

Television addiction among primary school pupils: A case study of Suhum Municipal

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ABSTRACT

Television has become an integral part of pupil's lives. Pupils are especially susceptible to developing a dependence on television. This study through the lens of social learning theory and a qualitative case study design critically examined television addiction among primary school pupils at Suhum. The study examined what drive pupils to watch television at the expense of their studies, the repercussions and ways to eradicate it. The study found themes such as attractive programs, advertisement and peer influence as triggers of television addiction among pupils; decline in academic performance, health risks and imitating immoral behavior as the effects of television addiction. The study further revealed themes such as parental, school-teacher, and governmental interventions as necessary measures needed to eradicate television addiction among pupils. The study concluded that television addiction is a vital issue that needs immediate attention.

Keywords: television, addiction, programs, intervention, social learning theory

INTRODUCTION

A principal motivation behind the introduction of digital terrestrial television has been the easy access to television (Akinbolati & Ajewole, 2020; Ariansyah & Yuniarti, 2021; Chen, 2019; Maria, 2016). Television has become indispensable to the existence, cohesion and development of modern society. With television, and both supported by satellite and other new communication technologies, the electronic media of mass communication are making the world much smaller (Gripsrud, 2015; Okuyama, 2019). The strategic place of television in modern state entities as effective media of mass communication and education for social awareness is not a debatable issue anymore. The absence of television broadcasting system in any country today would, therefore, approximate a sudden descent of darkness. With the availability of satellite communication channels to broadcasting companies and home telecasting facilities, television program production and dissemination has truly become globalized (Charankumar, 2015; De, 2014; Morley, 2013). Media liberalization has also led to the proliferation of more private television stations in addition to the state owned media (Galetić & Dabić, 2020, 2021; Xu, 2013). Ghana now boasts of a vibrant media landscape with multiple outlets and an ever increasing availability of a plethora of television stations.

It is important to acknowledge that through the proliferation of television and its attractive programs, the daily routine of pupils have been altered. Television has become an integral part of pupil's lives because they feel like knowing what is happening around the world, and the effects are controversial (Adebowale, 2019; Kandemir-Ozdinc & Erdur-Baker, 2013). Pupils quest to know more about the world around them is influenced by the numerous advertisement shown on the television. According to Gatou et al. (2016) television viewing continually exposes children to advertising, raising a number of concerns (Blades et al., 2013). However, access to television in homes can be very beneficial as a source of useful information to pupils if properly utilized (Haleem et al., 2022). Munger et al. (2021) point out that watching of television can have positive effect on pupils if well guided by parents and guardians. Watching of television can promote general learning as well as enhancing pupils' academic performance positively (Paudel et al., 2022). Some scholars support this when they indicate that although excessive television viewing may impair school performance, limited amount of television watching may be beneficial (Haleem et al., 2022; Munger et al., 2022). However, with the development of society and technology, television has brought convenience and also some problems, especially among primary school pupils (Jensen et al., 2022; Kent et al., 2023; McAnally et al., 2019; Munger et al., 2021; Pieper, 2022). Watching too much television is problematic as it limits learning hence the need to reduce television viewing among pupils to enhance their academic performance (Choi et al., 2022; Domoff et al., 2021; Hashan et al., 2021; Ikehara et al., 2019; Paudel et al., 2022). The exposure time and program content of television may also affect the health and social-emotional competence of

children (Intusoma et al., 2013). Also, increased time spent watching television has been associated with physical inactivity and with less desirable dietary intake among adolescents (Ramos et al., 2013).

