



Research Article

Evaluation of Influence of *Sophia the First*, *Henry Danger* and *PJ Mask* Cartoon Characters on The Behaviour of Primary School Children in Awka, Anambra State

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About Article

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ABSTRACT

Cartoons are the first and most common among the types of broadcasts that children watch on television. Primary school children watch cartoons the most with a rate of 72.1%. Children are usually attracted and influenced by what they see or watch on television and cartoons are being presented to them on many channels without recognition of their useful or harmful aspects. Thus, this study attempts to find out the behaviour of children after watching cartoon programme described as children's friendly and companion. Do children watch cartoons just for pleasure or watch sake? Do they imitate and try replicating their favourite cartoon characters? Through three selected cartoons namely; *Sofia the First*, *Henry Danger*; *Princess Charm School* and *PJ Masks*, the study tries to ascertain the frequency of children's exposure to the selected cartoons, the gratification derived from such exposure and ways such exposure influences them as perceived by the respondents, especially how they engage the major characters in the movies. The work is anchored on Social learning theory. Survey method was used for data generation; 109 pupils from four primary schools in Awka were selected and issued with questionnaire as the sample size drawn from the population of the study. The work found that primary school children within the age bracket of 6 - 12 are frequently exposed to cartoons and such cartoon exposure influences engagement behaviour of children. Some of the ways children engage the characters they see in cartoon include dressing like their favourite cartoon characters, speaking like them, walking and acting like them, seeking for magical powers to combat evil, seeking for popularity, clamour for cartoon materials bearing the pictures of their choice cartoon characters among others. The study then recommends more measures to ensure use of more positive and educative cartoons on children since such exposure aids their socialization development.



INTRODUCTION

The advent of cable and satellite television (TV) has boosted TV viewing in recent years and the amount of media products consumed by children in recent times, allowing them to compose their own "media menu" with their own preferences and likings. Cartoons are TV programmes usually preferred by children and seen as children's companions or child-friendly (Shekih et al, 2023). The above is the opinion of this mass communication scholar who observed in this work that children within the age bracket of 6-12 years devote more time watching cartoons on television than other programmes.

According to Siddiqui and ul Islam (2022), children spend more time watching TV than participating in any other activity and cartoon watching is the most favourable hobby of children in their leisure time, as they like to watch cartoons on television rather than do any physical activity. This constant viewing of television programmes, especially cartoons, by children will likely have some influence on them since children normally watch TV for purposes of learning and recognition, unlike adults who may just watch for fun. Ergun (2012) noted that the most effective influence in the lives of children after their parents is television, and cartoons are the first and foremost common among the types of broadcasts that children watch on TV. Ergun stated that children in elementary school watch cartoons the most, with a rate of 72.1%. (Okonkwo, 2012) affirms the above when he says that one of the major programmes that attracts the attention of children and, by extension, affects their behaviour and activities is film characters, particularly in cartoons

described as today's children's favourite and children's companion. Cartoons then seem to be the most frequent and easily accessible source of entertainment for children. With the vast media channels, it has become easier for children to watch their favourite cartoons with a single click and at the same time more convenient for parents to provide children with this all-time favourite activity of theirs (Bibi & Zebra, 2012).

The existence of cable television channels appears to have increased the number of television programmes, especially cartoons that children are exposed to on a daily basis, as observed by Noor et al. (2024). This is perhaps why some scholars have become concerned about the impact of such TV programmes on people, especially children. Agbanu and Nwammuo (2009) as well as Rezeki (2021) noted that television changed the way people view the world, expanded people's understanding of events, issues and culture around the world, and changed the way people do things. Today's children are mostly unconsciously exposed to TV, which is one of the most fashionable inventions of the 20th century. Most TV channels, on a daily basis, show cartoons of various kinds for twenty to forty minutes to their audience, which is mainly children and young people. Cartoon Network is the most favourite cartoon channel in the world and has gained record-breaking popularity since its inception in 1992. It has been watched in more than 80 million houses in the United States of America and in 145 countries throughout the world (Okonkwo, 2018). It broadcasts only cartoons, and its 68% audience belongs to the children aged 2 to 17 years, whereas 32% belongs to the age group of above 18 years and adults. The children

from the age group of 6-12 years, mainly the primary school pupils, are the core audience of the Cartoon Network (Awinzeligo et al., 2022). Equally, Kottak (2010) believes that TV programmes and all types of cartoons and animated movies are the main factors which are playing a key role in the enculturation of today's children. All these reveal to us that cartoons are very popular among children of all ages. The forces that shape children's impressionable minds are found mostly in the environment where they grow up as well as the things that they are exposed to on a daily basis. Sharma and Suri (2020) affirm that children's strong affiliation to cartoon programmes and supernatural cartoon characters may likely influence their lifestyle due to the adult content of most cartoons. It is in the light of the discourse above that the study tries to discover the behaviour of children after watching cartoon programmes. Do they engage in the behaviour of their favourite cartoon characters? Do children emulate and replicate these characters? Do they want to act and behave like them? From the three selected television cartoons namely; Henry Danger, Sofia the First and PJ Masks, the study tries to ascertain the level of children's exposure to the selected cartoons, the gratifications derived from such exposure as well as the level of influence these cartoons have on them. This forms the fulcrum upon which this research is based.

