Parental Control: the Relationship Amongst Parental Supervision, Education, Income and Children's Viewing Habits

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This paper explores children's relationship with TV and the influence of parental mediation on that relationship by examining factors such as parents' income, marital status, age, education, religion and the effects of the child's time spent with nannies. We employed the Parents Topline study by Luntz, Maslansky Strategic Research and Hart Research (2007) to investigate children's relationship with parents/guardians and television consumption in Kuwait. After pre-testing, the survey was modified and several questions were omitted and altered to align it with the cultural factors and variables and was then translated into Arabic. In total, 827, surveys were deemed valid of which, 56.3% were females, and 43.7 % were males. Statistical significant variables were found in parental age, marital status, and domestic help and socioeconomic status and nationality in our results. Additionally, what was found was that the socioeconomic status of the parents had no significance in parental mediation of their children's TV consumption habits as much as age and education of the parent and age of the child. However, there remains a gap in the research in developing countries on the relationship between parental mediation and TVs influence on children and more research needs to be done in these areas, especially countries with high TV censorship as these factors may also play a role in parental mediation of TV viewing.

Key Words: socioeconomic status, Kuwait, media, TV, parenting, TV mediation, culture

Introduction

The average child in America is exposed to more than 14000 sexual messages on television each year and 200,000 acts of TV violence before they are 18 (Fisher, Hill, Grube, Bersamin, Walker, Gruber 2009; Federman 1998). Albert Bandura's seminal research on the social cognitive theory, described a process in which people would imitate the behaviors of others including the images that they view on TV. This was especially evident in his 1961 research on children modelling violent behaviors when they observed adults in a video displaying aggressive behavior toward an inflated clown doll, Bobo (Bandura, Ross & Ross 1961; Fisher et al. 2009).

Parental mediation of TV messages can have a drastic effect on how children and adolescents interpret TV content and can mitigate detrimental behaviors that TV can produce. Parental mediation is described as taking shape in two primary forms: explicit, in which the direct discussion of programming takes place with the child; and implicit where parents would provide less vocal cues of their views of TV programming but messages are communicated through parental attitude. Active participation in TV viewing with the parents including discussion of TV content works to lessen the impact of negative TV messages that children consume while co-viewing without mediation or discussion may convey to a child that parents are consenting or endorsing the topics featured in the program. (Fisher, et al. 2009).

Parental mediation is not always consistent and easy to predict. Various variables have an impact on parental mediation styles and are predictors of when parents will mediate. The parent's gender and the child's age were primary indicators of the amount and quality of parental mediation. In one study, three types of mediation were described: restrictive, instructive and social co-viewing. Restrictive is defined as the parents setting specific times and designating types of programming deemed appropriate for their children to consume. Instructive mediation included more verbal interaction between parent and child and explaining the motivation, the situation and other factors that may influence why a TV character engaged in certain behaviors. Lastly, social co-viewing was consuming TV with the child with little or no discussion and no measure or indicator for the child to gauge a parent's approval or disapproval of character behaviors (Clyne & Jason 2006).

Research into the parental mediation at times encompasses the relationship between parental mediation styles and socioeconomic status (Chen and Berdan 2006; Dennsion, Erb and Jenkins 2002; Abanto 2004). However, seldom has this research focused on societies with a predominance of high socioeconomic status among citizens and in a cultural climate that limits or precludes other leisure activities due to national controls and laws. These variables may lead to higher rates of TV consumption among children and adolescents and could be impacting parental TV mediation styles. Research is also lacking in countries with heavy government censorship of TV and film.

Most of the research in the parental mediation is focused on the western world and very little is known or understood of the effects mediation plays in challenging social climates and emerging economies where there are often times stringent government TV censorship, high income and where college-level education is a relatively new phenomenon only offered domestically to recent generations. This is especially evident in the developing Persian Gulf nations where Islam and new oil wealth may have a substantial influence on parenting, censorship and education (Mitchell, Dinkha, Kononova, Rashwan, Matta, 2014; Al-Zu'abi, 2004; Fox, Mourtada-Sabbah, al-Mutawa 2006). These variables leave a gap in the areas of research that comprises the styles and effects of parental mediation of TV in the emerging economies of the Persian Gulf.

Literature Review

A body of literature suggests that there are many factors that play a role in the correlation between parent-child relationships and TV consumption such as the parents' marital status, socioeconomic status (SES), level of education, placement, and accessibility of television. This literature review will describe these factors in greater detail.