Addiction is a concept that has existed from the past until now and it expresses several attitudes and behaviors that human beings cannot give up on even though it is harmful (Salici, 2020). Some explanations as to why addiction is common among pupils are examined under phases such as first use, continuing usage, quitting, thinking about using again and starting to use again. Addiction also represents an emerging problem that may be common but manifests itself in different ways and through different forms (Kim et al., 2020). Sussman and Moran (2013) identified 16 categories of addictions based on an extensive electronic literature search on “types of addiction.” These categories were: drugs, food-related, compulsive anti-social behavior (e.g., aggression), technology/communications related (e.g., videogames, television), gambling, working, social group-related (e.g., sex, love, platonic relationships), physical attractiveness-focused (e.g., tanning and cosmetic surgery), fantasizing (e.g., isolation and laziness), exercise-related, spiritual obsession, pain seeking (e.g., self-mutilation and skin picking), shopping, thrill/adventure seeking, hoarding (e.g., small collectables), and voyeurism (e.g., celebrity or other idolization and gossiping). Television addiction is an example of a technology addiction, according to this scheme. Television addiction refers to out-of-control behavior pertaining to the medium of television, as opposed to a particular show on television (Domoff et al., 2021). That is, one may feel a subjective craving to view television a great deal to achieve a sense of satiation, become preoccupied with the idea of viewing television, not be able to predict how long one will watch television, and suffer negative life consequences (Lauricella et al., 2022; Vaterlaus et al., 2019).

Television addiction is one of the leading cause of pupils’ poor academic performance (Adebowale, 2019; Habes et al., 2022; Tewell, 2014). Previous studies have reported other consequences such as increase in obesity, attention problems and aggression (Jensen et al., 2022; Kent et al., 2023; McAnally et al., 2019). Doctors, teachers, counselors, parents, and even kids are growingly concerned as the quantity of content, type of available media, proliferation of electronic devices, and time spent on screens are on ascendancy. The average primary school pupil spends seven hours, 22 minutes on screens daily, not including for school or homework (James et al., 2019). According to James et al. (2019), television addiction is up significantly from the last survey in 2015, which is even more alarming when considered with the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommendation of pupils spending less time watching television. Unless this menace is addressed, students will have other plethora effects such as poor sleep quality and other physical illnesses such as stroke and heart disease due to limited mobility.

Previous research on television addiction has been directed towards television viewing addiction characteristics among university students. Several studies have examined binge watching and why university students are glued to their screens noting that young adults, especially college students, frequently engage in this behavior, representing a modern form of heavy television use (Dandamudi & Sathiyaseelan, 2018; Fortunata & Utami, 2021; Lades et al., 2022; Rubenking & Bracken, 2021; Vaterlaus et al., 2019). Other studies have focused on television viewing as a hidden addiction among High School students (Sussman & Moran, 2013). Fewer studies have examined the influence of television behavior on students, which is detriment to their studies and exposure to violent images associated with controversial and aggressive behavior (Adebowale, 2019). Minimal research attention has been directed towards television addiction, which exists among pupils at the primary schools in Ghana. Existing studies rather focused on television addiction among university and High school students (Adebowale, 2019; Dandamudi & Sathiyaseelan, 2018; Fortunata & Utami, 2021). Existing studies on television addiction among students are primarily quantitative with a focus on outcomes and trans theoretical models (Creswell, 2014). Qualitative investigations, however, provide detailed views of students in their own words (Creswell, 2014; Delgado-Hito & Romero-García, 2021; Hagman, 2023; Maeda et al., 2022). Moreover, qualitative inquiry offers the opportunity to involve pupils as co-researchers, a data collection procedure that can enhance the validity of students’ views uncontaminated by adult perspectives. Against this background, the study investigates television addiction among primary school pupils in Suhum Municipality using the qualitative research approach and the social learning theory. By examining television addiction using the qualitative approach and involving pupils as co-researchers, we can better understand some of the reasons why pupils spend most of their time watching television and the associated dangers. With this understanding, researchers can better isolate variables and develop models about television addiction among primary school pupils. Parents and teachers can also plan intervention strategies to prevent or change pupil’s attitude towards watching television at all times.

