Children, Youths and Mediated Violence: A Reflective Evaluation of Some Selected Theoretical Models

Ekeanyanwu, Nnamdi T., *Ph.D.*
University of Uyo, Uyo, Nigeria
&
Peter, Ada Sonia, *Ph.D*.
Covenant University, Ota, Nigeria

Abstract

Mediated violence especially as it affects children or the youths, has continued to benefit from scholarly attention in the area of research and theoretical explication. However, some of the research outcomes and theories show flawed arguments under serious theoretical interrogation. This paper uses a reflective analysis to interrogate further some of these theories and argues that they require a reassessment based on current thinking that the mass media alone could not cause violent effects to happen on children and the youths. In order words, media effects are not always direct, potent, and particular in causing significant effects on an individual or the entire society. There are always combination of factors that cause changes in audience behaviours and perception arising from the exposure to media stimuli, in this case, media violence. Theoretical models like Individual Differences perspective, Uses and Gratification theory, theory of Triadic Influence, and the other selective processes

further support this thesis. The paper recommends that current studies on mediated violence and the use of theoretical frameworks must reflect the realistic position/actual conclusions rather than idealistic or impracticable ideas that are best sophistry.

Keywords: Mediated violence, Children, Youths, Theoretical framework, Media effects

Introduction

Studies on mediated violence against children and youths have benefitted from many theoretical frameworks and arguments following the decline of the "All Powerful Media" paradigm and the emergence of "Limited Effects" notion to describe media effects. Many theories and hypotheses were then used to back up the arguments to support any of the eras in mass communication theory development. These theories had their weaknesses and strengths; some even showed flawed argumentation under serious theoretical interrogation.

No doubt, that many scholars have shown research interest on how media violence especially televised violence affect children and the youths. However, one wonders the place of theoretical models in arguing the different positions and why some schools of thought have held on to some of the flawed models years after credible research outcomes have questioned their fundamental rubrics.

The answer may not be far-fetched as Ekeanyanwu (2012, p. 28) describes theories "as the benchmarks upon which new and novel ideas could be tested and that they also offer empirical support to such novel ideas". Kerlinger (1973) observes that a theory contains a set of interrelated concepts, definitions, and statements that present a systematic view of a phenomenon by

specifying relationships among the concepts with the purpose of explaining the phenomenon for proper understanding of the concept. McQuail (1983) agrees with Kerlinger (1973) when he also argues that a theory is a set of ideas of varying status and origins, which seek to explain or interpret some phenomenon. Babie (1989) shares a similar view with the already cited authors. According to him, a theory is "a generalized and more or less comprehensive set of statements relating to different aspects of some phenomenon". Rosenberry and Vicker (2009, p. 4) also describe a theory "as a statement that seeks to describe how certain things are related to one another in ways that will predict or explain the nature of the relationship".

The place of theoretical frameworks or models in arguing a position like what effect televised violence has on children or the youths generally is aptly captured in this conclusion by Baran and Davies (2003, p. xvii) thus:

> Though today's media technologies might be new, their impact on daily life might not be so different from past influences. Changes in media have always posed challenges but have also created opportunities. We can use media to improve the quality of our lives or we can permit our lives to be seriously disrupted. As a society, we can use media wisely or foolishly. To make these choices, we need theories – theories that explain the role of media for us as individuals and guide the development of media industries for our society at large.

This conclusion by Baran and Davies (2003) underscores the interest of this paper in its attempt to evaluate some of the

theoretical arguments that support or contradict existing notions about what type of effects or influences are applicable, plausible, or even possible when minors are exposed to violent programming in the media.