When television was first introduced in the 1940s in the US, it was originally intended to be a gathering place for friends and family as a form of recreation. As time passed, and as TV consumption became more widespread so did theories about its adverse effects. The first studies on this subject lacked evidence of harmful effects of TV consumption on children. In exploring factors correlated with television consumption, Clarke and Kurtz-Costes (1997) attempt to explore the connection between children's TV habits, parents' employment status, and the atmosphere of education at home from a historical perspective. An initial study done on this subject did not show any effects

on children's academic performance whether TV exposure is light or heavy. However, other studies focused in this area suggested that the real harm of media consumption lies within the amount and programming type rather than simply watching television itself. Even though the article gives a concise overview of changing trends in children's TV habits, there are several limitations with this study: For one, the majority of research focused mostly on elementary school-aged children. Additionally, there was heavy dependence on self-reports, not observation to evaluate children's TV habits and other variables that may or may not play a role in the home environment.

Fisher et al. (2009) also investigated some of the negative effects TV consumption may have on children. In particular, the authors researched the area of TV sexually imagery and its influence on children. The researchers concluded that sexual content on TV did not necessarily lead to promiscuous behavior in children especially when parental co-viewing was involved and when parents discussed the sexual themes in the programming with their children. The parents' mediation directly correlated with the programming having less of an impact on the child and the child being less involved with and influenced by the sexual themes in the programing. This mediation was seen as key to mitigating promiscuous behaviors in children.

Jason (1987) research focused on the relationship between parental mediation and the amount of time children spent consuming TV. The author selected two families with two children who were prone to excessive TV consumption and who met the following criteria: one of the children watches more than five hours of television every day, one child was in the age bracket between four and 16 years old, only one TV was available for all family members' access, and one parent consented to mediate daily TV viewing. The first family reported that their 10-year-old son watches around 5½ hours of per day, while their 8–year old daughter consumed about 3.5 hours of TV per day. In family number 2, the parents estimated their 13-year son's daily consumption of TV to be close to six hours and their 15-year-old daughter, around three hours. Despite the parent's attempts to mitigate TV consumption in the second family, it failed due to verbal arguments that stemmed from attempting to restrict that TV viewing. When parental intervention took place, however, the number of hours watching TV was reduced to 2 hours and 1.8 hours respectively. When the researcher asked the child from Family 1 why he considered not watching TV useful, the child articulated that he was motivated to do work when offered a reward as an incentive for him to do other

activities. This suggests that reducing children's TV consumption by motivating them to participate in other activities other than watching TV is a possible solution.

Chen and Kennedy's (2005), article *Cultural variations in children's coping behaviour, TV viewing time, and family functioning* defines coping mechanisms as ways of thinking and behaving that allows the distressed person to help deal with stressful events. Since coping mechanisms were learned early in childhood, and then build up over time – these two authors place strong stress on creating studies to help children find healthy ways to cope with stress in their daily lives. One of the factors mentioned in the article is gender differences. For example, the most common coping mechanisms used by boys aged 8-13 years old are watching TV and either screaming or yelling. When under stress girls, unlike boys, cope with stress by crying and holding their pets close to them. Also, girls have additional coping mechanisms such as relying on social support and emotional self-control. Although watching TV is a common way for children of both genders to cope with stress, Chen and Kennedy (2005) say that other studies done on this subject do not show any correlation between children's TV habits and their health. Also, children learn these coping mechanisms from their family – which is the most fundamental building block of society in most cultures around the world. The downside of the study is that it does not give a full picture of how well the family functions, since it did not include both parents' perspectives on this matter – only the mother's. The paper suggests that children do suffer from stress in life and thus must have constructive and healthy strategies to counter it. Despite that, both authors suggest that it is imperative to understand how children of different cultural backgrounds cope with stress, but they do not specify how or what should be done to make it work.