Social Learning Theory

Social learning theory (Bandura, 1977) explains how mass media influences the audience (Hikmat, 2018). The theory is one of criminology’s major micro-sociological frameworks for explaining the causes of criminal and deviant behavior (Pinho et al., 2020; Proctor & Niemeyer, 2020). The theory has achieved its preeminence in criminology because it does well on all the major criteria by which sound theory is judged, which include logical consistency, scope, parsimony, testability, empirical validity and usefulness. Social learning theory is the ability to learn from others. Although humans can and have learned a lot from direct experience, they learn more from observing the behavior of others (Fortunata & Utami, 2021). This theory is assisted by the concept of imitation behavior and the concept of adolescence. The theory is important for the study because it will help explain television addiction as a deviant behavior among children and how children imitate certain behaviors from what they watch on television.

The present study was carried out to study the following objectives. Firstly, to examine what drive pupils to watch television always at the expense of their studies. Secondly, to investigate the perceived effects of television addiction among primary school pupils and finally, to explore the preventive measures to eradicate television addiction among primary school pupils. To meet the objectives, the following research questions were posed.

1. What are the triggers of television addiction among primary school pupils in Suhum Municipality?
2. What are the perceived effects of television addiction among primary school pupils in Suhum Municipality?
3. What are the preventive measures to curb television addiction among primary school pupils in Suhum Municipality?

METHODS

Research Approach

The study employed exploratory qualitative case study. Creswell (2014) avers that if a concept or phenomenon needs to be explored and understood because little research has been done on it, then it merits a qualitative approach. Television addiction among primary school pupils is an area, where little research has been done through the qualitative approach in Suhum Municipal.

Participants

The researchers used purposive sampling strategy by recruiting 18 participants comprising of six primary school pupils, six teachers, and six parents within Suhum Municipal. Purposive sampling was chosen with the following goals in mind: to generate information-rich data on television addiction, to identify triggers of television addiction, explore both physical, psychosocial and other consequences of intensive television use and to examine the preventive measures to help curb television addiction. During data collection, 12 (pupils and teachers) out of the 18 participants were selected from Suhum Municipal Assembly Experiment "C" Primary School, Suhum Methodist Primary School, Amanhyia Roman Catholic Primary School, Suhum Presby Model "C" Primary School, Kofigyia Municipal Assembly Primary School and Suhum Roman Catholic Primary School. The other six participants who were parents were also selected from Suhum Municipal using expert sampling technique.

Data Collection Procedure

Prior to data collection from the respective schools, permission was sought from the Suhum Municipal Director of Education. The goal for all data collection is to capture quality evidence that allows analysis to aid the formulation of convincing and credible answers to the questions that have been posed (Creswell, 2014). To collect rich and real-life evidence, the study used interview and focus group discussion as data collection methods.

Relative to the study, 12 participants consisting of six students and six parents were selected for in-depth interviews between February and March 2023. Open-ended questions were carefully designed to answer the research questions as well as address the research objectives. The open-ended interview guide thus, generated qualitative and opinion-related information to answer research questions one, two and three. The interview guide was developed on the basis of concepts from extant literature on television addiction among students. The rationale for conducting interviews was to avoid delays in filling and returning questionnaires by participants and also to have access to highly opinionated perspectives as data for the study. The 12 participants were interviewed in a conversational manner within a period of 40 to 45 minutes (Croix et al., 2018). The interviews were conducted at a place of convenience of the participants. Data collected were then recorded and transcribed for patterns of themes to emerge. The researchers also took notes so that in the event the recording failed, they rely on it.

The researchers employed focus group discussion in addition to the interviews using six participants who were all teachers to obtain detailed descriptions on television addiction among pupils in their respective schools. Participant recruitment for the focus group was conducted between March and April 2023. The discussions lasted approximately one-hour. The focus group discussion guide consisted of 11 open-ended questions based on the research objectives.

Data Analysis Procedure

Audiotapes of the interviews were transcribed verbatim and checked for accuracy by the researchers. The findings were coded and analyzed using a thematic analysis approach with close reference to the research objectives and research questions. We categorized the data into themes, and coded the various interviews conducted with the participants. We noted the issues that run through the interviews and categorized them under various themes. We used the inductive type of thematic analysis (Braun & Clark, 2013), where the researcher does not fit the data into any form of preconceived analysis or pre-existing coding frame (Braun & Clarke, 2021). Direct quotes were also used to support the discussions and interpretations. Pseudonyms were given to participants to conceal their identity.

