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An Overview**

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CHILDREN'S TELEVISION IN ASIA: AN OVERVIEW

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CHILDREN'S TELEVISION IN ASIA: AN OVERVIEW

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The objective of this paper is to present an overview of children's television in Asia and some of the problems and issues that beset it. By "children's television" is meant the range of programme materials made available specifically for children -- from pure entertainment like televised popular games and musical shows to cartoon animation, comedies, news, cultural performances, documentaries, specially made children's dramas, science programmes, and educational enrichment programmes -- and transmitted during time slots designated for children.

The paper does not purport to present a totally comprehensive picture. With the exception of the more advanced countries in the region, like Japan, very little documentation is done on trends and developments in children's television in most parts of Asia. For one thing, television is relatively new in many countries of South and South East Asia; and children's television is not yet considered a high priority. In other areas where documentation is done, the literature may not be accessible due mainly to the language in which they are written. For instance, there are some studies on the impact of television on Thai school children, but they are written in Thai; no English translations are available. There are also some formative-evaluative studies on children's television programmes in Indonesia; similarly, they are written in Bahasa.

TELEVISION IN ASIA

It is estimated that there are over 5 billion television sets in the world today. Only 1/8 of these are found in Asia, where half of the world's population lives.

What are the figures like in specific countries in the region? In the People's Republic of China, there are 469 TV stations and an estimated 165,930,000 TV sets; in the Republic of Korea, 50 stations and 18,260,000 sets. In Indonesia, there are 12 stations and 9,000,000 sets; Malaysia, 3 stations and 1,736,000 sets; Philippines, 132 stations and 5,494,383 sets; Singapore, 1 station and about 550,000 sets; and Thailand, 13 stations and 3,379,200 sets. In Bangladesh, there are 11 stations and 618,002 sets; India, 21 stations and 27,500,000 sets; Pakistan, 5 stations and 1,627,930 sets; and in Sri Lanka, 2 stations and 701,000 sets. (Communication Trends Study, AMIC 1991). It is significant to note that the number of sets stated here reflect only reported or licensed sets. Countless sets go unreported.

With a tradition of communal viewership common in South and South East Asia, even a smaller share of world-wide TV ownership spells a viewing audience doubled, if not tripled, in terms of millions. When one considers that an estimated half of South and South East Asia's population alone is below 15 years old, the actual and potential TV viewership among children is very high.

TELEVISION PROGRAMMES FOR CHILDREN

What children's programme materials are available on Asian television? There are the old Disney and Hanna-Barbera cartoons; children's participation shows with the usual quiz portions and song-poetry-dance recitals; nature and science documentaries; magazine formats; junior news editions; and of course, "Sesame Street" for countries that can afford it. In a few countries, there are structured educational programmes aired to support in-school instructional curricula. They may be produced by a network's educational, cultural or children's division. In general, they cater to two audience groups: pre-school and in-school below 12 years old.

Let us look at some specific examples.

NHK, Japan's public broadcasting network, remains at the forefront of children's television in Asia. Since the 1950's, NHK has been producing educational and entertainment programmes for young children. In 1953, it started TV broadcasts for primary and junior high schools. In April 1956, it began to produce programmes for kindergartens and nursery schools; these were "All of Us Together" and "Puppet Show". In 1957, the network expanded the programmes for pre-school children to include areas such as music and rhythm, nature, social studies and artistic creativity. In 1959, NHK began broadcasting its long-running series "With Mother", targetted at home-bound young children and their mothers. The series, which has influenced similar productions in other countries, "has presented a wide variety of characters and segments, such as physical exercise, singing, short animated cartoons, plays by people dressed as animals, and examples of children putting on pajamas or brushing their teeth." (Kodaira, 1987: 1-2; 1990).

Between the 60's and the 70's, more programmes were developed for children at home. When "Sesame Street" became a hit in Japan after it began airing over NHK in 1971, all of Japan's commercial broadcasting stations began to produce their own children's programmes. There were about eight series of this type in the 70's but most were discontinued by 1980. Today, many children's programmes on the commercial stations are animated cartoons, special-effects fantasies and variety shows. (*Ibid*, 1987: 2). These "Japanese animated cartoons and 'monster' dramas with special effects widely enjoyed by Japanese children and also

by children in other countries have been sometimes criticised because of their possible negative influence on children." (Ibid, 1990: 127).