Children, Youths and Mediated Violence

The interface between children's right and the media has remained an interesting area of concern because of the disconnection in past attempts to promote a harmonious child-media relationship. According to Oyero (2011, p. 85), "Children's right are claims that all children have for survival, development, protection, and participation". Oyero (2011, p. 85) further notes that the "first global attempt to galvanise children issues for global discourse came to the fore during the 1924 Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child which was followed up by the 1959 Declaration of the Rights of the Child and the Proclamation of 1979 as the International Year of the Child by the United Nations". However, specific action points between the Children's Right and the media came to a high point during the Asian Summit on Child Rights and the Media of 1996 and the Oslo Workshop of 1999. The essence of this Summit was again captured in Oyero (2011, p. 85) thus:

> The relationship between the rights of the child and the media was established in 1996 at the Asian Summit on Child Rights and the Media held in Manila, the Philippines (Hurights, 1999). Part of the Summit's resolutions is that media content aimed at children should be of high quality, made specifically for children, and should not exploit them but support their mental, social, moral, and spiritual development. When the media enable children to hear, see,

> and express themselves, their culture, their languages and their life experiences, it will affirm their sense of self and community. In much the same way, media should be made accessible to children when they need it and when the content is aimed at them (Hurights, 1996).

Clearly, this analysis by Oyero (2011) neatly signposts media's role in children's rights and helps to establish a connection between children and mediated violence, which is our major focus in this article. The public criticism of mass mediated violence especially as it affects children has been considerable. The research efforts in this area have focused mostly on television as the chief culprit in this regard.

Many scholars and researchers have often accused television of manipulating children resulting in increasing level of violence amongst youths. Most of the scholars who did one form of work or the other in this area clearly note that television programming have maintained increasing level of violent content and the youths are the chief users and audiences of these programmes. This has necessitated the fears expressed by many that televised violence is harming the future of our younger generation.

George Gerbner (1980)'s research efforts in this area are worth mentioning. He has been called by colleagues as "The man who counts the killings" (Stossel, 1997), because of his research project that kept track of the violence on television and projecting how this violence affected children and the generality of the society. Gerbner and his team of researchers carried out the Cultural Indicators Project for the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence set up by President Lyndon Johnson in 1968. The Cultural Indicators Project was one of the

longest media research projects in history (Stossel, 1997). Surprisingly, during the period, researchers still found out that violence on television did not abate. Rosenberry and Vicker (2009, p. 165), partly citing Stossel (1997), confirm this thus:

> Over the more than 30 years of the project, researchers and the public continued to be astounded at the level of violence shown in television programming, and the amount of television that average American consumed. For example, in 1992, the American Medical Association reported that the average child watched television for 27 hours a week and would see more than 40,000 murders by the age of 18.

The conclusion of Gerbner *et al* (1980) project led to Cultivation Theory that suggested that heavy television viewing literally cultivates a view of the world, thus making children grow up to cultivate and accept violence as a natural part of society. Gerbner's conclusion is further supported by the work of Leonard Eron, who was the first to do a longitudinal research on the effect of television on children (Rosenberry and Vicker, 2009). The study focused on 8- and 9-year olds in a suburban setting where Eron requested parents to indicate the type of television programs their kids watched and how long they watched such programs. The findings where very revealing and instructive. Eron, according to Rosenberry and Vicker (2009, pp. 167-168), observed

> …that the more violent television the children watched, the more aggressive they seemed to be in school. He returned when the children were 19 and found that the boys who watched a lot of

> television were more likely to get in trouble with the law. Finally, Eron returned to the community in 1982, when his subjects were 30. He found that children who had watched the most violent television programming in their youth were more likely to use violence against their own children, were more likely to be convicted of a crime, and were reported to be more aggressive by their spouses than those who watched less television.

Another significant study that established a correlation between children's exposure to televised violence and the tendency to behave violently is the Surgeon General's Scientific Advisory Committee on Television and Social Behaviour established by the United States Federal Government in 1969. The major purpose of establishing the committee, according to Baran and Davies (2003), is to "commission a broad range of research on television effects that might determine whether television could be an important influence on children's behaviour". After two years of serious research, which gulped the United States Government about a Million Dollars, the Surgeon General, Jesse Steinfield, reported to the United States Senate Sub-Committee handling the issue thus:

> While the…report is carefully phrased and qualified in language acceptable to social scientists, it is clear to me that the causal relationship between televised violence and antisocial behavior is sufficient to warrant appropriate and immediate remedial action. The data on social phenomena such as television and/or aggressive

> behavior will never be clear enough for all social scientists to agree on the formulation of a succinct statement of causality. But there comes a time when the data are sufficient to justify an action. That time has come (Ninety-Second Congress, 1972, p. 26 as cited in Baran and Davies, 2003, p. 188).

