**INFLUENCE OF VIOLENT TELEVISION CARTOON PROGRAMS ON CHILDREN IN ENUGU METROPOLIS**

**BY**

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**DECLARATION PAGE**

I, Ekwe Uchenna Valentine hereby declare that this research work was written by me. However, this work has not been submitted or received anywhere for the purpose of acquiring a degree in Mass Communication.

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**Ekwe Uchennna Valentine Date**

**DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to the almighty God for his mercy and his steadfast love for bringing me this far, his grace, strength, wisdom and most of all seeing me through my four whole years in the university.

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# CHAPTER ONE

# INTRODUCTION

# 1.1 Background of the Study

# Cartoons have been a part of cinema history from the time the first motion pictures were made in the late 1800s. A cartoon is a movie made by using animation instead of live actors, especially a humorous film intended for children (Thompson, 2010). Cartoons can also be described as the making of movies by filming a sequence of slightly varying drawings or models so that they appear to move and change when the sequence is shown. These are the elements that keep viewers, (mostly children) glued to their seats. Cartoons were initially so short because people would be watching these shorts in the movie theatres before their feature film. When cartoonists could put their shows on TV, they began to get longer, creating the half hour block shows that are on Nickelodeon, Cartoon Network, and the Disney Channel today. Also, the cartoons had to become more “family friendly” so that more people would watch their show (Kapelian, 2009).

# Television shows and animated films, for over 80 years, have been entertaining the kids. Felix the Cat the first ever cartoon icon, which started its journey in 1920s. In the next 10 years, Donald duck, Mickey Mouse and Pluto was the cartoon character which are being introduce by Disney Brother’ s Cartoon Studios (Box Office Mojo, 2004). Now a day, children’s physical activities are limited by excessive watching of television. As cartoon watching is the most favorite hobby of children in their leisure time, so they like to watch the cartoons on television rather than to do any physical activity. Cartoon watching affects the attitude and behavior of kids i.e. their liking and disliking, way of talking, and behaving with other children. It also has a strong affect on their language and the way of their dressing and eating.

#  Cartoon Network is the most favorite cartoon channel in the world. Cartoon network started its transmission in 1992, and has gained record breaking popularity. Since August 2002, it has been watched in more than 80 million homes in United States of America and in 145 countries throughout the world. It is one of the top ad supported channels for cable television network. Cartoon Network is a 24 hours channel, broadcasting only cartoons, yet, its 68 percent audience belongs to children of the age group from 2 to 17 years, whereas, 32 percent belongs to the age group of above 18 years and adults. The children from the age group 6 to 11 are the core audience of the Cartoon Network (Stabile and Harrison, 2003). Cartoon programs contain violence as its integral part. It is noted that cartoon content is full of violence than serial plays and comedies (Potter and Warren, 1998). As a result, children are more exposed to violence showed in the cartoon program than any other television program broadcasted during prime time (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan & Signorelli, 1994).

 The recurrence of the roles like Cinderella in numerous animated cartoons has led to the perception that it is an exceedingly passive character who is devoid of role model behavior; a pathetic victim who takes no action towards the fulfilment of her own dreams. There is a need for children to understand that a female character like Kim Possible from the animated cartoon series of the same name is a seeker and saviour and that she is not necessarily "un-feminine" when actively determining her own destiny. Research has indicated that television has a socializing influence on children particularly in their attitudes toward gender roles.

Cartoons send strong and compelling messages about socially approved gender roles and stereotypes that are in turn, reinforced by parents, friends, and school, contributing to the child's sense of what it means to be male or female in that society. There is increased risk to children’s safety in many of today’s children cartoons (Kindera 2006). Cartoon characters jump, dive, and fall from very great heights and land without being harmed. For example on every episode of Looney Toons, Wylie Coyote is always trying to catch the Road Runner. And in every clip Wylie Coyote in some shape or form, seems to fall off a cliff or simply have one of his inventions go wrong and cause a massive explosion. Yet, he manages to collect his teeth, dust himself off and get up for another attempt to catch the Road Runner. This seems funny until a child thinks it is alright to imitate these deeds.

# 1.2 Statement of the Study

# In today’s society, the prevalence of internet and television (TV) is an indisputable fact. While at the very beginning of 1980s, there were TVs only in a limited number of houses, we can now say that there are computers and internet connection available in nearly every house. As a result of these technological developments, the messages communicated from TV screens penetrate into houses and influence children, especially those in whose minds the defense mechanisms have not yet formed (Köşker, 2005). In her study, Arnas (2005) indicated that there was one TV in each house of the family in Nigeria, and about half of them have 2 and more TVs. Today, children are exposed to the effects of TV for too long within their daily lives.

# Children spend much more time watching TV than participating in any other activity; Larson (2001) determined that young people in America, Europe and Eastern Asia watched TV an average of 1.5 to 2.5 hours daily. The effects of TV have been much stronger on children than on adults. This is especially true because the purposes for watching TV are different among children and adults. While adults generally watch TV for fun, children watch it for purposes of learning and recognition. Additionally, more vulnerable children try to understand the TV programs they watch and they are more influenced by them (Yavuzer 2011).

# The most effective influence in the lives of children, after their parents, is TV. Cartoons are the first and most common among the types of broadcasts that children watch on TV, Cartoons have been presented to children on many channels, without recognition of their useful or harmful aspects. The ability of children to restrain their motives is very weak, so they can take the aggressive behaviors of cartoon characters as a model. Since children desire and look for power, the producer sets out from this need and creates sympathetic, strong and aggressive media heroes that can overcome every difficulty through magical and infinite powers, and solve their problems by brute force.

**1.3 Objectives of the study**

The general objective of this research is to investigate the impact of animated cartoons on children in Enugu between the ages of seven and eleven years.

The specific objectives are to:

1. Identify the animated cartoons programmes available on television to children in Nigeria.
2. Assess the viewing patterns of these animated cartoons in relation to time, duration, place, preference and days.
3. Understand the perception and views held by children in relation to how they rate their popular animated cartoons as “good” or “bad” from what they see and why.

**1.4 Research questions**

1 What are the animated cartoons programmes available on television to children in Nigeria.

2 What are the viewing patterns of these animated cartoons in relation to time, duration, place, preference and days.

3 What is the perception and views held by children in relation to how they rate their popular animated cartoons as “good” or “bad” from what they see and why.

# 1.5 Significance of the Study

The study has both theoretical and practical significance. Theoretically, it will contribute to knowledge of existing literature on animated cartoons.

Practically, the findings of the study will be relevant to education personnel that create excellence in education for early childhood centre and primary school teachers that are involved in the business of babysitting. It will also be of primary importance to families with children of school age and guardian of infants on the impacts of exposing them to TV cartoon programs.

**1.6 Scope and Limitations of the study.**

The scope of the study covers the impact of animated cartoons on children in Enugu between the ages of seven and eleven years.

**1.7 Limitations of the study.**

Financial resources required in obtaining data were on the high side, considering the amount required in photocopying and transportation to various places. Also, considering the combination of both my studies and the project, time was not adequate for a more elaborate study.