China Central Television (CCTV) broadcasts 3 hours of children's programmes daily: 1 1/2 hours in the morning devoted almost entirely to cartoons from Japan and the United States, and 1 1/2 hours of a magazine programme. The magazine may include segments with a programme host facilitating a children's show-and-tell portion; a comic fast-track documentation of Chinese toddlers learning to dress up in a day care centre; and a documentary feature on the Australian kangaroo. (Wang, 1991).

Korean Broadcasting System (KBS) and Munhwa Broadcasting Corporation (MBC) in South Korea have children's programmes and child/youth-oriented educational programmes under the networks' cultural/educational programming.

They have almost identical morning programmes for young children. Both air a 6-day 20-minute magazine format show aimed at pre-schoolers. KBS has its "TV Kindergarten: 1 2 3" which aims at developing the mental, emotional and socialization skills of children through physical exercise, music, numbers games, etc. Aired on the 8:00 -8:20 a.m. time slot, the programme has been running for 9 years. (Han, 1991). MBC, on the other hand, has its "TV Kindergarten: Po, Po, Po" which has been on the air for 10 years. It has a "Sesame Street" format and includes segments on art and music, natural science, and social relationships. (Chung, 1991). The programme aims at enabling children to grow healthy both physically and mentally. (MBC Annual Report, 1985).

KBS TV3 concentrates 100% on educational/instructional programmes providing tutelage on academic fields and guidance in moral and civic behaviour. KBS TV1 and KBS TV2 also carry educational and cultural development programmes. About 66% of the 2 stations combined weekly programming is devoted to cultural and educational programmes. (KBS Annual Report, 1985). Invariably, a large portion of programme materials are targetted at children and youth audiences.

MBC's cultural/educational programmes "cover a wide range of subjects including history, art, education, and new developments in science and technology, as well as practical information closely related to daily life." Among other objectives, the programmes are directed toward "strengthening educational potentialities of our children." Other cultural programmes with a considerable children/youth-audience provide information on medical, agricultural, fishery, cooking and various other subjects. (MBC Annual Report, 1985).

In Indonesia, children's programmes are subsumed under "educational programmes" which constitute 23% of total programming. (Communication Trends Study, AMIC 1991). Materials for pre-schoolers and young children include the usual animated cartoons, magazines, and dramas. An example of the drama programmes is the "Bina Watak Series" of the Children's Television Programme. The series consists of 17 films dealing with character development through the presentation of selected role models to children 10 to 13 years old. These role models were designed to demonstrate and foster independence, curiosity, and self-initiative, among other positive values. (Nasution and Papay, 1981).

Televisi Republik Indonesia (TVRI), the government television network, has a five-point policy on children's programmes. It states, among others, that "the content and scenes of all children's programmes, performed by children as well as by adults, should suit the perception, ability and level of development of the children" and that "dialogue and action should be easily understood by children and should stimulate positive/constructive thinking and behaviour." Each of TVRI's regional/local stations produce their own children's programmes for their areas, but usually link up with the Jakarta station during the daily cartoon shows, which are imported from the United States. (TVRI, 1985: 64, 69).

In Malaysia, the government-run Radio-Televisyen Malaysia (RTM) broadcasts 52.53 hours of educational broadcasts for children in a year. (Communication Trends Study, AMIC 1991). These programmes include the inevitable cartoons and a Saturday morning programme called "Children's Club", a magazine programme with teaching segments and a news portion on children's affairs. Unfortunately, much of the news focuses not on children and their activities, but on what politicians and community leaders are supposedly doing for children's welfare. An earlier series, the "Colgate Show" featured dental hygiene (of course!) and children's visits to different educational places in Malaysia. While it was considered a good show, it was criticized for being an "extended commercial" for Colgate. The Colgate logo and colors were all over the set. (Chia, 1991).

Sistem Televisyen Malaysia Berhad, or TV3, is the new, private television station in Malaysia. It has broadcast considerably less children's programmes, but it is currently developing children's programmes under its Magazine Department. Recent productions, narrated and acted in by children, include one on Malaysian children's games, and another on protecting animals in their natural habitats. (Abdullah, 1991).

In the Philippines, 200 hours is allocated yearly to educational programmes for children. (Communication Trends Study, AMIC 1991). These include US Disney and Hanna-Barbera type cartoons, Japanese robot cartoons, games and audience participation shows,

and magazine formats with segments featuring puppets, animation, and "live" action.