Baran and Davies (2003) were also quick to point out that "this report did little to end the controversy over television's effects", necessitating the other similar scholarly attention which reached similar conclusions.

Okoro (2008), on his own part, analyzed "The Television in the Lives of Children Study" carried out by Wilbur Schramm, Jack Lyle and Edwin Parker in 1961. Citing Biagi (2005, p. 270) as his source, Okoro (2008, p. 216) notes thus:

> The researchers reported that children were exposed to television more than any other medium. They noted that from the ages of three to 16 years, children spent more time watching television than they spent in school. According to the researchers, children used television for fantasy, diversion, and instruction. They also found, in support of Cantril, that "different children showed different effects".

Liebert and Sprafkin (1988) also argue that:

> Studies using various methods have supported the proposition that TV violence can induce aggressive behavior in children. Whether the effect will hold only for the most susceptible individuals (e.g. boys

> from disadvantaged homes) or whether it will hold for a wider range of youngsters obviously depends in part upon the measure being used (cited in Okoro, 2008, p. 217).

The United States-year study of televised violence and behaviour that was instituted by the National Institute of Mental Health in 1982 also yielded similar conclusions as detailed in Okoro (2008, pp. 217-218) thus:

1. There is a direct correlation between televised violence and aggressive behavior, yet there is no way to predict who will be affected and why.
2. Heavy television viewers are more fearful, less trusting, and more apprehensive than light television viewers.
3. Children who watch what the report called "pro-social" programmes that are socially constructive, like Sesame Street, are more likely to act responsibly.

Baran and Davies (2003) also observe that media violence research gave birth to many middle range theories that offered useful insights into how media especially television affect children's lives. Citing the argument of Huston *et al* (1992, pp. 54-55) thus:

> The accumulated research clearly demonstrates a correlation between viewing violence and aggressive behaviour – that is heavy viewers behave more aggressively than light viewers…. Both experimental and longitudinal studies support the hypothesis that viewing violence is causally associated with aggression… Field (naturalistic) experiments with preschool children and adolescents found

> heightened aggression among viewers assigned to watch violent television or film under some conditions.

Baran and Davies (2003) seem to accept this correlation but with a clear position that similar conclusion did not stop the contentious debate or disagreement over effects controversy.

Other similar studies had similar conclusions while those that did not were not able to proof anything beyond establishing a causal relationship between children's exposure to televised violence and a possible tendency that is prone to violent display. This may have been the reason Okoro (2008, p. 217), who did a detailed case studies' evaluation of some of the notable studies concludes thus: "The thesis of the foregoing argument is that since media violence is capable of inducing aggressive behaviour, TV violence could be a principal cause of violent behaviour even though it cannot be held responsible for being the only cause of aggressive behaviour".

This conclusion is instructive and supports the attempt by the current authors to re-evaluate some of the studies and/or theories that either came out of media effects research or used as frameworks to support such studies or theories. Before we set out on this re-evaluation, we must note that there is definitely a connection between children's exposure to media violence and the tendency to display violent behaviour as proven by media literacy interventions. According to an evaluation of *Flashpoint*, implemented by the Massachusetts Juvenile Justice System, learning to deconstruct media messages helped juvenile offenders think critically about the consequences of risky behaviours and develop strategies to resist impulses from the media that may lead them to engage in these behaviours, particularly during stressful moments or "flashpoints" in their lives (Moore, DeChillo, Nicholson, Genovese, and Sladen, 2000). More so in the macro-level theory of triadic influence, behaviours are seen as resulting

from a person's current social situation, general environment (which includes the media), and personal characteristics. Nonetheless, what we are not sure and still investigating is that research is yet to proof beyond reasonable doubt that display of violent behaviour by children or the youths is certainly caused by their experience of television in particular and media in generally.