Statement of Problem

For several years now, children have been entertained by television shows and animated cartoons (Origin of cartoon, 2011). Scholars say that some cartoons are useful in developing the moral character of children, while others, especially violent ones,

produce anti-social behaviour in them (Muzvidziwa, 2011). Children exposed to TV films and cartoons have a lot of undesirable effects. Rezeki (2021) noted that *Cartoon Network* is now no longer safe for children due to its adult content, against the previous belief by parents that it is Safe/Strong affiliations with these cartoons' supernatural characters make many children to fall prey to some serious injuries. Okonkwo (2012) observed that it is not uncommon to see Nigerian children playing or fighting with dangerous weapons and acting in several ways viewed as un-African, as seen in their dressing code, speech mannerism and other lifestyle patterned after their choice cartoon characters. He noted further that children are being easily distracted in their academic and domestic work due to frequent exposure to cartoon films.

Exposure of children to risk becomes inevitable as they consider things watched in cartoon to be real since they are unable to differentiate between fantasy and reality (Bibi & Zebra, 2012). Habib (2019) summed the effects of media use by children as an increase in social isolation; reduction of time and attention to homework; increased passivity; reduced time for play; exercise displacement; reduced time for reading due to increased screen time; premature sexual knowledge and experience; unhealthy eating and obesity; promotion of anxiety about self image leading to anorexia and depressive tendencies. Whether these assertions are true or not is subject to research. The researcher, having observed a high viewership rate of cartoons by children within the ages of 6-10 as opposed to other kiddies programmes as revealed by Okonkwo (2018) tries to empirically study

the influence of such cartoons on these children using the selected cartoons, namely *Henry Danger*, *Sofia the First*, and *PJ Masks*, as a reference point.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this research is to evaluate the influence of *Sophia the First*, *Henry Danger* and *PJ Masks* cartoon characters on the behaviour of Primary School children in Awka, Anambra State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. To ascertain the frequency of primary school children's exposure to the selected cartoon films in Awka, Anambra State.
2. To ascertain the gratification derived by primary school children from exposure to the selected cartoon films in Awka, Anambra State.
3. To find out in what ways primary school children engage the cartoon characters in the selected movies in Awka, Anambra State

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the frequency of primary school children's exposure to the selected cartoon films in Awka, Anambra State?
2. What is the gratification do primary school children derive from exposure to the selected cartoon films in Awka, Anambra State?
3. In what ways do the primary school children engage the cartoon characters in the selected movies in Awka, Anambra State?

Theoretical Framework

This research is anchored on the social

learning theory. This is because its basic tenets are fundamental to the understanding of the subject under study. The social learning theory, simply put, is the character imitation theory. The idea of this theory is that much learning takes place through observing the behaviour of others (Noor et al, 2024). It suggests that media can create "epidemic or infectious" behaviour, i.e. based on witnessing media, that behaviour could be acquired as a result of being performed by someone else (Nworgu, 2010). Traced back to (Bandura, 1977), he states that people learn certain behaviour, emotional reactions and attitudes from role models whom they wish to emulate. This becomes more poignant when we consider the effect of some of these observations on children in their formative years, and in this instance through the cartoons and home movies they are exposed to. Bandura highlighted four basic steps in the learning process, which include the following:

1. Paying attention and perceiving the relevant aspect of behaviour.
2. Remembering the behaviours, either through words or mental images.
3. Converting the remembered observations into actions.
4. Being motivated to adopt the behaviour.

Social learning occurs through four main stages of imitation, namely: close contact, imitation of superiors, understanding of concepts and role model behaviour. Thus, it is arguable that the attitudes, values and dispositions that children learn now may form the bedrock upon which their future reinforcement will be based. The children watch these programmes with an independent mind and innocence and may

come to believe the content as the basis for their future behaviour.