One of the most successful children's programmes in the Philippines is "Batibot" (meaning small but strong), a magazine programme for pre-schoolers aired daily from Monday through Friday on the 10-11 a.m. time slot. Broadcast in Pilipino, the national language, each programme carries 15 items including dramatizations, music, simple animation, live action and muppets. Material contents include segments on the alphabet, numbers, social relationships, national identity, values, and social realities. The programme follows a curriculum developed in consultation with child development experts. Now past its 8th year, "Batibot" started as a co-production between the Children's Television Workshop (producers of "Sesame Street") and the Philippine Government. After one year, development of the programme was turned over to the Philippine Children's Television Foundation. Originally aired over PTV4, the government channel, "Batibot" is now broadcasting nationwide via satellite on Channel 9, a private, commercial station. Recent audience surveys show that "Batibot" has 19% share of the total audience which translates into 86% of the target children audience. (Benitez-Brown, 1991).

"Batibot" has a Sunday edition called "Pin Pin" which caters to Chinese-Filipinos. "Pin Pin" has a similar format to "Batibot" but tries, in addition, to promote awareness of the positive values of Chinese and Filipino cultural traditions among young Chinese-Filipinos. "Batibot" also has a half-hour radio version, "Radyo Batibot" which airs daily from 4:00 - 4:30 p.m. over 16 AM stations nationwide.

The success of "Batibot" has inspired other TV networks in the Philippines to develop similar programmes. "Bulilit" (meaning small one) is a copycat programme on Channel 7, another private, commercial station. Interestingly, the producers of "Bulilit" were originally with "Batibot" but pirated by the GMA7 network. "Bulilit" tried to compete directly with "Batibot" by airing on the same time slot, but lost out and moved to a later schedule.

In Singapore, the Singapore Broadcasting Corporation TV (SBC TV) broadcasts 100 hours of children's programmes yearly, mainly in Malay and English. These include "Aksi Mat Yoyo" and "News Watch" for children 5 - 12 years old, and "Teen TV" for pre-teens and young adolescents. (Kassim, 1991). "Aksi Mat Yoyo" is a 25-minute programme which has been running since 1982. Developed primarily to promote educational achievement among low-performing Malay children, the programme has a magazine format. Hosted by two children in cat costumes, the show features quizz portions, information segments, choreographed song and dance routines with educational messages, and games and audience participation. "News Watch" is a short news programme; it includes world news and human interest features appealing to chil-

dren and youth audiences. The programme is hosted by a youthful-looking adult. "Teen TV", a new programme on SBC TV, is hosted by several teen-aged comperes. It features educational games, sports stories, and MTV portions.

Apart from these programmes, there are the daily children's cartoons in the afternoon, and "Sesame Street". "Sunday Morning Singapore" also features children's cartoons during the first half of the programme.

SBC TV Channel 8 also airs the educational programmes developed by the Curriculum Development Institute of Singapore to support the instructional programmes in the national school system. The programmes are aired Mondays and Wednesdays during the school term, for 2 2/3 hours in the morning and another 2 2/3 hours in the afternoon. (SBC in Focus, 1990: 6).

In Thailand, the stations allocate 16.25 hours monthly for educational children's programmes. (Communication Trends Study, AMIC 1991). These programmes include imported cartoon shows from the US and Japan, audience participation shows, and Japanese-made documentaries and educational programmes dubbed in Thai.

In India, Doordarshan allocates 120 hours a year to educational programmes for children and youth. (Communication Trends Study, AMIC 1991). These programmes consist of both enrichment programmes and syllabus-based broadcasts covering regional languages, sciences, and community living.

"The only programme that can remotely be said to relate to (the 3-5 age group) is the Sunday morning telecast - a foreign cartoon in English meant for English speaking children of the urban elite. A small number of similar programmes are being telecast from other television stations such as Bombay and Madras. But these are of very recent origin. (Agrawal, 1987: 6).

Programmes for the 5-12 age group were developed initially as part of the SITE (Satellite Instructional Television Experiment) in the 70's. These programmes, meant for communal viewing in village schools and community centres, "were produced with the objective of helping children to learn community living skills; instilling habits of hygiene and healthy living; promoting aesthetic sensitivity; and making children aware of the entire process of the modernization of life and society around them. In addition, science education programmes were aimed at making children realize that science is everywhere, that their immediate environments can be questioned by them, understood, explained and manipulated by them, using the scientific method....There has been little appreciable change in programme plan and duration since SITE days". (*Ibid*).