A Reflective Evaluation of Some Selected Theories of Mediated Violence

Having established a relationship and to be more specific a correlation between children's experience of television and the tendency to behave violently; we argue that since television is not proven as a sole factor of supposed violent acts of youths that constantly experience it, it is then important to reconceptualise some selected theories, hypotheses, or models that came out of such related studies on media effects. In other words, research findings and literature on mediated violence and the influence they have on society requires a major rethinking.

The current authors find support for this in the conclusive argument of Baran and Davies (2003) and more recently, Ngoa (2012). According to Baran and Davies (2003, p. 9):

> If we have learned anything about media over the past century, it is that they are not demonic forces that inevitably precipitate societal or personal disasters. Media alone don't create couch potatoes and cyber-addicts, or foster massive political demonstrations. But neither are they benign agents of a New Order ushering in the Age of Enlightenment. People using media have the power to create either division or community.

> Media technology alone is powerless to initiate useful change. But technology can augment and amplify the actions of individuals and groups and in so doing, facilitate rapid and widespread social change on an important scale.

Ngoa (2012, p. 1), on a separate but related argument, also notes that

> Opinions, attitudes and behaviours of people may change or even be altered not necessarily because the media have caused an issue to be elevated in importance to the public; but rather, people, that is media or message sources, it can be argued, manipulate the media (media content) selectively for a "plurality of individual needs and dispositions" (Langer, 1998, p. 12).

One of the major theories that fuelled the children mediated violence controversy is Albert Bandura's Social Learning theory, which argued that children imitate role models on television, including aggressive role models. According to Baran and Davies (2003, p. 192), "Imitation is the direct, mechanical reproduction of behaviour". Without attempting to raise reservations with Bandura's conclusion on the major argument of the Social Learning theory, we argue, however, that children do not only watch aggressive characters on television. They also watch epic dramas of rich cultural history of their societies, great love stories, thrillers, fantasies, soap operas etc that raise heroes and heroines with virtues anyone could mimic.

So, if Social Learning theory arguments are tenable as

presented, then, children also imitate good role models that are non aggressive on television and may also prefer them to the aggressive ones. In other words, a typical child that watches more than four hours of television every day will struggle among many diverse role models on television he or she needs to adopt. Since the forces of good always defeat evil (as we have often observed), it is then applicable to argue that such a child in such a dilemma may actually end up with the good character (non aggressive) role model. This may sound very simplistic but it is true. What we should focus on right now is more detailed studies that will profile the type of programmes "heavy viewers" of television are watching on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis. This will help to note the type of role models that children are likely to imitate and so aid in dealing with any fears in that regard.

These authors also find support in Baran and Davies (2003) conclusion that question the dramatised examples often cited to support argument of learning violence on television by imitation of role models. According to them:

> The problem of mass communication theories, however, is that these obvious examples of media influence, as dramatic as they are, are relatively rare. Moreover, such gross examples of media influence lend substance to the argument that negative effects occur only in those "predisposed" to aggression – In other words, those crazy to begin with (p. 192).

This has been our understanding and runs through many of the so-called media violence theories, which we will not have the liberty to cite here. The media are more effective as reinforcement agents than initiators. In fact, with the availability of various television genres with diverse role models, as earlier argued; the

young viewer will surely face numerous disorientation or to put it more mildly, confusion, of the type of role model to imitate and the ones to avoid. This is further compounded by the role of parents and guardians in that child's life to guide, advise, mentor and tutor towards the right conduct or choices. Therefore, to argue emphatically that such young people will definitely imitate aggressive role models is very simplistic or at best pedantry.