This theory, from the explanation so far addresses how several television programmes like cartoons, help in shaping social behaviour of children as they continue to observe and imitate the characters they see in such programmes, in this case cartoon characters. Thus they engage in a social learning process through some of the attributes as portrayed on television. The social learning theory is considered apt for this study because the more children are exposed to media content (cartoon programmes), the more they imitate the cartoon characters as role models, and this has some positive and negative influence on them. Equally, the children decide what to watch and not what the media want them to watch.

Literature Review

The Selected Cartoons Summarised with Major Characters: Barbie: Princess Charm School.

Sofia

A young girl named Sofia and her mother Miranda lived a peasant life in the kingdom of Enchancia. One day, Sofia's mother marries King Roland II, which leads to her becoming a princess. As she adjusts to her new role, Sofia works to live amongst the royal family while having; different adventures along the way. King Roland presents Sofia with a magical amulet, which, Sofia discovers, gives her the power to talk to animals and summon Disney princesses in the time of need. Sofia, is a little girl with a commoner's background until her mom marries the King and suddenly she is royalty.

With the help of the three fairies in charge of the Royal Training Academy, Sofia learns that looking like a princess isn't all that hard but behaving like one must come from the heart. Set in the storybook world of Enchancia, the movie introduces Sofia, an average girl whose life suddenly transforms when her mother marries the king and she becomes a princess, Sofia the First. Sofia must learn to navigate the extraordinary life of royalty while holding on to her own hopes and dreams. Her journey to being the best she can be also paves the way for those around her to realize how special they each are. Cinderella makes an appearance in the movie to offer Sofia some words of wisdom, princess to princess. Sofia's royal adventure begins as she prepares to move into the castle with her mom, starting a new family with her step-father, King Roland II, and step-siblings, Amber and James. Helping Sofia in her journey are the three headmistresses of Royal Prep Academy - Fauna, Flora and Merry weather (the beloved fairies seen in Disney's classic "Sleeping Beauty") and royal steward, Baileywick, as well as a group of cute woodland creatures led by a wise-talking rabbit, Clover. Sofia soon discovers that looking like a princess is not all that difficult, but displaying honesty, loyalty, courage, independence, compassion and grace is what makes one truly royal.

Sofia learns that looking like a princess isn't all that hard, but behaving like one must come from the heart. The stories focus on the idea that what makes a real princess is what's on the inside. The show highlights character qualities such as kindness, courage, generosity, loyalty, honesty and grace. Subjects such as sincerity and forgiveness are heavily focused on. She has the magical

and incredibly powerful Amulet of Avalor that allows her to talk with animals, shrink, and even turn into a mermaid. However, her amulet is coveted by the sorcerer Cedric, who desires its tremendous magical power to take over the kingdom of Enchancia.

Henry Danger

Henry Danger, a Nickelodeon animated series, follows the thrilling adventures of 13-year-old Henry Hart. Henry's ordinary life takes an extraordinary turn when he lands a part-time job as Kid Danger, trusted sidekick to the legendary superhero Captain Man. This dynamic duo protects Swellview City from villainous forces. Henry's secret identity requires careful balancing acts between his normal life and superhero responsibilities. His best friends, Charlotte Bolton and Jasper Dunlop, remain oblivious to his dual life. Only his younger sister, Piper Hart, occasionally stumbles upon hints of his secret.

Captain Man, aka Ray, is a fearless and charismatic superhero. His alter ego is that of a laid-back, slightly eccentric individual. Schwoz Schwartz, a genius inventor, provides invaluable support to Captain Man and Kid Danger.

Henry's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Hart, remain blissfully unaware of their son's nocturnal exploits. They focus on navigating the challenges of parenting Henry and Piper. Throughout the series, Henry and Captain Man confront formidable foes, including Frankini, The Toddler, Drillfinger, and Jeff. These recurring villains constantly test their mettle and push them to innovate and adapt. As Henry navigates adolescence, he faces relatable struggles: friendships, peer pressure, and self-discovery. His

experiences as Kid Danger teach him valuable lessons about responsibility, teamwork, and loyalty. The series seamlessly blends action, humor, and heart, making Henry Danger an captivating watch for audiences of all ages.

Main Characters:

- Henry Hart/Kid Danger (Jace Norman)
- Captain Man/Ray (Cooper Barnes)
- Charlotte Bolton (Riele Downs)
- Jasper Dunlop (Sean Ryan Fox)
- Piper Hart (Ella Anderson)
- Mr. Hart (Jeffrey Nicholas Brown)
- Mrs. Hart (Kelly Sullivan)
- Schwoz Schwartz (Michael D. Cohen)

PJ Masks

PJ Masks follows three 6-year-olds, Connor, Amaya, and Greg, who lead relatively normal lives day, where they are neighbours, classmates, and friends. However, at night, they become Carboy, Owelette, and Gekko, and fight crime as the PJ Masks, a superhero team. Together they go on adventures, defeat villains, solve mysteries, and learn valuable lessons. Some of the heroes in the cartoon include thus;