Dennsion, Erb and Jenkins (2002) examined the effects of TV consumption and the relationship with obesity on children from ages two to eight years old. In the research, the children reported that their mothers are more agreeable to allowing their children to consume TV because in many cases their mothers consumed TV with them and were able to articulate that the images seen on TV were fantasy and are not representative of real life. However, in the study, socioeconomic background had a huge effect on how much TV a child was allowed to view with mothers who had higher education tending to discourage their children from watching some TV shows altogether. Correspondingly, the children from homes with parents who have post-secondary education watch TV programs with better quality since their parents were more discerning. In addition, they also mediate their children's level of media consumption. Conversely, the authors argue, children of less educated parents are more susceptible to TV's conflicting messages and tend to passively receive it instead of assessing it critically because their parents are less likely to control the amount of hours their children spend in front of the TV and are less likely to explain the images on TV. This suggests that the parents' level of education and socioeconomic status does, to a great extent, play a role in how much television children consume and how they understand the messages they receive from TV. Moreover, it further posits that parents might assume that they know what their children watch on TV, but when the TV is in the bedroom, it is a different dynamic altogether as the parents may not have full information about what TV programs their children actually watch when they are alone.

Chen and Berdan (2006) also focus on the correlation between parent-adolescent relationships and socioeconomic status (SES). They say that families with low SES enforce stricter discipline and are less receptive to open parent-child communication. Also, their children act out their problems and frustration more often. One possible reason for this issue is that low SES families interact with their children differently than high SES families. They note for example, that children from low socioeconomic backgrounds generally have frequent conflict in the home. If parents are quicker to respond to negative feelings, however, it may help youth adapt better to social, emotional and physical changes taking place during that time of life.

Three hundred school children from the ages of 8 -13 were surveyed in another study examining the relationship among socioeconomic status, parenting and children's consumption of TV and the effects of TV exposure. The author established that regardless of age or gender children in the sample had high exposure to TV content (Abanto 2004). The research had five objectives: 1) to determine how the socioeconomic status of children and parents affected the influence of TV , 2) to examine the mediation style of parents, 3) to determine the relationship between the perception of children of TV programs and their socioeconomic status and parental mediation of TV , 4) to determine the children's or parents perception of TV programs and the practice of parental mediation of TV, and 5) a comparison of children's and their parents' perception of TV content. Half of the children in the survey reported that they were allowed to make their own TV programing choices with little or no parental supervision or restrictions. However, what was discovered was that the schools the children attended

and the presence of a father at home had a drastic effect on what kinds of content children were watching and the amount of exposure they had to TV programs.

When children came from a high socioeconomic family and had stable homes, TV's influence seemed to have been minimal. Even images of violence had little effect on their emotional well-being. Children who watched action films were not motivated or moved to emulate the violence portrayed. In fact, in many cases selective exposure had taken place, or self-mediation and children were able to make more positive choices about the types of television content they wanted to consume because both child and parent were selecting content that was aligned with their values. Moreover, the children in the study were simply watching TV mostly because of the entertainment value. However, what was also observed in the research is that some children had become desensitized to the violence they were exposed to on TV with many not discerning anything wrong with the way violence was represented on the small screen. Socioeconomic status was less an influential variable than the researchers originally postulated. What was eventually surmised was that the communication with parents and an open nurturing household does more to affect and mitigate the negative effects of TV than does other agents such as income (Abanto 2004). Furthermore, a secure familial relationship model where co-viewing and mediation is commonplace helps the child understand the TV messages they are consuming and helps the child to adjust and develop effective coping habits for social pressures and expectations.

Paavonen, Roine, Pennonen, and Lahikainen (2009) researched the effects of parental consumption of TV with their children and how discussing the content and nature of these TV shows can help alleviate any doubts children may have that these programs represent reality. The authors argue that parental co-viewing can be very beneficial because parents can help their children understand what they are really watching on TV and it also helps preschool age children with learning development. However, there are also downsides to parental co-viewing. For example, there has been research that concludes that parental mediation of the TV content their children watch is problematic because parents might watch more adult oriented content, which their children may find disturbing. Another possible problem with parents' regulation of watching TV programs with their children is that parents may unintentionally ignore the images of TV programs that feature violent content which may be seen by children as tacit approval of violent and other anti-social behavior. Paavonen et al. (2009) also looked

at other research and reported that parents can mediate in three ways: 1) discussing and commenting on content showed on TV, 2) setting rules for how much TV children can watch and 3) what is allowed to be watch.

