AN EXAMINATION OF PARENTAL AWARENESS AND MEDIATION

OF MEDIA CONSUMED BY FIFTH GRADE STUDENTS

by

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B.S., Elementary Education, Kansas State University, 1997

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AN ABSTRACT OF A DISSERTATION


submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree


DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY


Department of Curriculum and Instruction
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# Abstract

This dissertation investigated parental roles in mediating television, music, and the Internet for their children--specifically their fifth graders. Seventy two parents, representing forty seven fifth graders took part in the study. The Television Mediation Scale (Valkenburg, Kremar, Peeters, & Marseille, 1991) provided a framework for the instrument used. Parents were asked a series of questions dealing with television, music, and the Internet. Responses were given on a four point Likert scale. Additionally, participants were asked to estimate the amount of time spent with each medium, discuss the rules in place, the concerns they have with the media, and what principles guide their decisions about how their child uses each type of media.

Regarding television, results indicated that parents utilized the restrictive mediation style in which parents set rules for viewing television programs or even prohibit certain shows from being seen. Although parents report using restrictive mediation, more than likely co-viewing is being used most frequently (Weaver & Barbour, 1992). This is plausible when applied to this study considering how close the Mean values are between restrictive mediation (3.36) and co-viewing (3.28).

Statistically, no significant findings were reported in regards to music and Internet mediation. However, from a qualitative viewpoint, a wealth of data was gathered regarding the guiding principles and rules that are in place in each home regarding the media.

Overall, parents report being knowledgeable of the media that their child uses and are comfortable with the rules in place and the principles that guide their decisions. The results of the study indicate that parents are aware of how their child/children interact with the media but

an element of education for parents and even educators in the schools may be missing. Parents

must stay abreast of new technologies and continually monitor ways in which their child/children

use that technology.

If parents believe that they are helpless against the power the media has over their

children they are conceding a loss to the media's influence. However, if parents stay involved in

their child's life and stay up-to-date on the newest technologies and what children gain from

using this technology, then there is no reason to believe that we are powerless against the media.

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# DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my mom and dad, Mike and Cookie Springer. Thirty six years ago you took a chance on a baby boy and gave me all of your love, care, guidance, and support. You have instilled in me the desire to succeed, persevere, and be the best "me" I can be--even when the odds seemed stacked against me. I am so proud to be your son. Thank you for your endless love and inspiration. I love you both very much! This is for you.

# CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

We are living in an era of globalization (Richards, & French, 2000; Duffelmeyer, 2004; Saeidabadi, 2008; (Brown & Fitzpatrick, 2010) which has ushered in a wide variety of new and innovative technological mediums such as the television, movies, music, and internet (Fitzpatrick, In Press; Freyvaud, 2008). These mediums are being utilized as a means of establishing a global connectedness and represent resources for linking communities worldwide (Hepp, 2006). As digital natives (see Prensky, 2001, 2005) grow and mature into adolescence, they typically interact and consume each of these technological and media mediums differently than their digital immigrant counterparts (Fitzpatrick & Knowlton, 2009). According to Wartella and Jennings (2000) as children begin showing preferences towards program content as soon as they are introduced to media. Regardless of the media medium, children now are capable of accessing the world around them. Additionally, they use the media to identify with a particular group, for entertainment, education, and socialization (Brown & Marin, 2009). This simple reality has raised several concerns for parents, educators, and political and religious leaders (American Academy of Pediatrics, 1999; Barkin, Ip, Richardson, Klinepeter, Finch, & Krcmar, 2006; Strasburger & Wilson, 2002).

From this perspective it is difficult to refute that media plays a central role in the lives of today's students (Roberts, Foehr, & Rideout, 2005). For example, watching television is the number one after school activity reported by children between 7-and-8 year olds. Similarly, Gentile and Walsh (2002) discovered that 20% of adolescents reported watching more than 44 hours of television each week. On average, American children between the ages of 2-and-17 reported watching 25 hours per week of television. Subsequently, research conducted by the

Roberts et al. (2005) of youth between the ages of two-to-eighteen supported Gentile and Walsh (2002) findings and revealed:

- 99% lived in homes with TV sets.

- 60% resided in homes with three or more TVs.

- Over half had a TV in their own bedroom.

- 70% owned video game consoles.

- 69% lived in homes with personal computers.

- The number of people with access to the internet had grown from 47% in 1999 to 74% in 2005.

Based on these results, it is reasonable to assume that these percentages will continue to increase as media exposure continues to expand to meet the increasing demands of 21$^{st}$ Century consumers (Fitzpatrick, In press; Kaiser Family Foundation, 2010). Moreover, considering that 99% of homes have a television, it remains the most popular media outlet (Knowledge Networks, 2010).

**Historical Overview**

Times are changing (Obama, 2008) and the focus of how society utilizes and corporations market new technologies is constantly evolving (Sood & Tellis, 2005) Sood and Tellis (2005) suggested that it is essential to understand how new technologies are created and how they compete with existing mediums. Furthermore, advances in technology provide a dominant avenue for media expansion. Historically, the face of media began to change at the end of World War II. The youth market began to change demographically with the increased birth rate due to the postwar baby-boom (Osgerby, 2008). As family incomes rose (Romer, 2008), American society slowly shifted towards what Lindsey (2007) referred to as *mass hedonism*. This

theoretical construct manifested itself as citizens beginning to open their wallets and purchase numerous consumer goods and services (Osgerby, 2008).

The 1950s birthed the Baby Boomer generation (Sterheimer, 2003). Unlike their predecessors, they were credited with being the first generation to become acclimated to the new media environment and become more accepting of their roles as consumers. Sternheimer (2003) stated:

> *Following strict rationing of goods during World War II, consumption and the widespread availability of goods was celebrated. It became patriotic to spend instead of conserve. Families could carry more debt, with home mortgages requiring less of a down payment. This time also represented the introduction of the credit card* (p. 30).

Interestingly, this was a strikingly different role than previous generations. For example, in 1956, the average teenager had as much to spend on consumer goods as the average family during the 1940s (Cox, 1997; Halberstam, 1993).

More recently, Roberts et al. (2005) reported that media within the United States during the mid-20th century consisted of (a) print media; (b) theatre; (c) radio; (d) movies; (e) television; and (f) records, 8 track tapes, and cassettes. Conversely, as we enter the 21st Century, the media landscape has broadened its perspective to encapsulate (a) broadcast and podcasts, (b) cable and satellite, (c), digital audio (e.g., CD and mp3) and video players (e.g., DVD and Blu-Ray), (d) personal computers and netbooks, (e) cell phones, (f) video games, (g) global positioning devices, and (h) a plethora of different personal and professional technologies specifically developed to help American's maintain their quality of life (Brey, 1997)

With such a wide variety of media resources, companies are now allocating assets to marketing these new advances towards children and adolescents (Roberts, Christenson, & Strange, 2004). With 99% of households having a television (Knowledge Networks, 2010), one

may safely assume that television would be the media outlet that is chosen by marketing executives to deliver their product message.

When investigating the media, it is important to understand that despite the prevalence of text based materials and radio broadcasts the introduction of the television was immensely important (Munasib & Bhattacharya, 2010; Steyer, 2002) Although television competed with these other forms of media, it relied mostly on advertising, thus exposing Americans to new products and services (Romer, 2008). Increased commercial exposure played a critical role in American society because it showed that the media had the ability to influence people.

Many experts (Hogan, 2001; Fletcher, 2006; Jackson, Brown, & Pardun, 2008; Strasburger & Wilson, 2002) have claimed that the messages adolescents receive through television and other media play a major role in the development of adolescents in American society. Traditionally, adolescence is a time when young teens encounter an assortment of messages that influence and aid in the formation of their personal identities. The dilemma that adolescents encounter, however, remains that many of these aforementioned messages contain misinformation (Hogan, 2001).

**Theories of Adolescent Media Consumption**

According to Larson (1995) adolescents use the media for a variety of purposes including (a) identify formation, (b) culture identification, (c) coping, (d) entertainment, and (e) social networking. Given the influx of time adolescents spend interacting with media research suggests that the media does play a role in adolescent development (Escobar-Chaves, Tortolero, Markham, Low, Eitel, & Thickstun, 2005).

In the early 1900s, Cooley (1922) claimed that we learn by interacting with others and that we develop our self identity in three different phases:

- Phase 01: We imagine how we present our-self to ourselves and others.

- Phase 02: We imagine how others evaluate us.

- Phase 03: We develop some sort of feeling about ourselves.

As noted above, the media has the potential to influence this process of self identification as adolescents form ideas of how they should be or perceived (Martin, 2008; Schooler, Kim, & Sorsoli, 2006). This has major implications when considering Bandura's social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1977). Social cognitive theory posited that individuals learn by watching what others do and that human thought processes are central to understanding personality. Unlike Cooley's (1922) phases, Bandura (1977) social cognitive theory is of particular interest in the study of the influence of mass media. Bandura (1977) posited that exposure to media, particularly heavy engagement, has the ability to influence one's behavior and actions. The modeling becomes a learned behavior that influences decision making. This is converse to Cooley's idea of development of one's own self-identity.

According to Romer (2008), Bandura concluded that modeling an observed behavior did not necessarily result in simple mimicry. Bandura conducted a well known experiment in which children watched an adult attack a blow up punching bag referred to as a Bobo doll (Kirsh, 2006). The adult was either rewarded by a second adult or punished by another adult. The third possible outcome was that there were no consequences. The children were then taken into a playroom that included numerous toys including a Bobo doll. Bandura found that children who witnessed the aggression towards the Bobo doll were more likely to act aggressively than those who did not view the aggressiveness (Freedman, 2002; Strasburger & Wilson, 2002). Furthermore, Romer (2008) suggested that a continual rise in programming that focused on adolescent characters became more prevalent. This focus played an even stronger influential role

in the lives of adolescents as they became increasingly avid consumers of this media programming.

Despite these two differing theories, Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, and Signoriello (1986) suggested that with additional access points, popular media may replace more worthwhile activities. Moreover Larson (1995) argued that as adolescents begin to form their own sense of self as the way they consume media becomes more individualistic. Ultimately, as consumers, they will inevitably interpret these messages to fit their own stylistic sense, regardless what the sources main intention (Larson, 1995). Although this reality has led to several questions regarding the media's power to influence adolescence social and life outcomes, the critical question continues to be "*Are parents powerless over the influence that the media may have over their child/children?*"

**Significance of Study**

As noted above, adolescents use a variety of media outlets, but very little has been studied on parental roles in mediating the messages that are presented to their child/children (Barkin, Ip, Finch, Slora, & Wasserman, 2006). Given that adolescence is a time when children spend much more time using media and significantly less time interacting with their family (Arnett, 1995), it is vital to evaluate how parents communicate with how their child/children consume different media mediums (e.g., television, music and the Internet).

This study will add to the emerging field of media literacy, specifically for students in the elementary school setting. Moreover, the results of this study will provide additional research from a Midwest perspective on how parents of fifth graders contend with the messages their child/children receives from their constant interaction with the media. Finally, the results could

allow both parents and educators to evaluate how to incorporate media literacy as a supplemental instructional tool into their homes and classrooms.

**Purpose of the Study**

The primary purpose of this study is to examine the degree to which parents and caregivers are informed of their fifth grade child/children use of media--specifically focusing on television, music, and the Internet--and investigating the methods they used for regulating media usage. Additionally, the major goals are to (a) explore media content used by adolescents, (b) the extent to which various media is consumed, and (c) to explore the relationships that parents and caregivers have with their adolescents as they relate to media and media regulation. All data that is gathered is from the perspective or parents and caregivers.

**Implications for the Study**

This study provides a foundation for future research conducted regarding media literacy. It will provide insight into the role that parents partake in regulating media messages for their child/children. The study will also provide insight into how parents connect and communicate with their child/children about the media. Additionally, this research may be synthesized with other media research to supply additional resources in the field of mass media and/or media literacy.

**Research Questions**

The researcher utilized the Television Mediation Scale (Valkenburg, Kremar, Peeters, & Marseille, 1991) as a blueprint for the survey that was sent out to respondents. This instrument sought responses to numerous questions dealing with television, music, and the Internet. After a

review of literature and determining the focus of the study, the following research questions were developed:

- Question #1: In what ways and to what extent do parents of fifth grade students regulate television usage in their home? The following information was categorized into four dependent variables:

    o Discussion with the child,

    o Time descriptions,

    o Rules and restrictions both with the child and when the parents were children,

    o Principles used in the discussion process.

- Question #2: In what ways and to what extent do parents of fifth grade students regulate music in their home? The following information was categorized into four dependent variables:

    o Discussion with the child,

    o Time descriptions,

    o Rules and restrictions both with the child and when the parents were children,

    o Principles used in the discussion process.

- Question #3: In what ways and to what extent do parents of fifth grade students regulate the Internet in their home? The following information was categorized into three dependent variables:

    o Discussion with the child,

    o Time descriptions,

    o Rules and restrictions with the child, and

    o Principles used in the discussion process.

**Definition of Terms**

*Active Mediation*: Active Mediation involves parents or guardians taking time to talk with their children about what they are watching on television (Kirsh, 2006).

*Adolescence*: an age when :children go through rapid physical and emotional changes, have less contact with adults, and make the challenging transition out of elementary school" (Steyer, 2002, p. 52)

*Digital Immigrant*: an individual who was born before the existence of digital technology and adopted it to some extent later (Prensky, 2001).

*Digital Natives*: a person who was born after the general implementation of digital technology, and as a result, has had a familiarity with digital technologies such as computers, the Internet, mobile phones, and digital audio players over their entire lives (Prensky, 2001).

*Mass Hedonism*: pleasure or happiness is sought by all without consideration of the consequences or results (Lindsey, 2007; 2009).

*Parental Mediation*: "any strategy parents use to control, supervise, or interpret [media] content" (Warren, 2001, p.212)

*Restrictive Mediation*: Restrictive mediation allows parents to control their children's television consumption through rules and limitations (Nathanson, 1999). This may include eliminating the ability to view certain types of programs or content.

*Social Cognitive Theory*: A theory that suggests that humans can learn through observation without imitating the observed behavior (Bandura, 1991).

*Social Co-Viewing*: Social co-viewing is defined as parents and children watching television together without discussing the content (Mendoza, 2009; Nathanson, 1999).

Media literacy: "a framework to access, analyze, evaluate, and create messages in a variety of forms--from print to video to the Internet" (Thoman & Jolls, 2005, p.21).

**Summary**

As digital natives grow and their counterparts--the immigrants--explore the availability of new media surrounding them, a "digital world" (e.g., digital era see Fitzpatrick, in Press) of access opens its doors daily, revealing new experiences. The increase in exposure to these different mediums further details the ways in which the media may serve as an agent of influence. Many experts have claimed these messages perceived from the media play a role in the daily development of adolescents in today's society. With the bombardment of messages from the media, it is crucial that parents remain vigilant in mediating these messages (Levine, 1998; Singer, Miller, Guo, Flannery, Frierson, & Slovak, 1999). Thus, the purpose of this study should provide insight into the key roles that parents play when determining what media is appropriate and what is not appropriate. Finally, the research will discover the driving principles behind the decision-making process that parents and guardians must go through when regulating the media for their child/children.

# CHAPTER 2 - LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter II reviews relevant literature related to the research questions and hypotheses of this study. This chapter presents ideas related to:

- Censorship of the arts from the time of Plato and proceeds through to the Protecting Cyberspace as a National Asset Act (PCNAA) in 2010.

- Adolescent development with discussions about Erikson and Bandura.

- Television becomes the focus and violence in television is defined, the theories regarding violence in the media as they relate to Gerbner, Vygotsky, Banduyra, and Erikson, as well as ratings and how the government has tried to regulate various media outlets.

- Music's influence on youth regarding aggression and how parents regulate music.

- The Internet and how it is regulated worldwide and studies associated with how the Internet is used in the United States by adolescents.

From digital media-to-print based mediums all forms of mass media are competing for the attention of today's adolescence and youth (Anderson, & Hanson, 2009; Christakis, & Zimmerman, 2009). As briefly discussed in Chapter I, mass media has been a topic that parents, educators, and political and religious leaders have struggled with regarding what should be deemed appropriate versus inappropriate content (Kaiser Family Foundation, & American Center for Children and Media, 2009; United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2010). The following section provides an overview of how these debates have created a conundrum regarding how censorship has influenced society's consumption of mass media.

**Historical Censorship**

Throughout history, censorship, has played a pivotal role in how art and literature have been viewed (Steyer, 2002). For example, as early as 3rd Century BC, leaders of the Chinese Ch'in Dynasty understood that the way to maintain order and control of their population was to restrict, or even deny, access to created works (Newth, 2001). Qin Shihuangdi, First Emperor of China, was best known for burning books and burying 460 Confucian thinkers alive, in an effort to restrict free thought.

However, according to Kirsh (2006) one of the earliest instances of media censorship was in 339 BC when Socrates was accused, tried, and executed for corrupting Athenian youth with his teachings and oral story-telling. Additionally, Adolf Hitler also implemented severe forms of censorship including taking over national newspapers, publications, and radio stations that broadcast any ideals that differed from the views of the Reich (Norwegian Forum for Freedom of Expression, 1995) Censorship was not just limited to overseas instances. The United States has a history of censorship dating back to 1893.

In 1893 Edison invented the kinetoscope. This device was considered the earliest cinematography machine because it allowed an individual to *peek through* a tiny hole and view moving images (e.g., pictures) that created motion (Kirsh 2006). According to (Starker, 1989) it took less than one year for senators to condemn the kinetoscope as a major contributor to the moral decay of the Nation's youth. Similarly, in an apparent attempt to undermine this new technology, several newspapers began publishing articles denouncing the kinetoscope and made claims that it was responsible for corrupting the values of young impressionable minds (Kirsh 2006).

Based on the massive number of complaints and concerns, the *National Board of Censorship of Motion Pictures* was formed in 1909 (Kirsh, 2006; Picture Show Man, 2004). The Board instituted the Hays Production Code in 1930 which restricted vulgarity, revealing undergarments, the use of weapons--particularly guns--and compassion for criminals (Grieveson, 2004; Kirsh, 2006). Prior to abandoning the Hays Production Code in the late 1960s, (Starker, 1989), Hollywood went through a period of turmoil punctuated by the creation of the Black List. The purpose of the Black List was to identify members of the Screen Actors Guild (SAG) who were believed to share communist ideals. The Screen Actors Guild worked with the United States government to name these members which in turned ruined the careers of members of the organization (Ceplair, 1998). This time in screen history caused strife among members of the SAG.