Connor/Catboy (voiced by Jacob Ewaniuk) is a blue-eyed boy with brown hair. When he transforms he wears a blue costume with cat ears and a thin feline tail. He is the leader of the group. He has super-hearing using Cat Ears, can leap high and far using Super Cat Jump, and sprints fast using Super Cat Speed, or just Super Speed. His main flaw is his aquaphobia, a flaw which can be exploited by the team's opponents, as does Luna Girl in "Catboy's Cloudy Crisis". His vehicle is the Cat Car, located, in the middle segment of the Masks' tower. His bedroom is

on the second floor of a blue-roofed blue-doored house next to Amaya's.

- Amaya/Owlette (voiced by Addison Hoifey) is an auburn-eyed girl with brown hair who wears glasses and is able to do a handstand. When she transforms she wears a red costume with cape that can solidify into wings. She is able to see in the dark using Owl Eyes (or Super Owl Eyes) and fly by using Super Owl Wings, which she can also use to launch gusts of air to send opponents flying backward, which she calls her Owl Wing Wind. Her vehicle is the Owl-Glider, housed in her top segment of the PJ Masks' tower. Her bedroom is on the third floor of a red-roofed red-doored home with a walled-in yard between Connor and Greg's houses.
- Greg/Gekko (voiced by Kyle Harrison Breitkopf) is a green-eyed blonde-haired boy who is able to do the side splits. He is the youngest member of the Masks. When he transforms he wears a green costume with a thick reptilian tail, fins on top of his head, and suction cups on his hands. He can use Super Gekko Camouflage to change colors and blend in with his surroundings, Super Gekko Muscles (aka Super Muscles) to lift heavy things, Super Lizard Grip to climb walls or anchor himself to stop vehicles, and Super Lizard Water Run to walk on water.¹³ He has exhibited enough strength to lift Romeo's giant mobile laboratory off the ground to overhead. His segment is the bottom level of the tower which stores the Gekko-Mobile, a submersible vehicle which can travel underwater and also

via land on tank treads which is slower than the Cat-Car, It has abilities similar to him, with a "Gekko-Mobile Camouflage" letting it blend in with surroundings, and its treads can adhere to walls, allowing it to drive up the side of villains and go across roof-tops. His bedroom is on the second floor of a green-roofed green-doored house next to Amaya's.

Cartoon Influence on Children's Psychology and Behavior Patterns.

Cartoons as one of the core content of mass communication is increasing in today's television programmes. Currently, animated film classics and new television series can be seen on cable/satellite channels such as Cartoon Network, Boomerang, Kidsco, 4 Kids and Disney Channel. On the influence of these cartoons on children's psychology and behaviour patterns the work of two co-authors was examined.

In their own findings on the work titled "Effects of cartoons on children's psychology and Behaviour patterns", Bibi and Zebra (2012) showed that there is a wide range of cartoons from fairy tales like "Beauty and the Beast," Barbie: Princess Charms School to action-based cartoons like "Ben 10", 'Power Rangers' and PJ Masks. They said that children between the ages of 6-8 have different preferences; girls are usually into fairy tales and the animated "Barbie" series, whereas boys and some of the girls still have their favourite Superman hero cartoons like "Spiderman" "Batman", or action flicks like "Bay Blade", Ben 10" or Power Rangers" and PJ Masks. Bibi and Zebra discovered that children at such an early developing stage consider things they watch in cartoons to be

real since they are unable to differentiate between fantasy and reality and often believe that if Elmer Fudd remains unharmed after being bashed by Bugs Bunny with a hammer several times, so can they. They do not realise that these fantasy things have no true value and identity, that no "Spiderman" exists who will jump from the top of one building to another with the help of his web, no such 'Ben 10' wristwatch which will start blinking and will alert Ben of every evil action beforehand. That if someone is killed or beaten up by cartoons, does not mean that kids should also start doing the same. They exemplified the above scenario with the account of Mukarran, 8, studying in Primary 2, who received a warning from his school after he got caught for beating up a fellow student. When asked for an explanation, the child replied innocently; "I was just showing my friend one of the moves I saw in a cartoon the night before". His family members admitted the fact that they never kept an eye on his TV activities.