Another interesting line of argument against Social Learning theory, which is also called Social Cognitive theory, is that seeing aggression or violence on television could actually make aggressive or violent disposition unattractive to children and young people. According to Rosenberry and Vicker (2009, p. 141), "It is also possible to learn what not to do by watching others. For example, a child who sees his little sister burned by a hot stove learns not to put his hand there; a son who watches his father struggle with emphysema vows never to smoke; a student whose roommate fails for cheating resolves to do all her own class work."

This argument is more realistic and a possible experience from media exposure. Children prefer to be loved, cared for, pampered etc. Seeing such affection on television may actually excite them and easy for them to imitate than aggressive behaviours that run contrary to what they are used to. In essence, aggressive disposition on television may repel children and young people, rather than interests them as suggested by some of these dominant mediated violent paradigms.

The second case study we will use to argue our thesis further in this article is the Catharsis "theory" or hypothesis. Catharsis arguments actually question the very idea it claims to support. For instance, Baran and Davies (2003, p. 191) question the view that catharsis, sometimes called sublimation, is "the idea that viewing violence is sufficient to purge or at least satisfy a person's aggressive drive and, therefore, reduce the likelihood of aggressive behaviour". In other words, watching violence on

television may actually help an individual to release or at least reduce tension. Baran and Davies (2003, p. 191) offer a critique of such argument thus:

> Common sense and your own media consumption offer some evidence of the weakness of the Catharsis hypothesis. When you watch couples engaged in physical affection on the screen, does it reduce your sexual drive? If viewing mediated sexual behavior does not reduce sex drive and viewing media presentations of people dining does not reduce our hunger, why should we assume that seeing mediated violence could satisfy an aggressive drive?

Baran and Davies examples above really weaken Catharsis arguments to the core. It may be more reasonable to argue that viewing couples engaged in physical affection on screen can turn the act into a distasteful stuff for an individual under certain conditions; not the one with a sex drive already in his adrenaline. Some of us have often lost our appetite for food after seeing the way people eat certain meals on screen. In fact, some grew a dislike for particular kinds of food after seeing how some persons eat them.

This argument may make sense when one considers the position of Cognitive Consistency as the idea that people consciously and unconsciously work to preserve their existing views. Rosnow and Robinson (1967), cited in Baran and Davies (2003) define Cognitive Consistency as a tendency (on the part of individuals) to maintain, or to return to, a state of cognitive balance, and this tendency determines the kind of persuasive information or communication to which the individual may be receptive.

Similar to this argument is Cognitive Dissonance, which according to Festinger, also cited in Baran and Davies (2003) thus, "the bedrock premise of Dissonance Theory is that information that is not consistent with a person's already – held values and beliefs will create a psychological discomfort (dissonance) that must be relieved". In order words, if a person knows various things that are not psychologically consistent with his or her belief/value system, s/he will in a variety of ways try to make them more consistent and acceptable. This helps that individual to return to his or her natural state of equilibrium of existing beliefs.

Furthermore, relevant arguments of Uses and Gratification theory, according to Rosenberry and Vicker (2009), seem to suggest also that Catharsis hypothesis is true in terms of reducing tension arising from media exposure or experience. Uses and Gratification theory is a suggestion that individuals are active/literate users of the media for reasons of gratification or satisfaction they hope to get from such experience. In other words, the decision to watch television is made by an individual who already knows the type of satisfaction he or she expects from the exposure. Therefore, if an individual wants entertainment, no matter how violent the movie turns or is framed, he simply sees it as mere entertainment and refuses to be influenced by any other stimulant from the exposure. In another sense, such an individual who goes for entertainment may never be moved to violent behaviour because expectation is what births manifestation; and since there was no such violence expectation, there will be no violent display afterwards.

The arguments of Uses and Gratifications theory seem to find an ally in the selective processes especially Selective Exposure, which argues that people tend to expose themselves to or attend to media messages that they feel are in accord with their already-held or pre-existing views and beliefs (Baran and Davies, 2003). Under selective exposure, people also tend to avoid that which might be discordant to their beliefs and value system.