Apart from school or syllabus-based programmes, certain regional Doordarshan stations also allotted a small time slot for children's programmes, and were regularly transmitting 20-30 minute English-language programmes for urban children. One of these was a Bombay Doordarshan production in the 80's. Called "The Magic Lamp", the programme was a series similar to the CTW-produced "Sesame Street". (*Ibid*: 7).

In Pakistan, the Pakistan Television Corporation (PTV) allocates a little over 2.5% of its total transmission time (about 50 hours a week) to children's programmes. (PTV Basics 1989: 23). Thirty-minute entertainment cum education programmes are produced and broadcast weekly from regional centres like Karachi, Quetta and Islamabad. The programmes - aimed at development of moral and social values in children - consist of music and songs, audience participation games, and cultural performances. (Zaidi, 1991).

In Bangladesh, the National Broadcasting Authority allocates about 37 hours a year to educational programmes for children and youth. (Communication Trends Study, AMIC 1991). Programmes include songs and dance recitals, drama series, traditional stories, audience participation shows, and a fortnightly magazine programme. (Quyum, 1991).

In Sri Lanka, children's programmes receive the second highest allocation of broadcast time after news, on Rupavahini, the government television corporation. In 1989, programmes for children totalled 270 hours, against 385.2 for news. (8th Anniversary Brochure, SLRC 1990). In 1990, it was slightly less, 256 hours. Children's programmes include curriculum-based educational materials broadcast in the mornings, and magazine-type programmes broadcast in the afternoons. The magazine programmes include children's stories, quizzes, and documentaries. There is also a fortnightly children's news programme. In 1989, about half of the programmes were foreign productions; in 1990, the figure was reduced to a third. (Ratnasinghe, 1991).

It is apparent from this review that while many Asian television networks have not yet accorded children's programming a high priority, they have taken the effort to provide some programming for children. Several have, in fact, won awards for children's programmes from Japan Prize and Prix Jeunesse. However, a critical viewing of the programmes produced particularly in the less developed countries of the region shows that much still needs to be done. To what extent much can be accomplished depends in large measure on the resolution of some of the most pressing problems and issues confronting children's television in Asia.

PRODUCTION PROBLEMS

Following are some of the closely-related problems that bedevil production of children's programmes in the region:

1. Training of programme producers. Many of the producers currently developing children's programmes do not have adequate training in producing materials for children. One remark from a participant at a recent ABU meeting on children's TV programme exchange sums it all: "We are not trained to produce for children. I am from Public Affairs but I occasionally get assigned to produce a children's programme. Many of us are plucked from various production units in the network and asked to produce children's programmes. We try to be professional and try to come up with something, but the end result shows the inadequacy in dealing with the real needs of children."

It is encouraging that some training opportunities are available in the region. It is possible to train at NHK, for example. The Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD) has also initiated a training course on scriptwriting for children's programmes. These programmes will, for sure, lead to Asian children's programmes with improved production values. However, these opportunities are limited to only a few participants. Also, due to cost and time constraints, these development programmes are production-oriented and may not have adequate components dealing with the educational and development needs of growing children.

"It is harder to produce good television (or even adequate television) specifically for children than it is to produce for adults. More is required of the people involved. To basic production skills they must add a sensitive understanding of the nature of the children's thinking, emotions, behaviour and needs at different ages, and make a creative response to these." (Cupit, 1987: 5).

2. Lack of creativity in programme presentation. A quick look at representative samples of materials from Asian networks, particularly the magazine programmes, shows a weakness in presentation techniques. There seems to be a tendency to fall into the trap of the formula. On the one hand, there is the "Sesame Street" formula, which of course has become successful in many countries, partly because of the aggressive efforts of Children's Television Workshop to market its training programme and profitable "Sesame Street" merchandise. On the other hand, there is the usual format with an adult host acting as "teacher" in a televised informal classroom, or as host in a studio children's party. There are certainly countless permutations to these formulae.

The lack of creativity is closely linked to lack of training, and lack of exposure to good children's programmes produced elsewhere in the region. How many stations in the region, for instance, have access to copies of the Asian winners of the Japan Prize and Prix Jeunesse for quality children's programmes? The recent move of the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU) to establish a children's television programme exchange along the lines of the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) Saarbrücken Exchange seems to be a step in the right direction.