In August 1968, new SAG president Valenti made the decision that the SAG could not allow the government the ability to censor films. November 1, 1968 was the day the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) created the current movie ratings system (The Classification and Ratings Administration, 2010).

More recently the focus of media censorship was evident in Lieberman's (2000) acceptance speech for the vice presidential nomination at the Democratic National Convention in 2000 when he stated that no parent should be forced to compete with the media to raise their children. A long time proponent of media censorship, Lieberman made his stance clearly obvious that popular culture--specifically mass media--has more influence on today's youth than their parents.

Senator Lieberman remains in the news a decade later after recently proposing the PCNAA in 2010 (GovTrack.us, 2010). This Act gives the President of the United States the

ability to shut down the Internet in times of a cyber emergency. Opponents of the bill state that it is one more way that government may gain control of the media. As of December 15, 2010 the PCNAA has been placed on the Senate Legislative Calendar under General Orders (Open Congress for 111th United States Congress, 2010).

**Adolescent Development**

Adolescence is characterized as a time when children go through many physical and emotional changes (Steyer, 2002; US Department of Education, 2005)  This is a time when they typically avoid communicating openly with adults (e.g. parents or educators) and generally focus on social interactions in an attempt to understand the world around them (Arnett, 1995; Steyer, 2002). Unlike when they were children, Arnett (1995) suggested that adolescents begin using media in order to formulate their identity.

The Kaiser Foundation (2009) conducted a study related to media consumption habits of eight-to-eighteen year olds (n=2,032). Findings revealed that the average participant spent over 8.33 hours each day interacting with some form of media. It is extremely troubling considering the average American student spends more time interacting with media more so than any other activity besides sleep. (Parents Television Council, 2007). Additionally that these findings suggested that mass media consumption contributes to a loss in family time (Children and Families, n.d.; Mendoza, 2009). Thus, it has become increasingly important for parents and educators to examine consumption and search if any correlations exist between (a) the exposure to a variety of different media mediums and (b) the influence exposure may have on behavioral outcomes (Villani, 2001).

Opponents of media consumption have argued that adolescence is a time when children--typically--spend less time interacting with their family and more time actively engaging with

media (Arnett, 1995; Arnett, Larson & Offer, 1995; Kaiser Family Foundation, 2009; Preidt, 2010; Steele & Brown, 1995). Adolescents use media as a comparative outlet to their own lives (Arnett, 1995). The problem with using media as a comparative outlet is that, adolescents are not using the media in the company of their parents, and are instead consuming the media alone (Larson, 1995) which potentially has dire effects.

As parents become less involved in their children's consumption habits, they have little ability to discuss such issues as (a) sex, (b) violence, (c) relationships, (d) drug use, or (e) life and death situations which are just a few examples explored in the media (Fitzpatrick, In press). Conversely, parents who do play an active role in the relationship their children have with the media, the potential for problems are greatly diminished (Fitzpatrick, In press). Further various studies suggested that when a parent discusses events in the media with their child, the way their child interprets specific events are greatly influenced (Mendoza, 2009; Messaris, 1982; Nathanson, 1999; Padilla-Walker, 2006).

According to Oswalt (2008), Erik Erickson was an ego-psychologist who worked to further and refine Freud's theory of human development. Erickson believed that a person develops their personality through eight different developmental stages. Adolescence was related to what Erickson (1963) deemed, *psychosocial crisis*, which pitted *ego identity* against *role confusion*. It was at this stage that he posited that an adolescent struggles to be oneself and make sense of his or her surroundings (Boeree, 2006; Cherry, 2005). Additionally, this stage is characterized by the attitude of the adolescent is always right and there is no other way other than theirs (Boeree, 1997; 2006).

Numerous research studies (see Kaiser Family Foundation, 2010; Roberts, Fiehr, Rideout, Brodie, 1999; Roberts, Foehr, & Rideout, 2005) exist examining media consumption

habits. Typically, the majority of these studies focus specifically on determining how much time consumers engage with television and--more recently--the internet (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2010). For example, according to the *Fifth Annual Survey of Parents and Children* (Woodward, & Gridina, 2000) children cite watching television as the number one after school activity. According to Nielsen Media Research (McDonough,2009), the average adolescent watches nearly twenty four hours of television per week, and these figures do not include watching videos at home or playing video games. More recently, Gentile and Walsh (2002) suggested adolescents are more apt to staying in their rooms to watch television than participating in other activities such as reading or other recreational hobbies. When calculating all of these facts and figures, total consumption indicates that adolescents spend between 35-and-55 hours in front of the television (Beg & Loveless, 2008).

Unfortunately this has created a significant gap in the literature because researchers have neglected to examine the relationship between parents and their children's consumption of different media mediums (Barkin, Ip, Richardson, Klinepeter, & Finch, 2006; Linebarger, Chernin, & Kotler, 2008). Given the lack of information related to this important issue, it is important that parents begin researching the different types of media available to their children and examine how they (e.g., their children) interact within the *digital age* (Fitzpatrick, In press). In essence, active engagement should help foster stronger relationships between parents and their children (Wartella & Jennings, 2000).

Prior to the advent of written word, story-telling was the primary means of communicating the values and morals of a society (Kirsh 2006). However, it should be noted that there were many disadvantages of story-telling because it was typically controlled by the story-teller and over time oral histories were often changed or forgotten (Hamilton, 1999). To address

these concerns, between 1700 and 2000 BC the Egyptians invented the alphabet which changed the way knowledge and information was shared (Holst, 2004). For example, words were carved in stone or written on papyrus or parchment which helped maintain continuity, yet, according to Kirsh (2006) written communication did not become prevalent until the invention of the printing press around 1455. Gutenberg utilized his invention to create the first book on the press, the Gutenberg Bible. Ironically, Starker (1989) suggested that during the eighteenth century, the Church condemned the written word as being an evil influence, nevertheless newspapers soon followed and began mass production of product which offered readers an abundance of information.

**Television & Movies**

It is essential to review the history of television in order to gain an understanding of how society has embraced this media medium. In 1948 less than 100,000 television receivers were in homes. Nearly ten years later, this number increased exponentially to nearly 50 million (Roberts, & Foehr, 2004). Conversely, as briefly discussed in Chapter I, consumers now live in a time when over 99% of American homes have at least one television set (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2010). Moreover, televisions are common in 68% of adolescent bedrooms (Roberts, Foehr, & Rideout, 2005). According to Gentile and Walsh, (2002) when a television is present in an adolescent's room, parents are less likely to monitor what is being watched and therefore remain less informed about the messages that their child is receiving. Interestingly, Klein, Brown, Childers, Oliveri, & Porter, (1993), suggested that by the time a student completes high school they have logged between 15,000 and 18,000 hours in front of the television versus 12,000 hours in the classroom. Similarly Strasburg (1992) reported that by the time a person has reached the

age of 70, they have spent a total of seven-to-ten years of their life in front of the television.

Interestingly, these findings appear to corroborate with E.B. White's 1938 prophecy:

> I believe television is going to be the test of the modern world, and that in this new opportunity to see beyond the range of our vision we shall discover either a new and unbearable disturbance of the general peace or a saving radiance in the sky. We shall stand or fall by television, of that I am sure. (Strasburger, & Donnerstein, 1999, p. 129).

**Television Violence**

For many American's television violence remains a primary concern (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2000; American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, 2002; Slotsve, del Carmen, Sarver, & Villareal-Watkins, 2008). For example, Rideout (2007) reported that 32% of parents ranked television as being the media outlet they are most concerned about inappropriate content. These concerns have been repeatedly substantiated when considering by the time the average American child reaches the age of 18, they will have witnessed over 200,000 acts of violence solely by watching television (Huston, Donnerstein, & Fairchild, 1992). Subsequently, Bushman and Huesmann (2006) conducted a meta-analysis and discovered that the long term negative impact of exposure to violent media (a) was much greater for children than adults and (b) increased the number of angry feelings, aggressive thoughts, and aggressive actions. Similar findings by Anderson, et.al. (2003) revealed that increased exposure to media violence lead to an increase in the acceptance of violence as a way of problem solving. Each of these have led researchers (Freedman, 2002; Kirsh, 2006; Malamuth, & Impett, 2001; Ravitch, & Viteritti, 2003;) to conclude that a correlation exists between observational learning when it comes to adolescents consuming television programming.

According to Paik (2001) films were the first mass medium that appeared on the social scene. As noted above, the first movies were primitive because they consisted of capturing a sequence of pictures to create motion such as horse races and fire engines roaring down the

street. However, films continued to evolve in a rather condensed period of time. For example, in 1903, Porter shot *The Great Train Robbery* and in 1915 Griffith introduced *The Birth of a Nation*. These two groundbreaking films were seemingly the catalysts for the beginning of movies and by the mid 1920s, film began to compete with radio and grew in popularity (Paik, 2001; Peace on the, 1944). By the end of the 1920s, nearly all movies were referred to as *talkies*, in which sound was an added feature of the film. The addition of voice and a musical score made this medium even more attractive to consumers (Paik, 2001).

Paik (2001, p.9) stated the average weekly movie attendance reached 95 million people per week in 1929 and fell slightly during the Great Depression. It climbed back up in 1936 although there was some times in which serious drops occurred in weekly attendance. In 1920, the radio was introduced to Americans and in 1946 the television arrived in homes, thus taking viewers away from the cinema. Additionally the TV eventually rose in popularity in the 1950s which resulted in the radio becoming a less prevalent medium of American life (Boyd, 2008; The 1950s: Media: Overview, 2001).

Initially movies were released to draw in adults and generate revenue (Dirks, 1996). However filmmakers recognized the marketability of films to children and began a new genre of film--the family film For example, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* was released in 1937 and was the first feature length animated film that was in color with a musical score. It appealed to all ages as did other family films including *The Wizard of OZ* which was released in 1939 and *Lassie Come Home* in 1943 (Paik, 2001).

Early television shows included family oriented scenarios but television was not free from the problems that music and other forms of media were subjected to. Beginning in the 1950s, opinionated leaders began to express outrage over the violence on television and in

movies (Anderson, Berkowitz, Donnerstein, Huessman, Johnson Linz, Malamuth, & Wartella, 2003; Hoerrner, 1999). For example, Potter (2003) reported that Congress became involved in an examination of concerns of television programming and in May of 1952 a Senate Subcommittee held hearings to evaluate television content and determine if there was any immoral programming being shown over the airwaves (Anderson, et. al, 2003; U.S. Congress House Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, 1952).

**Defining Violence**

It is important to understand the perspective of researchers when defining a term like violence. It is evident that the *experts* in the field tend to have very different opinions of providing an operational definition of media violence. Below is a brief chronological summary of different versions of how to define the term:

- Williams, Zabrack, and Joy (1982) defined violence as "physically aggressive behaviors that do, or could potentially could cause injury or death" (p.366).

- Mustonen and Pulkkinen (1993) were the first to introduce the idea of psychological harm into the definition by defining violence as "any action causing or attempting to cause physical or psychological harm to oneself, another person, animal, or inanimate object, intentionally or accidentally. Psychological harm was understood as assaulting verbally or non verbally" (p.177).

- Gerbner has conducted a number of studies of mass communications and its effects on culture. He defined violence as "an overt expression of physical force (with or without a weapon against self or others) compelling action against one's will on pain of being hurt and/or killed or threatened to be so victimized as part of the plot" (Gerbner, Gross, Jackson-Beeck, Jeffries-Fox, & Signorelli, 1978, p.179).

- The National Television Violence Study (Center for Communication and Social Policy,1998) defined violence as "an overt depiction of a credible threat of physical force or the actual use of such force intended to physically harm an animate being or group of beings" (p.18).

It should be noted that as detailed as each of the before mentioned definitions, it is difficult to conclude one overall generalization by the *experts*. Thus, these varying definitions do not provide evidence of a causal link due to the discrepancies in their definitions.

**Commissions on Violence and the Media**

Throughout history opinion groups and activist parties have tried to tie a causal link between television and movie violence--similar to violence in music discussed below--as a way to explain behavioral choices made by adolescents (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2009; Anderson, et. al. 2003; Rowell Huessman, Moise-Titus, Podolski, & Eron, 2003). For example, in 2000, the American Medical Association said that more than 1,000 studies "point overwhelmingly to a causal connection between media violence and aggressive behavior in some children" (Arvidson, 2000, p.1) In response Jonathan Freedman, a professor in the University of Toronto Department of Psychology in a comment suggested a causal link between entertainment violence and violent acts in children, but said "the majority of them do not. Normally, in science, you expect to get consistent results. It is irresponsible for any scientist to say that given the distribution of the results of studies, this is proven" (Arvidson, 2000, p. 2).

Further evidence of this was apparent when Vice President Gore (1998) stated that "Numerous national experts have demonstrated that children who do view a large amount of TV violence are significantly more likely to exhibit aggressive behavior. There is really no serious controversy about that linkage" (Potter, 2003, p.6). However, Potter (2003) suggested that using

causation as a simple tool is very dangerous and asking for failure. Table 2.1 contains a truncated

summary of various Committees and key findings which examined media violence.

Table 2.1

*Key Findings: Committees Investigating Media Violence*

| Committee, Date | Key Findings: |
| --- | --- |
| Senate Subcommittee (1964) | • Investigated Juvenile Delinquency<br>• Established link between viewed violence and antisocial behaviors among juvenile viewers.<br>• Television programming was not the most significant cause of their delinquency (Potter, 2003). |
| National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence (1969) | • Exposure to television increased physical aggression (Potter, 2003).<br>• Television was seen as the most credible and believable source of information; particularly for the poor (Baker & Ball, 1969). |
| United States Surgeon General (1972) | • A causal link exist between violent behavior and violence on television and motion pictures (US Public Health Service, 1972).<br>• Within hours of exposure, media violence increases children's aggressive behavior in the short term. |
| American | • Cautioned physicians and parents that television may promote |

| Committee, Date | Key Findings: |
|---|---|
| Academy of Pediatrics Task Force on Children and Television (1984) | aggressive behavior (Committee on Public Education, 2001).<br>• As much as 10%-to-20% of real life violence may be attributed to violence seen in the media. |
| US News and World Report Poll (1994) | • 92% of Americans think TV contributed to violence in this country.<br>• 65% think that entertainment programs on television have a negative influence on American life (Potter, 2003). |
| Broadcasting & Cable, J. Eggerton (1995) | • Reed Hunt, former chairman of the Federal Communication Commission announced an agenda to support restrictions on violent content on television.<br>• Chairman Hundt stated that television violence "affects behavior negatively to some measureable and meaningful degree" (Eggerton, 1995, p.13). |

| Committee, Date | Key Findings: |
|---|---|
| National Television Violence Study (1995) | • Studied the same three years of programming as the National Association of Broadcasters (1995).<br>• Analyzed 2,500 television programs and found violent themes in 58% of those programs.<br>• Discovered that the number of violent acts per hour on television were seven.<br>• The numbers increased from the first year of 58% to 61% over the next two years (Potter, 2003). |
| American Academy of Pediatrics - Committee on Public Education (2000) | • Recognized that exposure to violence in not only television, but music, movies, video games, and the Internet posed a significant risk to the health of children (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2001).<br>• Recommended that doctors should assess how their patients interact with media and intervene on any media-health related issues. |

These studies, while all investigating media violence, tried to draw a correlation between youth behavior and the media. However, all of the studies failed to do so. Furthermore, Henry Jenkins, professor of comparative media at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology stated:

The problem with current research on media violence and behavior is that cultural studies cannot be conducted in a sterile laboratory environment in the same way other medical research is done. Very few of us consume media in a sterile laboratory and cultural

factors have a major impact on how an individual reacts. Just studying a neurological response does not factor in how people interpret, translate, and make sense of the media they are using (Arvidson, 2000, p.1).

Defining violence is only one component of these studies. Once the violence is defined, the studies need to begin. However, theories must be developed in concert with these studies. The next section provides insight into these theories.

**Theories on Violence**

When examining the effects of television on adolescents three theories are typically presented (a) social learning theory, (b) catharsis theory, and (c) the cultivation theory. Each of these theories looks at violence in a different way. Social learning theory says that violence is a learned behavior, while catharsis theory states that when one witnesses violence, the act of seeing it takes away the need to participate in it. The cultivation theory is the most direct of the three and posits that the television, in fact, shapes the lives of viewers. These are important because they offer differing viewpoints as to why violence may play such a role in the lives of youth.

*Social Learning Theory*. Social Learning Theory stated the importance of observing and modeling behaviors. Bandura (1977) stated that "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" (p. 22). Bandura further explained that most human behavior is learned by observing those around us. Bandura sought to prove this hypothesis with his *Bobo Doll* experiment.

In this experiment, children observed an adult hitting, kicking, throwing, and acting aggressively towards a plastic clown doll. After they observed this behavior they were taken to a

room with very nice toys but were told that they could not interact with them. This built the frustration level in the children. They were then taken into another room where the identical toys that were used in the *Bobo* experiment were present. Bandura found that 88% of the children in the experiment imitated the aggressive behavior and eight months later, 40% of those same children reproduce the violent behavior seen in the same experiment (Isom, 1998).

Similarly to Bandura, Vygotsky's social development theory posits that children's development is enhanced by their observation of how people behave in the world around them, how they interact with one another, and how they interpret these interactions(Sternberg & Williams, 2002). This theory plays in concert with social learning theory when one applies it to the media. Vygotsky would warn that the violence children see on television would provide an opportunity for them to place value on what they see and perhaps repeat these actions.

According to Bandura (1977) there are four components to observational learning: (a) attention, (b) retention, (c) motor reproduction, and (d) motivation. People will not learn a behavior unless they attend to what is going on and pay attention to it:

- First, the observer must have the physical capabilities to complete the observed task.
- Second, they must then retain what they saw in their long term memory.
- Third, they must be able to reproduce the behavior.
- Finally, there must be a motivation present to provide a reward. These four stages were apparent when observing the children in the *Bobo* experiment (Isom, 1998).

In the case of the *Bobo* experiment, the children witnessed the adults receiving positive reinforcement for acting aggressively towards the doll. One may correlate this theory based on the *Bobo Doll* with that of any adolescent watching a television program. There is a high

possibility that as adolescents watch a program they make judgments based on what they see and may identify with what they are watching.

*Catharsis Theory*. Catharsis comes from the Greek word katharsis meaning *purging*. Feshbach, and Singer (1971) coined the catharsis theory which argues that fantasy violence may actually reduce the possibility for aggressive behavior in people because by viewing violence the negative feelings that they had prior to that are purged away. For example, psychiatrist Brill would prescribe watching a prize fight once a month to his patients in order to purge their aggressive feelings (Bushman, & Anderson, 2001).

