes and villains can get what they want by using violence as it is an effective way. It is true that television programs may lead to aggressive behavior. This can be proven by an incident in Dallas where a <https://assignbuster.com/the-attitude-of-todays-youth-are-affected-by-television-programs/>

boy has been killed by his elder brother, 7 years old with a “ clothesline” maneuver he had seen on a wrestling show (Kaufman, 2004).

2. 2. THEY BECOME IMMUNE TO VIOLENCE

If the children watch more violent television programs, they will tend to have favorable attitudes toward aggressive behaviors. This will indirectly cause the child to become immune to the horror of violence (American Academy of Child Adolescent Psychiatry, 2002). This is because, they can always see violence in the television programs that they are watching. Hence, the child will gradually accept violence as a way to solve problems. Lefebvre has found an example to show that a child has immune to violence until he uses the type of violence that has been seen by him on television to solve his problem. A six years old boy wearing turtle costume stabbed his friend in the arm for not returning his toy. This shows that this child has no humanity because for him, it is only a normal thing to stab someone as he has already immune to violence.

AGGRESSIVE AND VIOLENT BEHAVIORS ARE CONTRIBUTED THROUGH OTHER CHANNELS

Some people argue that not only television programs can lead to aggressive and violent behaviors but these behaviors can be influenced by people surrounding them like peers and family. However, children spend most of their time by watching television. Almost everyone in the world has their celebrity idol. Children tend to like the characters of their idols on the television programs or movie without thinking whether their idols are doing the good or bad thing in that show. This will cause children to imitate their favourite characters in particular shows because they are too obsessed with

the characters. Factors that may lead to aggressive and violent behaviors that have been influenced by their peers or family members are not a strong argument compared to television programs. This is because, children will not always agree or listen to what people say to them because they are quite stubborn and will just follow their hearts to do whatever they want. Even though they have been influenced a lot of times by people surrounding them, they still can choose whether to do it or not as they might not be interested in their type of violence. If they chose not to do it, they can just not do it and can stay away from people who are influencing them. Think about television, how are they supposed to stay away from television? There is no way for people in this world to stay away from television unless that person is in a jungle or no television set at home. Although they do not have television sets at home, they can still watch it at their office place or any stalls. No matter what, they can still watch programs on television and somehow will come across to violence. Besides that, television programs are visual and children can always see the act in an interesting way and it can be watched repeatedly. There are so many types of violence on television programs that can be seen by the children. So they have variety types of violence to be chosen and if children love what they are watching, then they will start to behave like what they are watching. Hence, television programs are the main source which may lead to aggressive and violent behaviors.

In a nutshell, the attitude of today's youth are affected by television programs as they will indirectly encourage the children to be aggressive and violent in their behaviors. Children tend to imitate such behaviors from what

is shown on television and also the immunity to violence cause the children's behavior to be easier affected by television programs.

3. 0TELEVISION PROGRAMS ENHANCE NEGATIVE SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AMONGST YOUTHS

Children are very curious because they are still growing up and just about to see the whole world. So, they are more easily being influenced to do either negative or positive things when they see something new or something that they can see often on the television. We cannot control children's mind because they seem to keep it to themselves and we can only see the differences in them when they express it. Besides that, they do not know what the good and bad things are as they are just about to understand and see the real world. So, they will simply do whatever they like which have been seen by them on television. Examples of negative social development that can be enhanced by the television programs are drug and alcohol abuse, smoking and also sex amongst the youths. All of these cannot be expected not to be seen on television because these will be included in most of the television programs and advertisements.

Outley & Taddese (2006) state that one of the factors for increased drinking amongst the youths are due to the exposure to alcohol use on television and in music videos like MTV, Hitz, and [V] channels. According to Kaiser Family Foundation, three quarter of the prime time shows entitled Sex on TV contain sexual references. There is only one tenth of the sexual content shows include the risks, responsibilities and safety of sex. Only 17% of messages about safety and responsibilities of sex have been portrayed in shows about teenagers in sexual situations. Children will start smoking at an earlier age

for those who watch more television as the factors of influenced by the peer and parental smoking and gender is not as strong as the relationship between the age of starting smoking and television viewing (Mekemson & Glantz, 2002).