In somewhat similar vein to the previous authors, Abel (1976) explores the correlation of parent-child interaction and TV habits further by stating that television acts as a model for young children's behavioral emulation. He notes from other researchers that there are several patterns that stem from family interactions in mass communication research such as peaceful family interactions, exposing children to material on TV deemed as objectionable, allowing children to express their ideas, and the family is organized in a hierarchy. When children are allowed to express their thoughts and ideas, specific behaviors arise. For example, in a healthy debate between parents and their children on various subjects, the parent might take the child's side of the argument, or they may help their children look at other points of view critically. On the other hand, the social aspect of this issue shows that some children are still often taught to not disrupt the rules. However, Abel (1976) says that one major limitation of this study is that it is heavily focused on the direct effect of TV exposure on children, rather than how it is used by the entire family. What complicates matters, though, is the common perception of the family as having only little interaction with one and another. When parents did encourage healthy family interactions, they are described as receptive and more willing to mediate their children's TV habits. The child is also aware and receptive to what programs their parents want them to watch. This suggests that family dynamics plays a major role in what content children are viewing on TV. Huston, Wright, Marquis, and Green (1999) argue that how and where children spend their time is crucial because it will shape how they develop their skills, their relationships, behaviors and attitudes. Their study focuses primarily on families with low to medium incomes. As children in these families watch the most amount of TV, so they may either be positively or negatively affected by what they consume. The study had three purposes: to illustrate changes in development and gender differences in TV habits, to analyze the connection between time children spend watching TV versus doing other activities, and finally to find out specific characteristics of the home that may contribute to TV viewing patterns. The results of this study illustrates that the parents level of education is linked directly to TV viewing and in lower income families more TV is consumed and more specifically entertainment programs. The study further proposes that children who watch TV spend

less time engaging in other activities. TV viewing precludes other activities useful for children's development.

Methodology

The TV Watch Survey of Parents Topline by Luntz, Maslansky Strategic Research and Hart Research (2007) was utilized to investigate children's relationship with parents/guardians and television consumption. The survey was modified and several questions were omitted and altered to align it with the local culture. Pretesting was conducted with 17 respondents who were randomly selected by the research team. Feedback was then incorporated and culturally inappropriate questions were changed and made more conducive to the norms of Kuwait: viewing habits in Kuwait, the local familial unit and other cultural factors that play a role in family life such as religion were further incorporated to changes to the survey following our pretesting. Furthermore, the survey was translated into Arabic for those families whose command of the English language was minimal. The survey was distributed randomly, face to face to Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti families living in Kuwait. All the participants were informed that their answers would remain confidential. The surveys were assigned a numerical code to ensure anonymity of respondents. We circulated the self-administered survey to 930 households throughout Kuwait and excluded 113 responses due to insufficient data. We distributed the surveys in spring 2013 and also in autumn 2013, corresponding with the spring and autumn academic semester when our university assistants were available to distribute the questionnaire. In total, 827, surveys were deemed valid of which, 56.3% were females and 43.7 % were males.

Research Questions

The study attempts to explain children's relationship with TV and influence of parenting on that relationship by examining factors such as parents' income, marital status, age, level of education, religion and number of hours children spent time with the housekeeper. In our paper the following research questions are addressed:

1. Does parental age affect the number of hours children spent watching TV?
2. Do parents have different beliefs about the effects on their children of watching TV violence and inappropriate programs?
3. Do parents who believe watching violence and inappropriate programs on TV maybe harmful to

kids monitor the number of hours their children watch TV?
4. Do parents who believe that violence and inappropriate programs are harmful tend to use parental blocking controls?
5. Does parents' income affect the number of hours children spent watching TV?
6. Does parents' marital status affect the number of hours children spent watching TV?
7. Does parents' level of education affect the number of hours children spent watching TV?
8. Does parents' religion affect the number of hours children spent watching TV?
9. Does the number of hours children spent with the housekeeper affect the number of hours they watch TV?

The statistical software package SPSS was used to analyze the data. Descriptive statistics was used to report the percentages for each question in the questionnaire. Statistical tests such as t-test were used to test if the mean number of hours children spent watching TV is related to their relation with parents and their parents' situation. Chi-Square was used to test the relationship between parents' perception of inappropriate programs and their effect on children. ANOVA was used to test if parents' level of education and religion are related to number of hours children spent watching TV.