Bushman and Anderson (2001) summarized results from the largest meta-analysis on violent media aggression and other medical field studies and found that the second largest correlation existed between media violence and aggression, second only to smoking and lung cancer. This meta-analysis led many to believe that the catharsis theory should be debunked. Moreover Scheff and Scheele (1980) caution that the theory of catharsis needed to be explored in greater depth and that those who identified with cathartic feelings when watching the media should be separated from those who do not experience those feelings and then studied separately in order to form more researchable generalizations.

*Cultivation Theory*. Cultivation theory was developed by Gerbner in 1977 and suggested that television is responsible for shaping a viewer's conception of reality. He argued that television presented what he termed the *mean-world syndrome* that projected insecurity and the feeling of being vulnerable, despite the sole purpose of television being entertainment (Potter, 2003, p. 46). He also distinguished between two groups of television viewers: light viewers and heavy viewers.

Light viewers were individuals who watched no more than two hours of television per day and heavy viewers were those who watched four or more hours of television per day (Gerbner & Gross, 1976). Gerbner and Gross (1976) posited that these heavy viewers were exposed to more violence on television than their light viewing counterparts and were therefore, more apt to be effected by the *mean world syndrome*.

Individuals who are heavy viewers are more apt to assume that crime is on the rise, despite the facts which may be to the contrary. Heavy viewers have also been shown to be *watchdogs* and to purchase guns. Being made to feel victimized is related to heavy viewing as well. When one watches television and continues to see someone of their own race victimized, they begin to relate with that victimization more than those who are light viewers (Oulette, 1997).

Beginning in 1967, Gerbner began to study television and annually release "Television Violence Profiles." These reports included generalizations made based on the research collected each year. These findings, published in a media guide by Oulette (1997), included the following findings:

- Both male and female characters, lower class, and characters with handicapping conditions, pay a higher price for violence on television.

- Major characters in Saturday morning programs for children were the most violent on television with 82% of male characters and 66% of female characters being involved in violence.

- Most killings were committed by Hispanic and lower class citizens.

Gerbner's theories and studies pose a strong argument for closely monitoring television viewing by children and adolescents. It is certainly plausible to believe that the constant barrage

of violent images in the programming that adolescents are watching may have a negative effect on them.

Despite these three primary theories, the question still remains about what a parent may do to counteract the supposed negative effects of television media on children and adolescents? The following section details ways that parents, the government, and even the media industry try to mediate themselves. A discussion of these methods follows.

**Media Ratings**

The Telecommunications Act of 1996, Public Law 104-104 became effective on February 8, 1996. Congress affirmed this Act by recognizing the following:

- Television influences children's perception of the values and behavior that are common and acceptable in society.

- Studies indicated that children are affected by the pervasiveness and casual treatment of sexual material on television, thus eroding the ability of parents to develop responsible attitudes and behavior in their children.

- Parents supported technology that would give them greater control to block video programming in the home that they consider harmful to their children.

- Compelling governmental interest in empowering parents to limit the negative influences of video programming that is harmful to children.

Furthermore the advisory commission recommended the creation of a new ratings system that would allow parents to be informed of whether or not the programming contained sexual, violent, or indecent material that parents may find objectionable.

This was also the time that legislation was passed that required any televisions manufactured in the United States that were 13 inches or larger to have the V-chip installed. This

chip would read information that was encoded into the programming and would block programs from being viewed that the parents deemed inappropriate.

The TV Parental Guidelines were created by the National Association of Broadcasters and the Motion Picture Association. The ratings are shown for the first fifteen seconds of programs that are rated and when used with the V-chip, parents are able to block programming they feel is not suitable for their children (Federal Communications Commission, 2009).

The following ratings, found on the Federal Communications Commission's website at www.fcc.gov/parents, appear in the upper left corner of the screens on all programming except news, sports, and unedited movies on premium channels:

- TV-Y (Directed to all children): Appropriate for all children, including 2-to-6 year olds.

- TV-Y7 (Directed to older children): Found only in children's shows and appropriate for children ages 7-and-up.

- TV-Y7-FV (Directed to Older Children - Fantasy Violence): Means that fantasy violence may be more intense or more combative than other programming in the TV-Y7.

- TV-G (General Audiences): Means the shows is suitable for all ages but is not necessarily a child's show.

- TV-PG (Parental Guidance suggested): Denotes that parental guidance is recommended and that the program may be unsuitable for younger children. It may also include a V for violence, S for sexual situations, L for language, or D for suggestive dialogue.

- TV-14 (Parents strongly cautioned): Indicates that the show may be unsuitable for children under 14. V, S, L, or D may accompany this rating.

- TV-MA (Mature Audience Only): Specifies that the program is intended to be viewed by adults and may be unsuitable for children under 17. The program also contains one or more of the following: V, S, L, or D.

According to Gentile (2008), this current ratings system has poor reliability. Gentile suggested that networks are able to rate their own programming and a show that may appear on one station may receive a completely different rating on another network. In a study conducted by Kunkel, Farinola, Cope, Donnerstein, Biely, Zwarun, and Rollins (2001), 2757 television programs were analyzed for content. Findings indicated that 79% of shows that contained violence did not include a V descriptor and among programming specifically designed for children, 81% did not include the FV descriptor. This leads some researchers to question the validity of the current system.

Perhaps the most important factor when dealing with television ratings and the V chip would be to study how parents utilize the technology--if at all--and how effective they perceive the system to be. From this perspective Rideout (2007) conducted a study on parents, children, and the media and discovered that over 80% of parents have purchased a television since the V chip was required, yet 57% did not even know that it was available on their television and of the parents that did know about it, 54% had not used the feature.

Kunkel, Farinola, Cope, Donnerstein, Bieley, Zwarun (1998) conducted a study aimed at evaluating the effectiveness of the V chip in recognizing violence, sexuality, and language content that may be deemed inappropriate for children. The study found that only 23% of general programming included the content descriptors and only 11% of children's programming contained the FV descriptor. They concluded that the V chip only blocks 1 out of 5 (20%) of programming rated TV-Y7 FV and that while the chip is a tool that may be utilized by parents,

its effectiveness must continue to be evaluated if it is to be truly used as a means of control for parents.

As discussed in chapter I, the media plays a vital role in the lives of adolescents and the V chip is under scrutiny, it is crucial to investigate other ways that parents may mediate the way their children interact with television.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (2001) has urged pediatricians to talk to parents about discussing television with their children. They also recommend restricting media consumption--particularly in young children. Warren (2001) defined parental mediation as 'any strategy parents use to control, supervise, or interpret content" (p. 212) to this, parents enforce rules and limit the way their children use the media. When discussing mediation, three strategies remain at the forefront: social co-viewing, restrictive mediation, and active mediation.

*Social Co-Viewing*. Nathanson and Yang (2005) defined social co-viewing as "the simple act of watching television with children" (p.1) without discussing the content. Restrictive mediation is "Setting rules on children's television consumption" (p. 1) such as what they are watching or the amount of time that they are watching. Active mediation refers to talking with children about what they are watching.

In addition to discussing the program, they also discuss the advertisements that they may see during the station breaks. Mendoza (2009) cited that active mediation may strengthen critical thinking skills about television and may have a positive effect on protecting children and adolescents from negative media messages. She also cited research that showed active mediation having more of a positive effect including decreasing aggression (Nathanson, 1999), lessening the negative effects of violent and sexual content with teens (Strasburger & Wilson, 2002), and increasing pro-social behavior (Nathanson, 2002). Children of parents who use the active

mediation style and are more involved feel more positively about talking with parents about what they are watching (RobbGrieco & Hobbs, 2009)

Austin, Fujioka, Bolls, and Engelbertson (1999) posited that parents with a positive outlook on television encourage their children to watch certain programs. Nathanson (1999) suggested that when children watch television with their parents they may incidentally increase the likelihood of seeing negative effects such as aggression because the parents are watching the programming but are not discussing it.

*Restrictive Mediation*. Restrictive mediation occurs when parents limit the use of the television and restrict the programming and content (Nathanson, 1999). Jordan, Hersey, McDivitt, & Heitzler (2006) explored how limiting television may be received as a strategy when used by parents and their school age children. Parents in the study reported that they had rules for their children, but that few had rules for the amount of television that was being watched. Typical rules that fell under the heading of restrictive mediation included forbidding children from watching certain types of programs as well as limiting the types of channels that they have access to. Some parents reported that they also had completely eliminated television use in their child's room. Conversely, Nathanson (1999) argued that restrictive mediation is ineffective because it may only cause children and adolescents to want to watch even more.

*Active Mediation*. Active mediation allows parents or guardians to use their influence to help their children work through what they see on television. Gentile & Walsh (2002) wrote that active mediation influences understanding, reactions to, and how children may imitate the programming that they see. Active mediation may increase conflict within the family when parents pass judgment on a program that they are watching with their child or adolescent. This may increase the possibility that communication conflicts could arise. Similarly Nathanson and

Botta (2003) determined that there were three categories that could fall under active mediation: positive, negative, and neutral:

- Positive active mediation referred to when a parent praised a particular show or endorsed it.

- Negative active mediation referred to parents critiquing the show.

- Neutral active mediation involved parents asking probing questions without passing any kind of judgment (i.e. "What do you think will happen next?" or "This show was filmed in New York.") (Mendoza, 2007).

The research focused on mediation of television is lacking in regards to which method is the most effective for adolescents. There is no doubt that parents must remain involved in the lives of their adolescents. Common Sense Media (2007) released the results of a national poll that found 57% of parents felt their adolescents were overusing media and that media consumption was even more concerning that smoking, drinking, sexual behavior, or being overweight.

Research on media consumption has consistently focused on children reporting their media habits (Rideout,2007; 2010; Nielsen, 2009). Parents need to remain involved in their adolescent's media consumption--not only television viewing--but also how their adolescent uses music and the Internet in order to provide guidance and support (Roberts, Fiehr, Rideout, & Brodie, 1999; Strasburger, Wilson, & Jordan, 2009)

**Music**

Within the past decade, music and music videos have come under fire by several groups for having a negative influence on the behavioral choices their children make (Potter, 2003). With all of the outside influences that are working on the youth of today - peer pressure, academic challenges, and positive body image awareness to name a few, there are many potential

causes for negative behaviors that some youth may exhibit. Music and music videos have become a scapegoat for many adults as a way to explain the poor choices that tend to be made by adolescents (Anderson, et. al., 2003; Christenson & Roberts, 1998; Moore, 2002;). The literature concerning the topic of music's influence on adolescent behavior is rather random and there is little consistency in findings (Arvidson, 2000; Smith, 2003; Sternheimer, 2003). Some critics (e.g., Martin & Segrave, 1993; Potter, 2003; Roberts, & Christenson, 2001) claim that violent lyrics and thunderous rhythms that exist in some musical genres are the cause of violent acts that occur daily. While others (Blankenhorn, 1995; Fagan, 1995; Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2008; Smith, 2007) argued the breakdown of the nuclear family, not music (or even movies, video games, and the Internet) is the main cause of unruliness in a small percentage of youth.

There are a number of resources available on the subject, both arguing for and against music's influence including scholarly books (e.g. Christenson & Roberts, 1998; Kirsh, 2006'; Martin & Segrave, 1993; Sternheimer, 2003), magazine articles (e.g., Boehlert, 1999; Gibbs, 2010; Shute, 2010; Wolmouth, 1995), the Internet (e.g., Dawursk, 2009; Liljequist, 2004; Thomson, 2010), and numerous audio and video resources (e.g., Donaldson, 2000; Moore, 2002). Given that popular music is a force in the lives of adolescents it plays an important role in their ability to identify with a certain group (Strasburger & Wilson, 2002). Not only do they listen to music on the radio, CD players, MP3 players, and iPods, but they also interact with it via music videos on television, at live concerts, and on the Internet.

These contexts play a crucial role in youth culture (Christenson & Roberts, 1998). The radio played a pivotal role in entertainment prior to the advent of television (Romer, 2008). Families gathered around the radio to listen to their favorite serials. The transition to the

popularity of television made for an interesting time. People were able to associate a visual

picture with the music. This association led to controversies being played out on television.

One of the first music controversies to appear on television occurred on June 5, 1956

when Elvis Presley appeared on Milton Burl's Texaco's Star Theatre show and performed

*Hound Dog* and *I Want You, I Need You, I Love You* (Christiansen & Roberts, 1998). This

performance earned him the nickname "Elvis the Pelvis" and the criticism prompted parents,

religious groups, and those in the media to associate rock music with juvenile delinquency (EP

Music, 2007).

The association between rock music and juvenile delinquency led to many

recommendations by outside committees and government agencies, particularly during the 1950s

(Nuzum, 2001). In 1955 and 1958 Congress held hearings on suggested links between rock

music and juvenile delinquency (United States Congress, 1955). Seemingly these hearings and

other smaller committees around the nation ignited the beginnings of a trend in censorship.

In 1962, the Radio Trade Practices Committee recommended that broadcasters preview

lyrics prior to being broadcast. In addition to this early form of censorship, the 60s birthed the

counterculture movement in which youth began anti-war demonstrations and protesters in order

to show their dismay about the Vietnam Conflict. It also saw the beginnings of the Sexual

Revolution. Mores and values were changing and people felt more inclined to explore their

sexuality and express themselves more freely (Marcuse, 1987). They spoke up for what they

believed in. Music served as a medium by which they could express themselves (Casutt, 2009).

This movement introduced the masses to numerous artists including Bob Dylan, Jimi Hendrix,

the Rolling Stones, The Doors, and the Beatles. Committees investigating popular culture were

not uncommon. In the late 1960s the Federal Bureau of Investigation investigated the Kingsmen

for their song Louie, Louie. A federal law was in place prohibiting the Interstate Transportation of Obscene Material. After a thirty month investigation, the FBI concluded that the lyrics were indecipherable and that prosecution would not be filed (Predoehl, 2006). Interestingly law enforcement agencies and the government were not the only parties to target musicians. For example, industry executives began to self-censor the songs playing on their stations (Nuzum, 2001).

The censorship trend continued into the 1970s and made it a memorable decade for music. In 1970, the Movement to Restore Democracy protested against rock music and stated that it promoted socialism (Nuzum, 2001). Several other groups attempted similar actions. That same year Vice President Agnew began a campaign to censor music due to the message that was being delivered through the lyrics. President Nixon called for a ban on songs containing references to drugs, war, or violence (Nuzum, 2001).

Drugs, war, and violence were concerns but to that point, no one had created a ratings system for music. Randall, a radio programmer, changed that in 1970 when he introduced the first ratings system for music. Song content was labeled in the following way: drugs (D), sex (S), and language (L) (Martin, & Segrave, 1993).

The 1970s were far from a calm time in music. However, according to Christenson and Roberts (1998) the year that caused the most controversy in the music industry occurred in 1985 which the formation of the Parents Music Resource Center (PMRC).

The PMRC was created by a group of influential politicians' wives with the sole purpose of lobbying for the lyrics of songs to be printed on the cover of record albums. They also wanted a ratings system for records and concerts. The PMRC released a list of the Filthy Fifteen--a list

of fifteen artists the PMRC deemed especially dangerous. The Filthy Fifteen included (a) Prince, (b) Sheena Easton, (c) Def Leppard, (d) AC/DC, (e) Motley Crue, (f) Twisted Sister, (g) Judas Priest, (h) Cyndi Lauper (Martin & Segrave, 1993), (i) Vanity, (j) Madonna, (k) W.A.S.P., (l) Mercyful Fate, (m) Black Sabbath, (n) Mary Jane Girls, and (o) Venom.

The PMRC managed to convince the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation to hold hearings on music lyrics and ways to control the material that appeared on record albums (Martin & Segrave, 1993; Nuzum, 2001). Ultimately the goal of the PMRC was about to be reached when the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) conceded to a voluntary labeling of albums (Diehl, 2001). While they agreed to this in late 1985, the categorization of albums did not go into effect until five years later. These *Parental Advisory Stickers* led to significant drops in sales of record albums and the RIAA told the artists to limit using them in order that sales would begin to rise once again (Nuzum, 2001).

The Parents Music Resource Center is no longer a force in politics, having lost their funding in the late 1990s. However, their influence is still apparent as records and songs still show the *Parental Advisory Sticker*.

In terms of today's music media, subject matter including sexuality and violence are still of great concern (American Psychological Association, 2003; Tropeano, 2006; United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2010; Williams, 2004). However, when the ball dropped on the new millennium, the focus on music was intensified as teachers, parents, and government officials struggled for a way to explain violence in schools-- particularly the school shootings at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado in April of 1999. The events at Columbine put the focus back on to violence in music (Moore, 2002).

Shortly after Columbine, a ten year review of research was conducted dealing with the impact of media on children. According to the review, the American Academy of Pediatrics stated that there was enough evidence dealing with the content of rock music that parents should be concerned about children becoming desensitized to the violence (Villani, 2002).

Furthermore, some studies have been conducted to try to prove a link between musical preferences and social behaviors. One study showed a strong correlation between a preference for rock music and antisocial behavior (King, Orr, Schrieber, Trinh, Thornberg, & Wolfe, 2002; Primack, Dalton, Carrol, Agarwal, & Fine, 2008). However, other studies have sought to find out if music or lyrical content had any effect on suicidal thoughts or anxiety levels. The results from this study showed that neither music nor the lyrics had any effect on anxiety or mood (Ballard & Coates, 1995).

Congress, aware of these studies, and driven by constituent concerns, decided to use their influence to try to pass several bills that would affect a change on the current media. Several bills were introduced, but failed to pass in Congress. These included:

- Media Marketing Accountability Act of 2001 (govtrack.us, 2001)--would have prevented entertainment companies from marketing adult materials to children.

- The Children's Protection from Violent Programming Act--designed to eliminate the negative impact of music lyrics containing violence, sexual content, criminal behavior, and other subjects not appropriate for children (105th Congress, 1997).

- 21st Century Media Responsibility Act of 2001)--would have required manufacturers and producers of music, film, and all video games to label violent content (Hughes, 2006).

Each was defeated because Congress recognized the First Amendment was ratified to prevent the government from taking control of the freedom of artists (Hughes, 2006).

**The Internet**

The Internet is a prominent force in the lives of both children and adolescents and its universal accessibility spans the globe. There certainly are exceptions to this, including China, Iran, and Cuba where the Internet is regulated by the government (BBC News, 2006; Howden, 2005).

As of June 2010, it is estimated that the number of Internet users was 1.97 billion users worldwide (Schoenfeld, 2009). Given the popularity of the Internet it is understandable that a vast amount of research exists. Some experts have suggested ways parents can begin regulating the internet for their teens (National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, 2010). Moreover there are certainly a number of studies that suggest *why* parents should be involved in the regulation of the Internet for their children. However, there is very little literature detailing *how* parents regulate their children's use of the Internet and even fewer studies that demonstrate the concerns regarding how they access and consume online environments.

