The Development Of Media Over The Past 50 Years

J387 Media History (2001) describe the development of media within the 1960's. One of the main concerns of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) were children's television. Sesame Street were one of the first programmes broadcasted that were aimed at children. As well as television, radio programmers were also trying to provide entertainment musically to young people. Compared to the 1970's, media suitable for children was not an important topic (J387 Media History, 2001).

The 1970's focussed on a different aspect of media compared to the 1960's. Court (2014) identify the 1970's as a symbolic period as it left a permanent mark on the media industry that it is today. How people perceived childhood were changing as the generations of post war wanted a better life for their future generations. As well as this, childhood development theorists were starting to make an impact on people which would have still stayed relevant to the future days. Children's imagination were allowed to be free with their creative side looking for something to satisfy them. Books became more popular with Roald Dahl creating age appropriate fiction allowing children to see another side to media (Court, 2014).

BBC (2016) tell of the 1980's media period which focussed mainly on technology. Compared to the 1960's and 1970's, this was the first that children were experiencing of this kind. The BBC microcomputers with 128 kilo byte (kb) of memory were released in 1981. Compared to today's technology, this memory would not be able to fit not one photograph from a smart phone. With the popularity of the computer, school classrooms started to get them in with 80% of schools in the UK using them. Not long after this computer release, Apple released the first touch screen tablet which could only be used by stylus, named The Apple Newton. It was supposed to help children improve their hand writing, however the tablet often got the writing wrong. Apple stopped making The Apple Newton five years later as it were not as popular as the computer and more expensive (BBC, 2016).

Huq (2018) discuss the return of television in the 1990's. Presenters were not viewed as teachers trying to educate children or to transfer their knowledge but more as equals to the children. Different backgrounds and accents were on programmes aimed at children to make them feel more accepted and equal. This then led on to programmes employing presenters with disabilities so that children with special needs felt included. As the digital switchover had not happened yet, children's programmes often had a bigger budget than other programmes which meant they were more popular with better quality and content (Huq, 2018).

BBC (2015) explain the 2000's compared to previous years. Media is currently at centre to most children's lives, with girls spending around seven and a half hours watching a variety of screens compared to the 1995 average of three and a half hours. Five to ten year old children in 2014 spend four and a half hours watching screens compared to 1995 with two and a half hours. Compared to books, television and computers being most popular in previous years, YouTube is currently the most popular form of media for children since 2013. BBC one as well as ITV viewers have dropped because of this, with just 40% of viewers being seven to sixteen

years old compared to 1995 with 80%. YouTube remains popular since 2007 followed closely by apps such as Facebook and Snapchat (BBC, 2015).

The Influence Of Celebrities And Media On Behaviour

Kilbourne (2015) establish that the media and celebrities have a negative influence on children's behaviour. Young children, especially girls, obsess over many celebrities. As they are being exposed to this as such a young age, they are easily influenced on how they want to dress and look. This can put children into an early sexualisation (Kilbourne, 2015).

However, Chakravarty (2017) argues that media and celebrities have a positive influence on children's behaviour. It can help develop awareness of the problems within society that a celebrity may stand for. Social skills would be developed through constant communication which could then lead onto the child feeling inspired. Fine motor skills can be developed from celebrity's video games and other games that require a lot of attention. Celebrity's often write books or publicise their favourite books which can develop reading and writing skills. Also, if a child wants to contribute on chat rooms or blogs for example, they will be practising reading and writing (Chakravarty, 2017).

However, Palmer (2014) supports Kilbourne (2015) and describes that celebrity and media influences participate in children having a limited diet, not having a healthy sleeping pattern, spending less time with their parents, going into media overload and having less play time with others. As this is a toxic mix, the younger generation could be at risk to having a shorter attention span, no self-restraint, as well as minimum experience of balancing other people's needs with their own (Palmer, 2014).

However, Learning Theories (2017) put forward Skinner's theory that supports Chakravarty (2017). Skinner reports that positive outcomes to a particular event that are given to someone after showing certain actions or behaviour can encourage someone to do something again. This shows that if a child can see a celebrity doing something positive and getting rewarded through praises or rewards it could encourage them to do something similar. Skinner's theory also applies to negative behaviour, which suggests that if a child views a celebrity doing something that negatively impacts someone else, they will be discouraged to do a similar action. This would show the child has learnt from someone else's actions which makes them a stronger person (Learning Theories, 2017).

Davies (2010) point out another negative aspect of the influence of celebrities and the media on behaviour. Children's behaviour regarding purchases can increase negatively when constantly buying and consuming as this shows the child is not satisfied. From advertising, children can begin to not recognise the difference between fantasy and reality. This shows that children are easily influenced by the exaggerations and styles of advertising (Davies, 2010).