Results

Tables 1 show a summary of the percentages of the 31 questions asked in the survey. Independent sample t test was used to test the differences in the mean number of hours of watching TV for two groups of children; one group belongs to parents who are younger than 40 and the other one for those who are older than 40. The p value of 0.037 (Table 2) provided evidence to support the alternative hypothesis that children whose parents are older than 40 watch more TV than those whose parents are less than 40. Two other groups of parents were also considered, one consists of the married couples and the second is the divorced or separated couples' group. Independent sample t test was used to test the differences in the mean number of hours of watching TV for the two groups (Table 3). The p value of 0.026 provided evidence to support the alternative hypothesis that children whose parents are together watch less TV than those whose parents are not. Independent sample t test was used to test the differences in the mean number of hours of watching TV for the Kuwaiti children and non-Kuwaiti ones. The p value of 0.49 (Table 4) provided evidence that there is no difference in the mean number of hours

Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti children spent watching TV. The *p* value of 0.816 (Table 5) shows that there is no significant difference between number of hours children whose parents have income more than 2000 KD per month (less than 7000 US D per month) KD watch TV and those whose parents have income less than 2000KD per month(less than 7000 USD per month). The *p* value of 0.011 (Table 6) provided evidence to support the alternative hypothesis that children who spend more time with nanny watch more TV than those who do not. The *p* value of 0.000 of the Chi-Square test (Table 7) showed that parents have different beliefs on the effect of violence and inappropriate programs on their children. It was also shown that there is evidence to support the hypothesis, parents who believe watching violence and inappropriate programs on TV maybe harmful to kids monitor the number of hours their children watch TV, (Table 8). The majority of parents who believe that those programs might be harmful limited the number of hours their kids can watch TV. The tests showed that parents who believe that watching violence and inappropriate programs tend to use parental blocking more than the other parents (Table 9). One Way ANOVA was used to test if there is a difference in the average number of hours children watch TV depending on their parents' level of education. *P* value of 0.414 (Table 10) showed that there is no significant difference between the different groups of children. One way ANOVA was also conducted to test if religion plays a role in the amount of time children spent watching TV. *P* value of 0.66 (Table 11) showed that the difference is not significant.

Discussion

Kuwait has long been one of the most demographically self-conscious countries in the world. Since 1965, Kuwaitis have been a minority in their own country, outnumbered by migrants who had come there to find work and flee adversities elsewhere in the region. Although Kuwait generated revenues due to the discovery of oil. As a result of this oil wealth, an expansive welfare system was established which included services such as free education and access to Healthcare, and early retirement plans with pensions included , all denoting a relatively standard of living/high socioeconomic status (SES) among the Kuwaiti population (Al-Zu'abi, 2004).

Local television features state owned Kuwait TV with three channels in operation and a number of privately owned television operations. Foreign (primarily Western Satellite television) is readily available with a wide range of Arabic channels originating from neighboring countries as well as English language services which can be subscribed to locally (Mitchell et al. 2014).

In recent years, though, Kuwait has undergone many socioeconomic changes attributed to an open attitude toward modernization and the discovery of oil, which allowed more independence increased freedoms including marriage and partner selection and increased presence of women outside the home (Parmar et al., 2008). For instance, 70 percent of students at Kuwait University were women (Ghabra, 1997).

In our research, we found major significance with children of parents who were older than 40 tended to consume more TV than those whose parents were under 40. However, no correlation was found with educational level and TV consumption. This is profound because it does not correspond with what we found in our literature review (Dennsion, Erb and Jenkins 2002; Abanto 2004). Most western literature makes strong correlations between parents' age and post-secondary education. In our sample, younger parents (under 40) are more likely to mediate and restrict the amount of exposure that their children have to television. Younger individuals in Kuwait are traveling more, exposing themselves to difference cultures and ideas in and out of the country and via the Internet and social gatherings and they are becoming better read than previous generations. These are practices that are not always found in the older generation who may tend to cling to older traditions, such as keeping their children home, where children have little other options but watching TV.

The patterns for children viewing TV and the amount of exposure to TV appears to be no different between Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti families, which means the socialization process for children and parenting in Kuwait is very similar across the different nationalities that live in the country.

Another factor that was significant in this study is that children who are spending time with nannies are spending more time watching TV. As a percentage of the female expatriate labor force in Kuwait, Asians increased from 13 percent in 1965 to 68 percent in 1985. A major reason for this is the increase in domestic servants, especially in Kuwaiti households, 62 percent having at least one servant. Maids come mainly from Sri Lanka, India and the Philippines (Shah, Al-Qudsi, and Shah, 1991). We can hypothesize that nannies are using television as a way of occupying the children's time as nannies are often employed as housekeepers in addition to their duties taking care of the children. Nannies appear to be using the TV as a babysitter while they continue

with the rest of the household responsibilities. This finding is in keeping with our research questions as we expected to see higher levels of children watching TV in households with nannies.