The number of people who use the Internet has grown to nearly 1.9 billion people which is nearly 28.7% of the world's population (Miniwatts Marketing Group, 2010). Since the inception of the Internet and the availability of the *world at one's fingertips*, the Internet has been both a tool of academia and entertainment. Advancements in technology have made it affordable for most Americans to purchase a computer for in home use. That is not to say that a digital divide does not exist. The digital divide represents a gap between people and communities that have access to information technologies and those that do not (Brown & Fitzpatrick, 2010; Fitzpatrick & Brown 2009). Whether it is location or community resources, there is certainly a

population, that despite having the financial resources to purchase a computer, do not have access to the technology that the Internet provides (Dickard, & Schneider, 2009).

According to a Kaiser Family Study conducted in 2010, "the vast majority of all 8- to 18-year-olds have a computer at home, regardless of race or parent education" (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2010, p. 23). From this perspective, it becomes increasingly important for parents to know what their child may access while they are on the Internet. Further, the internet has been cited as being an important tool by which people may access important information (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2010). However, despite the positives (Louge, 2006; Rice-Hughes, 2001; Rehm, Allison, & Johnson, 2003; Valkenburg, & Soeters, 2001), it has also been criticized for an increase in the numbers of young people who use the Internet to access inappropriate materials such as pornography and violent content (Christian Concern, 2010; DeAngelis, 2007; Ybarra, & Mitchell, 2005). With the availability of inappropriate content and the fact that the Internet is largely unregulated, parents are becoming increasingly more vigilant when monitoring their child's Internet use.

As noted above, Internet use by children and adolescents is a subject that has received much attention over the past several years (Flemming, Greentree, Cocotti-Muller, Elias, & Morison, 2006; Lenhart, Madden, & Hitlin, 2005; Lenhart, Madden, Macgill, & Smith, 2007; Valkenburg, Schouten, & Peter, 2005). In addition to using the Internet for information searches, a staggering amount of children use it for communication including email, chat rooms, social networking, blogs, and instant messaging (Flemming et al., 2006; Kaiser Family Foundation, 2010; Lenhart et al., 2005).Communication is only one aspect of Internet use. Children are also cited as using the Internet to download, share, and listen to music; play games; access news and current events; socialize; as well as to watch videos (NetSafe Kids, 2003).

With so many uses for the Internet, parents need to effectively monitor how their child is using the Internet. Additionally, parents have reported that they are most concerned about their child giving out personal information, pop up ads, internet predators, adult content, exploitation, and prejudice (Knowledge Networks, 2009; Christian Concern, 2010).

An exorbitant amount of young adolescents are being exposed to unwanted material on the Internet each day. They are exposed to sexual materials, are sexually solicited, and even harassed (Finkelhor, Mitchell, & Wolak, 2000; 2005). The following are some statistics:

- Approximately 20% of youth between 10-to-17 were sexually solicited or contacted via the Internet in 2009.

- Twenty five percent of youth were exposed to pictures of nude adults or pictures of people having sex.

- One-in-17 were threatened or harassed.

- Nearly 25% who were sexually solicited told a parent.

- In homes with the Internet, 33% of parents had some kind of filtering program on their computer.

While there are some who believe the Internet is a dangerous place for children, others believe that incidences of sexual solicitation and cyber bullying are actually decreasing. "The data suggests that rates of bullying and sexual solicitation are not increasing and may actually be decreasing. This is also true for the distress levels experienced by kids online" (Ybarra, 2010, p. 2).

Ybarra's (2010) study investigated 1,600 kids between the ages of 10-and-15. The study found that 62% had not been involved in internet harassment--either as victim or perpetrator-- over the course of one year. Of the remaining subjects, 17% had been both perpetrator and

victim. Three percent of harassers have not been victimized themselves, while 18% had been victimized but not harassed. Ybarra's (2010) research concluded that kids that are most likely to be victims of Internet harassment exhibited the following characteristics:

- They are two times more likely to be white instead of non-white, more likely to come from affluent homes, and are nine times as likely as those that are not victims to harass others.

- Those who were harassed online are more than two times likely to be harassed offline.

With the influx of new sites being created every second on the Internet, the potential for adolescents being exposed to inappropriate content is astronomical. Many parents try to regulate their adolescent's Internet use but with the availability of mobile devices with Internet access, it is even more difficult to monitor.

**Summary**

In a world where parents compete with the media to maintain control and regulate messages to develop young, healthy adults, it is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain control. Market media (Fitzpatrick, In press) such as television, music, and the Internet all play a major role in the lives of adolescents (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2010). Each has been cited with promoting both positive and negative messages.

Parents cite television as being the most concerning media outlet that children use (Shulenburg, 2006; Parents Television Council, 2007). Television presents the message through visual images and sound--potentially making the message twice as powerful.

Therefore it is important for parents to remain vigilant in building relationships with their children and adolescents in order to keep the lines of communication open. Positive relationships

encourage open communication between families, thus making the messages from the media not

as overwhelmingly important.

# CHAPTER 3 - METHODOLOGY

This chapter contains information relating to the (a) purpose of this study, (b) research design, (c) participants, (d) instrumentation, and (e) validity and reliability of the instrumentation. The target population for this study included parents of students in the fifth grade of a suburban elementary located in the Midwest.

## Purpose of the Study

As discussed in Chapter 1, the primary purpose of this study is to examine the degree to which parents are informed of their fifth grade student's use of media and the ways in which they ways regulate said media. Additionally, this study examines the impact different media mediums have on adolescents, the extent to which they consume the media, and explores the relationship between parents and caregivers related to regulating their child's access and consumption of television, music, and the Internet.

## Research Questions

The following research questions were posed for the study:

- Question #1: In what ways and to what extent do parents of fifth grade students regulate television usage in their home? The following information was categorized into four dependent variables:

  o Discussion with the child,

  o Time descriptions,

  o Rules and restrictions both with the child and when the parents were children,

  o Principles used in the discussion process.

- Question #2: In what ways and to what extent do parents of fifth grade students regulate music in their home? The following information was categorized into four dependent variables:

  o Discussion with the child,

  o Time descriptions,

  o Rules and restrictions both with the child and when the parents were children,

  o Principles used in the discussion process.

- Question #3: In what ways and to what extent do parents of fifth grade students regulate the Internet in their home? The following information was categorized into three dependent variables:

  o Discussion with the child,

  o Time descriptions,

  o Rules and restrictions with the child, and

  o Principles used in the discussion process.

**Participants**

The participants for this study included parents of fifth grade students from a suburban elementary school located in the Midwest. Surveys were distributed to parents at an all school event. This method of delivery was chosen for a couple of reasons. One, according to Dillman (2007), the cost savings of this method is enormous. The researcher is familiar with all participants as he is known within the community. Although some consider convenience sampling to be a weaker method of sampling, Kerlinger (1986) stressed convenience sampling was appropriate because "random samples are usually expensive and, in general, hard to come by" (p. 120). The researcher chose a convenience sample because of the familiarity to the

population. Fifth grade students are also the population that the researcher is involved with on a daily basis and any data gathered on this subject could prove to be useful in understanding the issues that students at this grade level deal with when it comes to the media. The researcher instructed each participant (n=91) to fill out their own survey without discussing their responses with their partner. To insure fidelity, surveys were color coded blue for the father or male guardian and coded yellow for mothers or female guardians.

Instructions and an explanation of the purpose of the research were included in the packets (see Appendix A), as well as the research instrument being utilized (see Appendix B). Surveys were sent to parents at an all school event on September 2, 2010. The researcher requested that participants return the packets to school within seven school days. Initial data collection yielded a response rate of 28.4% (n=27 from a possible n=91). On the sixth day, a postcard was sent home with additional copies of the survey to remind parents of the requested deadline. A total of three opportunities were presented and yielded a return rate of 51.6% (n=73) representing 47 students in the grade level. Data collection was finalized on September 24. Finally, the researcher created a thank you postcard (see Appendix C) which was given to each student when their packet was returned.

**Protection of Human Participants**

In May of 2010, the researcher petitioned the Committee for Research Involving Human Subjects (IRB) at Kansas State University in order to begin data collection procedures. Every effort was made to insure confidentiality and anonymity of the participants. The researcher was granted "EXEMPT" status on July 11, 2010. According to the IRB an informed consent form was not necessary because the respondents were adults over the age of 18. Moreover, given the fact that participants were willing to complete the survey provided implied consent. At the

conclusion of the study all surveys, data, and rankings were securely stored in the researcher's office. Copies of all original materials were made as well and are being kept in a separate, secure location.

**Reciprocity**

Following the conclusion of this study, the findings will be released to the school district. Participants will have the opportunity to review the dissertation and contact the researcher with any questions, comments, concerns, or insight they may have regarding the significance, outcomes, or implications of the study.

**Instrumentation**

Following the decision to conduct this exploratory research, it was necessary to either find an existing instrument or develop one to utilize for the study. The researcher reviewed several but decided that the Television Mediation Scale (Valkenburg, et. al, 1999) provided an excellent framework by which a modified comprehensive instrument could be designed.

The Television Mediation Scale (Valkenburg, et. al, 1999) was developed to assess parent television mediation styles that existed within families. A pilot study conducted by Valkenburg, et. al., (1999) was conducted three weeks prior to the main study and included 123 Dutch parents. The results from the pilot study allowed the researchers to develop a 15 question survey utilizing a frequency scale (often, sometimes, rarely, and never).

The analysis of the demographic variables predicted different mediation styles. Researchers conducted a MANOVA with mediation style of the parents (restrictive vs. instructive vs. social co-viewing) and their demographic information, in addition to other factors including education. According to the research, the higher a parent was educated there was more of a tendency to engage in instructive mediation $t$ (low - middle) = 2.01, df=329, p>.01, t (low-

high) = 2.17, df=274, p <.05 (p. 62). Research showed no significant difference in educational level of those parents that used co-viewing mediation.

Finally, the research concluded that mothers were more apt to utilize restrictive and instructive mediation styles than were fathers. Parents with higher levels of education were more likely to use restrictive and instructive mediation than less educated parents.

Upon researching different survey methods, it was determined that the research instrument developed by Valkenburg et al. (1999) could be modified and adapted to gain insight into the regulation of other media mediums, specifically music and the Internet. Below is a brief summary the researcher employed to modify and validate the survey.

- First, the researcher consulted a committee of two professors and four colleagues to discuss the instruments prior to use.
  - Colleagues discussed verbiage and ways to make the questions clearer for participants.
  - Based on their suggestions, the researcher modified the instrument and presented it to the same colleagues.
- Upon receiving approval, the researcher selected parents (n=7) from a different grade level that would not participate in the study.
  - These parents were asked to read the survey and provide feedback about the readability, usability, and flow of the instrument design.

  Feedback received from this panel included the following:
- Survey was estimated to take between 15 and 20 minutes

- Suggestions to make the questions more clear were offered and the instrument was revised

- Questions dealing with specific communication skills between parents and adolescents were removed as there was no relation to the specified topic of the media

Feedback from the panel indicated an interest in the study focus and many expressed an interest in reading the final study. The researcher determined that based on the feedback from parents that this instrument was appropriate for the participants and would be used for this study.

**Treatment of Data**

A statistical consultant from the Department of Health and Human Services for the City of Oklahoma provided data analysis services for this research study. Responses were collected from the surveys returned. The data was compiled, coded, analyzed and given to the statistician to be interpreted. Using SAS version 9.2 software, the statistician entered the data and used a Chi-square analysis to produce the results discussed in Chapter IV.

According to Feyerharm (2010), it is important for researchers to know when to use the chi square analysis. It is most appropriate when researchers do the following:

- Test whether two or more distributions are identical.

- Compare a distribution with a reference distribution such as the normal distribution.

- Compare the frequencies of categorical data (Goodness-of-Fit)

- Compare the independence of two characteristics or how they are related to or independent of each other (Test of Independence)

- Test whether different populations are similar to some common characteristics. (Test of Homogeneity)

- Use to make inference about the population variance.

The Chi square test is used to compare categorical data and is designed to test the statistical significance of an outcome. The researcher, in association with the statistician, deemed the chi-square test the most appropriate method to use for this study.

When testing for statistical significance, the alpha was set at a standard of .05. There were instances when the total number of responses was five or less. In that case, the Fisher's Exact Test was used to obtain a more accurate p-value.

Tables were created based on the responses from each survey question and in the instances where short answer questions exist, frequency tables were created listing all responses and the total number of like responses.

**Limitations of the Study**

There were six limitations identified with this study. First, although the participation rate was 51.6%, the sample size was small ($N = 72$). Second, this study only sampled students enrolled at one elementary school within one school district located in the Midwest. Below are four additional limitations identified by the researcher:

- The sample for the study was not ethnically diverse, making it difficult to generalize findings from this study across other populations.
- Using the Television Mediation Scale may have been limiting. Using it as a framework for the music and Internet portion of the study may not have been validated.
- Over forty seven percent of participants had an annual income of greater than $76,000. These results may not be generalized to a lower income population.

- The survey research utilized a self-reporting method, in which parents filled out the surveys on their own. One problem with survey research method is social desirability bias in which participants over report admirable attitudes and underreport attitudes that are not socially valued (Krosnick, 1999).

Each of these factors may have affected the overall results of this study. Therefore, results should be interpreted with caution.

**Summary**

This chapter presented the methodology used in the survey research. In conducting the literature review for the research, the researcher examined several instruments that could be used to collect data. The final product is a modified version of the Television Mediation Scale (Valkenburg, et. al., 1999). Research participants included parents and caregivers of fifth grade students from a suburban elementary school in the Midwest. Participants were asked to respond to a number of questions using a four point Liker-type scale ranging from often to never. The survey was modified to analyze three areas of mass media (a) television, (b) music, and (c) the Internet. Initial data collection was scheduled to take place over a seven day period. Additional time was required in order to obtain more participants. Finally, the responses were categorized, coded, and entered into SAS version 9.2. An standard alpha level of .05 was used in the statistical analysis. Chi-square tests were utilized when examining the dependent variables of monitoring the media, restricting the media, and the principles that guide the decision making process. According to Howell (1999) the Chi-square test is a "statistical test often used for analyzing data" (p. 373). In addition to the Chi-square test, Fisher's Exact Test was utilized when an expected frequency was less than 5. Huck (2000) explains: "If researchers have a small amount of sample data, the expected values associated with their chi-square test will also be

small. Various rules have been offered over the years to help applied researchers know when they should refrain from using the chi-square test. The most conservative of these rules says that none of the expected frequencies should be smaller than 5" (p. 634-635). When entering the data into SAS version 9.2 software, users are made aware of this small frequency and the Fisher's Exact Test is suggested to insure a more accurate p-value. Additionally, frequency charts showing the total responses in addition to percentages and cumulative percentages were created to display the results. These results will be discussed in the following chapter.

# CHAPTER 4 - RESULTS

Chapter IV will examine the results collected from the data analysis. Data will be disaggregated by restrictions placed on the media, family status, and gender.

The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine the degree to which parents and care givers are informed of their fifth grade adolescent's use of media - specifically focusing on television, music, and the Internet. Additionally, rules for mediation and guiding principles used by participants were examined.

The participants for this study included parents of fifth grade students from a suburban elementary school located in Midwest. Chapter IV reports the results from the data collected, statistical analysis, and findings for this study.

**Demographics**

Several demographic variables were collected for this study including (a) gender of respondents, (b) gender of their children, (c) socioeconomic status, and (d) the current living arrangements in the home. Below is an analysis of each demographic variable.

*Gender of Respondents*. The gender of respondents included 64% females (n=46) and 36% males (n=26). In these families a total of 47 children were represented. Forty percent of the children were male (n=19) and 60% were female (n=28).

*Living Arrangements*. When investigating the familial living arrangements for each child, 65.95% (n=31) came from two parent, biological families. Nearly 24% (n=11) were from single mother families, 4.25% (n=2) represented step families, and 2.12% of respondents were represented by the following designations (a) adoptive grandmother (n=1), (b) two mother family

(n=1), and (c) two parent, adoptive family (n=1). Table 4.1 illustrates the family living dynamics of respondents.

Table 4.1

*Key Findings: Family Types of Sample Population*

| Types of Families | N | Sample Percentage | Cumulative Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| • 2 parent, biological | 31 | 65.95% | 65.95% |
| • Single mother families | 11 | 23.44% | 89.39% |
| • Step Families | 2 | 4.25% | 93.60% |
| • Adoptive Grandmother | 1 | 2.12% | 95.72% |
| • Two Mother Family | 1 | 2.12% | 97.84% |
| • Two Parent, Adoptive Family | 1 | 2.12% | 100% |

*Household Income*. Finally, participants were asked to report their yearly household income. 29.78% of participants (n=14) reported an annual income >$125,000, 44.68% (n=21) reported earnings between $76,000-and-$125,000, and 17.02% (n=8) reported a household income between $50,000-and-$75,000. Additionally 6.38% (n=3) reported <$25,000 and 2.14% (n=1) chose not to respond to the question. These results are found in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2

*Yearly Household Income of Respondents*

| Types of Families | N | Sample Percentage | Cumulative Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| • < $25,000 | 3 | 6.38% | 6.38% |
| • $50,000-and-$75,000 | 8 | 17.02% | 23.40% |
| • $76,000-and-$125,000 | 20 | 44.68% | 68.08% |
| • > $125,000 | 14 | 29.78 | 97.86% |
| • Undisclosed | 1 | 2.14% | 100% |

**Television**

In examining television, the researcher generated the following question: *In what ways and to what extent do parents of fifth grade students regulate television usage in their home?* The information was categorized into four dependent variables:

- Discussion with the child;

- Time descriptions;

- Rules and restrictions both with the child and when the parents were children; and

- Principles used in the discussion process.

A total of fifteen questions were asked of participants regarding the mediation of television. This section provides the results from those questions. Following the presentation of the research questions, the statistical results of the Chi-square and Fisher's Exact tests are presented.

Table 4.3

*Question #1: How often do you try to help your child understand what s/he sees on TV?*

| UNDERSTAND_TV | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Frequency | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| • Often | 34 | 47.22 | 34 | 47.22 |
| • Sometimes | 7 | 9.72 | 41 | 56.94 |
| • Rarely | 31 | 43.06 | 72 | 100.00 |
| • Never | 0 | 0 | | |

Forty seven percent of participants affirmed that they do, in fact, try to help their child understand what they are consuming on television. However, 43% rarely talk to their child about what they see. This is an interesting dichotomy when observing the findings outlined in Tables 4.4 and 4.5.