RESULTS

Participants described their views and current patterns of watching television. Three overarching themes each with a particular distinction represented through subthemes emerged from the interviews and focus group discussion relating to triggers, perceived effects and preventive measures to curb television addiction. Codes used for the participants for interview and focus group discussion are IP and FGP respectively. **Figure 1** shows a diagram with all the qualitative themes and subthemes.

Theme 1: Triggers of Television Addiction

Research question one examined what drive pupils to watch television. Data from the study revealed that easy access to television viewing has resulted in changing the daily routine of pupils. Television viewing has become a 24-hour day enterprise among pupils. This inadvertently has changed the beliefs, interest and lifestyle of pupils. Subthemes derived include attractive programs, advertisement, peer influence and parental control.

Findings from the study revealed that attractive programs aired by television stations trigger pupils to be behind the screen every day. A participant commented, as follows:

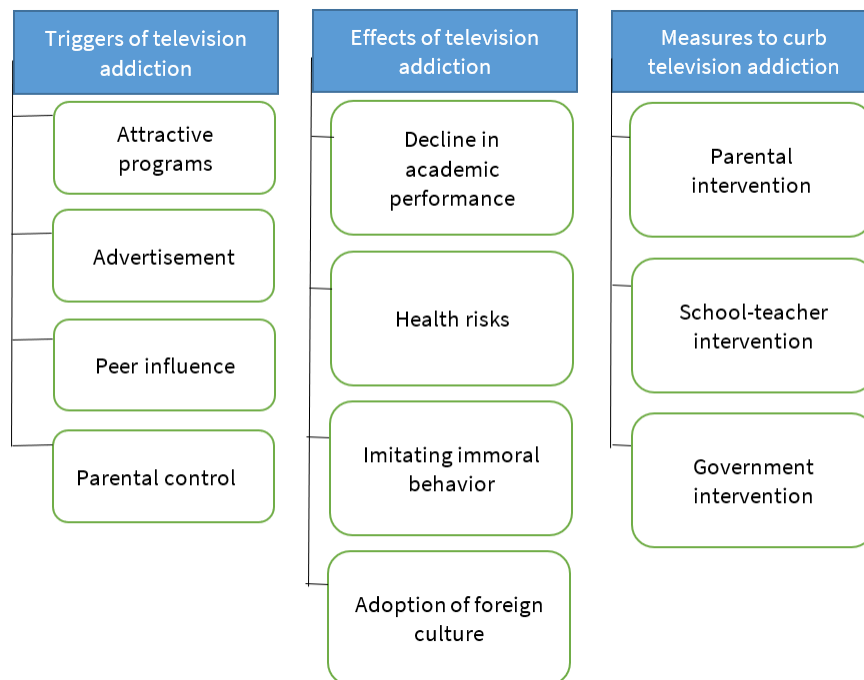


Figure 1. Diagram of themes & subthemes (Source: Authors' own elaboration)

Some of the programs on television are too attractive. So when you watch it, you will be attracted to watch it every day (IP 1).

Most of the participants indicated that some of the attractive programs always keep them in suspense, whipping their appetite to watch the next episode. The feeling of intense anticipation can be found in various genres and have an audience leaning forward with their eyes glued to the screen. One participant said this:

One of the factors that trigger me to watch television always is suspense. When you are watching some of the programs, it gets to the climax then they end it. When such happens, you have no choice than to patiently wait the next day to determine what actually unfold (FGP 5).

