Research Paper Educaiton

Impact of Television Viewing Habit on Develoment of Basic Social Skills by Primary School Children in Nsukka Urban, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the impact television viewing habit (TVHa) has on development of basic social skills among primary school children in Nsukka urban, Nigeria. Television viewing habit was described as the average daily television viewing hour(s) of a primary school age child. The design of the study was an Ex Post Facto. The population of the study was 2492 primary five pupils within the study area. The sample of the study was 429 television viewing children purposively drawn and distributed into 187 intense, 128 moderate and 114 low television viewing children using a diary of personal television viewing profile (PTVP) designed by the researchers and which served as the preliminary instrument. The main instrument for the study was a scale of acquisition of basic social skills (SABSS), also constructed by the researchers which assessed the level of relational skills as well as personal care and hygiene skill possessed by the children. The SABSS was a scale of 50 items arranged in 12 clusters. The research question was answered using descriptive statistics while the hypothesis was tested at .05 probability level using one- way analysis of variance (ANc OVA) statistic. Scheffe Post hoc test was also done to determine the direction of the significant mean differences. The findings of the study indicated that though television viewing habit impacted significantly on children's social skills development, the impact was not unidirectional. While low TVHa appeared to have had less impact, intense TVHa appeared to have had rather deleterious impact on children's development of basic social skills. The researchers therefore, recommended that parents and caregivers find time to moderate television viewing habit of children by ensuring that the quality time a child has after school is spread to accommodate television viewing and other activities and plays of children that positively impact on social skills develop

Keywords :

INTRODUCTION

Every human being needs to have acquired some basic and critical life skills to live productively, be it within the school environment or in the larger society. Productive living therefore is all about one's ability to apply right skills to life issues and problems. Such basic skills include social skills, cognitive and emotional skills. Social skills refer to those competencies which enable an individual to live a responsible life within the society. According to Ngwoke & Eze (2010), it relates to the acquisition of appropriate life skills such as communication, etiquette, nuances and psychomotor skills which enable a child to effectively function as a person in a group of interacting and inter-relating human beings. In this study, basic social skills were taken to include relational skills, personal care and hygiene skills. Relational skills comprised punctuality, attentiveness, perseverance, carrying out assignments, organizational ability, politeness, honesty, self control, spirit of co-operation (sharing resources and working well with others) and obedience. Personal care/hygiene skills include cleanliness, tidiness, orderliness, neatness of self and study materials and care of the body parts (nails, hairs and teeth). Development of basic life skills is influenced by innate characteristics as well as environmental factors.

There has been an age long debate among developmental psychologists (Watson, 1930) on the issue of whether inherited or environmental factors have stronger influence on human development. However, contemporary psychologists and researchers (Baumrind, 1993; Jackson, 1993; and Berndt, 1997) point to the relatedness of the two factors in determining development. That means that an individual's innate potentials can only be optimally utilized when environmental forces are able to play their roles. Heredity factors are givens and may not be easily manipulated. It is therefore the responsibility of parents, teachers, caregivers and other adult figures to ensure that environmental factors around the growing child are safe, rich and healthy enough for the child to attain the highest level set by his innate characteristics in developing the necessary basic skills. Children acquire much of the basic social skills during early and middle childhood. Middle childhood stage, the focus of this study, spans the period between six and eleven years plus. In addition to other characteristics of children at this stage, the stage is critical as it coincides with the period children start formal primary education in most countries.

In Nigeria, the legal age at which children start primary education is six years. The National Policy on Education (FRN, 2004) defines primary education as the education given in institutions for children aged six to eleven years plus. The policy articulates the goals of primary education among other things as to:

- lay a sound basis for scientific and reflective thinking;
- give citizenship education as a basis for effective participation in and contribution to the life of the society;
- mould the character and develop sound attitude and mor-

als in the child; and
- give the child opportunity for developing manipulative skills that will enable the child function effectively in the society within the limits of the child's capacity (p.14).