When we take closer look at socioeconomic status, there appears to be no influence of low or high SES on children's consumption of TV. While in households with of high socioeconomic status in the west, tends to see children watching less TV (Dennsion et al. 2002; Abanto 2004). Families with higher SES in the west can afford to provide various entertainment activities that can occupy their children and minimize television viewing. This was not significant in Kuwait. Although SES is higher, families in Kuwait are spending less money trying to occupy their children in activities outside the house. Several factors that may contribute to this lack of engagement in child activities including, little outside activities to engage children and their parents, and therefore, children are instead turning to TV as one of their prime sources of entertainment. Weather could also be a factor with dry high temperatures in Kuwait (CIA Fact Book) not being very conducive to children playing outdoors, or lack of parks compared United States, necessitate children finding activities to do inside such as consuming television. However, in keeping with what is found in the U.S. studies children's whose parents are concerned about the content of the programing that their children are watching and the harmful effects, do in fact mediate or limit the amount of television that their children can consume. This effect was seen across all household types regardless of SES. Many parents in our study (59.8%) are even monitoring what programs their children consume when the child is alone in their bedrooms and also many (58.1%) do not allow children to have TV in the bedroom at all, which illustrates that parents in Kuwait are quite aware of the perceived harm that television has on their children and are taking measures to limit their children's exposure to TV messages with more than 78% of those surveyed agreeing or strongly agreeing that TV messages can be harmful and almost 60% believing that more parental control is necessary to control the images children see.

Nevertheless, while many agree on parental supervision only 37% of those surveyed use or have used parental control devices found on their satellite system to control content. Interestingly the younger the child, the less likely the parent is to use parental control technology. For example, parents of those aged 1-5 use parent control less than 9% while almost 23% of parents of 16 to 18 year olds use parental control devices. Clearly this illustrates a mistrust in the parents of teenagers who perceive that their adolescents are more likely to seek out inappropriate

content and another likely cause is that parents of young children (under 11 years of age) are more likely to use co-viewing (39% for parents of children who are 1 to 5 versus just under 16% for parents of children who are 16 to 18 years old). However, this effect could be due to the fact that Kuwait and satellite images have heavy government censorship and less parental control would be required in Kuwait over content than what is typically found on satellite TV in the U.S. or other western nations. Still, almost 80% have changed the channel because they thought a certain program on TV was inappropriate for their children to consume with 50%, of parents with children fewer than 15 years of age, either watching TV with their kids or checking in when their kids watch TV. Although Kuwait has heavy government TV censorship (Mitchell et al. 2014), the large majority of respondents 71% believe it should be up to parents and not government to control what content they consume with almost 60% discussing controversial programming with their children. Although Kuwait is a culture with strict religious expectations and rules, religion was not a major variable or an influence for parents when deeming programs to be appropriate or not appropriate for their children to consume. In our research questions we expected to find a correlation with religion and parents' mediation and co-viewing of television but this did not materialize.

Limitations and Future Research

The limitations of research such as this is they rely on parents being truthful. In many cases, parents may not want to admit that they do not spend time with their children watching TV or meditate what their children watch on TV because they may appear to be neglectful. Again, the survey was anonymous but it's possible that some in our sample had issues with being forthcoming about their actual roles in TV mediation. In addition, since domestic helpers are primary caretakers of the children, the parents who answered the surveys did not consult with the helper and may have assumed the answers to the questions since they don't know. Because of the prevalence of nannies in Kuwait, it would have been interesting to control for this variable as nannies may be taking on many parental duties and they may be in some cases the primary persons who are mediating TV and co-viewing with the children. Furthermore, a more thorough face-to-face interview would have enhanced participants' answers and clarified some of the limitations in the survey itself. More research could be conducted on children in divorced households to ascertain if parenting styles of TV viewing are

different when one parent is absent from the home. Also, since there was huge gap in mediation and control of television of children from parents under 40 versus those over 40 it would be worthwhile to do further research in this area.

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Appendixes

Table 1. Survey questions.

