



IMPACT ON THEIR COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT AND FRUSTRATION TOLERANCE - TELEVISION VIEWING

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ABSTRACT: Television is the most powerful and exciting means of communication ever devised by man. It calls for the use of auditory as well as visual senses of the learners in receiving knowledge. With the help of it we can see and hear what happening thousands miles away is. Every spoken or the written word, the picture, the sights and sounds and the action of events as they take place at a particular place at a particular time can be instantly transmitted to us and thus we can get first hand living experiences without having our presence at the happening of the scene. As a 'symbol system', television has specific forms, codes and modes of representing information These comprise visual techniques such as cuts, fads, dissolves and special effects as well as auditory features including music, sound effects and various types of speech.

KEYWORDS: Television, communication, information

INTRODUCTION

The unique features of different communication media are their forms rather than their content. As a symbol system, television has specific forms, codes and modes of representing information (Salomon, 1979). These comprise visual techniques such as cuts, fades, dissolves and special effects as well as auditory features including music, sound effects and various types of speech. The level of character action, the rate of change and the pacing of presentation are also formal attributes that can be described independently of the content they are used to present (Huston and Wright, 1983).

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF TELEVISION

The advent of 'television' is one of the most significant changes in people's lives in the 20th century. Television was invented by Bayerd (U.S.A.) in 1944. 1946 was the important year in United States in the history of television, when there were 10,000 receivers; by 1984, there were 100,000 and in 1962, 49,000,000 house holds had television. One out of the seven homes had two or more sets, a total of 56,000,000 receivers. At that time, close to half of American homes had two or more television (Breckenbidge and Vincent, 1972) In India, television began as an experimental service in 15 August 1959, with limited transmission in Delhi. The regular service began in 1965. In 1972, television broadcast began in the second city- Mumbai and by 1975 in Calcutta, Chennai, Srinagar, Amritsar and Lucknow. In 1976, television set-up was delinked from AIR and given a separate status. August 15, 1982, saw another landmark in the history of television when color television was introduced in India. After INSAT-IA became operational, common national programs were started for the entire networks. In 1984, a second channel was added to Delhi to provide an alternative viewing option.

SATELLITE TELEVISION

There is perhaps no parallel in human history to the speed and extent of spread that has been witnessed by satellite television in the last one decade. There has been a sea change in the reach and access to television with the spread of satellite cable operation since it made a beginning at the time of 'Gulf War' in 1991 (Jadav, 2000). With the opening of skies and breaking of national state boundaries for satellite television rapid globalization of television scheme is taking place. Satellite TV today has emerged as a new

frontier in international relations and an important tool of marketing goods and services globally and regionally citing across national boundaries.

With this invention, the expansion of television in India has got enormous boost. Estimates about the number of cable operators in India are from 30 to 50 thousand each having a clientele of about 200 to 500 households; with total reach to 15 to 20 million people. They are doing good business in information and entertainment. They are providing choice to their customers in variety of entertainment, such as Music TV, Sports, channel, Zee News, Hindi channels, News across the world through BBC, world service, CNN, Discovery and National Geographic channel etc. They, besides distributing programs received through satellite channels and video films, even live the local cultural activities and functions to their customers. Some of the political parties and the contesting candidates have also used cable and satellite television for campaign adding a new dimension in electioneering in India.

Thus, today, with doordarshan and other channels TV covers 85% of country's population. About 64.7 million television sets are estimated in the country. But the growth rate of TV sets is expected to be three million annually. Most of the TV sets are in metropolitan cities and towns. However, to facilitate viewing in villages and urban slums, community sets have been provided in villages and tribal areas. (Jadav, 1999).

GENERAL IMPACT OF TELEVISION VIEWING

Today, people of all ages spend a large amount of their time in watching television, the New York City library reported, that "since the advent of television there has been an increased use of good library materials at all ages. Since television does not necessarily require reading capacity, it can reach even illiterate slum dwellers, which can thus pick up advanced ideas and terminology," (Lewis, 1961).

It is said that, "One picture is worth a thousand words", is absolutely true in case of television. It offers a reality and a variety of experiences that are not being easily gained by other means, so, now it has made its reach up to most of the families and therefore, its impact on people is very deep and more permanent. (Sampat, 1990).

Television Journalist Nupur Basu's documentary on "impact of satellite television on social, cultural and political life in South Asia in the last ten years", shows that TV really is playing a responsible role. An hour-long documentary filmed in different parts of South Asia, from Pakistan to Sri Lanka, remote villages in Bangladesh, Nepal and India shows the TV has brought a great change in human life style. Through it people get latest information in any field and hence the world is contracting for them. They get same information as anybody else in any other part of the world. People are now ready to grasp and accept new knowledge and are trying to raise their standard of living.

In a Study in America (Kohut, December, 2000, Pew research center of the people and the Press), it was found that the most Americans interested in presidential tug of war (between Al Gore and George W. Bush) in Florida, were watching television to follow the developments. The study which tracked Internet use before and after election found that most of the people were using television than Internet (The new latest technology). Kohut comments on this, "We are surprised that people are not going to the new on line only site and prefer television to Internet," (Election Junkies prefer TV to Internet" a report Times of India, 10th December 2000).