In pursuance of the above goals, the Nigerian National Policy on Education (NPE) stipulated that teaching in the primary schools shall be experiential and exploratory; that the medium of instruction shall be the language of the child's immediate environment for the first three years during which English Language shall be taught as a subject and that learning environment shall be child friendly. The extent to which social environment impacts on children's development of basic social skills will in turn influence their general adjustment in and outside school. Politeness for instance is acquired through identification with and imitation of parents who are themselves polite. Pro-social and compliant behavior promotes classroom learning indirectly by facilitating achievement oriented behavior (Kutner, 1991) while non-compliant behavior can be highly detrimental to classroom learning and instruction by disrupting pupils from engaging in academic activities (Feldman and Wentzel, 1990). Evidence from literature suggests that teachers prefer pupils who are co-operative, cautious and conforming. Teachers also have reported that negative and aggressive behavior was highly detrimental to classroom order and as a consequence, they spend an enormous amount of time teaching pupils how to behave and act responsibly (Rothbart, Ahadi and Evans, 2000). The development of basic social skills is important therefore for ensuring that children acquire early in life the rudiments for effective social contact and intercourse which are the pre-requisite for productive and happy life at school, adulthood and through life (Einsenberg and Strayer, 1987).

In Nsukka Urban, the area of this study, children especially of primary school age may be disadvantaged in terms of the opportunities for healthy social interaction with parents and other significant adults. Many parents within the area spend greater part of their day in the offices and business centres, leaving the children to take care of themselves or at most at the mercy of day care providers. Even the little time parents are at home, they are too pre-occupied to avail the children the opportunity for guided play and healthy social intercourse generally. Under such situations, children would find solace in gluing their eyes to the screens of televisions which appears to be one of the commonest electronic/communications technological gadgets in the home within the University town. The only controlling factor therefore becomes the availability of electrical power. Television viewing (TV) is defined as an act of spending time in front of a television screen while participating actively or passively in what is being displayed (Van, 1990). Television Viewing Habit (TVHa) on the other hand relates to such factors as the nature of the programme viewed, the age of the viewer and the amount of time spent viewing television programmes (Jason and Johnson, 1995). The attributes of TVHa which relates to the amount of time spent viewing television programmes formed the crux of this study. Therefore, in this study, TVHa is explained to mean the average daily viewing time of primary school age children; hence the three major classifications: Intense viewers (3 or more hours of daily viewing), moderate viewers (1 – 2 hours of daily viewing) and low viewers (less than 1 hour of daily viewing).

Total or complete denial of access to television viewing is not what is advocated here. If used in moderation, it may have some positive impact on the children. A study by Rosenberg (1998) revealed that TV plays a very vital role in creating awareness of some breakthroughs as well as some social problems. On the other hand, Zimmerman and Christakis (2005) concluded that excessive TV could cause frontal lobe damage which may lead to such social problems as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), depression and increase of appetite. These are highly detrimental to social skills development by children. As television viewing becomes a double-edged sword for the growing children, its positive impact can therefore be achieved only if parental assistance and censored television viewing can be guaranteed.

PROBLEM OF THE STUDY

In Nigeria today, the role of the family and other relevant socializing agents in helping children develop needed social skills may no longer be guaranteed. Television viewing and other technological devices appear to be taking over the role of parents and other socializing agents in the life of children. Television, a high-tech mass communication medium, rather than complementing the role of family in developing basic social skills needed by children, tends to be usurping parental and family role. Parents on the other hand see it as a welcome development as it gives them opportunity to attend to their unlimited and ever increasing life demands/challenges without considering the short and long term impact of such development. Agreeing that TV may have some positive impacts on children's development of basic life skills, the issue of their TVHa may become a source of worry to all friends of children and their development. Many television programmes children are exposed to are not appropriate for their age and worse still, they are often violent-oriented. In situations where adults are rarely available to censor and give thematic analysis and social implications of such programmes for children, children who are over-exposed could therefore be expected to resolve conflicts in their daily lives through violence, become apathetic towards crime and use violence as a means of obtaining desired goals. The impact of unfettered access to television viewing on development of basic social skills needed for life within and outside the school environment is indeterminable. The problem of this study therefore put in question form is: What is the impact of television viewing habits on the development of basic social skills?