Our thinking here is that children and youths who get violent from watching violent movies on television come to the media with violent tendencies and may have had a violent upbringing. In fact, we believe that if the programme the individual came to watch is changed suddenly for some other kind of less violence prone movie, such an individual will fleetingly walk away from the media because no other programme may interest him or her at that point in time.

Individual Differences perspective also adds another drama to the whole discourse. Individual Differences pushes the agenda that individuals have different socio-psychological makeup that will predispose them to individual reactions to any media stimuli, including mediated violence. From a medical and especially, psychological point of view, Individual Differences is true. No two individuals (even identical twins) can possibly think alike, act alike, respond similarly to the same questions etc in predictable ways simultaneously. These have been proven long before media researchers delved into media effects studies that indicted television of causing children to behave violently.

In other words, no two individuals may likely react similarly to the same media stimuli except there are some socio-psychological consistencies in their psychological makeup. Fifty children who watched the same violent movie will not all end up violent. Some may likely walk away from the exposure condemning the violent nature of the movie while some may merely be sympathetic to mediated violence as mirroring the society. True that some may end up displaying violent behaviour or emotions; but the argument here is that it is not a given that all children and youths who watch mediated violence always end up displaying violent behaviour.

All possible expectations that could happen to children who experience televised violence should feature in the literature on mediated violence instead of the dominant paradigm that pretends all exposure to media violence always leads to violent

display or emotions. As we have also argued earlier, children and youths watch other stuffs on television that are far from violence. There are stories of love, nationalism, friendly sports, reality, and a host of others that people are exposed to in their daily lives. If the dominant paradigm that people become what they see or read or watch in the media is true; then our world will be filled with love, nationalists, crime fighters, drug barons, philanthropists, gangsters, mobsters, rapists, addicts, robbers etc. If this is not the case then the argument that people get violent from watching violence on television is contradictory and cacophonous to the very ideals that empiricism represents.

Conclusion

The controversy around the issue of media and violence will remain fluid for obvious reasons: some researchers have refused to accept the truth about our contemporary world. Is the contemporary world we find ourselves that gave birth to the media or is the media (in singular sense here) that gave birth to the contemporary world? This unanswered question is the primary reason why scholars like Ngoa (2012) often argues that the media do not set agenda and concludes that such arguments of media agenda setting should be best regarded as a theory-in-process, meaning that it is inconclusive. There is little difference between Ngoa's (2012) argument on media agenda setting and our current thought that media cannot alone cause violent behaviour to happen.

At best, arguments should remain inconclusive until such a time when individuals are taken through a scientific experiment where all other extraneous variables would be identified and isolated and then mediated violence applied and tested to determine if such alone could cause violent behaviour. In such proposed experiment, all the identified extraneous variables may be individually applied to the independent variable and tested again. This should help point to the next decade of efforts in media

effects research especially as it concerns violence.

The so-called celebrated studies by scholars like George Gerbner, Albert Bandura, and Leonard Eron etc all have some construct inconsistencies and their conclusions remain debatable. Take the Leonard Eron's longitudinal study, which was the first recorded research on the impact of television on peoples' behaviour, as a case in point. In Eron's study, did these children – adults know they were being studied throughout the duration of the study? Whatever the response, it has serious implication for the findings and conclusions reached in the study. Did the parents keep quiet (play along) throughout the duration of the longitudinal research and watch their kids turn violent and refused to intervene so that the course of the study will not be disrupted? We know that parents could be extraneous elements between what their children watch and how they behave; especially, parents that take note of their children's media behaviour and advise appropriately.

It is very unlikely then that happenings in the lives of the Eron's participants did not affect their final disposition, which influenced the conclusions reached by Eron. Eron did not also tell us that he isolated the individuals who showed aggressive tendencies from other non-media related aggressive stimuli around their environment and lives throughout the duration of the project. It is also very unlikely that parents just watched away the destinies of their children being messed up with for mere research purposes or gains. They would have intervened at one stage or the other to influence the outcome of that particular study. In our conclusion, any argument that is categorical that media exposure directly leads to violent behaviour is manipulative, if not simplistic.

