



Uncovering Children Acceptance Towards Children Television Program

Shazleen Mohamed*, Ahlam Abdul Aziz**

**(Corresponding Author) Faculty of Communication and Media Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA, 40450 Shah Alam, Selangor. Malaysia
E-mail: shazleen@uitm.edu.my*

*** Faculty of Communication and Media Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA, 40450 Shah Alam, Selangor. Malaysia
E-mail: ahlam@uitm.edu.my*

Article Info

Article history:

Received: 10 March 2021

Accepted: 20 May 2021

Published: 2 June 2021

DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.33102/jicicom.vol1no1.8>

ABSTRACT

Most knowledge, entertainment, and education can now be accessed very conveniently via webs, blogs, and social media in this exponential age. On the other hand, television plays an essential role in most people's lives. This study aims to learn about children's acceptance of children's television shows in Malaysia. In the report, 30 children aged four to six years old were interviewed and examined. Interviews were performed in English and Malay, depending on the children's preferred language of expression: some were bilingual, while others spoke only Malay. During the observation period, the researchers observed and reported what the children said and did while watching. In terms of cognition, this research suggests that children have optimistically specific basic literacy skills. Affectively, the children can express their emotions by sufficient or reasonable emotional responses, and they can interact with the character's customs, etiquette, and cultural heritage to a limited extent. Children implicitly perceive sex-role stereotyping on a behavioral level. This research demonstrates that children comprehend basic literacy skills cognitively. Affectively, the children communicate their emotions through acceptable or sufficient emotional responses and can associate with traditions, etiquette, and cultural heritage to a limited extent. Children intuitively recognize sex-role stereotyping on a behavioral level. The results of the final review showed that television did not affect. The final study results showed that television did not significantly impact children's perceptions; instead, daily experience and context affected their awareness and understanding.

Keywords: *Children, Television, Cognitive, Affective, Behavior.*

INTRODUCTION

Young and old audiences can now watch their favorite programs via cables or satellites. In comparison to other forms of media, television is the most accessible and accessible. As a result, it is critical for everyone, particularly parents, to be media literate to help their children understand the picture, audio, and digital implications and have the ability to rationally, vitally, and effectively understand and effectively understand and effectively understand and relate to the media. Aletha C. Huston, a researcher at the University of Texas in Austin, predicted that young children who watch a small amount of educational programming each week have a higher chance of academic achievement over time than their peers who watch more popular television programs. For example, children who watch *B, Barney* will become skilled at counting, familiar with colours and shapes, language, and socially competent than children who did not watch the show. Huston and Dr. John Wright (1996a, 1996b), co-directors of the University of Kansas' Centre for Research on the Influences of Television on Children, conducted similar research. They discovered that children from low- and middle-income families and children from middle- and upper-income families, who watched *Sesame Street* and other educational programs daily from the ages of two to four, had exceptional vocabulary (Burton, 2005).

Children's television shows have the potential to bring children of all ages, values, and backgrounds together. *Sesame Street*, *The Wiggles*, *Barney the Purple Dinosaur*, and *Hi5* have continuously built their shows to promote a sense of community by incorporating casts from all walks of life. They also have messages about the importance of respecting one another, participating in community service, saving the world from pollution, and recycling. Abdullah Malim Baginda (2011) emphasized that children are naturally curious and that this trait should be encouraged at all times and in all situations. He stressed that this characteristic should be nurtured even more as children grow older and enter formal education.

As a medium for transmitting and receiving images and sound, television Patricia Palmer (1986) considered that television could be both entertaining and educational and that it has the potential to expose children to new opportunities that they would not otherwise encounter in their own culture. By watching television, young people will learn about themselves, life, how to act in different situations, and deal with personal and family problems. In addition, television may provide facts, insight, and suggestions on solving problems or accomplishing goals that they have not previously achieved (Gunter & McAleer, 1990).