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The understated research question guided the study: what is the mean score of Intense, Moderate and Low television viewers on a scale of acquisition of basic social skills (SABSS)?

HYPOTHESIS

One null hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of probability.

Ho: There is no significant difference in the mean scores of intense, moderate and low television viewing primary school children on a scale of acquisition of basic social skills (SABSS).

METHODOLOGY

The study employed an *Ex Post Facto* research design. The population of the study was made up of all the 2492 (two thousand, four hundred and ninety two primary five (5) pupils in Nsukka Urban, Enugu State, Nigeria. Ten (10) schools made up of six (6) public and four (4) government-approved privately owned primary schools were randomly selected from the study area. The sample of the study was 429 primary five pupils identified from the sampled schools using the diary of Personal Television Viewing Profile (PTVP) which served as the preliminary instrument. Children in primary school class five represent the middle childhood stage which was the age of interest to the researchers. Children within this developmental bracket were able to complete the preliminary instrument. The PTVP was designed for the pupils and their parents. The analysis of the PTVP enabled the researchers to categorize the pupils (sample) as follows: 187 intense viewers, 128 moderate viewers and 118 low television viewers.

The main instrument for the study was a scale of acquisition of basic social skills (SABSS) constructed by the researchers. The scale assessed the level of relational skills as well as personal care and hygiene skill possessed by the respondents. The SABSS was a scale of 50 items arranged in 12 clusters. Each item on the scale was rated between 1–5 points giving a minimum of 5 points for each item and a maximum obtainable score of 250 for the scale. Negatively skewed items were reversed during the analysis.

The PTVP and the SABSS were face validated by one Childhood Educator and two classroom teachers within Nsukka urban, all in Nigeria. The internal consistency estimate obtained for the SABSS using Cronbach Alpha was .95. Scorer reliability estimate of SABSS using Kendall coefficient of concordance was .56. Data obtained were presented using means and standard deviation while analysis of variance statistic (ANOVA) was used to test the null hypothesis at .05 probability level.

RESULTS

Table 1: The Mean Score and Standard Deviation of Intense, Moderate and Low Television Viewers, on a Scale of Acquisition of Basic Social Skills (SABSS)

S/N	Social Skills	Intense TV group		Moderate TV group		Low TV group	
		$\overline{X}$	SD	$\overline{X}$	SD	$\overline{X}$	SD
1	Punctuality	3.5290	0.55107	3.6276	0.5480	3.4064	0.56401
2	Attentiveness	3.2888	0.74201	3.6836	0.62311	3.4211	0.67125
3	Initaitive	3.0455	0.80276	3.8027	0.76633	3.3947	0.78629
4	Caring out assignment	3.0401	0.69202	3.2852	0.67048	3.1140	0.63728
5	Empathy	3.2210	0.83881	3.7760	0.83881	3.6930	0.77719
6	Neatness	3.6043	0.80617	4.1862	0.62941	3.8596	0.71008
7	Politeness	3.3868	0.78638	4.0443	0.70291	3.7251	0.77605
8	Honesty	3.2977	0.87302	4.0807	0.72903	3.7193	0.79894
9	Self control	3.0738	0.68432	3.1188	0.67832	3.0509	0.75858
10	Spirit of co-operation	3.1684	0.64786	3.6719	1.06932	3.3596	0.66356
11	Sense of responsibility	3.1024	0.57085	3.3694	0.62810	3.0852	0.69043
12	Organizational ability	3.2513	0.82203	4.0215	0.70643	3.5658	0.87115

Overall Social Skills	N	$\overline{X}$	SD
Intense viewers	187	3.2333	0.49197
Moderate viewers	128	3.6944	0.43567
Low viewers	114	3.4207	0.49135
Total	429	3.4207	0.51283