Bibi and Zebra exposing the research carried out by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP). Children that view shows in which violence is very realistic, frequently repeated or unpunished, are more likely to imitate what they see. Bibi and Zebra exposing some behavioural influence of cartoons on children reveals the experiences of the following people: - Hassan father of two sons said; "there was a time when one of my sons began to play pranks on his little brother quite frequently, and I failed to understand the reason behind this sudden change in his

behaviour, one day however I found him watching "The cramp Twins", and I understood the reason for all this bullying". Hassan also said that he has become conscious of the cartoons that his sons watch since that time. They shared another experience of a junior wing school teacher who, when asked about children's behaviour regarding violence and physical actions, commented, "Some students are always picking up fights in the class; one of the reasons behind this aggressive behaviour could be that they are too much influenced by violence-based cartoons or other programmes which parents without any concern let them watch in excess.

Still sharing more experiences, they reveal further that children watching too many cartoons often fantasise about the kind of life cartoon characters are living. They shared the views of Lizzy, an exasperated mother of a 7-year-old daughter, whose daughter's fixation with her favourite cartoon, "Winx Club" "creates a lot of fuss every time they go for shopping as she insists on having the same wardrobe as the characters in the 'Winx Club. " Also, college-going girl Rita, elder sister of a young kid Nelly, says, "My youngest sister is really under the influence of these glamorous tales, and she assumes herself to be a princess who is interested in wearing strapless frocks and wants to do ballroom dance". She believes that such programmes are putting a negative impression on the innocent minds of children.

Bibi and Zebra noted, on the other hand, that there are lots of cartoons that are not only the best source of entertainment for kids but could also be used for educational purposes.

For instance, some cartoons like "Barney" can be used to stop some toddlers from crying, whereas "Blue's Clues" or "Dora the Explorer" can be used for brain activity, helping children learn shapes and identify colours, etc. They noted the comments of one of the teachers at a local primary school who said, this "for mind building and constructive learning of children, students have a cartoon period once a week, and we try to show them standard cartoons after thorough selection so that they could drive something positive out of it". A psychology student Rose Peters shared her views regarding this issue; "Give your children time to watch cartoons as it is the most common source for education, expose them with programmes which are appropriate as per parental guidance". From the findings discussed; it is evident that cartoons have a lot of influence both positive and negative on children's behavioural pattern.

Influence of Television Programmes on Children

Television programme can affect a child positively and negatively as well. Okonkwo(2012) narrates the influence of Television on a 9-years Flora who is so crazy about cartoon characters especially "Ben 10" that she certainly insisted that everything she use must bear 'Ben10' be it school bag watch, games, sandals, exercise books etc. Flora's mother became tensed not able to understand how just a TV programme can influence her daughter's life so much. She jumped and shouted "an idiot box called TV greatly influence kids". Okonkwo sees children as clay which gets molded according to the environment and TV programmes as part of this environment that

influence the growth and development of a child. Gokulsing (2009) noted that children under the age often are much interested in watching and imitating their favourite cartoon characters, especially in linguistic patterns, as seen in some children shouting in the streets as a result of cartoon movies they watched. This is an indicator of cartoon influence on children and how they engage the behaviour of cartoon characters.

Summarising the positive and negative influence of TV programmes on children, Okonkwo has this to say. Some TV programmes have good effects on children. TV shows on some channels like Discovery or National Geographic Channel can increase children's knowledge, which is needed in this competitive age. Other channels also help children understand the importance of proper nutrition, health and exercise. Some others help them in academic learning in programs like quiz competitions. While some channels provide opportunity to prove children's talent in dancing, acting, painting and more, which can prove beneficial to them. Discussing also the negative influence of TV programmes on children, Okonkwo noted that TV programmes mostly affect the behaviour of children. He says that most children watch cartoon films and get so infatuated with them that they start using the dialogues used by their favourite cartoon characters. Added that children watching TV programmes meant for adults usually on concepts like crime, divorce, murder, etc., pose a great danger to them and have a very bad impact on the child's mind. This he said, may lead to unwarranted thoughts in their minds and can divert their attention from studies and force

them to do undesirable things. This can create disturbance in a child's life and make his or her life stressful. He finally noted that watching television for a longer time can deteriorate a child's health.

Steele and Brown (1995) identify three main reasons why media influence should be given a close look;

1. Young people spend more time with the mass media than they do in school or with their parents.
2. The media are full of portrayals that glamorise risky adult behaviour such as excessive drinking and sexual promiscuity.
3. Parents and other socialisation agents have arguably shirked their responsibility when it comes to directing children and youths away from risky forms of behaviour; thereby allowing the media a more fundamental influence.

In the context of the discourse, many commentators agree that by the age of 18, an individual will have spent more time watching television than any other activity besides sleep (Miles & Aderson, 1999). However, Miles (2000, p.73) is of the view that young people are affected more directly and negatively by the media than any other age group. All these findings have helped to prove that TV programmes, including cartoons, have a lot of influence on children's behaviour.