While most Malaysian children enjoyed watching *Power Rangers*, *Sesame Street*, *Barney*, and *Doraemon*, according to Balraj-Ambigapathy (2000), few local programs effectively captured their attention. Radio Televisyen Malaysia (RTM) made its first TV

animated film, *Usop Sontorian*, in 1995. Kamn Ismail, an animation director, and Ujang, a local cartoonist, collaborated on the project. Usop and his friends lived in a town named Kampung Parit Sonto in the novel. The story is based on Malaysia's rural working class. The characters wore simple clothing that reflected traditional and religious garments. Usop, Abu, and Dol (Malay), Ah Kim (Chinese), Vellu (Indian), and Singh (Si) were among the ethnic groups who were encouraged to integrate and cooperate (Balraj-Ambigapathy, 2000; Muthalib, 2007). The other programs are shown via RTM. *Keluang Man*, a Malaysian comedy superhero, made his debut. The prominent roles were based on Batman and Robin's famous comic book, and the film was released in 1997. It attempted to include moral principles, but other than using the national language, Bahasa Malaysia, it did not reflect something familiar to Malaysians (Muthalib, 2007).

Upin and Ipin have recently piqued the interest of young audiences. In 2007, TV9 aired it as a short animation during Ramadhan (the month of fasting). Upin and Ipin were identical Malay twin brothers who were five years old. They are orphans who live with their grandmother and sister. Even though the plot was simplistic and humorous, it managed to instil moral and educational values. It also attempted to represent Malaysia's multiracial people by portraying characters such as Mei Mei (Chinese), Rajoo (Indian), and Jarjit (Sikh).

As children reacted to the program they watched, the researcher agreed with Robertson and Rossiter (1976), Friedstand and Wright (1994), and Derbaix and Bree (1997) that cognitive capacity to comprehend instructional and persuasive purposes could not be ignored. Since their expectations are so dissimilar, children's responses can vary from those of adults. In explaining how influential works with adolescents, Wartella (1981) focused on both emotions and feelings. As a result, when an affective factor is strongly linked to a specific task, it can improve motivation. These will affect the children's cognitive, affective, and behavioral development. Several methods were used to allow for the assessment of children's acceptance, including evaluation of facial response, body movements, and the simultaneous use of verbal and non-verbal measurement (Derbaix & Bree, 1997).

LITERATURE REVIEW

It argued that children learned a lot about the world by watching television. Television may be able to assist them in becoming more socially aware. It has been suggested that children, like adults, need a degree of artistic variation in the content, design, format, and characters of their programming. As a result, children need programming that engages their imaginations, aids their social growth, informs them of their role in the world, introduces them to the worlds of others, and provides material that stimulates ideas. These must be understood in the context that children are not miniature adults, but boys and girls who need a curriculum tailored to their social,

psychological, and physical stages of development. The children's knowledge, interest, or perspective must not be excluded from the material (Berry & Asamen, 1993; Matthews, 2009).

Cognitive, Affective, and Behavior

In his book *Experience Psychology*, King (2013) explained that cognitive was all about the thought. Based on Bloom's Taxonomy theory, Bacon (2006) concluded that the cognitive domain concerned the ability to remember or differentiate facts, processes, laws, or definitions. According to Smaldino (2012), the cognitive domain is a process in which individuals can see the process or a more recent event such as history or geography. Bloom (1956) characterized the cognitive domain as a learning and teaching function category or level. Individuals knew if they could recall or were familiar with the facts, procedure, or laws. Individuals could comprehend the subject matter and provide explanation or understanding to add context or find clarification on some issues in the second part of cognitive. The third was application, in which people could put the knowledge to use in real-life situations. Synthesis was the fifth. Individuals created different styles or abilities during the learning process, which is known as synthesis. The final stage of the cognitive process was determining whether or not the information was important (Bloom, 1956).

According to Krik (2015) and Smaldino (2014), the affective domain is where images can alter and influence people's perceptions, emotions, and personal and social attitudes. Feelings, thoughts, and attitude influenced the affective domain (Kratwohl, Bloom & Masia, 1964). They divided the affective domain into many layers (which include the desire to predict new experiences and the willingness to pay attention to what was being delivered were the first levels of affective domain. According to Bacon (2006), the best way to determine an individual's involvement and focus is to ask questions and hold discussions. Individual feedbacks were crucial in the affective domain, according to Kratwohl, Bloom, and Masia (1964). Individuals' expression of personal opinion, thoughts, and criticism, according to Bacon (2006), may represent affective domains.