Data in Table 1 present the mean scores and standard deviation of intense, moderate and low television viewers on the scale of acquisition of Basic Social Skills (SABSS). On the basic social skills of punctuality, attentiveness, initiative, carrying out assignment, empathy, neatness, politeness, honesty, self control, spirit of co-operation, sense of responsibility and organizational ability, the respondents who were intensive viewers had mean scores of 3.53, 3.29, 3.05, 3.04, 3.22, 3.60, 3.39, 3.30, 3.07, 3.17, 3.10, and 3.25 respectively. Data in Table 1 indicates that the overall mean score of the intense television viewing group on the Scale of Acquisition of Basic Social Skills (SABSS) was 3.23 and the standard deviation was 0.49. The standard deviations ranged from 0.43 - 0.49. The close range of the standard deviations suggests that the scores clustered around the mean. The moderate television viewers had mean scores of 3.63 and SD of 0.55 for punctuality, 3.68 and SD of 0.62 for attentiveness, 3.80 and SD of 0.77 for initiative , 3.29 and SD of 0.67 for carrying out assignment, 3.78 and SD of 0.84 for empathy, 4.19 and SD of 0.63 for neatness, 4.04 and SD of 0.70 for politeness, 4.08 and SD of 0.73 for honesty, 3.12 and SD of 0.68 for self control, 3.67 and SD of 1.07 for spirit of cooperation, 3.37 and SD of 0.63 for sense of responsibility, and 4.02 and SD of 0.071 for organizational ability. Evidently, from data in Table 1, the overall mean score of the moderate television viewers on SABSS was 3.69 and the standard deviation was 0.44. The data also indicate close range (0.44- 0.49) in the variability of the standard deviations

On the same basic social skills of punctuality, attentiveness, initiative, carrying out assignment, empathy, neatness, politeness, honesty, self control, spirit of cooperation, sense of responsibility, and organizational ability, the low TV group had mean scores of 3.41, 3.42, 3.39, 3.11, 3.69, 3.86, 3.73, 3.72, 3.05, 3.36, 3.09, and 3.57 respectively. Data presented in Table 1 therefore show that moderate television viewers had higher mean scores on all the basic social skills tested followed by the low television viewers who had higher mean scores than the intense television viewers on all the social skills tested except in the skills of self control and sense of responsibility (3.07 and 3.10 respectively for intense viewers, and 3.05 and 3.09 respectively for low television viewers). The overall mean score of low television viewing group on SABSS as evident from data in Table 1 was 3.42 and the standard deviation was 0.49. The SD ranged from 0.44 -.49. The low range of the SD also suggests that the scores of the respondents were homogeneous as they clustered around the mean. The results suggest that moderate television viewers manifested higher social skills than the intense and low television viewers, followed by the low television viewers who showed higher social skills than the intense television viewers.

Table 2: Summary of One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on the Impact of TVHa on Development of Basic Social Skills

		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Squares	F	Sig.
Punctuality	Between Groups	6.015	2	3.008	9.813	.000
	Within Groups	130.568	426	.306		
	Total	136.583	428			

Attentiveness	Between Groups	11.92	2	5.956	12.521	.000
	Within Groups	202.631	426	.476		
	Total	214.543	428			
Initiative	Between Groups	43.721	2	21.861	35.234	.000
	Within Groups	264.307	426	.620		
	Total	308.028	428			
Carrying out assignment	Between Groups	4.618	2	2.309	5.122	.000
	Within Groups	192.059	426	.451		
	Total	196.677	428			
Empathy	Between Groups	24.490	2	14.245	24.049	.000
	Within Groups	276.476	426	.649		
	Total	304.966	428			
Neatness	Between Groups	25.762	2	12.881	24.049	.000
	Within Groups	228.172	426	.536		
	Total	253.934	428			
Politeness	Between Groups	33.270	2	16.635	28.825	.000
	Within Groups	254.825	426	.577		
	Total	279.095	428			
Honesty	Between Groups	47.488	2	23.744	35.946	.000
	Within Groups	281.390	426	.661		
	Total	328.878	428			
Self control	Between Groups	.296	2	.148	.299	.000
	Within Groups	210.562	426	.494		
	Total	210.857	428			
Spirit of cooperation	Between Groups	19.273	2	9.636	15.035	.000
	Within Groups	273.042	426	.641		
	Total	292.315	428			
Sense of responsibility	Between Groups	6.741	2	3.371	8.724	.000
	Within Groups	164.581	426	.386		
	Total	171.322	428			
Organizational ability	Between Groups	45.070	2	22.535	34.932	.000
	Within Groups	274.822	426	.645		
	Total	319.892	428			
Overall BS Skills	Between Group	16156	2	8.078	35.635	000
	Within Groups	96.405	426	0.226		
	Total	216830	428			