3. 1 THE MONKEY SEE, MONKEY DO THEORY

Audience can experience strong emotional reactions, gain new values and change the way they behave by observing the performance of actors. This will be more likely to happen especially when the models show new patterns of behavior and thought which are rewarded (Bandura, 1985). This explains that the audience will do whatever they like which have been seen by them on the television and this will affect their behavior and attitude. Most of the people who can think rationally, they will not follow the negative things that have been watched by them on television. However, we have to remember that youths are still young and they are still learning about things around this world. This world is new to them and they do not understand which is good and which is bad until the adults thought them the right things. At this range of ages, youths will have problems in controlling themselves if they are addicted to television programs which will then lead to the monkey see, monkey do theory.

Television is the most influenced medium. It can be part of the solution and part of the problem in the area of sex amongst the youths. It will give solutions to the area of sex amongst the youths when the shows are giving a technique to have safe sex, a warning program to the teenagers about the consequences if that person gets pregnant, the responsibilities that they need to know from the start before they decided to have sex, etc. However,

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it will give problems when the children watch the sex scenes in the television programs. When they watch this kind of scenes, they will get attracted to it because everyone has the passion and it is a human nature to have the feeling to do it. Children will think that it is not wrong to have sex because they can always see the sex scenes on television without being censored and the monkey see, monkey do theory will be seen in this situation. They see it on television and they will do it in real life. Not all of them will do it in real life because some of them might not get a partner to do it in real life but nowadays, in this kind of situation, it is not difficult anymore to get a partner to have sex due to the influenced by television programs. For those who might not get a partner to satisfy his satisfaction, he might do something worst like rape the girls.

In most television programs, there will be at least one scene where they will be drinking alcohol and smoking. For those children who watch this scene, he or she might not know what is alcohol and cigarette. As the theory said, monkey see, monkey do, the children might try to drink and smoke in real life like what they have seen on television.

3. 2 THEY HAVE BEEN ENCOURAGED BY THE TELEVISION PROGRAMS

People in the advertisements of alcohol can always be seen more successful, happier and sexier when they drink. Alcohol advertising including the television advertisements caused the drinking among youth to be increased (Johnson et al. 2004). When they see this kind of advertisements, they will be more likely feel encouraged by the advertisements because everyone wants to be sexy, happy and successful. Since these advertisements show that

they can feel all of the feelings, this will indirectly encourage them to drink so that they can feel to be more successful, happier and sexier.

There are some of the television programs about a group of friends ignore he or she because that person doesn't want to do something that had been asked to do by that group of friends, for example like smoking. When children watch this kind of shows, they will feel scared because they do not want to lose their friends, and they are still young to know that actually the friends who ignored them are not good friends for them. In order to be secure, children will take precaution steps before they lose their friends, and hence they will decide to smoke. This shows that television programs are indirectly encourage the children to develop the negative social in them.

YOUTHS RECEIVED THE KNOWLEDGE OF NEGATIVE SOCIAL FROM OTHER SOURCES

“ We are doing our young people a real disservice by attempting to protect them from straight and open information that is imperative for adjustment in the real world.”(Maw, 2007)

Some people argue that youths can get the information and knowledge from their friends, parents, teachers, magazines, etc. There are also some of them who claim that the purpose of television programs show all these kind of programs is because they want to protect today's youth by showing them the real side of world. However, television is still the most influenced medium. This is because, children can spend most of their time in front of television and can watch that particular show for a long period of time as well as get the information in detail throughout the show. If compared to the information by the parents, peers, etc, they will not get the information in <https://assignbuster.com/the-attitude-of-todays-youth-are-affected-by-television-programs/>

detail. Besides that, it is not that they will spend their time with their parents and peers to talk about it for 24 hours, they need to talk about something else too like family talk and etc. Hence, that is why television programs will give more impact on the negative social development amongst youths compared to the other sources.