Behavioral change, according to Cherry (2015), is the adjustment to people's actions, feelings, and thoughts. Cherry (2015) asserted that cognition and actions are inextricably linked. Nonetheless, while cognition was blurred, actions could be detected and seen. Cherry (2015) claimed that individual outcomes or effects (rewards and punishments) affected and influenced behaviour. The live model included a person demonstrating behaviour, the verbal instructional model included details and explanations of behaviour, and the symbolic model included real or fictional characters exhibiting behaviours in conventional and electronic media. It was assisted by live models who inspired and instilled in the children's behaviours through observation and imitation. It was derived from a study of observational learning or Bobo Doll conducted

by Bandura, Ross, and Ross (1963). They concluded that children learn more from repeated actions than from random behaviour. If the children's behaviour was negative, they were more violent.

METHODOLOGY

The researcher used the qualitative analysis approach to obtain the necessary data. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2008), qualitative researchers focused on the essence of reality constructed in a social context, the researcher's relation to the subject of study, and the situational obstacles that shaped inquest responses to questions centered on how social experience was shaped and given meaning. Patricia Palmer (1986), Bob Hodge, and David Tripp's study influenced the researcher's research style (1986). However, due to differences in cultural backgrounds, place, period, and costs, the technique had undergone some changes and alterations. Various qualitative approaches were used to obtain information from the children,. It was impractical to expect children to respond to survey questions because they would be challenging to comprehend. The researcher used observation and interview techniques to learn about children's experiences and interpret ideas and concepts.

Prior to the interviews, the children and the researcher met and had a short talk in which the researcher explained what will be done. The researcher inquired about the types of shows they watched on television. The programs they wanted to address were often related to their own personal favourites. The researcher learned from the interview sessions that it was critical to ask a few questions repeatedly in order for the children to fully comprehend what was being asked. With a brief and clear introduction, the researcher needed to break the interview into meaningful segments. The interview needed to be prepared in a lighthearted atmosphere. The kids had to be convinced to speak up. During the interviews, the researcher discovered that certain parents were more at ease if they were present in the conversation. Some people would simply be in another place, not actively participating in the interview. Nonetheless, several parents spoke up during the interview, perhaps because they were more familiar with their children's vocabulary. Parents' interference was initially concerning, but the researcher eventually came to appreciate the parents' participation, which added scope and comprehensiveness to the meeting that may not have been available at earlier or later meetings. For example, parents might say things like "Remember while dinner you said...", "What about...", "How did...", and "Remember what you informed me yesterday..."

The researcher observe the child's viewing habits in their natural environment: their homes. The researcher, on the other hand, had a difficult time finding interested participants. Many parents were concerned, especially when they learned that the researcher would be visiting their homes and spending time with their children. It was also difficult for them to understand that their children needed to be observed on

several days. The researcher was well aware that most parents were wary of allowing outsiders into their personal lives. To persuade the parents, persuasive and negotiation skills were needed. It was also essential to reassure parents that their privacy would be respected. As a result of this persuasion and negotiations, parents agreed to allow at least three days of observation in each area. If additional days were needed for these observations, parents were notified in advance.

While collecting the data, unexpected events needed the researcher to be prepared. Children seldom sat still for the duration of the questioning sessions. They ran around, jumped, played with toys, ate, and drank. The researcher needed to remain calm, alert, and in charge of the situation as much as possible. Patience and flexibility were required of the researcher. Since the respondents were children aged four to six years old, they needed to communicate effectively. The conversation had to be driven, and if they got off course, they had to be gently refocused on the key issues. It was critical to remember that the children were sharing their stories. The researcher needed to be prepared for minor deviations from the subject, which may mean reorganizing and recreating the questions.