However, Raising Children Network (2017) argue that celebrities know the power of advertising on children and try to use it in positive way. For example, if a celebrity exposes

children to the news that show political and social issues then the child could begin to take an interest which is because of the celebrity. This can encourage and educate children to be more involved which is what all citizens should do within their communities. Celebrities also speak publically about health issues such as suicides and depressions which children need to be hearing about especially close to the puberty age. Health issues can also include healthy lifestyle and eating habits and having respectful and positive relationships. All these different ways of advertising can inspire children (Raising Children Network, 2017).

However, Jarvis and Chandler (2001) identify Bandura's theory that supports Davies (2010). The theory suggests that children should not be allowed to view advertising as they imitate behaviour of those superior to them such as a celebrity. From Bandura's bobo doll experiment, when children watch an adult behaving in a certain way whether it is good or bad, children are more than likely to imitate their actions as they are still establishing what is right and wrong. This shows that when celebrities promote certain things they buy and do, children will try and do the same (Jarvis and Chandler, 2001).

Steinhoff (2016) tell of another negative aspect of the influence of celebrities and the media on behaviour, which is lifestyles. Children are more drawn to lifestyles that appear more interesting than their own. Most children when viewing media perceive what they see as reality and try to mimic the lifestyles. They can get addicted which cause struggles when trying to change their mind about certain products and aspects which can lead to the child wanting it even more. If a celebrity is pictured eating junk food the child may think that is a healthy way to live which can cause health problems such as diabetes and obesity (Steinhoff, 2016).

However, Tucker (2015) argues that celebrities do not think of themselves as perfect and if they do get picture eating junk food, they are not doing it for children to copy them. People are often too caught up in the negatives to acknowledge the positives. These positives can include promoting ethical behaviour by making responsible decisions. When natural disasters occur, celebrities are often on media promoting how society can help which promotes social justice. Celebrities provide a positive lifestyle by donating money and raising awareness on a variety of issues. From getting on with their lives, celebrities show that they are obeying the law and participating in positive and respectful relationships, showing a positive role model (Tucker, 2015).

However, Clarke (2016) discuss Ofcom's battle to try and ban junk food advertisement on media to try to minimise obesity in children. All food with high salt, sugar or fat will not be advertised on anything that children have access to including cinema, print, television and online (Clarke, 2016).

<u>The Influence Of Celebrities And Media On Self Image And Esteem</u>

Gross (2015) explain that celebrities and media have a negative effect on self-image and esteem in children. Celebrities can post on media unrealistic body images the children look up to. This can lead to dysmorphia which is a disorder that means there is no satisfaction within their body

appearance. This condition is increasing in children and young people as they strive to reach their view of perfection. 80% of 10 year old girls have already been on a diet as they try and look like the celebrities they are seeing. When children start to begin puberty, their bodies are constantly changing which can often be embarrassing and make them feel self-conscious. Children use media as a way to get acceptance and judgements which can lead to self-criticism. Celebrities use air brushed pictures so the public cannot see, for example, fat, wrinkles or stretch marks which children may perceive themselves to have. This can cause the child to feel burdened as they do not look like those celebrities (Gross, 2015).

However, Raising Children (2018) establish that children should be realistic and see the only way to get rid of fat and unwanted skin marks is by having a healthy lifestyle. Healthy eating and activity that is physical should be part of everyday life. Children should know that certain diets do not always work for everyone and it is about finding the right balance. Everyone has a different body shape that looks and do different things which should be appreciated. For a child to be proud of themselves, it should not be related to appearance but to personality and qualities. People should be valued on these things and not how someone looks, which could decrease comments on looks (Raising Children, 2018).

However, Explorable (2012) put forward Freud's theory that emphasises the importance of self that the celebrities and media fail to support. Freud suggest that self-concept is learned and environmental factors can help change and shape people, which can mean celebrities and media. Self-concept is also organised which suggests people stay the same for a long time before something changes them, but change is still possible. Self-concept is also dynamic as people behave on how they imagine themselves in a certain situation. Children are seeing celebrities posting unrealistic images which suggests that children then view themselves as also doing this. Due to the over editing, children can never reach their expectations (Explorable, 2012).

Bello (2013) report another negative effect on self-image and esteem that celebrities and the media have. A study shows that boys often feel emasculated with 52% having to live up to the standards on how to look set by girls. 63% of girls also felt that boys were struggling to meet their demands. These expectations are what turn boys to have a role model in order to have someone to aim for. H&M fashion brand have admitted to having fake people in their catalogue modelling their outfits. They provide children's clothes which suggests children would be looking through these catalogues and realising they do not look like the children they are viewing (Bello, 2013).

However, Jacobson (2018) argue that celebrities posting edited pictures and bragging about their perfect lifestyle on media for children to see is not the actual problem children have. Media alone is not the problem, it is the child for having false expectations of what they should look like (Jacobson, 2018).