Table 4.4 asked parents how often they point out what actors are doing is good. Seventy six percent of participants do point out the good things that actors are doing. However, even more parents (84.72%) talk to their child about what the actors are doing that is bad (see Table 4.5). One would assume that with such high percentages that the data represented in Table 4.6 would not be nearly as varied with an almost 50/50 split between "often" and "rarely" responses.

Table 4.4

*Question #2: How often do you try to point out why some things actors do are good?*

| GOOD_TV | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Frequency | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| • Often | 14 | 19.44 | 14 | 19.44 |
| • Sometimes | 41 | 56.94 | 55 | 76.39 |
| • Rarely | 15 | 20.83 | 70 | 97.22 |
| • Never | 2 | 2.78 | 72 | 100.00 |

Table 4.5

*Question #3 - How often do you try to point out why some things actors do are bad?*

| BAD_TV | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Frequency | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| • Often | 29 | 40.28 | 29 | 40.28 |
| • Sometimes | 32 | 44.44 | 61 | 84.72 |
| • Rarely | 9 | 12.50 | 70 | 97.22 |
| • Never | 2 | 2.78 | 72 | 100.00 |

Tables 4.6 and 4.7 also provide responses pertaining to how participants feel about making sure that their child understands the *good* and the *bad* that actors do, one would expect the data to reflect similarities. Nearly 75% of participants do explain the motives of television

characters. However, an overwhelming percentage (94.29%) affirmed that they try to explain what something on television means.

Table 4.6

*Question #4: How often do you try to explain the motives of television characters?*

| MOTIVES_TV | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Frequency | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| • Often | 14 | 19.72 | 14 | 19.72 |
| • Sometimes | 39 | 54.93 | 53 | 74.65 |
| • Rarely | 15 | 21.13 | 68 | 95.77 |
| • Never | 3 | 4.23 | 71 | 100.00 |

Frequency Missing = 1

Table 4.7

*Question #5: How often do you try to explain what something on television means?*

| MEANING_TV | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Frequency | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| • Often | 27 | 38.57 | 27 | 38.57 |
| • Sometimes | 39 | 55.71 | 66 | 94.29 |
| • Rarely | 3 | 4.29 | 69 | 98.57 |
| • Never | 1 | 1.43 | 70 | 100.00 |

Frequency Missing = 2

Table 4.8

*Question #6: How often do you try to tell your child to turn off a TV when s/he is watching an*

*unsuitable program?*

| MEANING_TV | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Frequency | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ● Often | 56 | 77.78 | 56 | 77.78 |
| ● Sometimes | 12 | 16.67 | 68 | 94.44 |
| ● Rarely | 4 | 5.56 | 72 | 100.00 |
| ● Never | 0 | 0 | | |

Referring to Tables 4.8 and 4.10, the data collected indicated that parents are involved

with their children when it comes to mediating television. This is supported in Table 4.7 with an

overwhelming amount of responses (94.29%) stating that they try to explain what something

means on television.

Nearly 95% of participants acknowledged that they do tell their child to turn off the

television when something is on that is unsuitable (See Table 4.8). Upon further investigation,

the data listed in Table 4.9 states almost 72% of participants set viewing hours for their children.

However, when participants were asked how often they restrict the amount of child viewing

(refer to Table 4.11), 90.28% replied that they did "often" or "sometimes." One would assume

that responses gained from questions seven and nine would be much closer to another than the

actual data shows.

Table 4.9

*Question #7: How often do you try to set specific viewing hours for your child?*

| SETHOURS_TV | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Frequency | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| • Often | 34 | 47.89 | 34 | 47.89 |
| • Sometimes | 17 | 23.94 | 51 | 71.83 |
| • Rarely | 16 | 22.54 | 67 | 94.37 |
| • Never | 4 | 5.63 | 71 | 100.00 |

Frequency Missing = 1

Table 4.10

*Question #8: How often do you try to forbid your child from watching certain programs?*

| FORBID_TV | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Frequency | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| • Often | 44 | 61.11 | 44 | 61.11 |
| • Sometimes | 21 | 29.17 | 65 | 90.28 |
| • Rarely | 6 | 8.33 | 71 | 98.61 |
| • Never | 1 | 1.39 | 72 | 100.00 |

Table 4.11

*Question #9: How often do you try to restrict the amount of child viewing?*

| RESTRICT_TV | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Frequency | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ● Often | 36 | 50.00 | 36 | 50.00 |
| ● Sometimes | 29 | 40.28 | 65 | 90.28 |
| ● Rarely | 6 | 8.33 | 71 | 98.61 |
| ● Never | 1 | 1.39 | 72 | 100.00 |

According to Table 4.12, 69.44% of participants indicated that they specify in advance the programs that may be watched, which is more than double the amount who stated they "rarely" or "never" specify in advance.

Table 4.12

*Question #10: How often do you try to specify in advance the programs that may be watched?*

| SPECIFY_TV | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Frequency | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ● Often | 31 | 43.06 | 31 | 43.06 |
| ● Sometimes | 19 | 26.39 | 50 | 69.44 |
| ● Rarely | 20 | 27.78 | 70 | 97.22 |
| ● Never | 2 | 2.78 | 72 | 100.00 |

The data collected during this study indicated that the majority of parents are involved with their children in regards to monitoring their viewing habits. Participants were asked a series of five questions that addressed the viewing habits of the parents and their children in relation to one another. Table 4.13 shows 88.89% of parents and children watch together because both parties like the same program. Table 4.14 asks a similar question and results are commensurate with 97.22% of parents sharing a common interest in a program with their child. However, when parents were asked how often they watch *their* favorite program with their child, only 63.89% responded "often" or "sometimes" as referenced in Table 4.16.

Table 4.13

*Question #11: How often do you try to watch together because you both like a progra*m?

| SHARE_TV_LIKE | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Frequency | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| • Often | 33 | 45.83 | 33 | 45.83 |
| • Sometimes | 31 | 43.06 | 64 | 88.89 |
| • Rarely | 8 | 11.11 | 72 | 100.00 |
| • Never | 0 | 0 | | |

Table 4.14

*Question #12: How often do you try to watch together because of common interest in a*

*program?*

| SHARE_TV_COMMON | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Frequency | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| • Often | 36 | 50.00 | 36 | 50.00 |
| • Sometimes | 34 | 47.22 | 70 | 97.22 |
| • Rarely | 2 | 2.78 | 72 | 100.00 |
| • Never | 0 | 0 | | |

Based on the responses from participants, it is evident that the television is a gathering place for families to spend time together. It is interesting to note that 94.44% of participants watch television with their child just for fun (refer to Table 4.15) and according to Table 4.17, an even higher percentage 97.22% laugh together about the things they see on television.

Table 4.15

*Question #13: How often do you try to watch together just for fun?*

| SHARE_TV_FUN | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Frequency | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| • Often | 35 | 48.61 | 35 | 48.61 |
| • Sometimes | 33 | 45.83 | 68 | 94.44 |
| • Rarely | 4 | 5.56 | 72 | 100.00 |
| • Never | 0 | 0 | | |

Table 4.16

*Question #14: How often do you try to do you both watch YOUR favorite program?*

| SHARE_TV_FUN | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Frequency | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| • Often | 15 | 20.83 | 15 | 20.83 |
| • Sometimes | 31 | 43.06 | 46 | 63.89 |
| • Rarely | 14 | 19.44 | 60 | 83.33 |
| • Never | 12 | 16.67 | 72 | 100.00 |

Table 4.17

*Question #15: How often do you try to do you laugh about the things you see on television?*

| LAUGH_TV | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Frequency | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| • Often | 38 | 52.78 | 38 | 52.78 |
| • Sometimes | 32 | 44.44 | 70 | 97.22 |
| • Rarely | 2 | 2.78 | 72 | 100.00 |
| • Never | | | | |

At the conclusion of the fifteen item television section, participants were asked to

estimate the number of hours that their child(ren)watched television per week.

Table 4.18

*The number of hours spent watching television per week*

| HOURS_TV_CATG | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Frequency | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| • 0 to 4 hours | 7 | 10.29 | 7 | 10.29 |
| • 4 to 9 hours | 19 | 27.94 | 26 | 38.24 |
| • 9 to 14 hours | 19 | 27.94 | 45 | 66.18 |
| • 14 to 19 hours | 14 | 20.59 | 59 | 86.76 |

| HOURS_TV_CATG | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Frequency | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| • >19 hours | 9 | 13.24 | 68 | 100.00 |

Frequency Missing = 4

Table 4.18 indicated that 38.24% of children watched 0-to-9 hours of television per week. In contrast, nearly 62% of children watched more than nine hours of television per week. This statistic points to children watching television an inordinate amount of time, especially when one considers the typical fifth grader's school day in addition to the amount of time they interact with other media outlets including music and the Internet.

It is not enough to ask participants how they interact with their child regarding television. The research also asked if there were any television programs that parents forbid their child from viewing. 23.61% (n=17) responded no and 76.39% (n=55) responded yes. Table 4.19 represents the frequency distribution of responses.

Table 4.19

*Examples of television shows that are forbidden by participants*

| Response | Frequency |
|---|---|
| • Anything Rated R | 33 |
| • Family Guy | 13 |
| • Primetime Drama | 9 |
| • MTV | 8 |
| • South Park | 5 |
| • CSI | 4 |

| Response | Frequency |
|---|---|
| • Only Shows Rated E7, E77, E77Y | 4 |
| • Spongebob Squarepants | 4 |
| • Adult Swim | 3 |
| • Simpsons | 3 |
| • Criminal Minds | 2 |

Upon analyzing the responses, a total of 88 responses were given by participants. 37.5% responded that they did not allow their children to watch anything that was rated R. Participants also listed several network cartoons including Family Guy, The Simpsons, Spongebob Squarepants, and Adult Swim for a total of 28 responses (31.8%). Primetime Dramas including CSI and Criminal Minds combined for the third most responses (n=15) accounting for 17% of the total data collected for this question. Being familiar with the programs listed in Table 4.19 is important in developing further research. The researcher understands the controversy surrounding programs like Family Guy which deals with topics ranging from abortion and sexuality to religion and alcoholism, as well as South Park which has remained one of the most controversial programs on Comedy Central since its debut in 1997. The show remains in rotation on Comedy Central and is presently in its thirteenth season. One may wonder, however, what makes Spongebob Squarepants a program forbidden by a small number of parents. In future research, personal interviews would prove beneficial to gain more insight into these questions when examining specific television programs. Following the question about specific shows that are deemed inappropriate, parents were asked to list reasons these television programs were not appropriate. A total of 74 responses were examined and categorized in Table 4.20.

Table 4.20

*Reasons television programs are not appropriate for children*

| Response | Frequency |
|---|---|
| • Excessive violence | 15 |
| • Language | 15 |
| • Adult Content | 13 |
| • Examples of Bad Behavior | 10 |
| • No Comment | 9 |
| • Sexual Content | 6 |
| • Too Scary | 5 |
| • Death Themes | 1 |

Twenty one percent of participants designated excessive violence and language as equal reasons to deem a show inappropriate. Adult content (17.56%) and examples of bad behavior (13.51%) were included most frequently.

The researcher examined if, as children, the participants had rules for watching television. Forty seven percent responded that there were rules in place in their homes growing up (n = 34) and 53% (n = 38) responded that there were no rules in the home. A total of 57 responses were given. Table 4.21 details those responses.

Table 4.21

*Rules parents had in place growing up*

| Rules about Watching Television | Frequency |
|---|---|
| • Parents monitored what was being watched | 19 |
| • Time limits set | 12 |
| • Shows must suitable for their age | 6 |
| • Homework must be completed first | 5 |
| • Kids must watch what parents were watching | 4 |
| • No response given | 2 |
| • No Beavis and Butthead | 1 |
| • No late night television with violence or romance | 1 |
| • No premium television (HBO, Showtime, or Cinemax) | 1 |
| • No television after school | 1 |
| • No television during the week | 1 |
| • No television when friends were over | 1 |
| • May only watch cartoons or the news | 1 |
| • May only watch PBS | 1 |
| • Have special permission to watch television after bed time | 1 |

Thirty three percent of participants responded that their parents monitored what was being watched. Twenty two percent cited time limits as the primary rule, followed by the need

for shows to be suitable for their age (11%) and the need for homework to be completed first (8.7%).

In examining this data further, the researcher was interested in finding out more information about the participant who could only watch public broadcast television. When considering violence, adult content, and language were the main concerns by the majority of participants, some may speculate the appropriateness of PBS when recurring programs such as the *Independent Lens* (Fifer, 2011) series and many other award winning documentaries which included all of the above concerns. Another popular television show on PBS is the British Comedy *Fawlty Towers* (Argent, 1979) in which star John Cleese attempts to operate a hotel. Slapstick violence, verbal and physical abuse, and racial stereotypes pervaded this show. This is another instance in which a personal interview may provide a better understanding for the reasoning behind a "PBS only" television diet.

Conversely, the researcher determined that it was important to gather data regarding the possible existence of rules for their own children watching television. Ninety two percent (n = 66) responded affirmatively, that they did have rules for their children, while 8% (n = 6) responded that they did not. A total of 141 responses were listed. Table 4.22 details those responses.

29.78% stated that the number one rule they had for their own children was that they may only watch preapproved shows. 19.8% listed that they limit the amount of time they allow their child to watch television, while 16.31% stated that homework must be completed first. Numerous other responses are listed in Table 4.22.

Table 4.22

*Rules parents have in place for their children regarding watching television*

| Rules about Watching Television | Frequency |
| --- | --- |
| • May only view preapproved programs | 42 |
| • Limit the amount of time | 28 |
| • Homework completed | 23 |
| • Must be age appropriate | 12 |
| • No adult themed shows | 10 |
| • Chores completed | 6 |
| • Must be educational | 6 |
| • No television during meals | 4 |
| • Children must ask permission to watch television | 2 |
| • Cable box is programmed to block any shows above PG13 | 1 |
| • Child may not watch the news due to violent content | 1 |
| • Child must understand the content | 1 |
| • No television is allowed in the bedroom | 1 |
| • No television Monday through Friday | 1 |
| • Not too many "mindless" cartoons | 1 |
| • Television may only be watched in the family room | 1 |
| • Must have permission to watch after bed time | 1 |
| • May only watch PBS | 1 |

| Rules about Watching Television | Frequency |
|---|---|
| • Have special permission to watch television after bed time | 1 |

The researcher assumed that if parents had rules for television, there must be a reason for having said rules. Table 4.23 details those concerns.

Table 4.23

*Parental concerns about television*

| Concerns | Frequency |
|---|---|
| • Sexuality | 46 |
| • Language/Profanity | 36 |
| • Violence | 36 |
| • Adult subject matter | 9 |
| • Reality television | 9 |
| • Too advanced for young kids | 9 |
| • Too many commercials | 9 |
| • No positive images | 8 |
| • Unreal family dynamics | 8 |
| • Negative role models | 7 |
| • Variety of shows on channels available to kids | 7 |
| • No manners | 5 |
| • Cartoons all the time | 3 |
| • Kids get addicted | 3 |
| • Little focus on positive body image | 3 |

| Concerns | Frequency |
|---|---|
| • Mature advertisements (Kotex, Viagra) | 3 |
| • Not educational | 3 |

Interestingly, of the 204 responses collected, 22.54% of participants listed sexuality as their main concern above language/profanity (17.64%) and violence (17.64%). Violence was a reoccurring theme throughout the literature study, more so than sexuality, and one may wonder if this attitude is due to changing times or the population that was sampled for the study.

Finally, participants were asked to list the factors or principles that guided their decisions about their child's use of television. A total of 100 responses were listed. The responses may be found in Table 4.24.

Table 4.24

*Factors/principles guiding decision making process about child's use of the television*

| Factors or Principles | Frequency |
|---|---|
| • Personal morals, values, and beliefs | 26 |
| • Television should be educational | 12 |
| • Appropriateness of the show | 9 |
| • Age appropriate content | 8 |
| • Decrease in activity level | 7 |
| • Limit total screen time | 6 |
| • No response | 6 |
| • Television should be used for entertainment | 6 |

| Factors or Principles | Frequency |
|---|---|
| • Homework must be done prior to watching | 5 |
| • No television may be in the bedroom | 2 |
| • Ratings | 2 |
| • Sex and violence must be limited as much as possible | 2 |
| • Time of Day | 2 |
| • Television is too big of a distraction | 2 |
| • Television should only be used as a reward | 2 |
| • Focus should be on family time | 1 |
| • Research | 1 |
| • Positivity | 1 |

As one may expect, 26% of participants cited personal morals and values as being the most important factor in guiding their decision making. 17% stated that age appropriateness of the show was paramount while 12% stated that television should be educational.

**Parental Mediation Styles**

Valkenburg, Krcmar, Peeters, & Marseille (1999) developed the Television Mediation Scale in order to research which of the three parental mediation styles were used most frequently by parents of children. These styles include instructive mediation, restrictive mediation, and social co-viewing. The fifteen item scale utilized five questions that detailed each of the three categories. The researcher employed the Television Mediation Scale (Valkenburg, et. al., 1999) and determined which style was most frequently used by participants.

The first five questions of the scale dealt with instructive mediation. Questions six through ten detailed restrictive mediation, and questions eleven through fifteen signified social co-viewing. The Television Mediation Scale was included in the packet to be completed first by participants. When the data collection process was completed, values of 1 to 4 were assigned to responses. "often" was signified with a value of 4, "sometimes" was valued 3, "rarely" was 2, and "never" was 1. The Mean was calculated based on the assigned values.

Responses from this population illustrated that the average of questions six through ten was 3.36, followed by questions eleven through fifteen averaging 3.28, and finally questions one through five detailing an average of 3.13. The results of these calculations indicate that the population most uses a restrictive mediation style.

The restrictive mediation style is one in which parents set rules for viewing television programs or even prohibit certain shows from being seen. Although parents report using restrictive mediation, more than likely co-viewing is being used most frequently (Weaver & Barbour, 1992). This is plausible considering how close the Mean values are between restrictive mediation (3.36) and co-viewing (3.28).

In related studies, when viewing rules are in place, parents report primarily using restrictive mediation (Weaver & Barbour, 1992; Warren, 2001). This coincides with the results obtained in this study. 92% of the participants involved in this study reported having rules for their children watching television. However, Buckingham (1993) cautions that parents may report using restrictive mediation in order to seem like more responsible parents. However, without further follow up interviews with participants, as well as their children, it would be difficult to make this assumption regarding this study.