In this study, the researcher interviewed the informants based on a list of questions prepared previously to obtain visions of the studies' emphasis and collect responses and answers that were comparable or differed from those informants. The thematic analysis was provided to these responses. According to Attride-Sterling (2014), thematic analysis of qualitative measures was incorporated in the practice of qualitative research to make it more sophisticated, and it provided a step-by-step manual of logical processes that were very useful for systematic qualitative inquiry. The researcher had to identify, transpire, and repeat themes and relationships of categories through all of the collected data. The information gleaned from the observation and interview transcripts was coded and organized into research themes.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Barney encouraged kids to use their imaginations and pretend to be someone they aren't. It aimed to encourage children to participate in imaginative and inventive play while keeping the language simple. It used fewer words and used more expressive language like "thank you," "please," and "may I." (Strasburger, Wilson & Jordon, 2009). One of the respondents' mothers claimed that her daughter grew up watching *Barney* and *Hi-5* daily. She was astounded to discover that her four-year-old could recognize objects and converse in simple English, even though she does not speak English. She, too, picked up a few basic phrases inadvertently. *Barney*, she claimed, emphasized kindness and good manners and had a positive influence on her child. She worked hard as a single mother to send her four-year-old daughter, Aila, to a good kindergarten that focused on English. She also suggested that Aila (four) watch *Hi-5* and *Barney* because she thought it would help her vocabulary and awareness. *Barney*,

she claimed, emphasised kindness and good manners. Aila (four) repeated the presenter's dialogue explaining shapes such as hexagon, circle, and square while watching *Hi-5's The Bee Busy Making Honeycomb*. She enthusiastically responded to the presenter's query about which shapes would match in the honeycomb. If the presenter showed the shapes of a circle and a square, she would say "NO." Throughout the observations, Alia would respond whenever Barney asked a question or encouraged her to join in with his songs or dances. They'd sing and dance around the room. Aila (four) was swaying her head and singing along to Barney's theme song. When Barney and his friends Gianna, Angela, Nick, and Scott sang "Fun Sunny Day," Aila waved back and danced along with them.

During the interview, the researcher discovered that mothers were instrumental in bringing *Barbie* into their daughters' lives. They purchased the doll, dresses, and a digital video disc for them (DVD). They also collaborated on a make-believe video. During an interview with six-year-old children, the researcher discovered that *Barbie* had become a medium for mothers and daughters to bond. Simultaneously, they instilled in their daughters a sense of belonging to the character's traditions, etiquette, and cultural heritage. During three separate interviews with the children, the researcher was able to discern differences between their own culture and the TV character they were watching. According to the results, the most distinguishing characteristics that children identified with *Barbie* were her accent, hair, femininity, elegance, and sense of style. *Barbie* had blonde hair, was soft-spoken, and stunning. It was obvious from watching the older girls (five to six years old) that they could tell the difference between *Barbie* and themselves. They were enthralled by her appearance, grace, and elegance, and envious of her lovely gowns, fancy jewels, and lovely hairdo. They noticed, on the other hand, that while *Barbie* was just a cartoon character, she portrayed a different type of young woman with a different background, upbringing, and social status. Zaty (six) went into great detail about the differences between herself and *Barbie*. Despite the fact that she adored *Barbie*, she said that she couldn't live like her because they came from two separate worlds. Zaty (six) admitted that *Barbie* was just a cartoon, but that it was fun to picture her as a real person with all of her lovely possessions.

Social experiences will also help you grow a sense of humour. Children had the ability to laugh and appreciate physical and visual jokes from an early age. They recognised humour, both verbal and nonverbal, as a great source of amusement. The emotional responses of children were linked to their increasing awareness of television as a medium. The children showed a mature comprehension of what they watched on television based on the findings and interviews. They recognised that television was merely a medium by which programs were broadcast, and their expectations of the programs were well-defined. Fun can also be described as social interactions. While watching *Upin and Ipin*, the five-year-old children spoke and reflected on the characters with their siblings who were also watching. Aiman, who was five years old at the time, was watching *Upin and Ipin* with her older sister, who was eight.

- Aiman (5) : I like the bald one.
 Aiman's sister : That is Ipin. He wears the blue shirt. The one in the yellow is Upin.
 Aiman (5) : Look, there is a spider

Aiman (five) laughed when he saw the spider. He guessed that the spider hid in the box. Although he guessed it, Aiman (five) and his sister could not help themselves and screamed when the spider came out of the box.