		Percent	
Are you the parent or guardian of a child 18 years old or younger?	Yes No	95.3 4.7	
In the spaces provided please list the ages of your children who are currently 18 or under:	1-5 years 6-10 years 11-15 years 16-18 years	41.4 50.1 44.3 31.0	
How many minutes or hours of television do your children watch on a typical day?	30 – 60 minutes 1.5 – 2 hours 3 – 4 hours 5 or more hours None Don't know	10.7 40.1 27.9 15.9 2.3 3.1	
1. Which concerns you more: the content your child may see on the computer, or the television?	Television Computer Both equally Neither Don't know	15.9 26.6 50.2 5.1 2.2	
How much TV do you watch?	30 – 60 minutes 1.5 – 2 hours 3-4 hours 5 or more hours None	15.6 48.2 20.5 10.5 5.2	
How do you control what your child watches on television? Please choose all that apply and specify the age	I monitor what they watch(1-5) I don't monitor because I trust my child to make the proper choices(1-5) I do not have the time to monitor everything my children are watching(1-5) I don't monitor (1-5)	21.1 26.1 26.3 26.5	
How do you control what your child watches on television? Please choose all that apply and specify the age	I monitor what they watch(6-10) I don't monitor because I trust my child to make the proper choices(6-10) I do not have the time to monitor everything my children are watching(6-10) I don't monitor (6-10)	43.9 1.4 0.8 53.9	
How do you control what your child watches on television? Please choose all that apply and specify the age	I monitor what they watch (11-15) I don't monitor because I trust my child to make the proper choices (11-15) I do not have the time to monitor everything my children are watching (11-15) I don't monitor (11-15)		23.2 25.2 25.7 25.9
How do you control what your child watches on television? Please choose all that apply and specify the age	I monitor what they watch(16-18) I don't monitor because I trust my child to make the proper choices(16-18) I do not have the time to monitor everything my children are watching(16-18) I don't monitor (16-18)		24.6 24.5 25.4 25.5
How do you monitor the programs your child watches? Please choose all that apply and specify the age.	Sit with my children as they watch TV(1-5) Check in with my children as they watch TV(1-5) Limit my children's viewing (1-5) Use DVD or DVR (1-5) Use parental ratings (1-5) Use s or other blocking technology (1-5) Others (1-5)		39.1 18.3 14.6 11.1 7.3 8.8 0.8
How do you monitor the programs your child watches? Please choose all that apply and	Sit with my children as they watch TV(6-10) Check in with my children as they watch TV(6-10)		33.1 22.1

specify the age.	Limit my children's viewing (6-10)	14.8
	Use DVD or DVR (6-10)	10.0
	Use parental ratings (6-10)	9.0
	Use parental controls or other blocking technology (6-10)	10.7
	Others (6-10)	0.3
How do you monitor the programs your child watches? Please choose all that apply and specify the age.	Sit with my children as they watch TV(11-15)	25.2
	Check in with my children as they watch TV(11-15)	25.2
	Limit my children's viewing (11-15)	16.5
	Use DVD or DVR (11-15)	7.8
	Use parental ratings (11-15)	10.2
	Use parental controls or other blocking technology (11-15)	13.9
	Others (11-15)	1.2
How do you monitor the programs your child watches? Please choose all that apply and specify the age.	Sit with my children as they watch TV(16-18)	15.6
	Check in with my children as they watch TV(16-18)	26.0
	Limit my children's viewing (16-18)	11.5
	Use DVD or DVR (16-18)	10.4
	Use parental ratings (16-18)	13.5
	Use parental controls or other blocking technology (16-18)	21.9
	Others (16-18)	1.1
Have you ever changed the channel during a television show because you saw something you did not believe was appropriate for your child to watch?	Have you ever changed the channel during a television show because you saw something you did not believe was appropriate for your child to watch?	79.6
		14.5
		5.9
Are you aware of parental controls on televisions that block inappropriate contents?	Yes	74.3
	No	16.3
	Don't know	9.4
Do you currently or have you ever used parental blocking controls to limit programming inappropriate for your children from being available on your television?	Yes, currently	37.7
	Yes, in the past	18.7
	No	38.1
	Don't know	3.3
	Missing	2.2
Which one comes closest to your point of view regarding kids and television?	More parental involvement is the best way to keep kids from seeing what they shouldn't see	57.8
	The government should increase control of network television programming	24.0
		9.5
	Neither	5.3
	Don't know	3.4
	Missing	
Please list the television shows your children watch:	1-3 shows	43.7
	4-6 shows	36.8
	7 shows or more	1.5
	Missing	18.0
Do you believe that watching violence on television may be harmful?	Strongly agree	43.1
	Agree	35.2
	Neutral	15.2
	Disagree	3.9
	Strongly disagree	1.1
	Missing	1.5
TVs are not allowed in our children's bedrooms:	Yes	58.1
	No	38.0
	Don't know	2.6
	Missing	1.3
Specific time limits are placed on the amount of TV our children can watch:	Yes	62.9
	No	31.4
	Don't know	4.0
	Missing	1.7
TV is not allowed until homework has been completed	Yes	74.9
	No	19.3
	Don't know	3.9
	Missing	1.9