**1.8 Operational definition of terms.**

# Cartoon character: a fictional character depicted in an animated film or a comic strip.

**Animated Films**: are ones in which individual drawings, paintings, or illustrations are photographed frame by frame (stop-frame cinematography). Usually, each frame differs slightly from the one preceding it, giving the illusion of movement when frames are projected in rapid succession at 24 frames per second.

**A cartoonist**: (also comic strip creator) is a visual artist who specializes in drawing cartoons. This work is often created for entertainment, political commentary, or advertising.

**Broadcasting**:  is the simultaneous transmission of the same message to multiple recipients. In networking, broadcasting occurs when a transmitted data packet is received by all network devices.

A **vulnerable child**: is defined as being under the age of 18 years and currently at high risk of lacking adequate care and protection.

**Movie Theater:** This is a place where people go to watch films for entertainment.

**CHAPTER TWO**

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

In this chapter the researcher reviewed related studies on the topic; the influence of violent cartoon programs on children in Enugu metropolis. The chapter was organized into the following headings

* Review of concepts
* Review of related studies
* Theoretical framework
* Summary of literature review

**2.1. REVIEW OF CONCEPTS;**

The following concepts were reviewed

1. Cartoon network and its Impact on Behavior of School Going Children
2. Children as Television Audience
3. Effect of television on children
4. Cartoons
5. Children’s aggression and violence in media
6. Cartoon violence on Nigerian children

**2.1.1 Cartoon Network and its Impact on Behavior of School Going Children**

Cartoons and animated films were once the favorite program of viewers of the different age groups in the society. These cartoons and films were enjoyed but all most every person, from different walks of life on their television sets and theatres. In the beginning when the animated movies and cartoons started their journey, the program contents of both contained humor and entertainment for all ages and sophistication levels. Cartoons, however, now lacked their cross-generational appeal and converted into “kids’ stuff” (Kellogg, 1992). Cartoon is not a precise term now a day as it is applied to multifaceted graphic form. It is the most entertaining source for kids as they developed a strong affiliation and attachment with it (Kemnitz, 1973). Animated programs and cartoons are playing a vital role in enhancing the profit of companies manufacturing toys as cartoons are source of advertisement for corporate companies. It can be said that cartoon are generally half-hour commercials for profit oriented companies. The last decade has seen an astronomical change in the genre of animated programs broadcasted on television. We are in the midst of “toon-boom” (Kellogg, 1992).

Cable television network is now available to about 75 percent of the US houses. Nickelodeon and Cartoon network broadcasts 16 hours/day and 24 hours/day respectively, having a Lion’ s Share of TV viewership and about 80 percent of advertising impacts. Revenue generated by Cartoon Network in the year 2000 was $500 million (Westcott, 2002). Most of the classic animations on Cartoon Network are now no longer broadcasted on regular basis with the exception of Tom and Jerry and Loony Tunes due to their popularity in kids (Susan, 2000). The main stream press, however, did not highlight the harmful effects of Cartoons and animations on kids. Cartoon Network is now no longer safe for kids due to its adult contents. Before it was believed by both the parents and children that cartoons which are being presented on television is safe e.g. a cartoon character of Joe Camel. But it is obviously having adverse effects on children, if they watch cartoon character is smoking. We must assure the safe contents of cartoon programs and address the harmful effects of cartoon programs like Space Ghost and Harvey Birdman, Attorney at Law on kids.

Cartoon related injuries are now becoming a serious problem, which is now needed to be addressed in America. Due to strong affiliation with these supernatural characters, many of our children fall prey to some serious injuries (Saturnine, 2004). Under the guise of “having fun” how many more kids will get injured? It must be kept in minds that it is the result of balanced coverage of Animation World Network that it is willing to publish my case study on the harmful effects of cartoons on kids. The parents and guardians of kids may be disturbed by the results of this study, but hopefully everybody will respond positively on this call to ban all the harmful cartoons.

Clara and Marian (1980) studied the impact of TV cartoons on children free play behavior. Same children were observed both by researchers and the kindergarten teachers. Sixty-five children and their teachers (n=18) were studied. Every child was individually asked following questions. (1) Which programs do you like most on television? (2) Which cartoon programs do you like the most? (3) Name your favorite cartoon characters? (4) What are the reasons of your liking for these characters? After observing the free play activities (recess/outdoor play activities) of kids, their teachers were asked the following questions. What is your clear evidence from classroom that children have effects of cartoons on them? Do you know about children favorite programs? The results of the study have shown that cartoons were the most favorite program among the children on television. Children like those cartoons which are broadcasted on weekday afternoon. Teachers believed that cartoon viewing have a strong impact on “inclass” behavior of children. Children often demonstrate television-related behaviors in the classroom. Research on the violence shown in television programs and video games is clear cut evidence that violent contents will increase aggressive and violent behavior of youngsters in both short-term and long-term context (Anderson, 2003).

Now a day, in social communication research, the impact of cartoons has gained a new status. Today, animation is used to convey the messages to target audience, e.g. in marketing and learning (Ginmann, 2003). The results of the research have shown that there are different variables having affects such as liking and disliking of cartoon characters, based on their gender, accessories and costumes they use, physical attractiveness, age, intelligence, anti and pro-social behaviors and over goodness and badness (Klein and Shiffman, 2006). The influence of the media especially television in learning mechanism is considered to be very important. Television has a strong impact on all of its viewers including all age groups. Today, our mother tongue is greatly affected by the different linguistic expressions which are being presented on television e.g. “break bad” (After the break). Likewise, children also affected up to a large extent by the different linguistic terms presented on television in their favorite dramas and cartoons (Gokulsing, 2009). Kottak (1990) believes that television programs and all types of cartoons and animated movies are the main factors which are playing a key role in enculturalisation of American children. It should be understood now that which type of culture these different television contents are presenting, in order to bring some drastic changes in popular cultures.

**2.1.2 Children as Television Audience**

Television carries some effect to the extreme with the combinations of images, sound, immediacy, and bringing into the home (Postman 1985, p.78). Television images replace reality, manipulate and showmanship in the replacement of leadership (Postman 1985, p.97). People who are expose to television programs such as the news, entertainment shows, commercials are being socialized into a variety of expectation about reality. For example, a child who has seen violence in the news, films and cartoon shows believes that the best way to solve problem is by been aggressive or violent.

There are mainly two opposing ideas as to children who watch television. One of the ideas is that television is good; children learn positive things from it. On the other it has a bad influence on them.

**2.1.3. Effect of Television on Children**

According to Huesman and Eron (1986), most children television station it has being rated high of violent crime in it, which is not surprising that the scape goat has been the television. In all the mass media, television portrals high violence in it with greater potential for a long term effect on children.

Ling and Thomas (1986) made research children who were shown two videotapes of aggressive and non-aggressive play behaviour. Only the children who viewed the aggressive video exhibited an increase in the amount of aggressive play. Film, rock music, and even the Internet amplify and reinforce the damaging content television pours into our consciousness (Medved & Medved, 1998).