While doing the observation and interview process, the researcher discovered that these children could select which channel they want to watch and what kind of programs they want to watch. The uses and gratification approach took into account the possibility of seeking or obtaining gratifications. Gratifications were pursued to contribute to media use situations, and gratifications received results (Krcmar & Strizhakova, 2009). It was argued that if the audience's standards were not met, they would switch to a different program before they found one that did. Gratification has pursued a variety of reasons. It is related to the gratifications that audiences expected to receive from a medium before connecting or linking to it (Quan-Haase & Young, 2010). On the other hand, gratitude refers to the gratifications that the viewer experienced through their use of a particular medium, for example, a television.

Initially, the researcher had no intention of finding out if the children would select their favorite programs based on their gender. However, it was interesting to discover that children could recognize and develop programs targeted at boys and girls from an early age. They could also tell which shows were aimed at a broad audience. Some children were interested in watching so they could apply it to their own experiences and interests. Girls will constantly associate their favorite shows with music, songs, and dance, all of which are also associated with feminine notions. When asked if they would watch *Barbie*, boys immediately responded with a resounding 'NO.' The boys thought the character was too feminine and not heroic enough. They liked characters that were action-packed and adventurous.

- Interviewer : Why boys can't watch Barbie?
 Am (4) : Yuck... I don't like the songs. She sings all the time. I like Transformers Autobot in disguise (sings)
- Interviewer : Why boys can't watch Barbie?
 Han (5) : She is not a superhero. Unlike Ben who fights with monsters and aliens. I like to see him change and save people.

On the other hand, this result prompted the researcher to inquire more about what caused these children to separate the types of programs based on gender. More questions revealed that parents, peers, and relatives played a significant role in shaping the children's perceptions and understanding. Gender stereotyping is aided by socializing agents such as parents, educators, and religious institutions, according to Lemish (2010). Gender stereotypes are so deeply ingrained in all human cultures that children have plenty of chances to internalize them regularly.

Children acted in various ways, including laughing, singing, dancing, imitating battle scenes, and even sleeping while watching television. Nonetheless, they were all attentive to the curriculum, appreciated it, and understood it fully. These children were aware of the programs' similarity to real-life scenarios, and they adapted and reacted to the program accordingly. The children enjoyed the plan, regardless of age (four, five, and six years old), and were more likely to have many males and females playing the main characters. The programs' content contained simple messages that allowed children to evaluate the difference between good and evil, right and wrong. During the interview, it was clear that they preferred cartoons and animated movies over other forms of television shows and could explain why they chose their desired performance in great detail.