Television's impact could be seen in capital Delhi in November 2000, when all cable operators in the capital went on a strike. The 72 hours long strike made people lonely, unhappy, depressed, bored uninterested and irritated. Psychiatrist Achal Bhagat said about it, "all this depression has got something to do with the break in continuity. TV was an important pivot in their lives. And, the interruption of something that has been constant for a long time can make people feel unusually bored and snap easily".

CHILDREN'S TELEVISION VIEWING: SOME RELATED FACTS

The mind of child is like a blank paper the pages of which are in the process of being written/filled by the experiences and the knowledge and the knowledge, that its mind acquires from this world itself and this process gradually leads it to attain maturity as it grows up. So whatever they see in front of them has great effect on their minds. As the children grow up to in a social world, they must learn to use and understand the modes of communication in their culture. In many modern societies, television has become an important means of communication, the one used extensively by children, (Comstock, Chaffee, Katzman, Mc Commbs and Roberts, 1978).

The child's exposure to TV is sometimes direct and early, as his mother or the baby sitter pushes his bassinet in front of the TV to keep him amused. This is more likely to happen in families where parents have had little more than lower grade school education, hold blue collar jobs and cannot afford baby sitters, (Schramm et al, 1961).

All investigators agree that children spend at least 2 or 3 hours a day watching television. In a comprehensive study of the United States, Schramm and his co-workers found that an average 3 year old viewed television for about 45 minutes per day. By the age of 4 the viewing time averages 1½ hrs per day. By the age of 5 the average was more than 2 hrs. per day. Everyday children under 12 spends some seventy million hours as television viewers, it is then evident, that television is one of the greatest source of common experience in the lives of children along with the home and later the school, in total.

It is proposed that young children look at television because of their cognitive involvement with and active comprehension of the content. Comprehension should dramatically increase over the preschool years as a result of increasing receptive language skills an expanded base of world knowledge and increased skills specific to interpreting the television medium, (Anderson and Lorch, 1981, Huston and Wright, 1983).

The result of a study indicates that low TV viewers were more responsive to the change in conditions. High viewers may have become accustomed to television since it's presence did not affects their level of distractibility. Low viewers may differ from high viewers in their reactions to stimuli, a difference which may have caused their low preference for the TV medium. Their high level of self stimulation may be related to their preferred level of sensory input (Berlin, 1960).

NEED FOR STUDY

Modern children face a heavy burden of self determination and expectations. Academic achievement, values, beliefs, thinking and creativity are also affected by the setting in which they live. Continuous efforts are being made by all the nations to utilize the child's capacities to the maximum. Keeping this in view psychologist and educationalists have tried to find out ways so that every child may prove to be useful and important for the society and the nation. The result of this study will provide useful information on the impact of TV viewing on children's cognition and capacity to frustration tolerance and also give answer of why, how and how much. This information will help parents to decide that what their children should watch on TV and what not and help to plan the TV viewing schedule for their children and give guidance to help the child to reach his maximum potential.

REVIEW OF LITRATURE

Wannet et al (1962) found that today's young children have a vast fund of experiences and information, in contrast to the children of even a few years ago. They accredit much of this information to the television experiences by which children travel below ice fields at the North Pole and rocket in to space, as well as travel extensively on a more local basic.

Hess and Goldman (1962) found that the time children spend with TV exceeds the total time they spend with all other mass media combined over the calendar year and is more than that they spend in school.

Lyle and Halfman (1972) reported very little use of TV viewing in order to keep a child in doors or otherwise occupied. Appell (1959) in an exploration of television impact upon middle class family life,

found that parents had, at different times, given the following reasons for valuing the TV viewing, “it gets the children out from underfoot.....it keeps them out of trouble.....it keeps them interested when they are alone indoors....I can get my chores done..... I know where they are and it is peaceful.”

Surveys (Hess and Goldman, 1962) have also found the utility of television for mothers. Mothers observed that their children were quieter and less bother some in the home while they were viewing TV. The implication was that the television could ease a substantial part of the burden of child care by reducing the need for parental control. The national society for prevention of blindness has stated that television does not usually affect child’s eyes adversely if the rules of proper seating (not on the floor immediately in front of the screen, clear focusing of the set, and proper lighting in the room) are observed.

Hustan and Wright (1984) studied on children’s comprehension of televised formal features with masculine and feminine connotations. In study, masculine and feminine content were presented on television with different types of formal production features (i.e. action, music and camera techniques). Children from grade 1 through 6 were presented with three typed of stimuli in which masculine and feminine formal features were varied. They were asked to judge whether each stimulus was better suited to advertise a feminine or masculine sex-typed toy. Children recognized the sex-typed connotations of the formal features presented in all three types of stimuli. The results demonstrated that children comprehend sex-typed connotations at the subtle level television formal features.

In an analysis (Hustan and Wright, 1979) toy commercials showing boys only, girls only or both genders were compared on the assumption that the intended audience was boys, girls or both respectively. Commercials designed for boys have rapid action, frequent cuts, loud music, sound effects, frequent scene changes. We may call these “masculine formal features”. “Commercials aimed at girls contained background music, many fades and dissolves and female narration or in other words, the feminine formal features. In most cases, the sex types commercials differed significantly from the neutral ones as well as from each other” (Welch, Huston, Wright and Plehal, 1979).

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