Creativity also includes imaginative utilization of cramped studio space (particularly in less developed nations of the region) and in design of studio sets, backdrops, and props that are part of the entire programme production. It is common to see multiple-hued, cluttered, and over-decorated sets in Asian children's programmes. The visual impact (or incongruity!) of the set many times detracts from the informative-educative-enriching components of the entire production. There is a universal principle in both architectural design and communication development: "Less is more."

3. Inadequate Use of Existing Resources. Still allied to the problems of training and creativity, is the under-utilization of existing facilities and equipment in the local networks. Programme makers are not always aware of the optimal, creative potential of even basic video equipment. Those who have been exposed to foreign - particularly Japanese and Western - training sometimes find themselves unable to cope with the "primitive" equipment they have to work with in their national networks. They may have been dazzled by overseas high-tech facilities and equipment that they find "re-entry" difficulties in their own local working environments; they feel frustrated by the quality of the equipment, and find themselves stifled "artistically" by the supposed primitiveness of available technical resources.

One possible solution is local training, with emphasis on the creative use of existing or more low-cost technology. Network producers of children's programmes can take a cue from the experience of non-government grassroots organizations who have produced excellent, creative, low-budget, and effective programmes using simple video technology. High-cost, high-tech equipment do not necessarily mean high quality and effective programmes.

(Incidentally, the Asian Mass Communication Research and Information Centre has an annual series of local (national) workshops on "Portapak Video Production". The workshops are oriented towards low-cost production and can be tailored to suit the needs of participants. A workshop can very well be designed for children's programme makers.)

4. Predominance of Western programme models / colonial mentality. Closely related to the problem of creativity is the predominance of Western programmes on many Asian networks which influence the perception of local producers on what is a good quality children's programme, and the still prevalent mentality of former colonials that what comes from the UK or the US is necessarily also the best for Asia.

There are many examples of children's programmes produced in the ASEAN and South Asian Regions which are strong in national identity, local colour, and universal human interest - qualities that help make good and effective programmes.

5. Production costs. A common complaint of producers is that children's programmes are expensive to make, in part due to the variety of materials that have to be integrated to ensure audience interest. Networks are unwilling to expend more funds for children's programmes because they do not yield profitable returns on investments. It is more economical to buy old syndicated cartoons and reruns of "Lassie". However, "Batibot" in the Philippines has demonstrated that with a minimum of US\$2,000 you can produce a 45-minute magazine programme of good quality which appeals to target audiences, advertisers, and award-giving bodies alike.

Production costs can be reduced with good production plans, optimal utilization of available facilities and equipment, and creative use of local and inexpensive resources. Unfortunately, cost management is not a feature of children's television production training workshops. Perhaps it is time that this be incorporated into programme makers' training so that when they present production proposals to their executives, they are better able to explain the dollars and cents of a project and increase the probability of support.

Production cost is also an excuse usually given by network executives for supporting "family programmes" instead of children's programmes. In fact, they are quick to point out that children regularly watch programmes made for adults, anyway. As pointed out by Anna Home, Head of Children's Programmes, British Broadcasting Corporation:

"Many people say why bother, for instance, to make drama specifically for children? It's not an economic proposition because the potential sales and the potential ratings are so small. Why not make something which has general family appeal instead? Well, sometimes you can and there are many excellent examples but there are a large number of children's books and dramas written for children which are specifically geared for the child audience and are not of much interest to older people nor should they be. Instead adults may sometimes be alienated and offended by the material." (Home, 1988).

ISSUES IN CHILDREN'S TELEVISION

Production-related problems aside, network executives and programme makers also have to contend with some of the major issues in children's television.

Enrichment or educational programmes? Network policy-makers, programme producers and educationists in Asia continue to debate this question. There are those who want to use television mainly for teaching syllabus-related subject matter, and those who want to exploit its potential for enriching life experiences. Some countries whose television networks are government-operated have tried doing both, with mixed results. With perennial tight budgets and limited facilities in most ASEAN and South Asian countries, it may be worthwhile for government networks in these countries to concentrate on one category in order to maximize the use of funds, facilities and equipment, and other resources for better and more effective productions.

Television crime and violence. Research studies and newspaper accounts are replete with reports of children engaging in criminal and/or violent behaviour as a result of exposure to television programmes, whether or not these are primarily adult or children's programmes. One interesting study focuses on the effects of TV violence on Malaysian children. (CAP: 1984). However, the findings of this and other studies remain inconclusive.