One of the important concepts of cultivation theory is the idea of “resonance.” This is the idea that certain issues or messages from television may resonate with audience members whose “real” environment includes similar issues and messages. According to Gerbner et al., (1980),

 When what people see on television is most congruent with everyday reality (or even perceived reality), the combination may result in a coherent and powerful “double dose” of the television messages and significantly boost cultivation. Thus, the congruence of the television world and real-life circumstances may “resonate” and lead to markedly amplified cultivation patterns (p. 15).

**Negative Effect of Television on Children**

According Neil Postman, the brain is to the mind as the technology is to a medium. A technology is merely a machine while a medium is the social and intellectual environment a machine has created (Postman, 1985). Television has no doubt of having effect on children but at times it is really difficult to distinguish the direct connection between media effects & children. According to Philips (1998), he said television are like watching rainfall on a pond and trying to figure out which drop causes which ripple. But much assurance is that the ripple is there because of television.

**Positive Effect of Television on Children**

There are many positive effects of mass media in a child’s life. According to (Rice, 1983), television viewing and the language learning has a correlation with the child growth. Television dialogue should as a source of new words for preschoolers. Television stimulates imagination as long as the child does not depend on it for imaginative activity (Singer & Singer, 1986) and it can be used to increase creativity and tolerance (Rosenkoetter, Houston & Wright, 1990). These shows that media has both positive as well as negative impact on children development.

In television different event are viewed such as drama, music video, news. The quantity of time people uses watching television is surprising. On average, persons in the developed world watch about 21 hours per week, which translates into nine years in front of the tube in a regular lifetime (Shrum, Burroughs & Rindfleisch, 2003).

Strong evidence from experiments, surveys and longitudinal studies suggested that viewing violent television program contribute a long-term aggression and violence behaviour on children (Barlow.B. & Lindsay, 2003). To younger children it might not be high cause they can’t display it yet but an older children are primed to act aggressively after viewing violent cartoon cause the will want to practice what they have seen (Bandura.A & Ross, 1961). As Gerbner (1976) recognized the 3 Bs on television, the blends which blends with reality, and it makes people more aggressive and they become more nervous to attack.

In violent cartoon shows it is seen has humorous and the consequences are seldom shown (Potter, 1998). To the male children the cartoon make them see themselves has hero’s at the detriment of their life, naturally male are more punitive while female children are scared of the world around them but it teaches them how to gossip, fashion (Coccaro. E., 1992). Aggression is an impulsive act which children don’t know about (Coccaro & Kavoussi, 1997; New et al., 2002).

**2.1.4 Cartoons**

Cartoon serves as a means of entertainment and at the same time it misinforms the children in real life. Clearly cartoon shows are lucrative market for advertisers. From observation, the most channels for kids like The Disney Channel, Nickelodeon, and The Cartoon Network create programming to attract children (Becker, 2004), with programs like Ben 10, Avengers, Hannah Montana, Zooey 101, and the Suite life of Zack and Cody. Disney ex-President, Rich Ross, explained why Disney produces shows for children-aged kids, but the shows feature older teen-aged kids in order to create aspirations for the viewers (Romano, 2004). Gary Marsh, the present Disney Channel Worldwide president of entertainment explains that Disney XD was revamped to improve tween boy viewership (Umstead, 2009).

Children purchasing power it is obvious why programming, which includes advertising for products, is created with this group of children in mind. Many cartoon programs has shown violence and aggression in a way that the perpetrators are attractive and heroic characters rather as a villain, also most of the bad act does not have consequences, no pain or suffering by the victims or survivors and to the children, that is how they perceive the world they are into. Albert Bandura talked of observational learning called modelling (Bandura, et al., 1961).

Models can be physical and involve real people, symbolic and involve verbal, audio, or visual representations, or a combination of these. Modelling is a very powerful medium for transferring attitudes, values, behavioural and thought patterns. According to modelling theory, children can remember what they have heard and seen, and then they can imitate that behaviour (Bandura, 1977).

Albert Bandura believed that aggression is learned through a process called behaviour modelling. He believed that children do not actually inherit violent tendencies, but they modelled them after three principles (Bandura, 1976: p.204). Albert Bandura argued that individuals, especially children learn aggressive behaviour from observing others, either personally or through the media and environment.

According to Bandura, people believe that aggression will produce reinforcements. The reaction of the reinforcements can formulate into reduction of tension, gaining financial rewards, or gaining the praise of others, or building self-esteem. When children are exposed to media violence that portrays the characters as heroes and also attractive, they can not only be negatively affected, but also they can reproduce the violent behaviours seen on television (Siegel, 1992: p.171).

**2.1.5 Children Aggression and Violence in Media**

Countless of studies have been carried out on children aggressiveness and violence in media. In psychology, aggression is a well-defined scientific concept. Human aggression researchers define aggression as:

(a) A behaviour that is intended to harm another individual (Anderson, 1997)

(b) The behaviour is expected by the perpetrator to have some chance of actually harming that individual (Berkowitz, 1990)

(c) The perpetrator believes that the target individual is motivated to avoid the harm (Anderson & Bushman, 2002b; Baron & Richardson, 1994; Berkowitz, 1993; Geen, 2001).

Media violence refers to media depictions of aggressive and violent behaviour directed at characters in the media story. Those characters can be human or nonhuman, cartoonish or visually realistic. Fictional, unrealistic, or animated violence is still considered violence if it meets the above definitions (Gentile, Saleem, & Anderson, 2007).

According to Mwema (2011), the early years are a crucial time for brain development; Children need time for activities that are critical for healthy mental and physical development. For some children under some conditions some television is harmful. For other children under other conditions it may be beneficial. For most children under most conditions most TV is probably neither particularly harmful nor particularly beneficial (Schramm, Lyle & Parker, 1961).

Unfortunately cartoon shows and prime-time programming glorify the use of guns and violence as acceptable, justifiable solutions to complex problems (Dietz & Strasburger, 1991). Media can contribute to long-term fear through cultivation. According to cultivation theory, people who watch a great deal of television will come to perceive the real world as being consistent with what they see on the screen (Gerbner, 1976).

Children inculcate aggressive behaviours after viewing a violent cartoon. Although the violent act in the cartoon may be short lived, but it effect on a child is a long term thing (Huesman L.R., 1986). To some child it is an immediate effect like showing it on the playground or at the day-care centre the next day. Other child it is attached to their thoughts and feeling before they implement what was learnt in childhood age. A longer-term study shows even more disturbing information (Wilson, B.J.et al., 1987).

Over the last decade, the role of mass media, in particular television, in daily life has increased (Hagenah & Meulemann, 2006). Violence call for much awareness in media effect like such as: movies, video-games, musical video, cartoon. There are believed that much violence and aggression which are harmful to children and society are portrayed in the media today (Anderson, 2003). There have been extensive debates among scholars on the impact of television programs on society (Zajonc, 1968, Tan et al., 2001, Mastro & Tropp, 2004). Some of these debates seem to question the negative impact of television viewing habits on society, in terms of influencing the mind-set, attitudes, behaviour and over all lifestyle of the viewers, especially among teenagers and younger viewers. In this case, according to (Osman & Nizam, 2010) the content of television programs is seen to be capable of shaping the overall mind set and behaviour of the viewers.