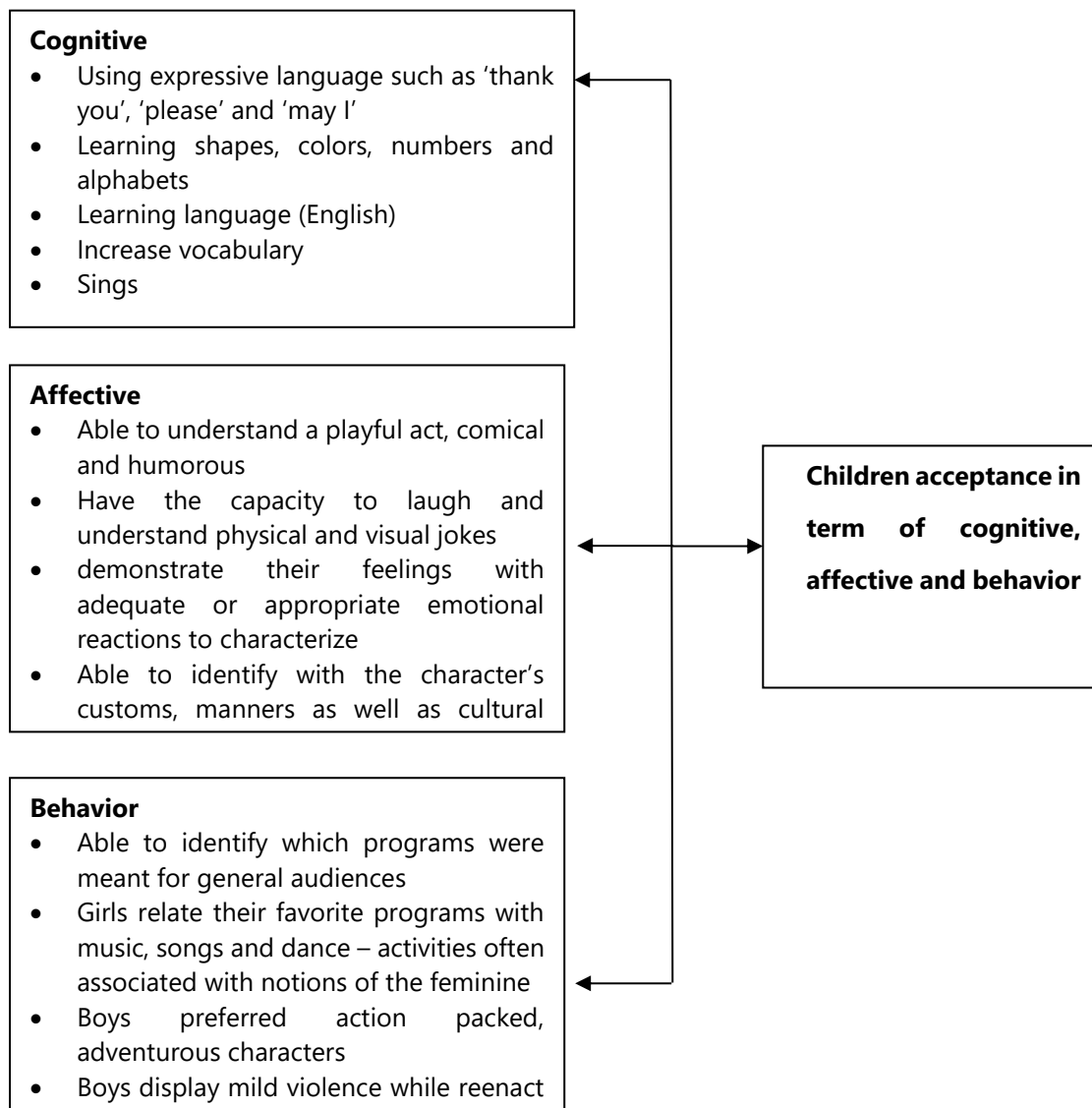
The researcher attempted to provide a summary of the options for understanding children and television in this report. The way people watched television had evolved. Children are now using various media resources, and some have been related to psychosocial aspects of behavior. Children are rapidly gaining access to and using these technologies at an early age. Children are gradually gaining access to and using these technologies at a young age. This research present and share the perspectives, findings, and analysis of a variety of academics, scholars, and experts. Television could be a way to create a safe space for friends who are going through very different things, but it could also be a way to shield places of anguish and angst that surfaced due to other people's perceptions. It could provide a way to work through personal conflict, complexities, and needs and a way to escape them into fantasies of power and control.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Although the dialogues are sometimes a little too mature for small cute performers to deliver, their performance, persona, and plot are appealing and entertaining. Instead of using a lot of adult connotation, the script writer will be able to write dialogues that actually resemble the children's real conversation. The majority of the shows were either entertaining or animation. The majority of educational and insightful programs are focused on school curriculum and syllabi. It's high time for producers to think about making more programs for kindergarten students. Musical and educational shows of real people, such as *High5*, *Sesame Street*, *The Wiggles* and

Barney, are only a few examples of outstanding television shows. It assist children in learning simple counting, spelling, colouring, and reading skills. The study discovered that while four and five-year-old children were able to recall certain episodes or scenes from programs they watched at random, they were unable to combine or share the storey in its entirety.

Children's acceptance of children's television programs: children received cognitive, affective, and behavioral development by watching their favorite programs. In a nutshell, the conclusion of the findings can be seen as followed:



Almost every child interviewed said they watched the shows because they found them to be entertaining and enjoyable. The amusing movements and characters enthralled them. Furthermore, each episode lasted about 15 minutes, which was only long enough to hold their attention. The show also had a strong plot that was based on a common theme and setting. It featured characters that children were interested

in, and there was no tension between the good and bad characters. The children easily understood the message.

