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NEGATIVE IMPACT OF MASS MEDIA ON CHILDREN, ADOLESCENTS, AND FORMING OF CRITICAL ATTITUDE TO MEDIA AS A WAY OF ITS PREVENTION

Annotation

The article deals with the problem of media influence on socialization process. Mass media are one of the most powerful institutions of socialization. They are factor of uncontrolled spontaneous socialization, that means that they may distribute deformed values and promote human's asocial actions. Children and adolescents choose mass media as a main source of information and mean of communication, what determines the risks of negative influence on their socialization. The main positive and negative consequences of mass media influence are highlighted in the article. The consequences of violence scenes impact, advertising impact, sex scenes impact are analyzed. Excessive involvement into interaction with media is a factor that promotes emergence of Internet addiction and gadgets addiction. Breaking Internet Safety rules leads to victimization of children and adolescents (fraud, cyberbullying, involvement in destructive groups in social networks, sexting, meetings with strangers, etc.). Mass media can manipulate human consciousness with the help of special techniques and methods, which include the combination of myth and half-truth, hanging labels, the usage of words-replacements, and the formation of certain action patterns. So people should know the main indicators of such manipulation and ways to counteract them.

One of many possible ways of negative impact prevention is formation of critical attitude to media. It involves informing of children about the impact of media on their personal and social development; their mastering of knowledge, skills, and abilities of critical analysis of information and detection of manipulative influence, forming readiness to counteract that influence.

Keywords: mass media, socialization, negative influence, critical attitude, media education.

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НЕГАТИВНИЙ ВПЛИВ МАС МЕДІА НА ДІТЕЙ, ПІДЛІТКІВ ТА ФОРМУВАННЯ КРИТИЧНОГО СТАВЛЕННЯ ДО МЕДІА ЯК ШЛЯХ ЙОГО ПРОФІЛАКТИКИ

Анотація

У статті висвітлено вплив мас-медіа на соціалізацію дітей та підлітків. Медіа є одним з провідних інститутів соціалізації сучасних дітей. Вони є фактором не керованої, стихійної соціалізації, що визначає можливість поширення ними деформованих цінностей і пропагування асоціальних дій. Діти та підлітки обирають мас-медіа як головне джерело отримання інформації та засіб комунікації, що обумовлює ризик негативного впливу на їхню соціалізацію. Стаття висвітлює як позитивні, так і негативні наслідки медіавпливу на особистість. На основі аналізу психологічних, педагогічних, медичних джерел представлено наслідки впливу інформації на когнітивну, афективну, ціннісну та поведінкову сфери людини. Проаналізовано наслідки впливу сцен насильства, сексуальних сцен, реклами. Надмірне залучення до взаємодії із медіа є фактором, що спричиняє виникнення Інтернет-залежності, гаджет-адикції. Недотримання дітьми і підлітками правил безпечної поведінки в мережі Інтернет сприяє їхній віктимізації (шахрайство, кібербулінг, залучення до деструктивних груп у соціальних мережах, секстинг, зустрічі із незнайомими людьми та ін.). Мас-медіа мають можливість маніпулювання свідомістю за допомогою спеціальних технік та прийомів, серед яких виокремлюють поєднання міфу та напівправди, навішування «ярликів», використання слів-заміщувачів, формування певних моделей дій. Отже людина має знати основні індикатори такого маніпулювання і способи їм протидіяти. Багато маніпулятивних впливів спрямовані на звуження свідомості та підсилення навіюваності. В першу чергу вони спрямовані на дітей, підлітків оскільки ці вікові періоди є сензитивними до впливу медіа.

Один із шляхів профілактики негативного впливу мас-медіа – формування у дітей та підлітків критичного ставлення до них. Воно передбачає ознайомлення дітей із наслідками медіавпливу на їхню особистісну та соціальне становлення; засвоєння ними знань, умінь, навичок критичного аналізу інформації та виявлення маніпулятивного впливу мас-медіа й готовності їм протидіяти.

Ключові слова: мас-медіа, соціалізація, негативний вплив, критичне ставлення, медіаосвіта.

Introduction

The mass media is a complex of organizational structures and communication channels that produce and distribute information intended for mass audience. Mass media include the press (newspapers, magazines, books), television, radio, Internet, cinema, sound recordings, videos, billboards, home video centers, smartphones and tablets. Each type of media has its own specifics of influence on children and adolescents. The increased amount of devices (smartphones, tablets) and a larger amount of interactive media led to an increased amount of time spent with media in everyday life. So media is one of the most powerful agents of socialization today. Socialization is the process of becoming a society member through internalization of values, rules, norms, patterns of behavior in the society/culture. It is a lifelong process, but the most important socialization occurs during childhood and adolescence. The beginning of the 21st century was marked by significant reduction of traditional social institutions (family, educational institutions) influence on the socialization process, their functions gradually have passed to the media.