**2.1.6 Cartoon Violence on Nigerian Children**

According to CNN, August 26, 2013 -- Updated 1201 GMT (2001 HKT), an 8-yearold Louisiana boy intentionally shot and killed his elderly caregiver after playing a violent video game, authorities say. Marie Smothers was pronounced dead at the scene with a gunshot wound in the head in a mobile home park in Slaughter, Louisiana, and the East Feliciana Parish Sheriff's Department said in a prepared statement. Slaughter is about 20 miles north of Baton Rouge. Authorities identified the woman as the boy's "caregiver," without stating whether she is a relative. But CNN affiliate WBRZ reported that the woman was the boy's grandmother. As at the period the research was conducted, no attempt has been made by any scholar to explore the influence of violence in cartoons on Nigeria children.

**2.2 EMPERICAL REVIEW;**

**The study reviewed the following related studies.**

Shanthipriya & Prabha (2017) studied parent’s perception towards children viewing cartoon channels and observed that television has become a member of every Indian family. Most of the children are eagerly watching cartoon programs on television. This is a subject of research that how television educates the children about various aspect of life and what are the impacts of cartoon programs on children. This study is used to know about children’s interest on type of cartoon and favourite channels and analyzing the parental perception towards children viewing cartoon. This research indicates the positive and negative attitude of rural children towards various aspects of cartoon programs.

Syed & Sarfraz (2016) studied the *Impacts of Cartoons Viewing on the School Going Kids and observed that* Cartoons are not the reflection of real life and in contrast it is an imaginary life which can affect the school going kids in many dimensions. This study deals with the impacts of cartoons on the school going kids. In this study researcher conducted survey and try to explore the intensity between different impacts like psychological impact, educational impact etc. on kids which will advance the understanding about the impacts of the cartoons on the school going children. The findings reveal that there are the psychological impacts of the cartoons on the children.

Khaled & Tarek (2015) Studied the Cartoons’ Effect in Changing Children Mental Response and Behavior and observed that Factors that sculpture children’s way of thinking are found mostly in the environment where they grow up. These include daily events, memorable experiences and peak feelings. Cartoons are one of the daily habits for our children; studies have proven that an average child with a facility of a TV and a satellite connection at his home watches approximately 18,000 hours of television from kindergarten to high school graduation. It is one of the strong factors that does affect an individual’s childhood, and takes considerable time from the young toddler schedule, is a double edged weapon; it could ruin an individual’s childhood through excessive exposure to sexual & violent content, or could aid in raising a balanced child with a proper mental state and also could act as a home school, to teach a kid the life experience that is not gained from parents or from school, due to facilities that is lacked in the normal academic way or in parents orders.

Oyero & Oyesomi (2014) studied the Perceived Influence of Television Cartoons on Nigerian Children’s Social Behaviour and observed that the forces that shape children’s impressionable minds are found mostly in the environment where they grow up. Such things include the things they are exposed to on a daily basis. It has been said that cartoons have influence on children’s behaviour but the nature of the influence and whether the parents, as well as children, are aware of this development have not been determined in Nigerian context. Thus, this study sought to examine the influence of cartoons on Nigerian children’s social behaviour from the perspective of the parents and the children. Survey design was adopted. Data were collected from 100 pupils and 50 parents through questionnaire, interviews and focus group discussion. Percentages and chi Square were used for data analysis. The findings show that both children and parents share similar understanding on the influence of cartoons on children as being positive. While cartoons are said to help children’s spoken English, learning inventions and good morals, as well as keep children busy among other benefits, some parents expressed that some influence of cartoons could be negative and therefore some regulations required in mitigating those negative aspects of cartoons. It is recommended that parents should make a conscious effort to monitor the cartoons that their children watching to ensure that it is appropriate to their age.

Hassan and Daniyal (2013) studied the Cartoon Network and its Impact on Behavior of School Going Children. It was observed that Cartoon network is one of the most favorite cartoon channels for children. As cartoon network is 24 hours channel, so children spend most of their leisure time in front of it. It not only attracts the children through its contents but also inculcates some positive and negative habits in them. One of the main factors which influence the children while watching cartoons is violence. Violence is a vital part of most of the cartoon programs. Children are induced and attracted by violent content by broadcasters. The study design is survey research and nonparametric statistics is used for data analysis. This study explores the impact of violence presented in cartoons on children behavior. They not only imitate their favorite cartoon characters but even force their parents to buy the same costumes or accessories as displayed by different cartoon characters. This study also depicts this fact that the behavior of the children in class is influenced by watching different cartoon programs.

Sibel (2012) studied the influence of violent TV cartoons watched by school children in turkey. The study aimed to demonstrate the gender-specific impact of violence-oriented television cartoons on children, and to identify the behaviors demonstrating this influence. The research was conducted on a total of 300 students chosen by a simple, random method applying a stratified weight in each school. A 20-question instrument was used for data collection, using face-to-face interviews with the students which occurred during visits to primary schools. A significant gender difference was noted between students’ favourite cartoon shows, the type of influence those shows exerted, and the ways in which students imitated the behaviors of the cartoon characters (p<0.05). It was noted that male children were influenced by violence-oriented cartoons more than female children, and that they imitated cartoon characters more.

Nair and Thomas (2012) in their study: “A Thematic study on the cause and effects of Television Violence on Children” analyzed whether the exposure to television violence leads to real-life violent behavior among children. They spent time watching cartoons, horror movies and TV shows. Parents too don’t have any control on their off-springs. In order to do their household work and to control their children, they switch on the TV and allow their children to watch. As time passes by, they become addicted to it and start recognizing the characters. They feel that whatever is portrayed on TV is real and they start imitating those characters. Some theorists feel that watching violent movies alone will not make them violent, but stopping them from watching TV can also make them violent out of frustration. Nevertheless, it is clear that there is a considerable amount of violence on television and that this violence on the small screen may translate into changes in attitudes, values, or behavior on the part of both younger and older viewers.

Gökçearslana (2010) in their paper: “The effect of cartoon movies on children's gender development” analyzed the cartoons in which complicated gender role models are presented critically and propose some solutions to this problem. Many TV programs reflecting the daily experiences of people includes gender discrimination which is a social problem. Gender discrimination is not a problem which is solely seen in children’s programs. It is seen that females are being represented weaker compared to males in terms of many aspects in TV programs viewed by adults. In this study, cartoons among the TV programs for children had been handled. Under their innocent appearance, cartoons, including many wrong messages, had been observed as transferring gender stereotypes. Especially in cartoons before 1980, female characters had been shown at lower status in terms of profession than males. Male characters were more in number and used to appear more frequently on screen. Males were prioritized. Children at tender ages are exposed to unequal representations of gender. Although there is little improvement in representation of female characters, it cannot be claimed that this problem is completely solved. Gender discrimination in cartoons is ominous since it is inevitable for children, who are not aware of the difference between reality and fiction, to internalize stereotypes related to gender roles in cartoons. Many negative images reflected on screen are in fact inputs from the real life. Female characters’ representation in active positions in work life can provide reduction of misrepresentations. Producers’ careful approach to this subject can also help children make right choices in the future.

