

History of Media

The use of media on young children didn't occur until after the romantic era. According to Macdonald (2003) in the romantic period childhood was viewed an idyllic state of innocence, which adults needed to protect in order to provide the best possible start to life. Media was produced through images, sound and words, but in the modern era these types of media have been used to influence the public to change their perceptions of 'reality'. According to Sparks (2009) the use of teachers helped influence children's perception and beliefs, but as mass media came in, in the twentieth century, they also shifted the use of influencing the public through the radio and magazines as it was less costly, and the scale was broader (Schramm, 1977). The use of mass media developed in the early twentieth century during the war as propaganda. Shortly after the war they developed propaganda to foster modern attitude and beliefs into the public. Following the growing use of mass media, Postman (1983) stated that this caused childhood to disappear, as children had greater access to adult media. In the 1930s, the media used advertisement to influence children through the radio at child-oriented shows, as children had a big influence on their parents' consumer behaviour. By the 1950s children were recognized as consumers (Strasburger, Wilson and Jordan, 2009). Research by Alexander et al (1998) showed that the average length of advertisements in children shows were 60 seconds, which is longer than modern adverts which last for 15 to 30 seconds (Strasburger, Wilson and Jordan, 2009). By the 1980s worries grew as children had greater access to adult media, and toys started to change to adult activities (Macdonald, 2003). As states Postman (1983), this influenced children to become miniature adults too soon, and cause childhood to end sooner than needed (Macdonald, 2003). Anxiety grew within the public in the 1990s, as women's magazines influenced young girls' views on their body image (Macdonald, 2003).

According to Chassiakos et al (2016), in the 1970s children from the age of 4 were regularly watching television, but in modern society children as young as 4 months of age interact with digital media. The use of influencing a young audience has moved from being on the radio to the television (Morgan et al, 2009). And the use of repeated messages through television, helps influence children as young as infants' views, beliefs, and perspective on the world, which Gerbner calls this the Cultivation theory. According to Gerbner, people and children who watch a lot of television can have their views of social reality effected and adjusted. The use of media through television can change people perceptions on the real world, through the news or shows. The most common and recurrent messages that are expressed on television will affect people's views and beliefs of the real world (Morgan et al, 2009). Media has

developed again through the use of digital media, where children watch more YouTube and Netflix than any educational program (alphabet or counting) (Kabali et al, 2015).

Celebrity influences

According to Dohnt and Tiggemann (2006) media has been impacting children's body image in a negative way in the recent years. Girls between the age of 6 and 7 years who look at magazines have a greater dissatisfaction with their bodies, due to the way celebrities are portrayed within magazines. Duchin (2014) agrees that children as young as 6 and 7 years of age are having body dissatisfaction due to comparing with how celebrities are shown in different media formats. There is a larger range of media in which children can be influenced, and children have a greater access to media now than in the past. The different formats of media are allowing children to have more access to adult media, which includes discussions on women's media on body image and dieting. The influence of the media that children see has impacted on the discussion of body image at a very young age to compare with past years. As stated by Wilson and Jordan (2009) children have had a child-oriented radio shows in the past, but in recent years children have gained more access to a range of media, including adult media.

Myers and Crowther (2009) suggest that social comparison between peers can cause body dissatisfaction. Dohnt and Tiggemann (2006) agree with Myers and Crowthers (2009), as shown in their research, that when children start school in the early years they begin comparing socially about aspects of their bodies and the differences between each other. The impact of their peer's discussion and the comparison could be a big factor within body dissatisfaction in young girls. Dohnt and Tiggemann (2006) found that peers' desire for a thin body was a big influence on other children's own body dissatisfaction, as they learn new values and beliefs from each other about their bodies. But Dijkstra et al (2008) states that social comparison has always been used as a skill for children to develop and learn socially about the world around them. Children have always discussed and learnt why everyone is different, but the discussion of what is the correct way to look and what is an acceptable body shape has not developed at this age in the past. This shows that something must have influenced the peers in order for the cycle to develop to include body dissatisfaction.

Phares et al (2004) states that until recently body dissatisfaction, or 'normative discontent', has always been applied in research to women and not young girls. And that recent research has started to show a growth in body dissatisfaction with young girls. Research by Dohnt and Tiggerman (2004) shows Phares et al (2004) idea that 'normative discontent' does exist with young girls. The research was done on 128 young girls between the age of 5 and 8, that

showed 42% of the girls had negative satisfaction with their bodies. Research by Lowes and Tiggemann (2003) also shows that girls as young as 6 are aware of dieting to lose weight and beginning to have eating disorders due to media and peer influences. This shows that young girls have been gaining this information about thin body ideals in order to influence their peers.