Research Methodology

The study adopted the survey method. The survey method was chosen because the researcher could not study all the pupils in the selected school, so they were sampled to get a manageable number. The study aims to find

out how primary school children engage or replicate their favourite cartoon characters' behaviour and the ways such character replication influences them as observed by their class teachers. Thus survey is used to get the opinions of the selected class teachers and children drawn from the entire population of study.

To get these children's opinions, the primary school children aged 6 to 10 in primary 2-4 from two public and private schools in Awka were selected through simple random sampling. The selected schools are

1. Edify Nursery and Primary School, Awka
2. Udoka Primary School, Awka
3. Ayom na Okpala Primary School, Awka
4. St. Gabriel Primary School.

The total population of study is 436 pupils. The pupils from primary two to four were purposively chosen because they fall within the age bracket (6-10 years) usually referred to as "copy cats". They believe things they watch on television are real and replicate their favourite characters, especially in cartoons, as noted by Okonkwo (2012). A sample of 109 children was selected through systematic sampling. A class register of each of the selected classes of primary 2 to 4 was used, and every fourth name on the list was chosen until the last name. Thus, from the first school with a population of 116 pupils from primary 2-4, a total of 29 pupils were selected systematically, second school with 104 pupils, 26 were selected, third school with 92 pupils, 23 were selected; and from the fourth school of 124 pupils, 31 were selected, totalling 109 children.

Results

Research Question One: What is the Frequency of Primary School Children's' exposed to the selected cartoon films in Awka, Anambra state?

Table 1: Percentage Scores of Pupils on the Frequency of Primary School Children's' exposed to the selected cartoon films in Awka, Anambra state?

N = 109

S/N	ITEMS	Very Often (VO)		Often (O)		Sometimes (S)		Rarely (R)	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	How often do you watch cartoon	90	(82.6%)	10	(9.2%)	7	(6.4%)	2	(1.8%)
2	What cartoon do you like most	<i>Sophia the First</i> 52 (48.9%)		<i>Henry Danger</i> 36 (33%)		<i>P J Masks</i> 25 (23%)			
3	Why do you like cartoon:								
3i	I want to be the hero, princess or prince of the children	10 (9.2%)							
3ii	I want to be popular like the cartoon character	20 (18.3%)							
3iii	I want to help others like the characters	18 (16.5%)							
3iv	I want to speak like the cartoon characters	25 (22.9%)							
3v	I need magical powers to change at different intervals	3(12%)							
4	Will you like to behave like your favourite cartoon character	Yes 92 (84.4%)		No 7 (6.4%)		Can't really say for sure 10 (9.2%)			
5	How often are you exposed to your choice cartoon	82	(75.2%)	18	(16.5%)	7	(6.4%)	2	(1.8%)
6	Do you remember and discuss what you watch in these selected cartoons	Yes 99 (90.8%)		No 5 (4.6%)		Can't say for sure 5 (4.6%)			

Data reveals in table 1 that on how often primary school children watch cartoons: 90 (82.6%) watch cartoons very often, 10 (9.2%) watch cartoons often, 7 (6.4%) watch cartoons sometimes, while 2 (1.8%) rarely watch cartoons. This shows that are greater number of primary school children in Awka who watch cartoons. On the cartoons they like most, 52 (48.9%) went for *Sophia the First*, 36 (33%) went for *Henry Danger*, while 25 (23%) went for *PJ Masks*. This means that most primary school children in Awka like *Sophia the First* more, followed by *Henry Danger* and lastly, *PJ Masks*. On why they like the cartoon, 10 (9.2%) says they want to be the hero, Princess or Prince of the children, 20 (18.3%) want to be popular like the cartoon characters, 18 (16.5%) want to help others like the characters, 25 (22.9%) wish to speak and like the cartoon characters whereas, 3(12%) need magical powers to change at different intervals. This means that the reason most primary school children in Awka like the cartoon is that they wish to speak and like the cartoon characters.

On whether they would like to behave like their favourite cartoon characters, 92 (84.4%) say yes, 7 (6.4%) say no, and 10 (9.2%) can't really say for sure. Implied that most primary school children in Awka would like to behave like their favourite cartoon characters. It was also found that 82 (75.2%) of the respondents observed that children are very often exposed to their choice cartoon, while 18 (16.5%) say they often watch the choice cartoon, 7 (6.4%) say they sometimes watch the choice cartoons, and 2 (1.8%) rarely watch their choice cartoon. This implies that a higher percentage of the children always watch their favourite cartoon films, an indication of children's familiarity with cartoons and cartoon characters.