Kirsh (2006) in his manuscript: "Cartoon violence and aggression in youth” reviewed the literature concerning the effects of animated violence on aggressive behavior in youth. It began with an overview of the research on children's and adolescents' perceptions of violence in cartoons. Next, the effects of cartoon violence on aggressive behavior across development are reviewed. In each section, the importance of the presence (or absence) of comedic elements in animated violence is addressed. Moreover, throughout the review, the potential influence of development is considered. Finally, a potential mechanism for reducing the negative influence of cartoon violence on youth is considered.

Kidenda (2006) investigated the impact of animated cartoons on children, she obsereved that children are excellent imitators but poor evaluators. The study suggests that animated cartoons have discernible impacts on children in that they influence the children to construct their worldview and create perceptions that are alien to them. The Non African ideals and values are increasingly defining the perception and attitudes towards gender roles, sexuality, body images and role modelling of children who consume animated cartoons. This is because these children arc in that stage where images and impressions from diverse environments play a big part in how they construct their world.

**2.3 Theoretical framework;**

A theory is a business of science which enables us to make predictions about outcome of events. For the purpose of this study, this research studied the following theories of media effect on society as integral to looking at the impact of animated cartoons on children;

i Cultivation theory

ii Reception Analysis theory

iii Critical theory

iiii Social learning theory

**Cultivation Theory**

The cultivation theory was an approach developed by Professor George Gerbner, of the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania to study how "heavy exposure to cultural una8ery will shape a viewer's concept of reality" (Pierce). Cultivation theorists argue that television has long- term effects that arc small, gradual, indirect but cumulative and significant Thus television is responsible for shaping\* or ‘cultivating’ viewer’s conceptions of social reality. Gcrbncr argues that the mass media cultivate attitudes and values that are already present in a culture: the media maintain and propagate these values amongst members of a culture, thus binding it together. Gerbner views this television world as "not a window on, or reflection of the world, but a world in itself' McQuil (2000).

The theory makes a distinction between two groups of television viewers: the heavy viewers and the light viewers with the heavy viewers’ as its main focus. It says that people who watch a lot of television are likely to be more influenced by the ways in which television programs frame the world than are individuals who watch less, especially regarding topics of which the viewer has little first-hand experience. This created version of the world entices heavy viewers to make assumptions about violence, people, places, and other fictionalized events that do not hold true to real life events. Research conducted by Gerbner (et al) contends that Cultivation research looks at the mass media as a socializing agent and investigates whether television viewers come to believe the television version of reality the more they watch it because instead of religion or education, "television is now the source of the most broadly shared images and messages in history” Gerbner & Signoriclli, (1997)

Cultivation analysis usually involves the correlation of data from content analysis (identifying prevailing images on television) with survey data from audience research (to assess any influence of such images on the attitudes of viewers). Audience research by cultivation theorists involves asking large-scale public opinion poll organizations to include in their national surveys questions regarding such issues as the amount of violence in everyday life. Answers are interpreted as reflecting either the world of television or that of everyday life. The answers are then related to the amount of television watched, other media habits and demographic data such as sex, age, income and education.

In a survey of about 450 school children in New Jersey, USA, 73 percent of heavy viewers gave the TV answer to a question asking them to estimate the number of people involved in violence iq a typical week compared to 62 percent of light viewers. The same survey showed that children who were heavy viewers were more fearful about walking alone in a city at night. They also overestimated the number of people who commit serious crimes. This effect is called ‘mean world syndrome’. One controlled experiment addressed the issue of cause and effect, manipulating the viewing of American college students to create heavy- and light-viewing groups. After 6 weeks of controlled viewing, heavy viewers of action-adventure programs were indeed found to be more fearful of life in the everyday world than were light viewers Nancy (2004). With imported animated cartoon shows being the most accessible and easy to understand form of entertainment available to the Nigerian children on television providing a means by which they are socializing into the society, particular attention need to be invested in the content of material in play. Television seeks to show and reinforce commonalities among people, so those who regularly watch television tend to see the world in the way television portrays it. Compared to actual demographics, women, minorities and lower classes of people are usually under-represented on television shows and it can be deduced in animated cartoons for children. The percent of people who work in law enforcement and violent crime —bad guys and good guys, are over-represented. People who arc heavy watchers of television assimilate this information and believe that the world is a dangerous, scary place where others can't be trusted; the "mean world syndrome." Further, heavy watchers of television blur distinctions between social groups such as the poor and the rich, urban and rural populations, and different racial groups.

This therefore begs the question; should Nigerian parents, educators and television programming personnel assume that the views and portrayals of the content of these imported animated cartoons be taken for granted to offer the views that are representative of the Nigerian demographics, realities and situations? And as such with the heroes and villains, settings and cultural traits under representation being predominantly Euro-American, what representation of the world is being portrayed to the Nigerian child?

**Reception Analysis Theory**

Reception analysis embodies how consumers interpret, read, decode, produce, perceive and use media materials'?’ . It illuminates how meanings circulate within social contexts while at the same time the theory investigates the process of interaction between unmediated messages and codes such as animated cartoons and their audience in this study; children. The main premise of this analysis is that for one to give a valid account of the reception, uses and impact, one must not only consider interpretation of the content, but also the impact on the audience. The leading originator of this work within the field of cultural studies was Stuart Hall at the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham, England in the e4fly 1970’s. Stuart was interested to investigate the process of media consumption within the model of “coding/decoding” in communications.

This research on the impact of animated cartoons considered the theory of reception analysis on the basis that the meanings of messages in the animated cartoons shown on television to children in Nairobi is coded with American and European sensibilities and wants, and produced specifically for those the values of those societies and their children audiences. When these meanings are transferred unmediated to audiences outside these cultures to Nairobi for example, it follows that this new audience will read, decode and extract new meaning from these materials with implications which are unpredictable to the sensibilities and wants of the society. What children in Nairobi will decode from a text whose authors share different cultural environments and to what application they will put the information is not a matter to be taken for granted.

**Critical Theory: Mass Media in a Free Enterprise Society**

The effects of media in a free enterprise society have been a preoccupation to critical theorists. According to the Frankfurt School, leisure as a product of culture has been industrialized and become standardized and dominated by the profit motive as in other industries. The Frankfurt School also generated one of the first models of a critical cultural study that analyzes the processes of cultural production and political economy, the politics of cultural texts, and audience reception and use of cultural artefacts. The critical theorists analyzed all mass-mediated cultural artefacts within the context of industrial production, in which the commodities of the culture industries exhibited the same features as other products of mass production: commodification, standardization, and massification. The culture industries had the specific function, however, of providing ideological legitimization of the existing capitalist societies and of integrating individuals into its way of life.

The process of media consolidation and globalization has led media corporations to-create wants in individuals which corporations have thrust upon them, and continue to thrust upon them, through both the advertising in the media (with its continual exhortation to consume) and through the individualist consumption culture it generates. In a mass society, leisure is constantly used to induce the appropriate values and motives in the public, therefore it has ceased to be the opposite of work and become a preparation for it. Critical theory believes that modern media train the young for consumption. In their theories of the culture, industries and critiques of mass culture, the Frankfurt School was among the first social theorists to see its importance in the reproduction of contemporary societies. In their view, mass culture and communications stand in the centre of leisure activity, are important agents of socialization, mediators of political reality, and should thus be seen as major institutions of contemporary societies with a variety of economic, political, cultural and social effects.