Data in Table 2 reveal that TVHa had significant impact on development of eleven out of the twelve clusters of basic social skills tested. This is shown by the calculated F values of 9.81for the skill of punctuality, 12.52 for attentiveness, 35.23 for initiative, 5.12 for carrying out assignment, 24.09 for empathy, 24.05 for neatness, 28.83 for politeness, 35.95 for honesty, 15.04 for spirit of cooperation, 8.72 for sense of responsibility, and 34.93 for organizational ability. The F values were significant at the pre selected probability level of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant impact of TVHa on the development of basic social skills with respect to the eleven social skills listed was not accepted. For the skill of self control, there was no significant difference in the mean scores of the three groups under study. This is evident from data in Table 2 with the skill of self control having an F value of .30 which was not significant at .05. Since the difference was not significant at .05, the null hypothesis of no significant impact of TVHa on development of basic social skill in respect of the skill of self control is not rejected. Data in Table 2 also indicate that TVHa had significant impact on the development of overall basic social skills. This was evident from the F value of 35.70 which was significant at probability level of .05. Since there were significant differences among the three study groups on the impact of TVHa on development of basic social skills, a Post hoc analysis using Scheffe test was done to determine the direction of the differences.

Table 3: Results of Scheffe Post hoc Test of Mean Scores of the Intense, Moderate and Low Television Viewers on SABSS

	Television viewing habit	Television viewing habit	Mean Difference	Std. Error	**Sig**.
Punctuality	Intense Viewing	Moderate Viewing	-.27466*	.06351	.000
		Low Viewing	-.05349	.06578	.719
	Moderate Viewing	Intense Viewing	.27466*	.06351	.000
		Low Viewing	.22117*	.07130	.009
	Low Viewing	Intense Viewing	.05349	.06578	.719
		Moderate Viewing	-.22117*	.07130	.009
Attentiveness	Intense Viewing	Moderate Viewing	-.39482*	.07912	.000
		Low Viewing	-.13228	.08195	.273
	Moderate Viewing	Intense Viewing	.39482*	.07912	.000
		Low Viewing	.26254*	.08882	.013
	Low Viewing	Intense Viewing	.13228	.08195	.273
		Moderate Viewing	-.26254*	.08882	.013
Initiative	Intense Viewing	Moderate Viewing	-.75728*	.09036	.000
		Low Viewing	-.34928*	.09360	.001
	Moderate Viewing	Intense Viewing	.75728*	.09036	.000
		Low Viewing	.40800*	.10144	.000
	Low Viewing	Intense Viewing	.34928*	.09360	.001
		Moderate Viewing	-.40800*	.10144	.000
Carrying out assignment	Intense Viewing	Moderate Viewing	-.24505*	.07703	.007
		Low Viewing	-.07393	.07979	.651
	Moderate Viewing	Intense Viewing	.24505*	.07703	.007
		Low Viewing	.17112	.08647	.142
	Low Viewing	Intense Viewing	.07393	.07979	.651
		Moderate Viewing	-.17112	.08647	.142
Empathy	Intense Viewing	Moderate Viewing	-.55501*	.09242	.000
		Low Viewing	-.47195*	.09573	.000
	Moderate Viewing	Intense Viewing	.55501*	.09242	.000
		Low Viewing	.08306	.10375	.726
	Low Viewing	Intense Viewing	.47195*	.09573	.000
		Moderate Viewing	-.08306	.10375	.726
Neatness	Intense Viewing	Moderate Viewing	-.58192*	.08396	.000
		Low Viewing	-.25537*	.08696	.014
	Moderate Viewing	Intense Viewing	.58192*	.08396	.000
		Low Viewing	.32655*	.09425	.003
	Low Viewing	Intense Viewing	.25537*	.08696	.014
		Moderate Viewing	-.32655*	.09425	.003
Politeness	Intense Viewing	Moderate Viewing	-.65746*	.08714	.000
		Low Viewing	-.33834	.09026	.001
	Moderate Viewing	Intense Viewing	.65746*	.08714	.000
		Low Viewing	.31912*	.09783	.005
	Low Viewing	Intense Viewing	-.78305*	.09026	.001
		Moderate Viewing	-.42162*	.09783	.005
Honesty	Intense Viewing	Moderate Viewing	-.78305*	.09324	.000
		Low Viewing	-.42162*	.09657	.000
	Moderate Viewing	Intense Viewing	.78305*	.09324	.000
		Low Viewing	.36143*	.10466	.003
	Low Viewing	Intense Viewing	.42162*	.09657	.000
		Moderate Viewing	-.36143*	.10466	.003