From the study, other participants revealed that attractive programs such as telenovelas drive them to watch television always. Telenovelas are gradually making their way into every home with their melodramatic style of arresting the taste and fulfilling a great vacuum in the viewing pleasure among pupils. Underscoring the significant role that telenovelas play in the lives of audience, its content is gaining popularity. Some participants said that because telenovelas are showed in their local dialect, they actually find it more interesting and understandable One participant reiterated as follows:

For me, I will say telenovelas that have been introduced on the television stations drive most of the pupils to be addicted to the television because the language is easily understood, and they follow it more and more (IP 12).

The study revealed that attractive and inspiring nature of advertisement shown on the television drive pupils to always stay behind the screen. Some of the adverts keep students in suspense, wanting to know what follows. One participant said this:

Some of the television stations advertise their programs such that children will always want to watch. The child will be curious to watch and see what will happen (FGP 6).

Some participants indicated that their friends who discusses what they watched the previous day drives them to also watch he television always. Majority of the participants indicated that when they come to school, their friends always narrate some of the programs that they watched on the television, with some engaging in role play. One participant commented as follows:

Peer influence always lead me to watch the television. Some students are found of discussing what they watched the other day on the television in class. To those of us who did not watch the program, they will even tease you. Some of us have no option than to watch it so that when we come to class and they are discussing it, we can also contribute (IP 5).

Findings of the study revealed that lack of parental control drive pupils to watch television.

One participant said this:

Children watch television with their parents. They do the discussion together. Their parents are with them while they watch. So it gives them the interest to make time to watch a lot of the programs (FGP 3).

Excessive television watching by pupils severely compromises their physical and emotional conditions. The study found out that although some parents have restrictions on the type of television programs that their children watch, they do not limit the actual time they spend on the screen. Findings of the study showed that for many of the participants who are parents, there is lack of concern that television viewing is a problem for their children.

Theme 2: Effects of Television Addiction

Research question two investigated the effects of television addiction among primary school pupils. The study identified decline in academic performance, health risks, imitating immoral behavior and adoption of foreign culture as the effects associated with television addiction among pupils.

The study revealed that increased hours of television viewing has negative impact on pupil's academic performance. Students spend considerable amount of time watching various programs on television. Watching television always reduce pupil's academic achievements and performances depending on the quality of the programs that are being watched. A participant reiterated, as follows:

Some learners perform poorly because they are always watching television without concentrating on their books. This inadvertently affects their academic performance. Some of them may be brilliant but frequent exposure to television will affect their education (IP 4).

In extreme cases, pupils can drop out of school as a result of their continual exposure to television. One participant said this:

Television addiction can also lead to school dropout. When pupils are so much addicted to the television and they do not learn, it affects their academic performance. And we have some children if they do not perform, the last thing is that they will drop out of school (IP 1).

Findings from the study revealed that when pupils are exposed to the television, it also affects their health. Pupils who watch television always are at the danger of developing eye defects. During this condition, the affected child experiences blurry or reduced vision that is not correctable by glasses or lenses. Television addiction also promotes scarcity of exercise and a sedentary lifestyle. Both of these impact the guts and the brain. This will eventually cause cardiovascular problems and narrow arteries. One participant commented, as follows:

When it comes to health, watching television also affects vision. There are some pupils, when they are eating, they will be watching television. Research has proven that watching television while eating affects the brain (IP 6).

The study revealed that children who spend long hours watching television every day have a higher rate of becoming obese.

Although some participants highlighted the importance of television to children, the study revealed that pupils who are addicted to television imitates some immoral behavior from the programs they watch. Findings from the study showed that extensive viewing of television causes greater aggressiveness among children. Children who view shows where violence is very realistic, frequently repeated or unpunished are more likely to imitate what they see. Children with emotional, behavioral, learning or impulse control problems may be more easily influenced by television violence. The impact of television violence may show immediately in the child's behavior or may surface years later. One participant said this:

One of the set back of our time is watching television. The negative effect is that it brain washes our children by exposing them to negative attitudes. When it comes to sexual lifestyle, most of our children imitate from there. Then when it comes to action movies, most of our young ones learn how to use knives, gun, weapons. When it comes to our local movies, the most serious aspect is when someone poisons another. In some of the movies too, you see people hanging themselves. All these things affect our children. Some of them practice these things and it is dangerous too (FGP 4).