Although a sizeable portion of what the mass media offers, particularly in news, commentaries, documentaries, and other informational programs deal with highly controversial subjects, the major portion of mass media offerings are designed to serve an entertainment function. These programs tend to avoid controversial issues and reflect beliefs and values sanctified by mass audience. Television networks, whose investment, follow this course and production costs are high. Viewed in this light, animated cartoons for children are not only an entertainment medium but also high money making medium. These corporations not only produce animated cartoons but action figures and associated merchandize for sale in retail outlets patterned on the animated cartoons. Mickey Mouse produces an estimated $5 billion in merchandise sales for Disney Corporation every year The New York Times; 11 June82.

Warner Brothers hopes to “reinvigorate and re-imagine” Bugs Bunny and Scooby-Doo through a new virtual world on the Internet, where people will be able to dress up the characters pretty much any way they want. American Greetings is dusting off another of its lines, the Care Bears, which will return with a fresh look (less belly fat, longer eyelashes). These questions in the marriage of entertainment for children and commercial merchandizing therefore pose challenges that must be taken into account when considering the implications of television animated cartoons on children.

**Social learning theory**

As children grow and develop, they take in information and acquire knowledge at a rapid pace. As they develop their cognitive abilities, they assimilate new information and accommodate it to what they already know. The child’s mind is still developing and the idea of how the wood works comes from experiences, attitudes and behaviors that are in their environment. It is therefore possible to assume that in cases where television programs that reinforce gender stereotypes are part of this environment, children who watch many hours of television will develop the same stereotyped beliefs.

Social learning theory is much more than just observing behavior and modeling our own after it. One must be motivated to attend to modeled behavior, store information about it in memory (e.g. rehearsing it) and to later retrieve it when opportunity arises to put it to use. This helps to understand why children are susceptible to modeling changes as they mature and grow older by being more discriminate observers of their environment,and are better placed to extract general rules of behavior from specific examples that they have observed. Berger (1995) says that the study of human development has greatly benefited from this theory in the sense that it has led researchers to see that many behaviors that may seem to be inborn or a result of deeply rooted emotional problems may actually be as a result of the immediate environment. Social learning theory explains human behavior in terms of continuous reciprocal interaction between cognitive, behavioral, and environmental influences.

According to the social learning theory, knowledge is best constructed when learners collaborate together. Students support one another and encourage new ways to form, construct and reflect on new maternal. The social learning theory of Bandura emphasizes the importance of observing and modeling the behaviors, attitudes, and emotional reactions of others. Bandura states "Learning would be exceedingly laborious, not to mention hazardous, if people had to rely solely on the effects of their own actions to inform them what to do. A key aspect of social learning theory is that of modeling whereby we observe others and then model our behavior after them. The effects of modeling can be particularly apparent when children are exposed to televised animated cartoons without proper guidance. This may make the child develop totally flew behavior from speech, dressing style to table etiquette and moral stances.

**2.4 Summary of literature**

This chapter was able to review some concepts that are related to this study. It went further by explaining and exposing the meaning of cartoons as were defined by renowned scholars. It also went ahead in explaining the concept of influence, cartoon network and its impact on behavior of school children, children as television audience, the negative and positive effect of television on children,

Children’s aggression and violence in media and effects of cartoon violence on Nigerian children. The chapter in its literature review reviewed a key study which was similar to the present study with the title “parent’s perception towards children viewing cartoon channels”. The study also used to the social learning theory to explain the research that is being carried out.

 **CHAPTER THREE**

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This chapter focuses on research design, population of the study, scope of the study, sources of data collection, instrument for data collection, method of data collection, method of data analysis

**3.1 Research Design:**

A research design is a plan or blueprint which specifies how data relating to a given problem should be collected and analyzed (Nworgu, 2006). The research design adopted for this study is the cross sectional survey design. A cross sectional survey design allows for the use of a section of the study area to generate information that will be representative of the total population.

**3.2 Area of the study**

Enugu East is a [Local Government Area](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Local_Government_Areas_of_Nigeria) of [Enugu State](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Enugu_State), [Nigeria](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nigeria). Its headquarters are in the town of Nkwo [Nike](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nike_Community). It has an area of 383 km² and a [postal code](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Postal_code) of the area is 400.

**3.3 Population of the Study**

The study was carried out in Enugu east, it  is the capital of Enugu State in Nigeria. It is located in southeastern Nigeria. The city had a population of 279,089 according to the 2006 Nigerian census.

**3.4 Sample size**

The entire population of children aged 7-11 years would be far too many to include in the study, therefore there was a need to draw an appropriate population to be sampled. This research used the Non probability design

**3.5 Sampling techniques**

This method purposely targeted a group of children in Enugu believed to be reliable for the study. The research also employed judgmental Sampling by selecting children aged 7 tol 11 years old from six primary schools in Enugu because children attend these schools from middle class families, enabling them access to both terrestrial as well as satellite television programming. They are exposed to television constantly at home, they watch cartoons and understand the English language.

**3.6 Instrument for Data Collection**

The instruments for data collection are structured questionnaire and in-depth interview guide. The questionnaire consists of two sections, namely: Section A and B. Section A was toseek information on the personal data of the respondents while section B addressed the substantive issues of the research. Interviews were alsoconducted to both pensioners and underwriters.

**3.7 Scope of the Study**

The study is limited to investigating the impact of animated cartoons on children in Enugu between the ages of seven and eleven years.

**3.8 Method of Data collection:**

The questionnaire was administered face to face to the respondents by the researcher. To ensure validity and reliability of responses, the researcher administered and collected the questionnaires from the respondents immediately.

**3.9 Method of Data Analysis**

The research questions as well as the hypotheses were analyzed using statistical package for social science (SPSS).

**CHAPTER FOUR**

**DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

**4.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents and analyses the findings of the study carried out to investigate the impact of animated cartoons on children. The study population was made up of selected urban children in the 7-11 age brackets within Enugu. A total of 450 self-administered questionnaires were distributed to respondents. All the 450 questionnaires administered were returned. Twenty-four (24) of these were either incorrectly answered or had over 25% missing data. They were thus discarded and not used for analysis because some questions were related to others and there was need for consistency in responding to the questions. A total of 426 questionnaires, 94.7% of the total questionnaires, were analyzed. This was an excellent return rate going by Babbie’s (1990) assertion that a 50% response rate or more is adequate for data analysis. The data from the questionnaires were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) .

**4.2 Demographic Characteristics**

Gender of Respondents

Table 4.1 below shows that the respondents were 52.6% male and 47.2% female, an indicator of almost equal distribution in terms of gender. The research had proposed an equal distribution in terms of gender, so as to give both sexes an equal chance of being selected. It was also done to make cross-tabulations with regard to gender and cartoon preference possible, since it was assumed that different sexes might exhibit different tastes and preferences in animated cartoon programs.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Male | 224 | 52.6 | 52.6 | 52.6 |
| Female | 201 | 47.2 | 47.2 | 99.8 |
| Missing Data | 1 |  |  |  |
| .2 | .2 | 100.0 |
| Total | 426 | 100.0 | 100.0 |  |
|  |

Age of Respondents

It was the aim of the research to study exclusively children in the 6-12 age brackets. However, the pre-test analysis showed that the research could not get the definite ages from the classes. Therefore, it was found useful to decrease the age categories so as to include those within the range of 7 years gncj 1 1 years. This did not alter the findings because the objective of the research was to study children in the concrete operational stage of development, which encompasses the children within the 7-11 age brackets. It should also be noted that these ages were not equally distributed among the categories given.