Finally, Mendoza (2009) reported that restrictive mediation has resulted in children watching slightly less television. The results of which suggest a correlation between prior research and this current study. Adolescents living in households where parents restricted television consumption "often" vs. "sometimes," "rarely," or "never" did watch less television (p=.021). This result may be viewed in Table 4.53. In more restrictive households, 51.4% of adolescents watched <10 hours of television, contrasted with only 24.2% watching fewer than 10 hours in the more lenient households.

**Music**

In examining music, the researcher developed a total of seven questions regarding the mediation of music. The following question was posed: in what ways and to what extent do parents of fifth grade students regulate music in their home? The information was categorized into four dependent variables:

- Discussion with the child;

- Time descriptions;

- Rules and restrictions both with the child and when the parents were children; and

- Principles used in the discussion process

Table 4.25

*Question #1: How often do you help your child understand what s/he hears on the radio?*

| UNDERSTAND_RADIO | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Frequency | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| • Often | 11 | 15.28 | 11 | 15.28 |
| • Sometimes | 30 | 41.67 | 41 | 56.94 |

| UNDERSTAND_RADIO | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Frequency | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| • Rarely | 22 | 30.56 | 63 | 87.50 |
| • Never | 9 | 12.50 | 72 | 100.00 |

Upon examining the responses in Table 4.25, one can see that 56.94% of participants "often" and "sometimes" help their child understand what is heard on the radio. While 43.06% "rarely" or "never" discussed the content with their child. These results stand out when one reflects back on Table 4.3 when the same question was asked regarding television. Responses were exactly the same indicating that it is a priority for parents to help their child understand what is being seen on television or heard on the radio.

Table 4.26

*Question 2: How often do you try to tell your child to turn off an unsuitable song?*

| UNDERSTAND_RADIO | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Frequency | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| • Often | 13 | 18.31 | 13 | 18.31 |
| • Sometimes | 21 | 29.58 | 34 | 47.89 |
| • Rarely | 29 | 40.85 | 63 | 88.73 |
| • Never | 8 | 11.27 | 71 | 100.00 |

Frequency Missing = 1

Table 4.27

*Question 3: How often do you try to discuss the lyrics or message being presented in a song?*

| DISCUSS_RADIO | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Frequency | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| • Often | 9 | 12.68 | 9 | 12.68 |
| • Sometimes | 34 | 47.89 | 43 | 60.56 |
| • Rarely | 21 | 29.58 | 64 | 90.14 |
| • Never | 7 | 9.86 | 71 | 100.00 |

Frequency Missing = 1

Table 4.26 deals with parents or guardians instructing their child to turn off an unsuitable song. Thirty four participants (47.89%) responded that they "often" or "sometimes" tell their child to turn off an inappropriate song. Interestingly, upon reviewing Table 4.8 dealing with unsuitable programs on television, 46.55% more participants were concerned about what was viewed on television than what was heard on the radio. The researcher assumes that television is more of a concern due to the visual imagery and thematic elements that may be more obvious in a visual medium.

Table 4.27 shows that 60.56% of parents or caregivers discuss the lyrics or message being presented in a song. Equally, when referring back to Table 4.25, 56.94% responded that they "often" or "sometimes" help their child understand what is being heard on the radio. One may draw the conclusion that these results are, in fact, very similar further indicating participants

are concerned about the message and making sure that their child understands what is on the

radio.

Table 4.28

*Question 4: How often do you try to forbid your child from listening to a particular song or*

*radio station?*

| FORBID_RADIO | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Frequency | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| • Often | 11 | 15.71 | 11 | 15.71 |
| • Sometimes | 23 | 32.86 | 34 | 48.57 |
| • Rarely | 24 | 34.29 | 58 | 82.86 |
| • Never | 12 | 17.14 | 70 | 100.00 |

Frequency Missing = 2

In regards to forbidding a child from listening to a particular song or radio station, the

results were nearly split in half. Nearly 49% of participants responded that they "often" or

"sometimes" forbade a song or station. Fifty one percent responded that they "rarely" or "never"

did.

Table 4.29

*Question 5: How often do you try to restrict the amount of time spent listening to music each*

*week?*

| RESTRICT_RADIO | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Frequency | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| • Often | 2 | 2.86 | 2 | 2.86 |
| • Sometimes | 7 | 10.00 | 9 | 12.86 |
| • Rarely | 32 | 45.71 | 41 | 58.57 |
| • Never | 29 | 41.43 | 70 | 100.00 |

It is important when comparing the different types of media to look at the time

restrictions that parents place on their children. Table 4.29 shows that 12.86% of participants

restrict the amount of time spent listening to music. However, as shown in Table 4.11, 90.28% of

parents restrict the amount of time that their child spends viewing television. Again, this may be

an indication that parents are more concerned with the visual imagery than what the children are

hearing on the radio.

Table 4.30

*Question 6: How often do you try to listen to music together with your child because you both like the music?*

| SHARE_RADIO_LIKE | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Frequency | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| • Often | 30 | 41.67 | 30 | 41.67 |
| • Sometimes | 34 | 47.22 | 64 | 88.89 |
| • Rarely | 4 | 5.56 | 68 | 94.44 |
| • Never | 4 | 5.56 | 72 | 100.00 |

With the wide variety of music that is readily available, it is not surprising that 88.89% of participants "often" or "sometimes" listen to the same music because they both enjoy it. Similarly, 79.17% (as seen in Table 4.31) of participants listen to music with their child because they share a common interest in the same music.

Table 4.31

*Question 7: How often do you try to listen to the music together because you share a common*

*interest in the music?*

| SHARE_RADIO_LIKE | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Frequency | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| • Often | 26 | 36.11 | 26 | 36.11 |
| • Sometimes | 31 | 43.06 | 57 | 79.17 |
| • Rarely | 10 | 13.89 | 67 | 93.06 |
| • Never | 5 | 6.94 | 72 | 100.00 |

Parents were then asked to estimate how many hours each week their child(ren) spent

listening to music each week. The following results were collected.

Table 4.32

*Estimate of total hours spent listening to music each week*

| HOURS_RADIO_CATG | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Frequency | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| • 0 to 4 hours | 39 | 57.35 | 39 | 57.35 |
| • 4 to 9 hours | 17 | 25.00 | 56 | 82.35 |
| • 9 to 14 hours | 8 | 11.76 | 64 | 94.12 |
| • 14 to 19 hours | 4 | 5.88 | 68 | 100.00 |
| • >19 hours | 39 | 57.35 | 39 | 57.35 |

Frequency Missing = 4

Table 4.32 indicates 82.35% of participants listen to 9 hours of music or less each week which is much less than children who watch television as seen in Table 4.18.

When asked to identify genres of music that were not appropriate for their child, 62 responses were given. Of those 62 responses, 17 (23.61%) dealt specifically with genres of music. Another 17 (23.61%) provided no response. 12.5% responded hard rock, 6.9% indicated heavy metal, and 4.16% indicated pop music was not appropriate for their child.

Additionally, ten responses named specific artists as being inappropriate including Lady Gaga (4.16%), Eminem (4.16%), Katy Petty (1.38%), Kid Rock (1.38%), Madonna (1.38%), and Rihanna (1.38%).

Table 4.33

*Inappropriate genres of music*

| Genres of Music | Frequency |
|---|---|
| • No Response Given | 17 |
| • Hard Rock | 9 |
| • Sexuality | 8 |
| • Heavy Metal | 5 |
| • Promotes Immoral Values | 5 |
| • Violent | 5 |
| • Degrading or Derogatory | 4 |
| • Pop | 3 |
| • "I can't understand what is being said" | 2 |
| • It's not music | 1 |
| • Offensive | 1 |
| • Promotes drug use | 1 |
| • There are no inappropriate genres | 1 |

Table 4.34

*Specific Artists Listed by Participants*

| Artists | Frequency |
|---|---|
| • Lady Gaga | 3 |
| • Eminem | 3 |
| • Katy Perry | 1 |
| • Kid Rock | 1 |
| • Madonna | 1 |
| • Rihanna | 1 |

Regarding rules, participants were asked if rules were in place for the child about listening to music. 53% (n=38) affirmed that they did have rules regarding listening to music, while 47% (n=34) stated there were no rules in place. Participants were asked to list the rules that are in place. These rules are seen in Table 4.35.

Table 4.35

*Rules for children about listening to music*

| Rules | Frequency |
|---|---|
| • No music with foul language, sexuality, or violence | 24 |
| • Must be age appropriate | 5 |
| • Managed iTunes purchases | 4 |
| • Media is pre-screened | 3 |

| Rules | Frequency |
|---|---|
| • Must listen to preapproved radio stations | 3 |
| • May not be degrading to women | 2 |
| • May only listen to Christian music or Disney | 1 |
| • Noise level | 1 |
| • No music during homework | 1 |
| • No rap music | 1 |
| • May only listen to soft music | 1 |

Not surprisingly, 52.17% (n=24) indicated that the music may not contain any foul language, or reference to any sexuality or violence. Future qualitative research could investigate these rules further to determine how the media is pre-screened and to define the response "soft music."

Conversely, participants were asked if they had any rules about listening to music when they were children. 86% (n=62) stated there were no rules about listening to music when they were younger, while 14% (n=10) responded that there were rules. Of the participants who responded affirmatively, fifteen responses were given. These responses are in Table 4.36.

Table 4.36

*Rules in place when the participants were children*

| Rules | Frequency |
|---|---|
| • Music was monitored closely | 4 |
| • No music that was offensive or embarrassing | 3 |

| Rules | Frequency |
|---|---|
| • May only listen to classical music | 3 |
| • Limited time to listen | 1 |
| • May only listen to Christian music | 1 |
| • No rap music | 1 |
| • Volume must remain low | 1 |
| • "We could not listen to rock n roll because it was viewed as antisocial and antiestablishment" | 1 |

One may easily recognize that when comparing the frequency of rules for children now as opposed to when the participants were children, that nearly three times as many rules exist. Clearly, the thematic elements that exist in music have changed over the past decades, and an assumption may be made that it is due to these changes that the participants feel more apt to monitor music consumption more so than their parents did.

It is also fascinating that when compared with rules for television as seen in Tables 4.21 and 4.22. It is easy to recognize that participants have many more rules regarding the visual medium of television.

Table 4.37 details the concerns that participants have about the music that is available to children today. 142 responses were given with two concerns standing out more than the others. 25.35% (n=36) of participants stated that explicit language was the number one concern followed closely by sexual themes at 22.53% (n=32). Table 4.37 shows the frequency distribution of all concerns from participants. Again, curiously concerns about sexuality were nearly double those

concerns about violence in music. This is a reoccurring theme in this research and is a topic that should be further investigated in future studies.

Table 4.37

*Concerns about music that is available to children today*

| Concerns | Frequency |
| --- | --- |
| • Explicit language | 36 |
| • Sexual themes | 32 |
| • Violence | 15 |
| • Lyrics | 9 |
| • No positive influence | 7 |
| • No response given | 7 |
| • Degrading to women or others | 6 |
| • Promotes drugs and alcohol | 5 |
| • Negative storytelling | 4 |
| • Bad musicality (off key/vocal abuse) | 3 |
| • All genres are too easily accessible | 2 |
| • Does not promote moral behavior | 2 |
| • Headphones and ear damage | 2 |
| • Lack of substance | 2 |
| • No concerns | 2 |
| • Annoying | 1 |
| • Cultural bias | 1 |

| Concerns | Frequency |
|---|:---:|
| • "Me" focused | 1 |
| • Not enough originality | 1 |
| • Ratings | 1 |
| • Too loud | 1 |
| • Values of the artist | 1 |
| • Visual images of music videos | 1 |

Participants were asked what factors or principles guided the decision about their child listening to music. 42 responses were given and 17 participants chose not to respond. 30.95% (n=13) responded that the music must be appropriate for their child. 23.80% (n=10) responded that their personal morals and principles guided their decision making process. Finally, 16.66% (n=7) responded that the message in the music guided the decisions that they made. Other responses may be seen in Table 4.38.

Table 4.38

*Factors or principles that guided decisions about the child listening to music*

| Factors or Principles | Frequency |
|---|:---:|
| • No response given | 17 |
| • Must be child appropriate | 13 |
| • Morals and principles | 10 |
| • The message in the music | 7 |
| • "I have to be able to tolerate it - not love it" | 1 |

| Factors or Principles | Frequency |
|---|---|
| • "I only listen to jazz with my kids. No vocals = no sex" | 1 |
| • "I try not to regulate it. I think it helps develop their brains" | 1 |
| • "If he wants a new song, I must listen to it first" | 1 |
| • "She is in dance and is exposed to everything. Variety is good" | 1 |
| • "We only listen to music in the car"" | 1 |
| • Genre | 1 |
| • Is it quality music | 1 |
| • Music should be appreciated | 1 |
| • Prior choices | 1 |
| • Volume | 1 |
| • We want the kids to learn to sing | 1 |

The importance of music to youth is evident by the amount of hours spent with the medium. The Internet is of similar importance.

**Internet**

The researcher developed a total of eight questions regarding mediation of the Internet using a four point Likert-type scale. The following question was posed: in what ways and to what extent do parents regulate Internet usage in their home? The information was categorized into three dependent variables:

- Discussion with the child;
- Time descriptions; and

- Principles used in the discussion process.

Sixty seven (93.06%) stated they "often" or "sometimes" discussed appropriate use of the Internet which is to be expected when one reads Table 4.43 detailing the concerns that participants have about their child using the Internet.

Table 4.39 discusses appropriate use of the Internet

Table 4.39

*Question 1: How often do you discuss appropriate use of the Internet with your child?*

| DISCUSS_INTERNET | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Frequency | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| • Often | 36 | 50.00 | 36 | 50.00 |
| • Sometimes | 31 | 43.06 | 67 | 93.06 |
| • Rarely | 5 | 6.94 | 72 | 100.00 |
| • Never | 0 | 0 | | |

Table 4.40

*Question 2: How often do you discuss Internet safety with your child?*

| DISCUSS_INTERNET | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Frequency | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| • Often | 39 | 54.17 | 39 | 54.17 |
| • Sometimes | 29 | 40.28 | 68 | 94.44 |
| • Rarely | 2 | 2.78 | 70 | 97.22 |
| • Never | 2 | 2.78 | 72 | 100.00 |

An even higher percentage, 94.44% of participants responded that they "often" or "sometimes" discuss Internet safety with their child. Again, the researcher is interested in the 5.56% that responded "rarely" or "never." It is difficult to make assumptions about why one would not discuss Internet safety since the Internet provides both a visual and auditory experience.

Table 4.41

*Question 3: How often do you tell your child to avoid particular websites?*

| AVOID_INTERNET | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Frequency | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| • Often | 27 | 38.03 | 27 | 38.03 |
| • Sometimes | 23 | 32.39 | 50 | 70.42 |
| • Rarely | 15 | 21.13 | 65 | 91.55 |
| • Never | 6 | 8.45 | 71 | 100.00 |

Frequency Missing = 1

"Often" and "sometimes" were clearly the most common responses, as 70.42% stated they do tell their child to avoid particular websites. Parents were asked what kinds of sites were inappropriate for their child. The results in Table 4.42 are more content focused as opposed to site related. Of the 100 responses given, only 4% listed actual websites including one adult site (redtube.com), two gaming sites (agames.com and SIMS), and one news site, CNN.com.

Participants were also asked if there were any websites that they felt were inappropriate for their child. 92% (n=66) affirmed that there were websites that were appropriate. Five percent (n=4) stated that there were no websites that were inappropriate while 3% (n=2) gave no response to the question.

In accordance with the other media outlets, pornography (sexuality) was mentioned the most frequently. Violence, in contrast, was mentioned only 8%. Social Networking sites such as Facebook and MySpace made up 10% of responses, as did YouTube.

One may inquire as to why chat rooms were only mentioned 9% of the time, when, as seen in Table 4.43, participants overwhelmingly stated that they were the most concerned with Online Predators (23.6%). The researcher expected cyber-bullying to play a more prominent role in the survey, which was not the case as only 6.06% sited it as a main concern.

Table 4.42

*Inappropriate sites or content*

| Inappropriate sites or content | Frequency |
|---|---|
| • Pornography | 31 |
| • No response given | 19 |
| • Social Networking | 10 |
| • YouTube | 10 |
| • Chat rooms | 9 |
| • Violence | 8 |
| • Some search engines (not specified) | 3 |
| • Explicit content | 2 |
| • The internet is restricted to only school approved sites | 2 |
| • Language | 1 |
| • Music download sites | 1 |

Table 4.43

*Concerns participants have about the Internet*

| Concern | Frequency |
| --- | --- |
| • Online predators | 38 |
| • Accessing sexual materials | 28 |
| • Viewing inappropriate material | 12 |
| • Cyber-bullying | 10 |
| • Not age appropriate | 10 |
| • Identity theft | 9 |
| • Misleading sites connect to searches using common words | 9 |
| • Social networking | 9 |
| • Everything is too available | 7 |
| • Violent content | 7 |
| • Pop ups | 4 |
| • Chat rooms | 2 |
| • False information given | 2 |
| • How to effectively monitor use | 2 |
| • No response given | 2 |
| • Spyware | 2 |
| • Too much for gaming | 2 |
| • Everything that is written is archived somewhere | 1 |

| Concern | Frequency |
|---|---|
| • Getting to the wrong site | 1 |
| • Hard to stay abreast of all technological changes | 1 |
| • Makes kids grow up too fast | 1 |
| • Time is better spent elsewhere | 1 |
| • Too much sedentary time | 1 |

Over 70% responded that they "often" or "sometimes" forbid their child from using the Internet while 7.05% stated they "never" forbid any site (refer to Table 4.44).

Table 4.44

*Question 4: How often do you forbid your child from using the Internet unsupervised?*

| FORBID_INTERNET | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Frequency | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| • Often | 24 | 33.80 | 24 | 33.80 |
| • Sometimes | 26 | 36.62 | 50 | 70.42 |
| • Rarely | 16 | 22.54 | 66 | 92.96 |
| • Never | 5 | 7.04 | 71 | 100.00 |

Frequency Missing = 1

Restricting the amount of time spent online proved to be an interesting question and one in which 82.86% affirmed that they did "often" or "sometimes" restrict Internet use. (See Table 4.45).

Table 4.45

*Question 5: How often do you restrict the amount of time your child spends on the internet?*

| RESTRICT_INTERNET | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Frequency | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| • Often | 32 | 45.71 | 32 | 45.71 |
| • Sometimes | 26 | 37.14 | 58 | 82.86 |
| • Rarely | 9 | 12.86 | 67 | 95.71 |
| • Never | 3 | 4.29 | 70 | 100.00 |

Frequency Missing = 2

It is not only important to determine if participants are restricting the amount of time spent on the Internet, but it is as equally important to know how often kids are supervised while on the Internet. Ninety three percent affirmed that they monitored their child "often" or "sometimes," while 6.94% "rarely" supervise their child when they are online.