This study does not represent the opinions of all Malaysian children. It does, however, provide a snapshot of what is currently taking place. This study found that children do not accept what they watch on television blindly; but, since they are still young and naive (4-6 years old), parental intervention may help ensure that they have proper guidance. Parental advice may help children interpret television more critically, selective, responsible, and constructive. In addition, this report has no intention of pointing fingers or condemning any organizations about children's television programming. However, it is expected to be eye-opening to determine the types of transformations, mechanisms, procedures, policies, or adjustments that parents, academics, media professionals, researchers, government agencies, and non-government organizations may collaborate on to create better programs for children. More efforts are needed to improve children's programs, especially for kindergarten children. As a result, this study has its limitations, and further analysis and studies are required.

REFERENCES

- Attride-Stirling, J. (2001). Thematic networks: an analytic tool for qualitative research. *Qualitative Research*, 1(3), 385-405. doi:10.1177/146879410100100307
- Baginda, A.M. (2011). Social Development in Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur: Malaysia Strategic Research Centre
- Balraj, S. (2001). Media Literacy in Malaysia : Making Connections With Critical Awareness. In M. Kalantzia & A. Pandian, *Literacy Matters : Issues of New Times* (1st ed.). Australia: Common Ground Publishing Pty Ltd in association with Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM).
- Bandura, A. (1971). Social learning theory (1st ed.). New York: General Learning Press.
- Berry, G. L. & Asamen, J. K. (1993). Children & Television: Images. In A Changing Sociocultural World. Newbury Park, California. London. New Delhi : Sage Publications
- Burton, G. (2000). Talking Television. Madison Avenue, NY : Oxford University Press Inc
- Cherry, K. Perception and the Perceptual Process. verywell. Retrieved 13 June 2008, from <https://www.verywell.com/perception-and-the-perceptual-process-2795839>
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2000). Handbook of qualitative research. 2nd Edition. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Derbaix, C. & Bree, J. (1997). The impact of children's affective reactions elicited by commercials on attitudes toward the advertisement and the brand. *International Journal Of Research In Marketing*, 14(3), 207-229. doi:10.1016/s0167-8116(97)00003-7

- Friestad, M. & Wright, P. (1994). The Persuasion Knowledge Model: How People Cope with Persuasion Attempts. *Journal Of Consumer Research*, 21(1), 1. doi:10.1086/209380
- Gunter, B. & McAleer J. L. (1990). *Children and Television: The One Eyed Monster?* London. New York: Routledge
- Hodge, B. & Tripp, D. (1986). *Children and Television: A Semiotic Approach.* Cambridge: Polity Press
- Huston, A. & Wright, J. (1996a). Television and Socialization of Young Children. In MacBeth, T. M. (Ed). *Tuning In To Young Viewers: Social Science Perspectives on Television.* Thousand Oaks, CA : Sage Publications Inc.
- King, L. A. (2013). *Experience Psychology.* 2nd Edition. NY: McGraw Hill
- Kratwohl, D. R., Bloom, B.S. and Masia, B. (1964). Taxonomy of educational objectives, the classification of educational goals – Handbook II: Affective domain. New York: McKay.
- Kirkorian, H.L.; Wartella, E.A.; Anderson, D.R.. (2008). Media and Young Children's Learning. *The Future Of Children*, 18(1), 39-61. doi:10.1353/foc.0.0002
- Krcmar, M. & Strizhakova, Y. (2009). Uses and Gratifications as Media Choice. In Hartmann, T. (Ed). *Media Choice: A Theoretical and Empirical Overview.* New York. London: Routledge.
- Muthalib, H. A. (2007). From Mousedeer To Mouse: Malaysian Animation At The Crossroads. *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies*, 8 (2) (2007)
- Palmer, P. (1986). *The Lively Audience (A Study Of Children Around The TV Set).* NSW. Australia: Allen & Unwin Australia Pty Ltd
- Robertson, T. S., and Rossiter, J. (1976), Short-Run Advertising Effects on Children: A Field Study, *Journal of Marketing Research*, 13 (1), 68-71.
- Wartella, E. (1981). The child as viewer, in M. E. Ploghoft and J. A. Anderson (eds.) *Education for the Television Age.* Athens, OH: Cooperative Center for Social Science Education.