Dohnt and Tiggemann (2006) state that the idea of body dissatisfaction has been transmitted through socio-cultural mechanisms such as parents, peers and the media. The information and the way their parents and parents act based on their body dissatisfaction can influence their values and beliefs of their own body. According to Dohnt and Tiggemann (2006) young girls see images of unrealistic celebrities on mass media such as magazines, televisions or digital devices, and are provided with information on how they could achieve the ideal body through these formats of media. As Postman (1983) states, children were receiving premature access to adult media, which is shortening children's childhood experience. Children are becoming miniature adults and are moving from childhood at a younger age due to the access available to them of media through televisions and digital media.

Research by Jordan (2004) shows that children as young as 2 years of age spend roughly 6 hours a day exposed to television or some form of mass media. This is allowing them a wide range of information from a young age for an extended period of time. According to Jones, Vigfusdottir and Lee (2004) there is a link between how much exposure children have to television and digital media, and their body dissatisfaction. As children have a range of media at a young age for long periods of time, this suggests that body dissatisfaction would be greater in many children at a younger age. Carey et al (2014) suggest that young children could be socially comparing themselves to celebrities as they have more exposure to this type of media through television and digital media. The access to this media allows children to gain information on these celebrity's diets.

Garbner's Cultivation Theory suggests that mass media is influencing young children's views, beliefs and perceptions on how their bodies should look. With the constant exposure to mass media and the repeated display of celebrities' thin ideal bodies, Garbner suggests that this has developed a new set of beliefs on young children's body image (Morgan et al, 2009). Jones et al (2004) agrees with Garbner's theory and suggests that young girls discuss with their peers about the celebrities they see on television and digital media, which then reinforces the views and beliefs of an ideal thin body from mass media. Carey et al (2014) also agrees with this idea, and says that by comparing and discussing the ideal thin celebrities the young girls see on mass media, they are increasing their body dissatisfaction. There is a constant cycle of

peer influences and media influences on children's body satisfaction. Even a child that has not been exposed to ideal celebrity's body image through media formats, they can still be influenced by their peers' knowledge of celebrities with ideal bodies and dieting (Dohnt and Tiggemann, 2006).

Tangelo and Ricciardelli (2015) suggest that the way gender roles are shown in media, with peers and family can also affect children's views on their body image. If a celebrity is shown as a small, thin, delicate wife who has an amazing life. Then children will perceive that to gain a good life they would need to become a thin and delicate wife. This was shown by Macdonald (2003) when children were invited to become miniature adults. When given toys that encourage children to play in the gender roles, such as domestic toys for young girls and intellectual toys for boys. Adults would conform with media because of the influences it has on their beliefs on which toys are correct depending on the child's gender (Morgan et al, 2009).

The main concern of negative feelings towards body image has been placed on young girls. Tatangelo and Ricciardelli (2015) found in their research that this is because girls feel as if they are judged more on their appearance and therefore have more pressure to have a good body image. But boys feel as if they are judged more on their abilities, which include sports, which would have less of a negative impact towards their body image and more on their abilities. Kraye et al (2008) says that young boys tend not to talk about the appearance of their bodies, but more about the functional components of their bodies. Tatangelo and Ricciardelli (2015) shows Kraye et al (2008) idea in their research, as boys showed less appearance related social comparisons, and more use of comparing their sports ability and skills in fitness. Boys aimed to improve themselves in the skills needed for their development in childhood, which would allow them to aim for possible goals. Girls had more of an aim at a goal that wasn't achievable for all body types, which then lead to eating disorders. Tatangelo and Ricciardelli (2015) suggest that more research needs to be done on body dissatisfaction to do with ability, and the use of harmful body changing strategies in order to better performance.

Conclusion

This section has looked at the effects of media body image, and how the influences everyone's views on body image. The research looked at mainly young girls, and the negative impact media had on their body image whilst comparing with celebrities and peers. Cultivation theory showed how the media can influence our beliefs and views on our body image, which then can affect how we influence our peers with social comparison. The

research had shown that because children have greater access to media through different formats, that they can gain more information on celebrity's ideal bodies and how they can achieve this. Which has shown to influence young girls to diet. This section however didn't look closely into media's influence on boy's body image. Tatangelo and Ricciardelli (2015) suggest that not much research has been done into this, and more needs to be done. Many of the researches note that as media becomes more accessible to children that negative body image has increase. And more needs to be done to address within schools to support children, and to raise awareness for parents and carers to help prevent children accessing adult media.