Findings from the study revealed that children behave according to what they watch on television. Television presents content and values that are often contrary to the predominant values of society. Majority of the participants indicated that television emphasize illegal action and perpetuate a system in which groups of people are devalued because of sex, race, and other criteria. The study revealed that type of television content influence children's behavior and is manifested through lowered self-control and greater likelihood of morally deviant behavior.

The study revealed that pupils learn indecent language from the television. One participant indicated as follows:

One negative aspect of being addicted to television is the abuse or use of filthy words. For instance, in our local movies, most of them are full of insults. Children learn them and imitate in society (FGP 3).

The study revealed that a child's age and linguistic maturity, the suitability of the content for his or her age group, the quality of the content viewed, the amount of television viewed, and the involvement of parents during viewing all inform the likelihood of language learning from television.

Findings from the study indicate that pupils adopt foreign culture through television addiction. While television can entertain, inform and keep children company, it may also influence them in undesirable ways such as imitating foreign culture. The study showed that children choose what to wear, eat, among others from what they watched from the television. One participant indicated, as follows:

Pupils copy foreign culture from what they watch. Pupils copy how to dress, talk and even behave just like the actors from these movies, which are contrary to our culture (IP 5).

Theme 3: Measures to Curb Television Addiction

Research question three explored the preventive measures needed to eradicate television addiction among pupils. The following subthemes were identified: parental, school-teacher and government interventions.

Findings from the study indicated that it is important for parents to control the exposure of their children to the television. The study revealed that parents can intervene for their children to transition through this difficult age by counselling them and being familiar with life pressures they are experiencing. A participant said this:

As parent, you should guide your children. As you are with the kids, there should be a specific time that you should allow your them to watch television. Some of the programs are not meant for the children. So when it is time for the program, either you will let your kids take their books and learn or do other things (IP 10).

The study again revealed that school-teacher intervention is crucial in curbing television addiction among pupils. Findings from the study indicated that teachers should introduce the type of programs, which are educative to pupils and also give them enough assignments to preoccupy them. One participant commented, as follows:

As teacher, what can be done is giving pupils a lot of assignments and specify the time for submission (IP 13).

Another participant said this:

Teachers should involve parents and inquire from them about what their kids do at home during their free time. Some of the parents may not be aware. Some of them are busy to the extent that they go to work and by the time they come back, they would not know what goes on in the house. So as a teacher, when you see something of that sort, you should engage the parents and explain to them the consequences of allowing your child watch television all the time. This can best be done during our community general assembly, formerly PTA meeting. So some of these problems could be addressed (IP 14).

Findings of the study also revealed that government has a role to play in curbing television addiction among pupils. The study indicated that government can best control this menace among pupils by moderating the programs aired by television stations. One participants commented, as follows:

Some of the programs, which portrays immoral behavior should be banned by government. Government should also give the television stations specific programs that they need to show, especially educational programs (IP 10).

DISCUSSION

This study explored television addiction among primary school pupils in the Suhum Municipality.

The study provided rich and detailed descriptions related to pupils viewing of television by directly quoting participants' words in the interview and focus group discussion. Further, the qualitative themes that were generated contextualized relevant findings from previous qualitative studies.

Findings from the study indicated that attractive programs is a major trigger of television addiction among pupils. Some of these programs include telenovelas, which are aired in the Ghanaian language. This finding corroborates the view of Adebowale (2019), and Kandemir-Ozdinc and Erdur-Baker (2013) that the proliferation of television and its attractive programs have altered the daily routine of pupils.

The qualitative findings revealed that attractive and inspiring nature of advertisement shown on television drives pupils to watch television. This finding affirm the view of Blades (2013) and Gatou et al. (2016) that pupils quest to know more about the world around them is influenced by advertisement. The purpose of advertising is to present the most persuasive selling message to products or services. It catches the attention of viewers and consumers with commercial messages. Some of the adverts keep students in suspense, wanting to know what unfold.