Self control	Intense Viewing	Moderate Viewing Low Viewing	-.04495 .02292	.08065 .08354	.856 .963
	Moderate Viewing	Intense Viewing Low Viewing	.04495 .06787	.08065 .09054	.856 .755
	Low Viewing	Intense Viewing Moderate Viewing	-.02292 -.06787	.08354 .09054	.963 .755
Spirit of co-operation	Intense Viewing	Moderate Viewing Low Viewing	-.50343* -.19120	.09184 .09513	.000 .134
	Moderate Viewing	Intense Viewing Low Viewing	.50343* .31223*	.09184 .10310	.000 .011
	Low Viewing	Intense Viewing Moderate Viewing	.19120 -.31223*	.09513 .10310	.134 .011
Sense of responsibility	Intense Viewing	Moderate Viewing Low Viewing	-.26705* .01716	.07130 .07386	.001 .973
	Moderate Viewing	Intense Viewing Low Viewing	.26705* -.28421*	.07130 .08005	.001 .002
	Low Viewing	Intense Viewing Moderate Viewing	.01716 -.28421*	.07386 .08005	.973 .002
Organisation ability	Intense Viewing	Moderate Viewing Low Viewing	-.77015* -.31445*	.09214 .09544	.000 .005
	Moderate Viewing	Intense Viewing Low Viewing	.77015* .45569*	.09214 .10344	.000 .000
	Low Viewing	Intense Viewing Moderate Viewing	.31445* -.45569*	.09544 .10344	.005 .000

Overall BS skills	Intense viewing	Moderate viewing	-0.46111*	0.05457	.000
		Low viewing	-0.18734*	0.05653	.004
	Moderate viewing	Intense viewing	0.46111*	0.05457	.000
		Low viewing	0.27377*	0.06126	.000
	Low viewing	intense viewing	0.18734*	0.05653	.004
		Moderate viewing	-0.27377*	0.06126	.000

*the mean difference is significant at .05 level.

Data in Table 3 reveal that there were significant differences in the mean scores of intense television viewers relative to the moderate television viewers in all the clusters of basic social skills tested except for the skill of self control. For the skills of punctuality, attentiveness, initiative, carrying out assignment, empathy, neatness, politeness, honesty, spirit of cooperation, sense of responsibility and organizational ability, the intense television viewers had the following mean differences relative to the moderate television viewers: - .27, -.39, -.76, - .25, -.56, - .58, - .66, - .78, - .50, - .27, and - .77 respectively on the listed skills. The mean differences were significant at .05 level and in favour of the moderate television viewing group. Overall, as evident from data in Table 3, there was an observed significant mean difference of - .46 between the intense and the moderate television viewers on the SABSS. The mean difference was significant at .05 and the in favour of the moderate television viewers.

From data in Table 3, it is also evident that there were significant differences in the mean scores of intense television viewers relative to the low television viewers in only six of the social skills tested for the study as follows: -.35 for the skill of initiative, - .47 for empathy, - .26 for neatness, - .34 for politeness, - .42 for honesty and - .31 for organizational ability and also in favour of the low TV group. For the skills of punctuality, attentiveness, carrying out assignment, self control, spirit of co-operation and sense of responsibility, the observed mean differences were not significant at .05. Overall, as shown in Table 3, there was an observed significant mean difference of - .19 between the intense and the low television viewers on SABSS in favour of the low television viewers.