In his book, Children in front of the small screen, Grant Noble writes:

"Violence, as we have seen, is a tricky area. In my opinion the effects of violence on the small screen depend, first, on the type of televised violence and, secondly, on whether or not your son is aggressive. Many boys are aggressive, and I would recommend that these boys work out these feelings by watching fantasy aggression where there is a distance between aggressor and victim, such as westerns, war films and historical violence. Where possible, I would try to prevent my young child from watching news violence and violence seen in the neo-realistic police and detective programmes. These latter types of violence, I fear, do show that violence is normal and accepted in everyday life and possibly define the targets at whom aggression can be directed. The sight of children in the news throwing stones at soldiers is for me the worst offender. Such violence takes place in streets similar to those in which our children live, the soldiers are recognizably different and thus a uniform target and overall such sights show your child how his counterparts in the wider society do conspicuously behave. There is a danger that by mere exposure

we legitimate such acts of violence. I would have no fear, though, about children, whether aggressive or not, watching Tom and Jerry, since the violence therein is stylistic, removed from life and even, dare I say it, imaginative." (Noble, 1975: 237-238).

Child consumerism. There is growing criticism of children's programmes which advertize products for children during commercial breaks, or which by themselves are disguised commercials for various merchandise designed for children. They create a child market that keeps growing and keeps parents wringing their hands in anguish. Mutant Ninja Turtles and Sesame Street merchandise flood many markets in Asian capitals. Sesame Street even has an expensive, Broadway-style touring show that also serves as venue for promotional sales of related products. Network officials can only say, lamely, that these advertisements pay for the show.

Sometime in the 70's, a group of concerned Filipino women professionals in the media who called themselves WOMEN (for Women in Media Now), successfully lobbied against the continued broadcast of a Japanese animated robot series because of the unusually high demand (and frustration) it created among the young viewers for "Voltes V" toy robots. Each toy robot cost Pesos 500 - 700 at that time, a figure that was beyond the reach of most of the viewing audience and/or their parents. Mounting complaints from parents helped WOMEN in their lobby to have the show cancelled. In the 80's, however, the Japanese animated robot shows, featuring more fantastic special effects, came back with a vengeance.

Regulation of children's programming. The charters of national television networks and the articles of incorporation of private, commercial stations invariably state (or at least imply) that they will endeavor to provide educational and/or cultural development programming for children. Many, however, fail to operationalize substantially this statement of objective. Perhaps, it would be worthwhile for some of the Asian countries to examine closely the experience with regulation, of a South Pacific neighbour-country, Australia. Regulation has succeeded in ensuring regular time slots for children's programmes, classification of programmes for child audiences, and the further "development, production and transmission of children's programs of quality." (Edgar, 1984).

CONCLUSION

Television is expanding in Asia. Its audience extends to millions of children in urban capitals as well as rural village communities. Government as well as commercial networks offer this large child audience a wide variety of programmes - from entertainment to educational - the quantity and quality of which vary according to economic, creative, and technical resources available to the producing or distributing networks.

There is growing concern about children's television in Asia, particularly among children's programme makers, child development specialists and educationists, parents and other child advocates. Much of this concern has been focused on the negative aspects of television's influence on children - the effect of crime, sex and violence, the impact on consumer behaviour, i.a.

Television is here to stay, however. And it has demonstrated that utilized properly, it can play an important role in children's lives by developing an understanding of their cultural identity; contributing to their emotional, intellectual, social and physical development; enriching and extending the range of their experiences; developing their attitudes and behaviour; and providing learning experiences to prepare them for school and for life. "However, children's television programming can only play a positive role if it addresses its child audience in ways which children will understand." (Edgar, 1983: 5).

Ensuring that children's programmes are specifically oriented to respond to children's needs requires much more than loud protestations from parents and teachers. It requires concerted action from parents and teachers groups, programme makers, and other child advocacy groups. Such action can include the following:

1. Organized lobbies for more effective legislation /regulation of children's programming, including advertising for children;
2. Media education programmes for parents, children, teachers, and other community groups to help them in critical assessment of television programmes offered to children;
3. Inter-disciplinary councils or foundations for the purpose of critically reviewing children's programmes and developing guidelines for quality programming;

4. Upgraded/expanded training programmes on children's programme production in regional or national broadcast training institutions;
5. Increased participation of Asian producers in children's programme exchange programmes to expose them to various creative and technical developments in children's productions; and
6. New courses on children's programme production to be offered in mass communication schools around the region.

Perhaps this present seminar can address some of these measures in the course of the workshop discussions.

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