TV viewing is only allowed in rooms where we can easily see and hear what is being watched	Yes	59.8
	No	32.9
	Don't know	6.1
	Missing	1.2
Television viewing is only allowed during certain hours in the day.	Yes	59.9
	No	34.6
	Don't know	4.3
	Missing	1.2
When controversial programs are viewed, we regularly discuss the sensitive topics the children maybe confronting	Yes	59.8
	No	26.4
	Don't know	12.1
	Missing	17
Parents should decide what their kids should or should not be watching on television rather than leave it to the government to decide for them.	Strongly agree/ agree	71.3
	Somewhat agree	17.6
	Somewhat disagree	3.2
	Strongly disagree/ disagree	4.3
	Don't know	1.7
	Missing	1.9
Do you subscribe to any premium movie channels such as Orbit or Showtime?	Yes	55.5
	No	38.9
	Don't know	3.7
	Missing	1.9
. What is your age?	18-29 years	24.2
	30-39 years	38.0
	40-49 years	27.5
	50-59 years	8.3
	60 or above	.7
	Missing	1.3
What is your current marital status?	Married	81.4
	Single	5.7
	Separated	3.7
	Divorced	6.3
	Widowed	1.6
	Missing	1.3
What best describes your formal level of education?	Some high school	6.0
	Completed high school	13.9
	Vocational school or some college	7.5
	4- year college graduate	54.3
	A post-graduate degree	16.6
	Missing	1.7
Do you consider your family to be religious?	Yes	60.8
	No	28.8
	Don't know	5.8
	Missing	4.6
Gender	Male	40.8
	Female	56.3
	Missing	2.9
Religion	Muslim	85.7
	Christian	9.0
	Hindu	.9
	Buddhist	.4
	Others	1.6
	Missing	2.4
Nationality	Kuwaiti	59.1
	Egyptian	9.0
	Lebanese	8.2
	Palestinian	3.9
	Indian	3.1
	Iraqi	1.2
	Syrian	3.7
	Iranian	.7
	American	2.7
	Other	5.9

	Missing	2.5
On average how many hours per day does your child spend with a nanny?	Less than one hour	10.9
	1-3 hours	24.9
	4-6 hours	17.8
	6-8 hours	8.7
	Never	13.3
	All day	21.3
	Missing	3.1
Which of the following categories best describes the industry you primarily work in?	Health care	9.8
	Legal services	7.6
	Construction	5.1
	Own a business	17.6
	Primary/Secondary (K-12) Education	4.7
	Education industry	15.2
	Telecommunication	6.2
	Housewife	10.3
	Retired	5.2
	Other	15.2
	Missing	3.1
What is your monthly income?	Less than 500KD (less than 1750 USD)	10.6
	500- 1000KD (1750 USD to 3500 USD)	22.9
	1100-2000KD (3900 USD to 7000 USD)	32.9
	2100-3000KD (7,400 to 10,600 USD)	15.9
	3000Kd+ (10600 USD+)	10.8
	Missing	6.9

Table 2 Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
hours_watching_tv	Equal variances assumed	.939	.333	-2.090	820	.037
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.070	608.027	.039

Table 3: Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
hours_watching_tv	Equal variances assumed	.259	.611	2.228	820	.026
	Equal variances not assumed			2.244	189.761	.026

Table 4: Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
hours_watching_tv	Equal variances assumed	10.645	.001	.672	815	.502
	Equal variances not assumed			.691	743.828	.490

Table 5: Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
hours_watching_tv	Equal variances assumed	.000	.984	.233	819	.815
	Equal variances not assumed			.233	414.208	.816

Table 6: Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
hours_watching_tv	Equal variances assumed	.598	.440	2.298	808	.022
	Equal variances not assumed			2.295	800.866	.022

Table7: Test Statistics

Chi-Square	825.540
df	2
Asymp. Sig.	.000

Table 8: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	36.990	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	34.086	4	.000

Table 9: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	36.990	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	34.086	4	.000

Table 10: ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	4.053	5	.811	1.005	.414
Within Groups	656.057	813	.807		
Total	660.110	818			

Table 11: ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	4.034	7	.576	.708	.666
Within Groups	659.531	810	.814		
Total	663.565	817			