Table 4.46

*Question 6: How often do you supervise what your child is doing on the Internet?*

| SUPERVISE_INTERNET | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Frequency | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| • Often | 49 | 68.06 | 49 | 68.06 |
| • Sometimes | 18 | 25.00 | 67 | 93.06 |
| • Rarely | 5 | 6.94 | 72 | 100.00 |
| • Never | 0 | 0 | | |

Participants responded overwhelmingly (93.06%) that they supervise what their child does on the Internet. However, only 76.39% stated that they "often" or "sometimes" check to see where their child has been on the Internet (see Table 4.47). Further research may prove helpful in defining the ways in which parents provide supervision of the Internet if only 76.39% check to see where their child has been when they are online.

Table 4.47

*Question 7 - How often do you check to see where your child has been on the Internet?*

| CHECK_INTERNET | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Frequency | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ● Often | 39 | 54.17 | 39 | 54.17 |
| ● Sometimes | 16 | 22.22 | 55 | 76.39 |
| ● Rarely | 11 | 15.28 | 66 | 91.67 |
| ● Never | 6 | 8.33 | 72 | 100.00 |

Table 4.48 asks participants how often they read their child's emails or instant messages. 57.81% responded that they "often" or "sometimes" read these messages. 42.19% responded "rarely" or "never." Eleven percent chose not to answer the question. Again, this is another instance in which a follow up interview could provide more insight into the methods that parents use to monitor their child when they are online.

Table 4.48

*Question 8: How often do you read your child's emails or instant messages?*

| READ_EMAIL | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Frequency | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| • Often | 22 | 34.38 | 22 | 34.38 |
| • Sometimes | 15 | 23.44 | 37 | 57.81 |
| • Rarely | 9 | 14.06 | 46 | 71.88 |
| • Never | 18 | 28.13 | 64 | 100.00 |

Frequency Missing = 8

As with the other two media outlets--television and music--participants were asked to estimate the amount of time their child spent on the Internet each week. They were also asked to disaggregated their estimation into 5 different categories: online gaming, email, instant messaging, school work, and other. When the data was analyzed, 97% (n=70), responded with a Mean of 5.49 hours per week on the Internet. The range was 19.5 hours. 3% (n = 2) chose not to respond. Table 4.49 shows the frequency distribution of the estimated number of hours reported by participants while Table 4.50 displays the disaggregation of the activities.

Table 4.49

*Estimated number of hours spent on the Internet*

| HOURS_RADIO_CATG | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Frequency | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| • 0 to 4 hours | 33 | 47.14 | 33 | 47.14 |
| • 4 to 9 hours | 21 | 30.00 | 54 | 77.14 |
| • 9 to 14 hours | 11 | 15.71 | 65 | 92.86 |
| • >14 hours | 5 | 7.14 | 70 | 100.00 |

Frequency Missing = 2

As Table 4.49 shows, 77.14% spend between 0-to-9 hours on the Internet with the majority of the children spending their time with online gaming (n=50 Mean: 3.2 hours). The second most prevalent response was school work, however with an n=47, the mean hours online was only .47 hours.

Table 4.50

*Mean of Internet activity (in hours)*

| Activity on the Internet | N | Mean Hours |
|---|---|---|
| • Online Gaming | 50 | 3.2 |
| • School Work | 47 | .47 |
| • Email | 26 | 1.0 |

| Activity on the Internet | N | Mean Hours |
|---|---|---|
| • Instant messaging | 12 | 2.7 |
| • Facebook | 5 | 5.5 |
| • Listening to music or watching music video | 3 | 8.3 |
| • Educational (not related to school) | 2 | 1.0 |
| • YouTube | 2 | 1.37 |
| • None Identified | 2 | .5 |

Next, participants were asked if there are rules for their child when using the Internet. Eighty two percent (n=59) responded that there were rules in place. 11% (n=8) did not have rules for Internet use, and 7% (n=5) did not respond. 126 responses were provided and the frequency chart may be viewed in Table 4.51.

In researching television and music, participants were asked to recall if there were rules in place for each media outlet. In the case of the Internet, it was not as accessible to a majority of the participants as it is now in 2010.

Table 4.51

*Rules for Internet use*

| Rules | Frequency |
|---|---|
| • Only access pre-approved sites | 18 |
| • No unsupervised use | 12 |
| • No response given | 11 |
| • Restrictions on time spent online | 11 |
| • Must have permission to use the Internet | 10 |
| • No online chatting | 8 |
| • Must be educational sites | 7 |
| • Must use central computer | 7 |
| • Must be age-appropriate | 6 |
| • Must have monitoring software in place | 6 |
| • Permission to download | 5 |
| • Homework must be completed first | 5 |
| • Only chat with people you know | 4 |
| • May not click on pop ups | 2 |
| • Permission to access new sites | 2 |
| • "Don't write what you don't want me to read" | 1 |
| • "I don't think my child knows what is out there" | 1 |
| • Email forwards must be approved before sending | 1 |

| Rules | Frequency |
|---|---|
| • If something doesn't feel right, my child must let an adult know | 1 |
| • May only use the Internet Monday through Thursday for school | 1 |
| • No computer in their room | 1 |
| • No email is allowed | 1 |
| • No social networking | 1 |
| • No web on iPod Touch | 1 |

Finally, participants were asked what factors or principles guided their decision making process when it came to their child's Internet use. A total of 59 responses were collected with 6 participants choosing not to respond. 18.64% (n=11) stated that their religious beliefs guided their decision making process and 13.55% (n=8) stated that it must be age appropriate. Other responses included common sense (3.38%), personal standards (3.38%), and fear (1.69%). The complete frequency table may be viewed in Table 4.52

Table 4.52

*Factors or principles that guide decisions about the child's Internet use*

| Factors or Principles | Frequency |
|---|---|
| • Our religious beliefs | 11 |
| • Is it age appropriate? | 8 |
| • May only be used for school work | 7 |

| Factors or Principles | Frequency |
|---|---|
| • No response given | 6 |
| • Safety | 5 |
| • Is it approved by the school or parents? | 4 |
| • Common sense | 2 |
| • Personal standards | 2 |
| • Fear | 1 |
| • Health | 1 |
| • I read all open instant messages | 1 |
| • The Internet is a privilege, not a right | 1 |
| • Limit overall use to keep student's active | 1 |
| • Limit the time | 1 |
| • Need to be monitored | 1 |
| • No email is allowed | 1 |
| • No surfing | 1 |
| • Reinforce that even though it is available does not mean its suitable | 1 |
| • Set limits to what they are doing | 1 |
| • Limit the overall use for gaming | 1 |
| • The Internet is too addictive | 1 |
| • Use it for good and avoid the bad | 1 |
| • We have a really good filter program | 1 |

| Factors or Principles | Frequency |
| --- | --- |
| • "People are bad and I worry about her to be safe. She's my baby!" | 1 |

**Data Analysis**

SAS version 9.2 software was used to analyze the data collected from this research. The software calculates several statistical tests. For this research study, the Chi-square was calculated due to the nature of the data collected. The Chi-square assumes that the data will be even distributed (Feyerharm,2010). When less than five occurrences are listed in a particular section of a frequency table, the Fisher's Exact Test is used.

The Fisher's Exact test, unlike the Chi-square does not make any assumptions about the data. It utilizes a two sided probability, in which PR<=P. The alpha level is set at .05. In the two sided probability, p=.025 is represented on each side. The two sided probability in the Fisher's Exact Test is a conservative measurement (Feyerharm, 2010).

For this research, the standard Chi-squared test was performed to determine if parental restrictions on media were significantly associated with fewer hours (<10 hours vs. 10+ hours) of television, Internet, and music consumption by their adolescent children (see Tables 4.53, 4.54, and 4.55).

Results were mixed. Parents who restricted their adolescent's Internet use "often" compared with "sometimes," "rarely," or "never" did not see a significant difference in Internet consumption (p=.581). Likewise, adolescents living in households where parents restricted music consumption "often," "sometimes," or "rarely" compared with "never" did not significantly reduce their radio consumption (p=.233). However, adolescents living in households where

parents restricted television consumption "often" vs. "sometimes," "rarely," or "never" did watch

less television (p=.021). Fully 51.4% of adolescents in more restrictive households watched <10

hours of television, contrasted with only 24.2% watching fewer than 10 hours in the more lenient

households.

Table 4.53

*Restrictions of Television by Hours*

| Frequency of TV usage rules | Hours spent on TV per week | | | Chi-square p-value |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 0 to 10 hours | 10+ hours | Total | |
| **Often** | 18 (51.43%) | 17 (48.57%) | 35 (100%) | **0.0211 \*** |
| **Sometimes, Rarely, or Never** | 8 (24.24%) | 25 (75.76%) | 33 (100%) | |
| **Total** | 26 (38.24%) | 42 (61.76%) | 67 (100.00%) | |

Frequency Missing = 5

**\*-indicates statistically significant finding**

Table 4.54

*Restrictions of Music by Hours*

| Frequency of Music usage rules | Hours spent on Music per week | | | Chi-square p-value |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 0 to 10 hours | 10+ hours | Total | |
| | | | | 0.2331 |
| **Often** | 31 (77.50%) | 9(22.50) | 40 (100.00%) | |
| | | | | Fisher's Exact |
| **Sometimes, Rarely, or Never** | 24 (88.89%) | 3 (11.11) | 27 (100.00%) | .3345 |
| **Total** | 55 (82.09%) | 12 (17.91 | 67 (100.00%) | |

Frequency Missing = 5

Table 4.55

*Restrictions of the Internet by Hours*

| Frequency of Internet usage rules | Hours spent on Internet per week | | | Chi-square p-value |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 0 to 10 hours | 10+ hours | Total | |
| **Often** | 24 (75.00%) | 8 (25.99%) | 32 (100.00%) | 0.5813 |
| **Sometimes, Rarely, or Never** | 29 (80.56%) | 7 (19.44%) | 36 (100%) | |
| **Total** | 53 (77.94%) | 15 (22.06%) | 68 (100.00%) | |

Frequency Missing = 4

These categories were further analyzed and disaggregated. A frequency procedure was created and Chi-squared tests were performed to determine if restrictions placed on television, music, and the Internet were significantly affected based on family situation. Results were constant and showed no significant difference in any of the independent variables. Single parent families vs. two parent families (n=19) accounted for 44.19% who "often" restrict television. The remaining 55.81% (n=24) responded "sometimes," "rarely," or "never." A Chi-squared test was performed resulting in a p-value of .5358. However, SAS determined that the Chi-squared test may not be a valid test and a Fisher's Exact was performed resulting in a p-value of .7279 (see Table 4.56).

Regarding restriction of radio disaggregated by family type, 55.81% of participants (n=24) responded that music was restricted "often", "sometimes", or "rarely." The remaining 44.19% (n=19) responded that music was "never" restricted. SAS computed the p-value based on the Fisher's Exact test in order to be more accurate. The two-sided p-value resulted in a value of 1.000 (see table 4.57).

Additionally, 34.15% (n=14) responded that they "often" restricted the Internet, while the remaining 65.85% (n=27) responded "sometimes", "rarely", or "never" in regards to restricting the Internet. Chi-squared tests resulted in a p-value of .2240 indicating no existence of significance. Once again, a Fisher's Exact test was performed and resulted in a two-sided p-value of .2672 confirming no significant value from the data collected. (see Table 4.58)

Table 4.56

*Restriction of Television by Family Type*

| Restriction Category | Family Situation | | | Chi-square |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | **Single Parent** | **Two parents** | **Total** | **p-value** |
| | | | | 0.5448 |
| **Often** | 4 (21.05%) | 15 (78.95%) | 19 (100%) | |
| | | | | Fisher's Exact |
| **Sometimes, Rarely, or Never** | 7 (29.17%) | 17 (70.83%) | 24 (100%) | .7279 |
| **Total** | 11 (25.58%) | 32 (74.42%) | 43 (100.00%) | |

Frequency Missing = 4

Table 4.57

*Restrictions of Music by Family Type*

| Restriction Category | Family Situation | | | Chi-square p-value |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Single Parent** | **Two parents** | **Total** | |
| **Often, Sometimes, or Rarely** | 6 (25%) | 18 (75%) | 24 (100%) | 0.9218 |
| | | | | Fisher's Exact |
| **Never** | 5 (26.32%) | 14 (73.68%) | 19 (100%) | 1.000 |
| **Total** | 11 (25.58%) | 32 (74.42%) | 43 (100.00%) | |

Frequency Missing = 4

Table 4.58

*Restrictions of the Internet by Family Type*

| Restriction | Family Situation | | | Chi-square |
| Category | Single Parent | Two parents | Total | p-value |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | | | | 0.2240 |
| **Often** | 5 (35.71%) | 9 (64.29%) | 14 (100%) | |
| | | | | Fisher's Exact |
| **Sometimes, Rarely, or Never** | 5 (18.52%) | 22 (53.66%) | 27 (100%) | .2672 |
| **Total** | 10 (24.39%) | 31 (75.61%) | 41 (100.00%) | |

Frequency Missing = 6

Finally, a frequency procedure was created and Chi-squared tests were performed to determine the association of gender with hours spent interacting with each type of media. Results remained stable and showed no significant difference in any media area. 20.45% (n=9) watched 0-to-10 hours of television, while 38.64% (n=17) watched 10+ hours. Conversely, 11.36% (n=5) of males watched 0-to-10 hours of television while 29.55% (n=13) watched 10+ hours. In regards to gender totals, 31.82% (n=14) watched 0 to 10 hours of television, while 68.18% (n=30) watched 10+ hours. Responses were not reported for 3 students. A Chi-squared test was performed resulting in a p-value of .6321. (see Table 4.59)

Hours spent listening to music presented similar results. 42.22% of females (n=19) were reported to listen to 0 to 10 hours of music, while 17.78% (n=8) of females listened to 10+ hours each day. The data also shows that 35.56% (n=16) of the male population listened to 0-to-10 hours of music, while 4.44% (n=2) listened to 10+ hours. A Chi-square test was performed and resulted in a p-value of .1432. However, since 25% of the cells had a count less than 5, Chi-square may not be a valid test. Fisher's Exact Test was used resulting in a two-sided Pr<=P of .2721 (see Table 4.60).

Lastly, the association of gender in relation to the Internet produced similar results. 44.44% (n=20) of the females reported using the Internet 0-to-10 hours; 13.33 % (n=6) of females were reported to spend 10 + hours online. The male results yielded 31.11% (n=14) were on the Internet 0-to-10 hours while 11.11% (n=5) were online 10+ hours. A Chi-square was performed and resulted in a p-value of .8028 (see Table 4.61).

Table 4.59

*Television viewing hours by Gender*

| Adolescent Gender | Hours | | | Chi-square |
| | 0 to 10 hours | 10 + Hours | Total | p-value |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | | | | 0.6321 |
| Female | 9 (34.62%) | 17 (65.38%) | 26 (100%) | |
| Male | 5 (27.78%) | 13 (72.22%) | 18 (100%) | |
| Total | 14 (31.82%) | 30 (68.18%) | 44 (100.00%) | |

Table 4.60

*Hours of music by Gender*

| Adolescent Gender | Hours | | | Chi-square |
| | 0 to 10 hours | 10 + Hours | Total | p-value |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | 0.1432 |
| Female | 19 (70.37%) | 8 (29.63%) | 27 (100%) | |
| | | | | Fisher's Exact |
| | | | | .2721 |
| Male | 16 (88.89%) | 2 (11.11%) | 18 (100%) | |
| Total | 35 (77.78%) | 10 (22.22%) | 45 (100.00%) | |

Frequency Missing = 2

Table 4.61

*Hours of Internet use by Gender*

| Adolescent Gender | Hours | | | Chi-square |
| | 0 to 10 hours | 10 + Hours | Total | p-value |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | | | | 0.8028 |
| Female | 20 (76.92%) | 6 (23.08%) | 26 (100%) | |
| | | | | Fisher's Exact |
| | | | | 1.000 |
| Male | 14 (73.68%) | 5 (26.32%) | 19 (100%) | |
| Total | 34 (75.56%) | 11 (24.44%) | 45 (100.00%) | |

Frequency Missing = 2

**Summary**

This chapter included an examination of the study results through data analysis using SAS v. 9.2 software and a summary of those results. The results illustrated statistical significance when adolescents living in households where parents restricted television consumption "often" vs. "sometimes," "rarely," or "never" did watch less television (p=.021).

Other statistical analysis' showed no statistical significance when comparing music and Internet use by hours restricted. Nor was there statistical significance when comparing the hours spent with each media type by family situation or gender. Equally frequency tables were created illustrating participant responses to a variety of research questions including time spent

with various media outlets, as well as rules and principles that guide the decision to mediate each

media medium.

# CHAPTER 5 - SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Chapter V summarizes the research design, findings, and discusses limitations of the study.-The researcher reflects on and evaluates guiding principles, mediation rules, time descriptors, and conversations between adolescents and adults that may have impacted the findings. Suggestions for future research are provided.

**Summary of Research Design and Findings**

The primary purpose of the study was to examine the degree to which parents are informed of their fifth grade adolescent's use of media--specifically focusing on television, music, and the Internet. The major goals were to (a) explore the various media types used by adolescents, and (b) to explore the relationships that parents have with their adolescent as they relate to media regulation.

Today's adolescents are growing up in an era of globalization (Brown & Fitzpatrick, 2010; Duffelmeyer, 2004; Saeibadi, 2008). They are viewed as "digital natives" because they typically are familiar with digital technologies such as computers, Internet, mobile phones, and digital audio players (Prensky, 2001). They are in opposition to "digital immigrants" who were born prior to the advent of the digital age (Prensky, 2001). Adolescents are able to access the world around them via these media outlets which has raised concerns from parents, educators, and political and religious leaders.

This study was designed to determine what measures parents employ to regulate the media their adolescent consumes, the amount of time spent with each medium, and the principles that guide the decision making process used for regulation by the parents.

The participants for this study were parents of fifth grade students from a suburban elementary school in the Midwest. The researcher obtained permission to use the Television Mediation Scale from Valkenburg, one of its authors. This communication may be seen in Appendix A. The Television Mediation Scale was then modified--by the researcher--into a comprehensive framework by which music and the Internet use would also be studied. Additionally the researcher developed several questions and collected information related to demographic information from the participants.