Study participants revealed that most pupils are influenced by their peers to watch television. The study revealed that students who are addicted to television always discuss what they watch the previous day with their peers, and they learn from each other. This inadvertently influences each other to also watch the program in order to contribute to the discussion. This finding affirms the social learning theory (Bandura, 1977) that pupils learn from their interactions with others in a social context.

Several quotes from the participants revealed that parents who look adamant and pay no attention to pupil's habitual mode of watching television contributes to their addiction behavior. The study revealed that lack of parental control is a major trigger to television addiction among pupils. Munger et al. (2022) supports this assertion that parents are key in pupil's addictive behaviors if they do not control what their children watch on the screen.

In spite of the fact that television help students positively in many ways, it also impacts on them negatively. The excessive watch of television among primary school pupils is an important issue that needs to be addressed. The study revealed that television addiction affects pupil's academic performance. This include decline in grades and possible school drop. However, Haleem et al. (2022) hold a divergent view that access to television in homes can be very beneficial as a source of useful information

to pupils if properly utilized. Confirming the above view, Munger et al. (2022) point out that watching of television can have positive effect on pupils if well guided by parents and guardians. Paudel et al. (2022) corroborate the above assertion that watching of television can promote general learning as well as enhancing pupils' academic performance.

The study revealed that increased number of hours spent watching television has negative impact on the health of children and young people. Findings from the study indicated that too much screen time can lead to insomnia, obesity, sleep problems, chronic neck and back problems, depression and anxiety. Intusoma et al. (2013) corroborate the above view that exposure time and program content of television may also affect the health of children (Intusoma et al., 2013). Ramos et al. (2013) support the above view that increased time watching television has been associated with physical inactivity and with less desirable dietary intake among adolescents.

The qualitative case study revealed that pupils imitate immoral behaviors when exposed to the television. The study showed that one of the set back of our time is watching television, which brain washes children and put them in negative attitudes. Pupils try to imitate immoral behaviors such as sexual lifestyle, committing suicide, use of filthy language, handling of deadly weapons, among others. Intusoma et al. (2013) aver that exposure time and program content of television may also affect the social-emotional competence of children. The use of television in the context of traditional cultural values in a society can sometimes have unintended and deleterious effects on certain segments of society.

The most visible form of cultural domination and penetration through television is the import and dissemination of programs from foreign countries. The study revealed that pupils learn foreign culture from foreign programs. These include dressing, speaking and the type of food. The social learning theory (Bandura, 1977) affirm the above views because when pupils observe the behaviors of others, they also imitate and assimilate them. Fortunata and Utami (2021) affirm that although humans can and have learned a lot from direct experience, they learn more from observing the behavior of others.

Findings from the study revealed that parental intervention is crucial in eradicating television addiction among pupils. The study revealed that parents can help their children transition through this very difficult age by engaging them in counselling and being familiar with the life pressures they are experiencing. Parents can work to make television both an educational resource and a family bonding experience by monitoring their children's television viewing routines. The above view corroborates Munger et al. (2022) study that watching of television can have positive effect on pupils if well guided by parents and guardians.

The study revealed that teachers play important role in controlling television addiction among pupils. Teachers intervention cannot be ruled out because they play critical role in the development of pupils. This can be enhanced if teachers introduce television programs to families, which are appropriate for pupils to watch. Teachers can also engage pupils with assignments that will occupy pupils when they close from school. In that direction, pupils who will refuse to submit their assignments will be punished. The present study envisaged an additional role for schools, serving as information and prevention hubs with an increasing involvement of educators in raising awareness, in assessment and prevention of excessive use and ensuing problems. This new role of schools conceptualized by the participants implied adequate training of school staff that may support the needs of students both in terms of digital literacy and by responding to evolving socio-emotional issues. School support may be provided in the following ways:

- (i) identification of early signs of problematic use,
- (ii) providing assessment tools for an accurate and rapid evaluation of television addiction, and
- (iii) becoming informed about and liaising with referral sources for mental health services or support groups for high-risk students to be readily available to school counsellors, staff and parents.