However, Google Sites (2011) put forward Erikson's theory that children should go through failure in order to succeed. This suggests that children should have high expectations of how

they should look as when they do not succeed, they will then realise how they should stop trying to look a certain way. At the ages six until eleven children begin to cope with new social demands which could be the realisation of media. At the ages twelve until eighteen, the sense of self is developing as well as a child's identity and that success leads to the ability to stay true to self. Media tests children on whether they are true to their own self which will always succeed in the end (Google Sites, 2011).

Knorr (2017) point out that children who are on a variety of media, often worry about how they are being perceived, especially girls. 35% of girls are worried about the photos that they get tagged in as they fear they would look unattractive. 27% of girls worried about how they look in the photos they post of themselves and 22% of girls felt bad if they thought there photos were being ignored. Children often compare themselves to images that they find on media as these photos are often over sexualised or unrealistic body images of girls (Knorr, 2017).

However, Filucci (2015) argue that not all celebrities knock children's confidence regarding their image and self-esteem. Taylor Swift is an icon to many children yet she donates books to schools in America, suggesting that she does not care just about her looks. John Cena is also idolised by many children yet works with terminally ill children and does not publicise his image on his personal media. Lady Gaga also proves to be an inspiration by voicing her struggles with her own body image and encouraging children to be kind to themselves as well as others which shows that even celebrities can have doubts about their looks (Filucci, 2015).

Villegas (2018) put forward Vygotsky support with celebrities communicating about their self-image and esteem problems. As children grow up they learn how people around them think, which cause them to do mental activities. Thinking is an important aspect to the learning process as social interaction influences them with speech changing over time (Villegas, 2018).

Role Of Parents In Safeguarding Children From Negative Influences

Tassoni et al. (2013) describe the role of parents in safeguarding children from negative influences. Children and young people should only be given access to chat rooms that are educational and should be monitored to guarantee that discussions are topic appropriate with no inappropriate language or behaviour. Parents can contact mobile phone operators to set up internet filters which could block potentially harmful material such as pornography. A child's image should also be protected as after it is posted on media, anyone can copy, change and post the picture without the person involved knowing. Children should know that pictures should only be posted when they know the people who are going to view it and if they would be happy with everyone seeing it. Children should be made aware of the people in their setting as well as their surrounding community who can participate in keeping the child safe. From this they can begin to trust relationships with adults and know who they can speak to in a complex situation (Tassoni et al., 2013).

This advice for parents is supported by the Children's Act 2004. Legislation.Gov (2004) identify the responsibility of children are key agencies including parents, surrounding the child

to promote their welfare and safeguarding. Concerns noticed early on as possible should be recorded and kept watch which can be applied to online safety (Legislation.Gov, 2004).

However, Mould (2010) suggests parents cannot always safeguard their children from negative influences. At an early age as possible, children should be introduced to the fact that there is more than just an image on a screen. Adults should be aware that they are capable of influencing a child's curiosity, participation and responsibilities without allowing a child to create the benefits and negatives. Many parents often do not understand recent technologies so fail to teach their children on how to use them effectively. There is never a way of knowing when a child is ready to use media, which suggests the adult is never ready to discuss the dangers with them. Access cannot be controlled at all times with children often being left alone to figure out media's for themselves. Children often want attention and can exchange their privacy in order to receive this. They should always know they can talk to an adult if a problem did occur (Mould, 2010).

However, even if the parents are not ready for their child to use media, the Children's Commissioner For Wales (1992) argues that part of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) supports the use of media. Article 13 explains every child has the right to access media. Article 16 explains the privacy of a child should be protected and article 17 explains a child has the right to access the media for information purposes which should be encouraged in a way that they can understand. Parents should be following these articles and ensuring children are staying safe on media (Children's Commissioner For Wales, 1992).

However, Learning Theories (2016) put forward Bowlby's theory of attachment. If a child has access to the media from an early age then they could become attached to the media rather than their parents. Bowlby suggest attachment is having a long lasting connection with a person that causes someone pleasure when interacting and in time of stress, this person soothes them. When attachment between mother and child does not occur, it can have negative consequences on a child's development causing decline in intelligence and affection as well as many other aspects. If a child is turning to the media in times of stress, the parents' role is being dismissed (Learning Theories, 2016).

However, The NSPCC (2018) suggests ways to overcome this. They report that parents and children should explore apps and internet sites together which can show parents what is suitable. Communication should be encouraged so the child can make the parent aware of what apps or sites they already like so the parent can thoroughly investigate them to guarantee they are appropriate. Through communication, the parent can question what the child feels makes them uncomfortable which can allow the parent to encourage the child to talk to them whenever they feel they need help. On certain sites, people can be blocked and information protected which the child should be shown how to do (NSPCC, 2018).

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