The study was conducted using a survey research method using the aforementioned questionnaire. Participants included all fifth grade parents at the elementary school. Ninety one total students were enrolled in the fifth grade at the time of the study. A total of 51.6% (n=72) surveys were returned representing forty seven of the ninety one enrolled.

Data collection took place over a three week period and involved three opportunities designed to gain as many participants as possible. The data were analyzed using SAS version 9.2 software using frequency tables, Chi-squared test, and Fisher's Exact test when necessary.

**Research Questions and Findings**

The critical research question posed was "are parents powerless over the influence the media has on their children?" Regarding each media outlet (television, music, and the Internet) a series of questions were developed:

- Q1: In what ways and to what extent do parents of fifth grade students regulate television usage in their home? This question was then broken down into four dependent variables:
    - Discussion with the child,
    - Time descriptors,

      o   Rules and restriction both with the child and when the parents were children, and

      o   Principles used in the discussion process.

The questions yielded some interesting findings as seen in Tables 4.3-through-4.24 found in Chapter IV. The only significant finding occurred when the data was examined and parents restricted television viewing, by limiting their children to ten hours or less per week. The resulting p-value was .021 as seen in Table 4.53.

- Q2: In what ways and to what extent do parents of fifth grade students regulate music in their homes? This question was then broken down into four dependent variables:
  - o   Discussion with the child,
  - o   Time descriptors,
  - o   Rules and restriction both with the child and when the parents were children, and
  - o   Principles used in the discussion process.

The results of these inquiries may be viewed in Tables 4.25-through-4.38. Interestingly, when compared with television, parents had far fewer rules about their adolescent listening to music than they did watching television. The researcher drew the conclusion that parents were more concerned with the visual media than auditory media.

- Question 3 focused on the Internet and asked in what ways and to what extent do parents of fifth grade students regulate the Internet in their home?
  - o   Discussion with the child,
  - o   Time descriptions,
  - o   Rules and restrictions with the child, and
  - o   Principles used in the discussion process.

The results from the dependent variables may be seen in Tables 4.39-through-4.52. Participants responded that they were most concerned with online predators and the ability to access sexual materials. Additionally, participants indicated that they were vigilant in discussing rules about Internet use as well as monitoring Internet use in the home.

**Classroom Considerations**

The results of the study indicated that parents are aware of how their adolescents interact with various media but an element of education for parents and even educators in the schools may be missing. The researcher believes that parents must be more proactive in the lives of their children. The media cannot serve as a babysitter or an unmonitored outlet to pass the time. Parents must stay abreast of new technologies and continually monitor ways in which their adolescents use traditional and emergent technologies. The researcher is concerned that as new technologies develop and are introduced to their children and adolescents, parents will take an even less active role in mediation because many times they are not aware of the capabilities of present technology. This suggests that as technology evolves, parents may become even more frustrated and will not invest the time needed into learning what the media is offering to their child or adolescent.

Although educators were not a focus of this study, they need to be more aware of how technology is evolving and how their students are using that technology in their daily lives (Fitzpatrick, in Press). The students are the digital natives that will bring the "latest and greatest" technology into the classroom. Without a doubt, educators must remain vigilant in understanding new technology. Parents should work in concert with educators to continue to educate their students about proper use of technology, the important role technology continues to play in our daily lives, and ways to remain safe (Notten, & Kraaykamp, 2009; Steeves, 2005)**.**

**Limitations of the Study**

There were six limitations identified with this study. First, although the participation rate was 51.6%, the sample size was small ($N = 72$). Second, this study only sampled students enrolled at one elementary school within one school district located in the Midwest. Below are four additional limitations identified by the researcher:

- The sample for the study was not ethnically diverse, making it difficult to generalize findings from this study across other populations.

- Using the Television Mediation Scale may have been limiting. Using it as a framework for the music and Internet portion of the study may not have been validated.

- Over forty seven percent of participants had an annual income of greater than $76,000. These results may not be generalized to a lower income population.

- The survey research utilized a self reporting method, in which parents filled out the surveys on their own. One problem with survey research method is social desirability bias in which participants over report admirable attitudes and underreport attitudes that are not socially valued (Krosnick, 1999).

Each of these factors may have affected the overall results of this study. Therefore, results should be interpreted with caution.

**Implications for Future Research**

There are numerous implications that can be drawn from this study to enhance future media literacy research. These suggestions are provided for future researchers who desire to conduct additional studies.

- This study should be replicated using the same measures, but in addition to collecting data from parents and care givers, their children should be included in the survey process. Responses could then be compared and conclusions drawn from the research. Responses from the children would provide invaluable data and bring another facet to the study.

- Longitudinal studies are recommended to observe how responses change over time. This would be especially important as technology evolves and the "digital immigrants" of today become tomorrow's "digital natives."

- This study should be replicated in numerous other settings. This study was conducted in an affluent suburban school district. Suggestions for additional settings would be inner city and rural settings in different parts of the country. The researcher also would suggest conducting the study across a wider span of grade levels. The information one could gather from parent's attitudes towards students in elementary school versus middle school versus high school could provide valuable insight into how parents deal with their children and media regulation.

- This study brought to the surface concerns that parents have about the media, most notably the issue of children and sexuality. Future research should examine how sexuality is dealt with in the media and the reactions of parents and children to said subject matter.

- Television, music, and the Internet were the focus of this study. However, other forms of media technology exist that are continuing to advance including mobile phone and video gaming technology. These avenues should be examined in order to gain a

greater understanding of how children are using this technology in their daily lives and to explore the concerns, if any, that parents have regarding their use.

Today's media environment is in continual state of flux. New technologies are always on the horizon (Johnson, Levine, Smith, & Stone, 2010). Therefore it is vital for parents and educators to remain *hyper vigilant* (Fitzpatrick, In press) when regulating the messages their children receive from the media. The researcher recognizes the importance of mediation and considers parents as the first line of defense in this digital age. Unlike educators, they have the ability to insure that today's generation is raised with values that are akin to a respectable and civic minded society (Boteach, 2008; Rigby, 2006). Concerned parents should instill a sense of *right* and *wrong* in their child from a very young age and when it comes to outside influences such as television, music, the Internet and other forms of market media. This will help ensure that children will have a solid foundation to base their personal responsibility. When parents employ mediation as a safeguard, the media, which still is a powerful force, should cease to have such perceived power over our society.

**Final Discussion**

This study was an extension of a significantly limited-but-growing body of research in the field of media literacy. Additional research is needed at a variety of levels as discussed in the implications for future research. The assessment of a variety of technological advances will be critical as the field of media literacy continues to evolve.

This study produced positive results, and may have proved even more positive had the sample size increased. If parents believe that they are helpless against the power the media has over their children they are conceding a loss to the media's influence. However, if parents stay

involved in their child's life and stay up-to-date on the newest technologies and what children gain from using this technology, then there is no reason to believe that we are powerless against the media.

Parents should stay abreast of new technologies and learn all they can about the technology, what it is used for, and what effects-- socially, emotionally, or physically--that it may have on their adolescent.

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# APPENDIX A - Letter to Participants

Dear Parent(s):

My name is Dustin Springer, and I am a doctoral candidate at Kansas State University. I am currently conducting research concerning how parents of fifth graders regulate the media (specifically television, music, and the Internet) within your household.

Within this envelope you will find the following:

- This cover letter
- Survey with a blue cover (to be completed by Father or Male Guardian)
- Survey with a yellow cover (to be completed by Mother or Female Guardian)
- Demographic Sheet

**\* please note that the surveys are IDENTICAL. The colored cover serves only as a means of coding for male and female respondents.**

*This research is being conducted with the supervision of Kansas State University.*

**Principal Investigator**: Dustin Springer **Faculty Advisor**: Dr. John Hortin

**Description**: This study explores parental mediation of adolescent mass media consumption. The study focuses on parental involvement in their child's daily media use and explores if regulations are in place to limit these activities.

There are **no** foreseeable risks or discomfort to respondents associated with this survey. Participants may benefit from this research in gaining a greater understanding of media use and the role that television, music, and the Internet plays in the lives of fifth graders and the immediate family.

**Approximate Duration of the Study**: 15 - 20 minutes

If you do not wish to participate, please return the packet in its entirety. If two parents or guardians are filling out the survey, please do not discuss your responses prior to returning the packet. Your responses should be honest and are based on your own experiences. All avenues will be utilized to protect the anonymity of all respondents.

I certainly appreciate your participation in this study. If you have any questions, please contact me at (913) 375-1387 or via email at dspringer@kc.rr.com

Thank you,

Dustin Springer

Doctoral Candidate, Kansas State University

# APPENDIX B - Study Instrument

# PARENT SURVEY

INSTRUCTIONS: Please complete the following demographic information about your family.

1. Your age: _____

2. Your relationship to the adolescent taking this survey?

_____ Mother          _____ Father          _____ Step-Mother    _____ Step-Father

_____ Other; Please specify _____

3. Your adolescent's gender : _____ Male _____ Female

4. Indicate which best describes your present family situation:

_____ Two Parent, Biological Family          _____ Step Family

_____ Single Mother Family                    _____ Single, Father Family

_____ Other; Please specify: _____

5. Indicate your family's income: (circle one)

         < $25,000     $50,000 - $75,000    $76,000 - $125,000   > $125,000

**When you have completed the survey, please place it in the enclosed envelope.**

## SURVEY FOR MOTHER

**Part I. Television**

How often do you...

1) try to help your child understand what he or    Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never
   she sees on television?

2) point out why some things actors do are good?    Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never

3) point out why some things actors do are bad?    Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never

4) explain the motives of television characters?    Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never

5) explain what something on television really means?    Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never

6) tell your child to turn off a TV when s/he is watching    Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never
   an unsuitable program?

7) set specific viewing hours for your child?    Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never

8) forbid your child from watching certain programs?    Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never

9) restrict the amount of child viewing?    Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never

10) specify in advance the programs that may be watched?  Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never

11) watch together because you both like a program?    Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never

12) watch together because of a common interest?          Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never

13) watch together just for fun?                          Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never

14) do you BOTH watch **your** favorite program?          Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never

15) do you laugh with your child about things you see     Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never

   on television?


Approximately how many hours of television would you estimate that your child watches in a typical week?


Are there any television programs that you forbid your child from watching?  YES          NO


If you chose YES, please give two examples of those shows and indicate why you do not allow them to be watched.


Reflect on yourself as a child. Did your parents or guardians have rules about watching television?     YES   NO


If you chose YES, please elaborate on those rules.


As a parent, do you have rules for your child about watching television?    YES    NO


If you chose YES, please elaborate on those rules.

List three concerns that you have about television programming today.

1.


2.


3.


What factors or principles guide your decisions about your child's use of television?

**Part II MUSIC**

How often do you...

1) try to help your child understand what s/he hears on          Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never
the radio?

2) tell your child to turn off an unsuitable song?               Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never

3) discuss the lyrics or message being presented in              Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never
a song?

4) forbid your child from listening to a particular song         Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never
or radio station?

5) restrict the amount of time spent listening to music          Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never
each week?

6) listen to music together with your child because you          Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never
both like the music?

7) listen to the music together because you share a              Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never
common interest in the music?

Approximately how many hours of music would you estimate that your child listens to in a typical week?

Are there any genres of music which are inappropriate for your child?      YES    NO

If you chose YES, please write what those inappropriate genres are and why you feel they are inappropriate.


As a parent, do you have rules for your child about listening to music?      YES            NO


If you chose YES, please elaborate on those rules.



List three concerns you have about the music that is available today.

1.


2.


3.


What factors or principles guide your decisions about your child listening to music?

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**Part III Internet**

How often do you...

1) discuss appropriate use of the Internet with your child?   Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never

2) discuss Internet safety with your child?                  Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never

3) tell your child to avoid a particular website?            Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never

4) forbid your child from using the Internet unsupervised?  Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never

5) restrict the amount of time that your child spends on     Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never
   the Internet?

6) supervise what your child is doing on the Internet?       Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never

7) check to see where your child has been while on the       Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never
   Internet?

8) read your child's emails or instant messages?             Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never

Approximately, how many hours does your child spend each week on the Internet?

Of those hours, how much time is spent on the following:

online gaming _____            email _____            instant messaging _____

school work  \_\_\_\_\_          other (please indicate) _____

Are there any types of websites that are inappropriate for your child?       YES          NO

If you chose YES, please list two examples of those websites and state why you feel they are inappropriate.

As a parent of a fifth grader, do you have rules for your child about the Internet? YES   NO

If you chose YES, please list those rules.

List three concerns that you have about your child using the Internet.

1.

2.

3.

What factors or principles guide your decisions about your child's Internet use?

**SURVEY FOR FATHER**

**Part I. Television**

How often do you...

1) try to help your child understand what he or     Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never

   she sees on television?

2) point out why some things actors do are good?     Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never

3) point out why some things actors do are bad?     Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never

4) explain the motives of television characters?     Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never

5) explain what something on television really means?     Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never

6) tell your child to turn off a TV when s/he is watching     Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never

   an unsuitable program?

7) set specific viewing hours for your child?     Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never

8) forbid your child from watching certain programs?     Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never

9) restrict the amount of child viewing?     Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never

10) specify in advance the programs that may be watched?  Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never

11) watch together because you both like a program?     Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never

12) watch together because of a common interest?        Often   Sometimes   Rarely   Never

13) watch together just for fun?        Often   Sometimes   Rarely   Never

14) do you BOTH watch **your** favorite program?        Often   Sometimes   Rarely   Never

15) do you laugh with your child about things you see     Often   Sometimes   Rarely   Never

     on television?

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Reflect on yourself as a child. Did your parents or guardians have rules about watching television?     YES    NO

If you chose YES, please elaborate on those rules.

As a parent, do you have rules for your child about watching television?     YES    NO

If you chose YES, please elaborate on those rules.

List three concerns that you have about television programming today.

1.

2.

3.

What factors or principles guide your decisions about your child's use of television?

**Part II MUSIC**

How often do you...

1) try to help your child understand what s/he hears on    Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never
   the radio?

2) tell your child to turn off an unsuitable song?         Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never

3) discuss the lyrics or message being presented in        Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never
   a song?

4) forbid your child from listening to a particular song   Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never
   or radio station?

5) restrict the amount of time spent listening to music    Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never
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6) listen to music together with your child because you    Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never
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   common interest in the music?

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typical week?

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As a parent, do you have rules for your child about listening to music?      YES            NO


If you chose YES, please elaborate on those rules.



List three concerns you have about the music that is available today.

1.


2.


3.


What factors or principles guide your decisions about your child listening to music?

**Part III Internet**

How often do you...

1) discuss appropriate use of the Internet with your child?   Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never

2) discuss Internet safety with your child?   Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never

3) tell your child to avoid a particular website?   Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never

4) forbid your child from using the Internet unsupervised?  Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never

5) restrict the amount of time that your child spends on   Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never
   the Internet?

6) supervise what your child is doing on the Internet?   Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never

7) check to see where your child has been while on the   Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never
   Internet?

8) read your child's emails or instant messages?   Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never

Approximately, how many hours does your child spend each week on the Internet?

Of those hours, how much time is spent on the following:

online gaming _____          email _____          instant messaging _____

school work  \_\_\_\_\_                other (please indicate) _____

Are there any types of websites that are inappropriate for your child?      YES          NO

If you chose YES, please list two examples of those websites and state why you feel they are inappropriate.

As a parent of a fifth grader, do you have rules for your child about the Internet? YES   NO

If you chose YES, please list those rules.

List three concerns that you have about your child using the Internet.

1.

2.

3.

What factors or principles guide your decisions about your child's Internet use?

**APPENDIX C - Thank You Card**

Dear ▮▮▮▮▮▮ Parent(s),

   Thank you for participating in this study regarding methods of media mediation employed in your home for your fifth grade student. The results will contribute to a growing field of research involving parents and how they perceive the media is affecting their child.

At the conclusion of the study, copies of the final report will be available by request in .pdf format. Requests must be submitted to Mr. Springer at the email address below.

I appreciate your time and participation. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,


Dustin Springer, Researcher
dspringer@bluevalleyk12.org




Dear ▮▮▮▮▮▮ Parent(s),

   Thank you for participating in this study regarding methods of media mediation employed in your home for your fifth grade student. The results will contribute to a growing field of research involving parents and how they perceive the media is affecting their child.

At the conclusion of the study, copies of the final report will be available by request in .pdf format. Requests must be submitted to Mr. Springer at the email address below.

I appreciate your time and participation. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,


Dustin Springer, Researcher
dspringer@bluevalleyk12.org

**APPENDIX D - Permission to Use Television Mediation Scale
from Dr. Valkenburg**

**From:** Dustin Springer [mailto:dspringer@kc.rr.com]
**Sent:** Sun 3/21/2010 8:57
**To:** Valkenburg, P.M.
**Subject:** RE: Permission to use the Television Mediation Scale

Dr. Valkenburg,

Thank you so much. Can you tell me how I may access the scale and the scoring methods?

Dustin

---

**From:** Valkenburg, P.M. [mailto:P.M.Valkenburg@uva.nl]
**Sent:** Sunday, March 21, 2010 2:41 AM
**To:** Dustin Springer
**Subject:** RE: Permission to use the Television Mediation Scale

Dear Dustin, Of course you are allowed to use our scale.
Good luck with your project.

Patti Valkenburg

---

**From:** Dustin Springer [mailto:dspringer@kc.rr.com]
**Sent:** Sun 3/21/2010 5:47
**To:** Valkenburg, P.M.
**Cc:** 'Dustin Springer'; dspringer@bluevalleyk12.org
**Subject:** Permission to use the Television Mediation Scale

Dear Dr. Valkenburg,

My name is Dustin Springer and I am a doctoral student at Kansas State University in Manhattan, Kansas. I am currently working on my dissertation proposal to finish the requirements for my doctoral degree from Kansas State.

My research will focus on 1) mediation styles by parents involving television viewing by adolescents and 2) how, if at all, communication is affected between parents and adolescents.

I have investigated some other instruments but have found that your Television Mediation Scale most closely aligns to my particular research.

I am writing to you to ask your permission to use your instrument. At the present time I believe that I will be surveying approximately 125 middle school students and their parent(s). As I read the instrument, I understand that it is geared towards parents and would be used for that particular population. However, if given permission, may I alter the verbiage in order to make it applicable to the adolescent population that is being surveyed? For instance, when the instrument as "How often do you try to help your child understand what s/he sees on TV", I would ask the same question to the adolescent but alter the question to ask "How often do your parents try to help you understand what you see on TV"? This would allow me to search for correlations between the answers given by the adolescents versus their parent(s).

I would also be very interested in learning if you have any suggestions for other instruments that may be available that deal with parent and adolescent COMMUNICATION styles or if anything like this even exists.

Please advise as to the possibility of using your instrument in my dissertation. I thank you in advance for your consideration of this request.

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