4. 0 TELEVISION PROGRAMS MAY AFFECT SELF DEVELOPMENT AND SELF ESTEEM

In order to create a good relationship with other people, it is important for us to have good self esteem and self confidence in ourselves so that we can achieve our goals. People who have trouble getting positive relationship and afraid to do anything that can improve their life is due to the lack of self esteem. We can always see beautiful skinny models and actresses on television. Most of the children will then start to feel insecure and they will definitely want to do something with their bodies so that they can feel as good as the beautiful skinny models and actresses on television. However, in order for them to maintain their bodies or to get the body like their role models, they have to sacrifice a lot of things. For example, they have to diet in order to be beautiful and skinny like models and actresses on television. This will affect the youths' self development and self esteem.

4. 1 THEY HAVE SLEEPING PROBLEMS BY WATCHING TELEVISION

Sleeping disorders and sleeping patterns among youths have been altered by television viewing. In order to get healthy sleep, we need regular sleep schedules. Thompson & Christakis (2005) state that watching television makes the youths to have more irregular sleep disorders. Children need to get enough sleep so that their brain can work and can think carefully. If they

do not have enough sleep, their brain will be very tired and cannot think carefully which will indirectly make their brain to be slow. When the brain is slow, this will affect the development of the youth. Besides that, the development of youth will be affected by the sleeping problems because they need to have enough sleep to grow. The growth at this age is very important and the growth rate should not be affected by anything so that the self development will not be interrupted.

4. 2 THEY TEND TO PUT ON DIET

When they see beautiful actresses and models on television, they feel insecure about their bodies and they will start on diet to get beautiful body like those actresses and models. When they look someone beautiful on television, their self esteem will automatically being activated. They will start to ask themselves whether they are beautiful or not. For example, when someone sees Megan Fox on television, she will automatically feel very insecure and she thinks that herself is ugly. She will definitely think the way how to compete herself with Megan Fox. No matter how preety that person is, normally if she sees someone who she thinks is preety, her self esteem will then automatically be activated and cause her not to eat in order to be preety like the others. Not only that, when they are not having a proper diet, this will also affect the self development on them.

SELF ESTEEM AND SELF DEVELOPMENT CAN BE AFFECTED BY PEOPLE SURROUNDING THEM

People who do not agree with television programs may affect self development and self esteem say that self esteem and self development can be affected by people surrounding them. It is true that it can be affected by

surrounding people but we have to remember that our surrounding people are random people. We will not see the same person every day. It is also possible if the children see their idols as random people for only once. Compared to television, children can always see their idols on television again and again, which will make them feel more uncomfortable with themselves due to the self esteem and self development. Hence, television is the biggest influenced medium on youths.

5. 0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations have been made to solve the problem of youth's attitude that has been affected by the television programs:

- Provide the youths with media education
- Monitor on what they are watching
- Discuss the contents of the shows with youths
- Give them more confidence in themselves

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, the kids will be less influenced to the negative effects of watching violent shows on television by the help of media education. Some studies have shown that media education can make the kids to have less violent behavior after watching violent shows on television (Kyla, 2009). This shows that media education can help the youths to control their aggressive behavior even though they have watched a lot of violence shows. Hence, it is not wrong for the parents to try the method of providing their children with media education. Either it works or not, parents are highly recommended to try this method as it is one of the most effective ways for controlling children's behavior. We have to