Role of the Adult

According to Matthews and Seow (2007) it is the role of the adult in supporting children's learning of media in different formats. The adult needs to use Vygotsky's theory of scaffolding according to Matthews and Seow (2007) in order to help support in varies different situation, and with the different formats of media. Boog (2014) agrees with this by stating that 'interactive' applications such as e-book, and other digital tools, need an adult to support the child, as children do not learn or develop from these unless an adult is there supporting them through scaffolding and asking question to expand their knowledge and develop them through these experiences. The use of digital devices such as iPads can help children to learn as they are more motivated, enthusiastic and engaged when completing tasks on an electronic device (Pitchford and Outhwaite, 2016). Research by Clements and Samara (2003) indicates that digital media can have real educational benefits for young children. They showed that children had greater gains in intelligence, structural knowledge, problem solving, and language skills when learning using digital media.

Ofcom stated in the House of Lords (2017) that there is a reason why children are not getting the support needed to safeguard them on the new formats of digital media. According to Ofcom, 19% of parents stated they are worried their lack of technology skills could be putting their children at risk, and that 44% also say that their children's expertise outstrips their own. These parents believe they do not have the knowledge to care for their children on digital media, and that even if they tried that their children would outstrip them. As the UNCRC states children have the right to the resources, skills, education and contribution necessary for the full development in learning to give them the best possible opportunity in their future. With the technology developing and digital media developing, they have the right to learn about how to use these formats of media in a safe way. Children have the right to protection, which includes on online digital formats. And children have the right to participate, through expressing their opinions through many media formats (UNCRC, 2018).

But as stated in the House of Lords (2017) these rights are not being met as adults don't have enough knowledge to support children, and to give them the best opportunities to develop in all media learning. Parents need support in gaining their knowledge, as ownership of tablet devices has more than doubled in households from 20% in 2012 to 51% in 2015. And where there are children in these households, they are also being users of these devices. This shows there is a growing access to young children have to digital media (Ofcom, 2015). As shown, support is needed to help develop adults' knowledge on digital media in order to safeguard and support children to use in a safe way to develop their learning.

Support for Adults and Children

Dr Krause stated in the House of Lords (2017) that children can get an obsessive behaviour from the pressure of society and peers because of the fear of being left out, and this can cause children to have anxiety. Dr Krause suggests mediating children's usage of digital media in order to avoid children getting anxiety and prevent access to adult media for children. Ofcom (2015) suggest 4 ways for mediating children's internet use which can help provide them with rules to use digital media in a safe way. First, they suggest using tools or application that can help adults to place restrictions on what children can see, and how long then can spend on these devices (Ofcom, 2015). This can help prevent seeing any adult media that could cause children to have a shorter childhood (Postman, 1983). Ofcom suggest discussing the dangers that can occur on digital media with children, to make them aware of what to do if they do come across something that they uncomfortable with. Ofcom also suggest scaffolding the children whilst they use the devices, as Matthews and Seow (2007) suggest. And Ofcom suggest placing rules for the use of digital media, which can include what times they can be used, and what application or websites can be used.

The new Digital Competence Framework by the Welsh Government (2016) also allows teachers, as carers, to help children learn about different digital media formats, and how to use in a safe way. Through the Digital Competence framework children learn a new set of skills, knowledge and attitudes that enable the creative and critical use of digital media. And this is all essential for learners if they are to be informed capable and successful in today's society as technology and jobs are developing. The Framework is taught from 3 to 16 years and looks at 4 difference strands, citizenship, interacting and collaborating, producing, data and computational thinking, which has been relevantly link to everyday use, and possible future use. As shown in one of the outcomes for nursery children as they should be able to distinguish between someone they know and someone they have never met online through the framework. This framework allows for children to be knowledgably about how to deal

with situation on digital media, how to keep their information safe and secure, and how to use digital media in an effective way to develop their learning and skills.

Conclusion

The research shown in this portfolio shows how media has developed to provide children with more information than ever before. The use of digital media with young children has grown, with children as young as 4 months of age using technology (Chassiakos et al, 2016). Worry has grown as children's negative body image is growing for young girls. With research showing that young girls of the age of 6 being affected by social comparison with peers, and celebrities causing a negative body image. This has shown a development in knowledge with young girls on dieting, and a growth in eating disorders. The support for children has been affected as many adults do not have enough knowledge on safeguarding and supporting their children whilst using digital media. The development of the new Digital Competence Framework by the welsh Government (2016) will help to develop children's knowledge on how to use media in safe and effective way to better their skills for future technology. The framework will allow children to understand how to deal with situation on digital media and gain the skills needed for future jobs and new digital media that will develop.

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