The age distribution as indicated in Figure 4.1 shows that the highest age representation in percentage terms was 11 years old with 31.7%. The rest of the population was distributed as follows; Ten year olds constituted 19.5%, eight and nine year olds constituted 18.5% each and seven year olds constituted 11.7%. These results show that 69.7% of the composition of the study was between the ages 9 to 11. This explains why most of the answers given were logical since children in this age group are able to be reasonably objective and logical in evaluating events such as TV watching.

Figure 4.1: *Age of Respondents*

**Family and Guardian of Respondents**

Since most television viewing takes place at home, the researcher wanted to find out with whom the respondents stay because this was the person charged with guiding the respondent on what they are supposed to watch.

According to Juma (2002), parents are meant to guide their children in television viewing and recommend to the children what kind of programs they should watch. However this assumption of the researcher just remains an assumption because the findings tell a different story. Almost all, 96.9% of the respondents lived with their parents who were expected to guide them on what to watch and what not to watch- The other 2.8% also stayed with someone old enough, such as brother/ sister, aunt/ uncle, grandparents, or a Good Samaritan. Although a very large percentage stays with their parents, it is evident that when it comes to cartoons, parents neither watch nor discuss them with their children.

**Whether or not Children like Watching Animated Cartoons**

Almost all the children who responded to this question (95.3%) said they liked watching animated cartoons. However, one of the criteria that were used in selecting the sample of study was to pick out the children who watch animated cartoons on television. But it should be noted that not all children who watch animated cartoons like cartoons and they may be watching because of peer pressure or lack of any other activity to engage in. Hence the need to establish whether they actually like watching cartoons.

Figure 4.2: *Whether or not the Children Like Animated Watching Cartoons*

**Reasons Why Children Like Watching Animated Cartoons**

One of the objectives of this study was to explore the gratifications that children seek from watching animated cartoons on television. The study found several reasons from the children under study why they watch cartoons. The reasons given were; cartoons are funny 45.3%, cartoons are enjoyable (12.4%), cartoons are good (10.8%) and cartoons are interesting (9.4%). All these categories fall under entertainment. Other reasons given were; to pass time (7.5%), to relax (6.1%) and to seek knowledge and information (5.4%). It can therefore be deduced that most children watch cartoons mainly for entertainment purposes. In discussing the uses and gratification theory, there are three key orientations that audiences take towards the broadcast media; entertainment, the diversion orientation and to seek knowledge and information

**Where do Children Watch Cartoons**

The findings in figure 4.3 below answer objective number 1:3:3 of the study. This had sought to find out where children watch animated cartoons on television. Ninety six point 2 percent of the respondents watched cartoons at home. Only 3.5% said they did not.

Figure 4.3: *Where Respondents Watch Cartoons*

An overwhelming the majority of the respondents, 93.4% said that the home is the place where they watch cartoons the most. It can be deduced that the respondents like watching animated cartoons at home because they spend many hours at home especially during weekends and during school vacation. The remainder of the respondents said that they watch most cartoons at the neighbour’s house, or at a friend’s house (Figure 4.3).

On whether they watched cartoons at school, 95.1 % confirmed that this was not the norm while 19.0% of the total respondents said that they had at some point. This finding depicts that cartoon watching is not considered a learning activity and is therefore not incorporated into the learning curriculum in Nigeria. This shows that watching cartoons can be regarded as a peer activity and that some of the respondents could be watching cartoons due to peer pressure.

**Whether or not the Respondents Watch Cartoons at Home**

Ninety six percent of the children who responded to the question said they watch cartoons at home whilc4°/o said they did not.

Figure 4.4: *Whether or no! the Respondents Watch Cartoons at Home*

**When Children Watch Animated Cartoons**

Questions were asked to find out from the respondents when they watch cartoons. It was seen that despite the children’s busy schedules, they would still find time to watch cartoons on weekdays. A total of 338 children (79%) said that they watched cartoons during weekdays. Seventy-five (18%) did not, while 12 indicated that they rarely watched cartoons during the week.

Figure 4.5 Whether Respondents Watch Animated Cartoons during the Weekdays

During the school term, most cartoon programs are scheduled late afternoon from 4 pm when most children are in school, therefore only the children who get back home early or attend school for half-day are likely to watch cartoons during the week. Half of the respondents watch between 2-5 cartoons during the week. 14.3% watch between 6-10 cartoons and 20.9% watch more than ten cartoons during the weekday. As the number of children who watch cartoons during the weekend increases, so does the number of cartoons they watch with most respondents admitting that watching cartoons constitutes a major activity of their weekend. Ninety six point five percent said that they watched cartoons during the weekend and only 3% said that they did not watch cartoons during the weekend (Figure 4.6).

Figure 4.6: *Whether respondents watch cartoons during weekends*

Watching television is a key pastime activity for children during the weekends especially in the morning since most outdoor activities do not pick up until later in the day. The number of cartoons watched during the weekends is also high compared to the number of cartoons watched during the weekdays. The study established that close to 47% of the total respondents to this question watched more than 10 cartoons during the weekend, a clear indication that they have more time to watch cartoons during this period. Since most children arc at home during the school holidays, the researcher wanted to establish the effect this had on time spent watching cartoons. This question was open-ended and it elicited responses such as “of course”, “definitely” or “obviously” indicating that children watch cartoons during school holidays. Of the 425 respondents who attempted this question, 93.9% said they watched cartoons during the holidays. Just 22% of the total respondents said that this was not the case.

Figure 4.7: *Whether Respondents Watch Cartoons During Holidays*

On the specific times when the respondents watch cartoons during the holidays, 43.7% watch during the morning hours, from 8:00 am to 11:00 am. 15% watch cartoons in the afternoon between 1:30pm to 3:30pm while 10.3% watch cartoons in the evening from 4:00pm to 6:00pm. Eighteen-point 1 percent watch cartoons all day and this can be attributed to the availability of satellite television providers such as DSTV which has made Cartoon Network and Boomerang channels available 24 hours a day. It is also worth noting that although none of the children acknowledge the personal identification orientation in responding to this question, this is one of the indirect reasons as to why they watch cartoons because 86.4% as shown below agree that they actually discuss cartoons with their friends.

Almost all, 96.9% of the respondents lived with their parents who were expected to guide them on what to watch and what not to watch. The other 2.8% also lived with a guardian. The results indicate that adults neither watch nor discuss cartoons with children.