Respondents' view on whether the children remember and discuss what they watch in these selected cartoons, 99 (90.8%) says yes they do, 5 (4.6%) said no, while 5 (4.6%) can't say for sure if they do. This is to say that a higher percentage of primary school children in Awka remember and discuss what they watch in these selected cartoons.

Research Question Two: What is the gratification derived by primary school children from exposure to the selected cartoon films in Awka Anambra state?

Table 2: Percentage Scores of Pupils on the Gratification Derived by Primary School Children from Exposure to the Selected Cartoon Films in Awka Anambra state

N = 109

S/N	ITEMS	YES	NO	CAN'T SAY FOR SURE
1	Does children's exposure to the selected cartoons provide any kind of gratification to them	95 (87.2%)	10 (9.2%)	4 (3.7%)
2	What kind of gratification does the cartoon?			
2i	They are educational	11 (10%)		
2ii	Helps children's socialisation with others	34 (31%)		
2iii	It teaches good behaviour	16 (15%)		
2iv	It helps children's development	29 (27%)		
2v	It is used for children's entertainment	19 (17%)		

Respondents' view on whether children's exposure to the selected cartoons provides any kind of gratification to them, 95 (87.2%) say yes that it does; 10 (9.2%) says no while 4 (3.7%) can't say for sure. This means that a higher percentage of primary school children are of the view that exposure to selected cartoons provides a kind of gratification to them. Respondents' view on kind of gratification the cartoons offer to the children

show that 11 (10%) perceive that these cartoons are educational, 34 (31%) is of the view that it helps children's socialization with others, 16 (15%) says it teaches them good behavior, 29 (27%) says it helps child's development while 19 (17%) says that it is for children's entertainment. This implies that majority of the children is of the view that exposure to the selected cartoons helps children's socialization with others.

Research Question Three: In What ways do the primary school children engage the cartoon characters in the selected movies in Awka Anambra state?

Table 3: Percentage Scores of Pupils on Ways Primary School Children Engage the Cartoon Characters in The Selected Movies in Awka Anambra state

S/N	ITEMS	YES	NO	NOT SURE
1	Do children engage the cartoon characters in the selected movies in the classroom	104 (95.4%)	4 (3.7%)	1 (0.9%)
2	What ways do children engage such cartoon characters?			
2i	They try to emulate the violent and bad behavior of their favourite cartoon character	14 (12.8%)		
2ii	They emulate the cartoon characters' good behavior	27(24.8%)		
2iii	They copy and speak like the cartoon characters	35 (32.1%)		
2iv	They like dressing like their choice character	33 (30.3%)		
3	In what ways does the selected cartoon help in children's socialization with other children?			
3i	Aids them in discussing various cartoon series and contents	109 (100%)		
3ii	We discuss the latest cartoons in the market	109 (100%)		
3iii	We talk about various cartoon materials in the market like wrist watches of various cartoons not only the selected ones	109 (100%)		
3iv	Discussion on popularity- the hero, the strongest man etc	109 (100%)		
3V	Discussion on dressing code as seen in the favourite character	109 (100%)		
3Vi	Demonstration some of these characters in the classroom	109 (100%)		
4	What are the lessons children learn from these cartoons? Children learn:			
I	Morals and values	18 (16.5%)		
Ii	Creativity	13 (11.9%)		
Iii	How to speak good	17 (15.6%)		
Iv	How to dress well	16 (14.7%)		
V	Team work	20 (18.3%)		
Vi	Defence	14 (12.8%)		
Vii	Violence	11(10.1%)		

Respondents' view on whether children engage the cartoon characters in the selected movies in the classroom shows that 104 (95.4%) says yes it does, 4 (3.7%) says no while 1 (0.9%) can't say for sure. This implies that greater part of primary school children in Awka perceive that children engage the cartoon characters in the selected movies in the classroom. Respondents views on the ways children engage such cartoon characters show that 14 (12.8%) perceive that children try to emulate the violent and bad behavior of their favourite cartoon characters like fighting, quarrelling, desiring magical powers, heroism as in *PJ Masks*, 27(24.8%) says they emulate the cartoon characters good behavior like team work in Sophia, fighting together to combat evil and friendship as in *PJ Mask* and *Henry danger*; 35 (32.1%) says the children copy and tries to speak like the cartoon characters, some talk well and speak good English like them, some like addressing other children, acting and speaking like the hero, 33 (30.3%) likes dressing like their choice characters especially wearing good look like Sophia. This means that to a higher percentage of primary school students, ways children engage with cartoon characters is by copying and tries to speak like the cartoon characters; some talk well and speak good English like them, some like addressing other children, acting and speaking like the hero.