In conclusion, we piquantly believe that no single factor, no matter how potent, can cause humans to behave violently. It is easy to attribute such possible violent disposition to a combination of factors, which the theory of triadic influence

captures as distal and proximal influences. As discussed by sociologists and social ecological theorists (See Obanua and Ekeanyanwu, 2010), distal influences on behavior on one hand can arise from the person (intrapersonal), the situation (interpersonal), the broader environment (socio-cultural) and their interaction. On the other hand, proximal influences are cognitive and affective in nature i.e. attitudes toward the behaviour, social normative beliefs, self-efficacy, and intentions (Obanua & Ekeanyanwu, 2010). Hence, a child who grew up in a violent home may likely exhibit violent behaviour with minimal exposure to mediated violence. This is the thesis of our argument. It also confirms that truly, a correlation exists but as Ngoa (2012) rightly points out; correlation is not causation.

References

Babie, E. (1989). *The practice of social research* 8th Ed. Belmont, USA: Thomson & Wadsworth.

Baran, S. J. and Davies, D. K. (2003). Mass *communication theory: Foundations, ferment, and future* (3rd Ed.). Belmont, USA: Thomson & Wadsworth.

Ekeanyanwu, N. T. (2012). Theorizing cultural development vis-à-vis cultural imperialism theory. In Ekeanyanwu, N. T., Ngoa, S. N. & Sobowale, I. A. [Eds] *Critique and application of communication theories*. Pp28-49, Ota: Covenant University Press.

Folarin, A. B. (2005). *Theories of mass communication: An introductory text,* 3rd Ed. Lagos: Bakinfol Publications.

Gerbner, G., Gross, L., Morgan, M., & Signorielli, N. (1980). The "mainstreaming" of America: Violence profile no.11. *Journal of Communication* 30 (3), 212-231.

Hurights, (1996). Asian Summit on child's rights and the media. Accessed April 12, 2006 from

http://www.hurights.or.jp/asiapacific/no_05/06asiansummit.htm

Huston, A. C. E., Donnerstein, H., Fairchild, N. D., Feshbach, P. A., Katz, J. P., Murray, E. A., Rubenstein, B. L., Wilcox, and Zukerman, D. (1992). *Big world, small screen*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Kerlinger, F. N. (1973). Foundations of behavioural research (2nd ed.). New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Langer, J. (1998). *Tabloid television- popular journalism and the 'other news'*. London: Routledge.

Liebert, R. M. and Sprafken, J. N. (1988). The Early window: Effects of television on children and youth. New York: Pergamon.

McQuail, D. (1983). *Mass communication theory: An introduction*. London: Sage.

Moore, J. DeChillo, N. Nicholson, B. Genovese, A. & Sladen, S. (2000). "Flashpoint: An Innovative Media Literacy Intervention for High-Risk Adolescents," *Juvenile and Family Court Journal 26 (2)* 23-33.

Ngoa, S. N. (2012). Agenda-setting: A theory-in-process. In Ekeanyanwu, N. T., Ngoa, S. N. & Sobowale, I. A. [Eds] *Critique and Application of Communication Theories*. Pp 1-25, Ota: Covenant University Press.

Obanua, A. S. & Ekeanyanwu, N. T. (2010). The Theory of Triadic Influence, Media Literacy, Adolescents and Alcohol Advertising in Lagos State *International Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities Review*, Vol. 1. Number 3, Pp34-39,

Okoro, N. (2008). Television violence and children: A case studies exploration of the violent behaviour paradigm. *International Journal of Communication*, Vol. 1, N0.8,

203-230

Oyero, O. S. (2011). Presenting children's rights' issues in Nigerian and Ghanaian newspapers. Fort Hare Papers, Vol. 17, 84-11

Rosenberry, J. and Vicker, L. A. (2009). *Applied mass communication theory: A guide for media practitioners*. Boston: Pearson

Stossel, S. (1997). The man who counts the killings. *The Atlantic Monthly*, 279 (5), 86-104