**Parental Involvement with Cartoons Children Watch**

Only 39.7% of the 426 children said that they discuss cartoons with their parents. The remaining 55 6% do not discuss cartoons with their parents. Three point five percent of the children said that they dooccasionally discuss cartoons with their parents. Despite the fact that the question was asking for a “Yes or “No” kind of answer, some of the children went ahead and gave elaborate responses as to why they do not discuss cartoons with their parents. They substantiated their “No” with comments such as *“cartoons are for kids.* ” *“my Parents areto watch cartoons with me, " o f course*” and *‘Never.’’*

Furthermore, it must be noted that the children in the focus group discussions were perplexed that an adult was interested in watching cartoons with them. Some of the children wished that they could watch cartoons together with their parents. These responses are an important indicator of how parents and even children themselves perceive cartoons. To the parents, it is assumed that cartoons are “innocent” and that they are “good for children.” Children were asked whether cartoons contained anything bad, and they were able to state what they thought were good. To others, even some of the things considered bad by adults such as violence were deemed okay. 86.4% of the respondents discuss animated cartoons with their friends

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | Frequency  | Percentage  | Valid Percent  | Cumulative President |
| Valid  | Yes  | 368 | 86.4 | 86.4 | 86.4 |
|  | No  | 49 | 11.5 | 11.5 | 97.9 |
|  | Sometimes  | 4 | 0.9 | 0.9 | 98.8 |
|  | Missing Data | 5 | 1.2 | 1.2 | 100.0 |
|  | Total  | 426 | 100.0 | 100.0 |  |

Tabic 4.2: *Whether Respondents Discuss Cartoons with their Friends*

**CHAPTER FIVE**

**SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This chapter is a summary of findings; it attempts to link the main research question, the theoretical framework, literature review and results.

**5.1 Summary**

1. The study confirmed that animated cartoons do not reflect the realities of the environment that children in Enugu grow up in.
2. The cartoons are conceived, developed and produced with Euro-American views. Those who import the cartoons and the parents who allow their children to watch the cartoons do not always take the trouble to find out whether or not the contents are relevant to Nigerian audience.
3. Up to this point in time, no institution or individual produces animated cartoons that may be socially and culturally relevant to children in Enugu.

The impact of these [Euro-American] attitudes, perceptions and constructions on children in Nigeria who watch these animated cartoon productions is evident from the way they relate to Ben 10 and Kim Possible. These relations maybe imperceptible to the casual observer but data showed that the two cartoon characters are idols, image ideals and role models to children who watch animated cartoons in Enugu yet both these characters are not representative of the children they interact with everyday. This is because Ben 10 and Kim Possible are ideal Euro- American white and might give the children the impression that black children cannot be heroes since they are not portrayed in these animated cartoons.

Children in this study like Ben 10 and Kim because they represent power, control and are heroic in outlook. This researcher feels that these constructions are a possible reason why Nigeria children are prone to adoring white characters. If these two heroes were black and representative of children their age and in their environment, it could have as implication in how they see themselves. The data showed that children in the study spend a lot of time watching these programmes therefore it is prudent to ask what perceptions and attitudes are being reinforced, and the implication of this on how they construct their wordier and self-worth

**5.2 Conclusions**

The theories of middle childhood development stage namely; cognitive theory, social learning theory, social cognitive theory, operant conditioning theory and moral development theory have shown that during this stage the child’s mind is still developing and the idea of how the world works come from experiences, attitudes and behaviours that are in their environment. Television makes up part of this environment. Animated cartoon programmes on television transmit experiences, attitudes and behaviours that children model or pattern their behaviour after. The data research weighed the selection of animated cartoons available to children in Nigeria; the fact that none of them is produced locally, the content and the fact that they form the bulk of daily television programming for children in Nigeria as the underpinning questions of analysis- Since the children under and subjects of the study were in the 7 to 11 age group, the theories reflected under the formed one basis of framework.

Recent studies also show that there is a more complex interaction between media and society. The media generates a scheme of relationships and influences that flow between it and the individual who in turn analyses both the information provided and the information contained outside the text. Idle consequences and ramifications of the mass media relate not merely to the way newsworthy events arc perceived but also to a multitude of cultural influences that operate through the media. Children also form part of society therefore the overall effects of media on society cumulatively has an effect on them. The research therefore also used the following theories of how mass media affect audiences; cultivation theory, individual difference theory, uses and gratification approach and reception analysis.

**5.3 Recommendations**

The study put forward the following recommendations

1. Guidelines should be developed for children on how much animated cartoons he/she can watch; the less the better. Keep television out of a child’s bedroom. The best place is the family room. Watch animated cartoons together and talk about what your child sees on the animated cartoons.
2. Parents should not assume that all animated cartoons are harmless. The subtext of messages in animated cartoons dealing with sexuality and romance are ignored and unacknowledged by critics and parents. They should be considered because animated cartoons have become an institution through which society brings up children and use to teach values.
3. Parents must develop the proper perspective concerning their children. Scripture indicates that children are gifts from God, and should be regarded by parents as such. They are to be cherished not tolerated. “Bring them up in the nature and admonition of the Lord.”

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**APPENDIX**

Godfrey Okoye University,

Ugwomu Nike,

Enugu State.

Dear Respondent,

**Investigate the Impact of Animated Cartoons on Children in Enugu State.**

I am a final year student of Godfrey Okoye University Enugu Campus. I am carrying out a research work on the above topic in partial fulfillment for the award of B.sc in Mass communication. Please kindly assist me by supplying genuine answers to the questions.

All information given to me will be held in strict confidence and I will be grateful for your total co-operation.

Thanks

 Yours faithfully,

 **Name**

1. Do you watch television with your children? Yes No

2. Reason for answer ................................................................................................................

3. How much of cartoons do you watch in a day? Minutes Hrs

4. Are cartoons o.k. for your children? Yes No

5. Why ..............................................................................................................................

6. Are there risks in watching cartoons?..............................................................................

7. Which ones?...........................................................................................................................

8. Do you control what and when your children watch cartoons? Yes No

 If yes, why ............................................................................................................................

 If no, why not ........................................................................................................................

9. Which cartoons do you watch?............................................................................................

10. Which (name) cartoons do you dislike most? ..............................................................

Why? ......................................................................................................................................

11. Which cartoon characters do you like most?.....................................................................

12. Why? .................................................................................................................

13. Do you get to buy for your children cartoons when they demand for them? ....................

14. Why? .....................................................................................................................................

15. Do your children get to imitate or emulate cartoons (in behaviour, dressing, values, etc)

16. Example ....................................................................................................................

17. Do they prefer certain cartoons to others? Yes No

18. Why? ..................................................................................................................

19. Do their demand for cartoons cause misunderstanding between you? ................................

How...................................................................................................................................

20. Do you feel that cartoons are affecting your child’s school performance? ..........................

21. Why? .....................................................................................................................................

22. Which values do you think cartoons are impacting on your children...........................

23. Do cartoons give your children a sense of responsibility? ..................................................

24. Why do you give the above answer?...............................................................................

25. In your opinion what should be done in order to curb possible problems brought about by the cartoons our children watch..............................................................................

26. Do you tell your children when a cartoon is real or not real? How?..................................................

27. Is any children’s television safe? W hy?...................................................................

28. Our children watch cartoon while eating. Do you think this is a good habit?

29. Why ...................................................................................................................................

30. How can you improve your children’s television habits?.....................................

Thank you for answering all the questions.