Respondents' view on ways the selected cartoon helps in children's socialisation with other children, 109 (100%) of them asserted that exposure of children generally to cartoon films aids children's socialisation, especially in discussing various cartoon series, the contents and the latest cartoons in the market. This shows that all the children perceive it as a way the selected cartoon helps in children's

socialisation with other children. Also, 109 (100%) views that discussing of various cartoon materials in the market like wrist watches, school bags, sandals, games, T-shirts, etc of various cartoons, not only the selected ones, are ways the selected cartoon helps in children's socialisation with other children. This means that all the primary school children in Awka perceive it as a way the selected cartoon helps in children's socialisation with other children.

Also, 109 (100%) discussed popularity, the hero or the strongest man, Prince or Princess among them and also discussed dressing code as seen in their favourite characters and always try to speak and dress like them. All of them also agreed that they demonstrate some of these characters in the classroom. This shows that all the items are ways the selected cartoon helps in children's socialisation with other children.

Respondents view on the lessons children learn from these cartons, 18 (16.5%) view that children learn morals and values, creativity 13 (11.9%); that children learn how to talk well and speak good English 17 (15.6%); how to dress well 16 (14.7%); 20 (18.3%) perceive that children learn team work; 14 (12.8%) says it is defence while 11(10.1%) says it is violence.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this research agree with social learning theory adopted in this work which slates that most human behavior is learned observationally through modeling from observing others who in this case are the cartoon characters. This is in tandem with the literature reviewed from the work of two co-authors Hibi and Zebra, (2012) on "Cartoon

influence on child's psychology and behavior patterns" which discovered that children at early developing stage consider things written in cartoon to be real because of their feeble mind and equally believe and replicate such behaviours. The example of Mukarram, 8 in primary two who when asked for an explanation for beating up a fellow student, replied, he was just showing his friend one of the moves he saw in cartoon the night before. This is one of the ways these "copycats" engage the behavior of their favourite cartoon characters.

Also, the earlier findings from the work of Odishika, et al (2020) and Reseki (2021) that children under the age of ten are much interested in watching and imitating what they watch especially speaking like their favourite cartoon characters is another indicator of cartoon influence and children's engagement behavior of the choice characters. Another major finding from this work is the clamour for cartoon materials by the children revealed by Okonkwo (2012) and Hassan and Daniyal (2013) while narrating the influence of TV programmes on children. The study also identified that most children take to heart what they watched in cartoons by recalling and using the content after exposure. Some equally imitate what they watch and practice same. This socialisation influence of cartoons on children helps in killing the spirit of timidity and inferiority complex in most children.

The findings so far affirm that the theories used in this study appropriately address how television cartoons help in shaping children's social behaviour. Children engage in a form of social learning process as they replicate the behaviour of characters they see in cartoons.

They always try to speak, dress, act, walk and behave the same way as their favourite cartoon characters. The findings show that while children are watching cartoons, there is a form of learning process that is going on. Also, whatever children learn while watching cartoons, they tend to act it out, thereby influencing their mode of socialisation with other children and with the world in general.

Conclusion

The results of this study show that primary school children are frequently exposed to television cartoons and that this level of exposure plays a significant role in shaping their behaviour. Children seem to identify with cartoon characters they choose as role models for themselves and integrate them into their relations in their social life and into their games, and they reflect the positive or negative manners they gain from these characters in their lives.

Recommendations

This study, in view of its findings on the cartoon characters' engagement behaviour of primary school children, reveals that children regularly watch the selected cartoon films and others than any other television programme and this has some negative and positive influence on their behaviour. But the influence can be made positive by a little effort on the part of parents or elders, the government, movie censoring board and other related agencies. Therefore, the following recommendations are made.

1. Since family is one social institution that plays a vital role in shaping children's social behaviour, parents and guardians should devote ample time to educate their wards on what they watch on the emouiin.nl or cartoon TV scions,

keep an eye on their activities and observe peculiar changes in their behavior and pay a little heed towards providing selective cartoons that will have a positive impact on them. By doing so, parents can help their children to interpret television materials and overcome the effects that televised violence has on their attitudes and behaviour.

2. Parents/guardians should make their kids realize that these fantasy things in most cartoons have no true value and identity. Like no such 'Spiderman' exists who will jump from top of one building to another with the help of his web. That if someone is killed or beaten in cartoons, it does not mean that kids will start doing the same.
3. Also parents should have an interrogation session with their children and try to clear the reality of things, and answer controversial and ambiguous questions they have in their minds.
4. Video producers/entertainment TV stations should be mindful of the children in the packaging of their movies and programmes as this can shape the behaviour of children who are still in their formative stages. They should not sacrifice morality on the altar of profit-making but should be mindful of promoting programmes of positive impact on the consumers.

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