The role of media is hardly quantifiable, as it depends on the interplay of a wide range of influences, such as content, context, family, peers, personality, motivation, educational and cultural background [1, p. 2]. That's why there is

contradictory empirical evidence of mass media effect. Nevertheless, it is possible to describe most widespread consequences of media impact.

Presentation of the main material. Positive and Negative Influences of the Mass Media

It is proved that consequences of mass media influence on the process of socialization of children and adolescents are not only positive, but negative also. On the one hand, media make the achievements of science and culture accessible to the masses; extend the boundaries of person’s life. Also positive effects of media influence on person include improving of cognitive and motor skills [2; 3; 4], forming of prosocial behavior [2], facilitating the formation of communicative skills, providing opportunity to rest from studying. On the other hand there is a list of negative consequences of media influence.

Among the negative effects of media, special attention scholars [1; 3; 4] pay to the consequences of violence scenes impact (changes in the perception of the surrounding world, the perception of violence as a legitimate way of solving conflicts, copying violent patterns of behavior, the emergence of a reaction of desensitization, etc.), the consequences of the impact of advertising (advertising asserts respect for the material product as a complete substitute for the spiritual, forms an idea that consumption and material wealth are the main goal of human life, eating of advertised food makes a negative impact on the health), forming of stereotypes (perception of gender, political attitudes, stereotypes of minorities), the emergence of addiction from the media (Internet addiction, gadget addiction), the effects of sex scenes in the media (the formation of a deformed view of interpersonal relationships, the artificial imposition of certain stereotypes of sexual behavior), victimization of children and adolescents due to breaking Internet Safety Rules.

The analysis of psychological, pedagogical, social-pedagogical, medical literature gives the data to describe the negative effects of media influence on the cognitive, affective, value and behavioral spheres of person (table “Consequences of mass media negative impact on children and adolescents”).

Positive and Negative Influences of the Mass Media on children and adolescents

Cognitive	Affective	Values	Behavior
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Narrowing of the circle of cognitive interests; – Reducing the flexibility of cognitive processes (the consequence of the usage of “ready-to-use” information); – Stagnation of the mental processes; – Formation of a “distorted” picture of the world; -Formation of stereotypes (gender, people living with HIV/AIDS, minority stereotypes, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Increasing of anxiety level; – Increasing of aggressiveness level. 	<p>Reducing of universal values significance and promoting of material values as leading in the hierarchy of value orientations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Emergence of addictive behavior (Internet addiction, gadget addiction); – Inappropriate eating behavior, eating disorders (anorexia, bulimia, etc.); – Change of consumer behavior (the effect of advertisement); – Victim behavior as result of breaking Internet Safety Rules. – Deviant and delinquent behavior (the effect of watching violence scenes); – Reduction of physical activity and emergence of diseases (myopia, musculoskeletal system diseases (such as scoliosis), obesity, sleep disorders, depression, etc.); – Distraction from learning and other types of activities, poor academic performance.

Made by the author on the basis of the sources [1-5]

It should be noted that any media product is a constructed reality. It reflects not the real world, but certain subjective, carefully selected ideas about it. However, children and adolescents do not have enough life experience to realize this fact. Their uncritical media consumption leads to appearance of described above negative outcomes.

The most effective way of prevention negative media impact and protection from manipulation is the development of critical attitude towards mass media. Critical attitude is formed on the basis of critical thinking. Critical thinking is about having a desire to evaluate and analyze information, not to swallow it; the ability to evaluate objectively one’s actions, the ability to find and determine one’s mistakes, to analyze critically propositions and judgments of other people. We define

critical attitude of children and adolescents to the media as an active, selective position of an individual, which forecasts the ability to analyze and evaluate media messages, the volitional regulation of interaction with the media. A tool for critical attitude forming is media education. Media education prepares new generation to live in a digital world. It teaches children to use media as a source of information, as a mean of self-education and self-realization; it also involves recognizing and limiting of potential risks of interaction with media. The main task of media education is to form skills and abilities of self-regulation of media usage. According to N. Cherepovska [6, p. 64] self-regulation provides actualization of volitional efforts aimed at critical, conscious attitude to media information (awareness of the purpose of interaction with media, planning of media usage, self-control of duration of media usage, usage of special techniques, such as filtration and selection of information, informational self-restraint); constructive emotional and cognitive processing of perceived information (reflection of impressions, analytical and critical processing of media messages, reasoned assessment, creative rethinking). The person should be able to communicate with other people constructively, to discuss media information, to be tolerant to other's opinion. It is important for children and adolescents to define the aim of interaction with media (it prevents them from thoughtless media consumption) and to filtrate information (to choose it in accordance with their system of value orientations). There is a lot of different information in mass media, so the person should be responsible for the choice.

Conclusions

Media is one of the most important factors of socialization of children and adolescents. Mass media forms a worldview, influences personal values, and makes a major impact on cognitive, emotional processes and behavior. The mass media has both positive and negative influences. Forming of critical attitude towards mass media is an effective way to prevent negative influences.

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