remember that we cannot control everyone's interest. If the kids love to watch violent programs, we cannot stop them from watching it and it is not wrong for them to watch it as long as they can differentiate what is good and what is bad. Besides that, another way to prevent the youths from having aggressive or violent behavior is parents should monitor the children on what they are watching. This is to prevent the children from straight away imitate whatever they have seen on television, especially for kids. Parents should try to explain to kids as many as possible about what have been shown on television because the children do not know how to differentiate which one is reality or fantasy as they are still young and know nothing about it. Usually, children love to imitate the aggressive or violent behavior from cartoon and this is the main reason that the parents need to explain to their children about reality and fantasy terms to give the children an idea about this issue. In addition, every program should give a moral values and lessons either in a text or visual form at the end of the movie. This is to ensure that the kids will get a better picture of violence scenes that have been shown on television. The message should tell the kids that the violence scenes and any other immoral scenes are not supposed to be taken by the kids as good examples. Instead of taking it as good examples or inspiration to do the bad things, the kids should be reminded by the media that all the violence and immoral scenes that have been shown on television programs are just to give a lesson to the kids and also to remind them that all those actions are not a right thing to do.

Secondly, parents should discuss the contents of the programs with their children in order to avoid the development of negative social amongst the

youths. The advertisements about alcohol and cigarette as well as sex scenes cannot be avoided from the youths. Parents should spend more time with their children to share opinions between them. Parents need to know what exactly on their children's mind so that they can give advices to their children. This is the time for the parents to be a good role model for their children. Give them good advices and hear their opinion patiently without judging. Even though their thoughts are wrong, parents need to correct it and give them a bigger idea about the effects of alcohol, smoking and sex before married by giving them a story based on experience or tell them the consequences of all these actions. Not only that, the media can also help the youths to get the right message by always show the negative impacts right after the negative social scenes. This is to ensure that they will get the right message without any doubts and they will know the consequences of doing all those negative social actions such as smoking, drinking, taking drugs and having sex before getting married.

In order to avoid self esteem and self development from being affected, parents should help their children to build confidence in themselves. They should remind their children how attractive they are and nobody's perfect. Parents should keep on telling their children that that all those beautiful skinny models and actresses on television must have scarcity in themselves. Parents have to help their children to build their confidence so that they do not want to be someone else due to the confidences that have been built in them. Besides that, parents should set rules for their children. For example, set the rule that they have to switch off the television before 10 P. M so that they can sleep early and get enough sleep. This rule may help the children to

have a good self development. In addition, the media should set the time limit for youths' shows. For example, youths' shows should only be shown on television until 12. 00 AM. This is to ensure that youths will get enough sleep and not spending so much time on watching television.

6. 0 CONCLUSION

To summarize, television programs contribute more damage than benefits. Television programs may lead to aggressive behavior and violent behavior as kids become immune to violence and they tend to imitate what is shown on television. Eventhough aggressive and violent behaviors are contributed through other channels, television is the main source which will lead to this behavior. This is because, they spend most of their time on watching television compared to the others. They can easily imitate the violent behavior due to the blur images of good and evil which have been created by television programs. Since they watch more violent television programs, they become immune to the horror of violence as they can always see violence in the television programs that they are watching.

Evidently, television programs enhance negative social development amongst youths. This can be proven by the theory of monkey see, monkey do. Whatever have been seen by them on television, they can always do if they want to without thinking the consequences because they are still young and do not know how to differentiate the good and the bad things. Even though the knowledge of negative social can be received from other sources, television is the most influenced medium because they can watch those actions as if it is real while magazines and posters are only in a form of pictures.

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Not only that, television programs may also affect self development and self esteem. The self development is affected by the sleeping disorder because they might watch their favourite shows until late night and have not enough sleep. Sometimes they tend to put on diet due to their self esteem as they see beautiful skinny models and actresses so that they can be as pretty as those models and actresses. Youths can always see the beautiful skinny models and actresses as long as they watch television, they cannot avoid from seeing them on television. Do you think it is logic for us not to see even one beautiful actress? Of course the answer is no and that is why television is the most influence medium which can affect self development and self esteem.

In a nutshell, television programs do affect the attitude of youth's today as it enhances negative social development amongst youths, which may lead to aggressive or violent behavior, and they tend to affect self development and self esteem.

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