A Comparison of the means of the moderate television viewers with that of the low television viewers in Table 3 indicated significant differences in nine of the basic social skills tested. For the skills of punctuality, attentiveness, initiative, neatness, politeness, honesty, spirit of cooperation, sense of responsibility and organizational ability, there were significant mean differences of .22, .26, .41, .33, .32, .36, .31, .28, and .46 respectively. The mean differences were significant at .05 and in favour of the moderate TV group. For the skills of carrying out assignment, empathy and self control, the observed mean differences were not significant at probability level of .05. Overall, as shown in Table 3, there was also an observed significant mean difference of .27 between the moderate and the low TV groups in favour of the moderate TV group. The result of the comparison indicates that the TVHa of the moderate TV and low TV groups explained the source of the significant differences in the mean SABSS scores. The observed significant differences among the three groups of viewers favoured the groups in the following increasing order: intense viewer< low viewers < moderate viewers (3.23 < 3.42 < 3.70).

Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that though television viewing habit impacted significantly on pupils' social skills development, the impact was not unidirectional. The *post hoc* analysis using Scheffe test showed that the differential impact favoured most the moderate television viewing pupils, followed by low television viewers while there was an apparent deleterious impact on intense television viewers. What this suggests is that TVHa had a kind of inverse impact on pupils' social skills development. While low viewing habit appeared to have had less impact on basic social skills development, intense viewing habit appeared to have had rather deleterious influence on children's basic social skills development. This finding and interpretation agree with the finding of Wright et al (1990) that depending on the intensity, TVHa may cause behavioural problems that may have strong implications for basic social skills development such as poor eating habit, decreased physical activity and physical fitness, and most importantly, child obesity. Such behavioural problems according to Wright et al are implicated in the development of low self concept among children, a situation that engenders in children interactional and relational difficulties with others and especially peers. The findings of this study also support the finding of Howse, Dunton, and Marshal (1999) which attributed children's hyperactive behaviours such as aimlessness,

restlessness, frequent destruction and abnormal inexhaustible energy to intense television viewing habit. The less impact of TVHa on low television viewers as observed in this study may also have been due to lack of opportunities to unfettered access to television viewing, which invariably offers them more opportunity for quality family interaction. This according to Berk (2003) is the bedrock for healthy social skills development. Greater quality family interaction may therefore be a compensatory experience (for global experience from television) enjoyed by low television viewing children but denied intense television viewing children by their addiction to television screen. The facilitating impact of moderate TVHa on development of basic social skills as indicated by the findings of this study also tends to agree with the findings of Evra (1998) and Murray (2003), that television viewing habit can enhance healthy social skills development if well moderated, by offering the child opportunity to interact with people and objects within the child's immediate environment in addition to global experience obtained from television viewing.

Though this study attributed the differential impact of TVHa on development of basic social skills to the amount of time spent viewing television progammes, the differential impact in line with the assertion by the Hopkins Researchers (2007) could also have been due to the age at which viewing occurred. In support of that, assertion, the American Academy of Pediatrics (2008) advocated that children under two years of age should not view television at all while children of two years and above should be limited to not more than two hours of daily television viewing.

Conclusion

The development of basic social skills by primary school children significantly depended on their television viewing habit. Pupils who were moderate television viewers were significantly superior to both low and intense viewers on a scale of basic social skills development. While moderate viewing habit facilitated social skills development, low viewing habit failed to and intense viewing habit apparently hampered the development of basic social skills. Also obviously, low television viewing habit did not significantly stimulate the development of basic social skills among school children. Apparently, low viewing habit limits children's world of experiences thereby hampering the development of basic cognitive skills. It is therefore recommended that parents and caregivers find time to moderate television viewing habit of children to create a balance between television viewing and quality time for the children to interact with significant adults, do home chores, play with peers and do school assignments. The quality time children have after school need to be spread to accommodate television viewing and other activities and plays of children that positively impact on social skills development.

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