The study revealed that government has to regulate ownership and programs aired by television stations. This is important because despite the fact that television programs assist in modelling behaviors and develop children value system, scores of current television programs are regrettably very violent and misleading. Adebowale (2019) supports the above findings from the study. Adebowale (2019) affirms that government should sensor what is being aired on television and sponsor educative and interesting programs that will be beneficial to pupils and society at large.

Limitations

The study attempted to examine television addiction among pupils using only qualitative research approach. However, using only qualitative research approach will not pave way for generalization of results. Also, using only 18 participants to represent the entire population of Suhum did not provide fair representation for the study. However, since qualitative studies are not about large numbers but concerned with garnering in-depth understanding of a phenomenon, the sample size gave a fair representation on how television addiction fair among pupils in Suhum, though not enough. Nevertheless, these limitations did not take away the credibility of the study, as it has implications for further studies. Further research is needed to ascertain the level of television addiction among pupils.

Recommendations

Considering the deleterious effects of television watching addiction among primary school pupils, the study recommends the following.

Parents should monitor their children's television routines. They should not allow their children watch all kinds of television programs because these programmes are not appropriate for their age. Monitoring can take many forms including setting time limits, setting rules around types of content and active mediation. They should also introduce pupils to some of the educational programs on the television. Parents should put passwords on their television to control when their children switch on the television and what they watch. Parents should also engage their children in co-viewing to make sure they watch television with

the type of lessons that they want. When watching television with children, parents can see strategies in the shows and discuss them with their children, which will help regulate their emotions.

Considering the circumstances, where television is penetrating into the lives of children and gradually affecting their academic performance, the school plays critical role in eradicating this menace. The school should provide a functional guidance and counseling unit, where students can be referred to. The school can also use its social gatherings to educate parents and pupils on the dangers associated with television addiction. During such gatherings, expert advice could also be solicited from the Educational Directorate. Teachers should also engage pupils with assignments that will occupy them after school.

Government should moderate through the National Media Commission (NMC) the type of programs shown on the television. NMC should insist on all television stations to show academic programs that will benefit kids more than movies. The movies, especially telenovelas should be shown deep or late in the night while kids are asleep.

CONCLUSIONS

This study examined television addiction among pupils. Three main themes comprising of triggers, perceived effects and measures to curb television addiction emerged from the qualitative study. Under triggers of television addiction, subthemes derived are attractive programs, advertisement, peer influence and parental control. The study revealed that attractive programs often have captivating storylines and high production values. As a result, pupils may become hooked to these programs and feel a strong desire to continue watching to find out what happens next. This often leads to excessive television viewing and a neglect of other activities such as learning. Advertisements are designed to be persuasive and capture the attention of viewers, including pupils. Television stations often employ techniques such as catchy jingles, vibrant visuals, and engaging storytelling to create a strong impact. These persuasive techniques can make pupils more inclined to watch television for longer periods. Pupils also often look up to their peers and may imitate their behaviors, including television viewing habits. In some cases, pupils may have limited parental control or supervision over their television viewing habits. If parents are not actively involved in monitoring and setting limits on screen time, pupils are more likely to engage in excessive television watching. Without proper guidance or restrictions, pupils may develop a habit of relying on television as a primary source of entertainment and escapism.

Considering the numerous potential benefits of television notwithstanding, pupils are at high risk of developing television addiction. These addictive behaviors inadvertently affect pupil's academic performance, health, behavioral change and adoption of foreign culture. The study highlights the urgent need of all stakeholders such as parents, teachers and government to intervene using appropriate strategies. Parents should set clear limits for screen time and involve pupils in co-viewing., Teachers should engage pupils in alternative activities such as giving assignments to occupy them. The government should also regulate the activities and programs of television stations.

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