Comedies TV show have big impact on adolescent sexual behavior

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**Hypothesis:**

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Media plays a major role in the lives of adolescents. With technology, younger generations are exposed to watch all kinds of media content. Some of them like the comedy shows have scenes that are not appropriate for adolescents. And normally, people tend to copy what they see on television. That is why we believe that Comedy shows have a big impact on adolescents’ sexual behavior. We will analyze three different empirical studies to confirm the correlation between sexual material in the comedy shows and sex attitudes of the adolescents.

According to a report presented by Christian Post entertainment on September 2018, titled “81% of family comedy shows exposed Kids to sexual dialogue”, some comedy TV shows like American Housewife, Family Guy, Speechless etc. have scenes in which the adult characters speak sexual things before children. The programs that have the highest frequency of such material, according to the report, are the NBC series A.P. Bio., Fox's "The Mick," ABC's "American Housewife," CBS's "Life in Pieces," and Fox's "Family Guy" also falls under the category.” (1)

Georges Gerbner, the scientist who develop the Cultivation Theory that examines the long-term effect of television, explained in his text ‘Television violence the power and the peril’ that television also plays a role of the education of the adolescents because they spend a lot of time in front of it. TV the maintainer of the new social ambience, is putting forth a noticeable shift in the manner of childrens’ growth, learning and life styles in the societal context. (4) This is why it is important to have good regulation and rate the comedy show as general public (PG) or Adult (R) in order to protect the adolescents against sexual content that will influence his/her behavior later.

The second study was presented in 2007 by Patricia Thickstun and it focuses on the effect of of the Media on adolescents’ sex relations and behavior. She explained that Sexual content viewed through Comedy Show by American adolescents between 11 to 19 years old can be the cause of early and risky sexual behaviors. The programs widely seen by adolescent children in years 2001–2002 have a high frequency of sexual material: as high as 83% of the shows watched by teenagers have sexual content, and 20% of them have scenes that show sexual activity. As a whole, every hour of programming watched by the teenagers happened to have 6.7 scenes which included some sort of sexual content (3)

Georges Gerbner also found that in his study about the impact of violence in TV on adolescents that, effectively entertainment violence was very harmful for the society and adolescents are the most affected by that. There was a Poll conducted in 1993 and it came up with the result that people in America who responded to be offended or uncomfortable at a personal level by the depiction violence in Television programs increased from 44% (1983) to 59%. Also, 80% of the respondents agreed that the violence shown on TV is damaging to the viewership, which 64% people believed in 1983. (4)

Now finally, for the third empirical study, we will it find in the book “Media effects research: A basic Overview”, Carol Pardun and her coauthors studied “the impact of media on sexual behavior” explained the exposure to sexual content on TV shows will influence adolescents to sexual activities. The study was realized on 3200 adolescents on seven and eight grades and asked them to complete a questionnaire. “The results of the study showed evidence of a reciprocal relationship between media exposure and sexual behavior. Teenagers that were involved in sexual activities at the time when the first survey was conducted had a higher probability of watching TV shows containing sexual stuff in the years to follow. The authors interpreted these results as evidence for the fact that exposure to sexual content cause sexual activities – and that sexual activity may be causally related to exposure to media that contain sexual material.” (5)

Georges Gerbner also administered a survey to a large and representatives’ national samples of respondents. The results of the result indicate that the exposition to violence in television will lead the adolescent to develop violent behaviors. The studies show that watching of the TV shows that contain fights and violence contribute to the perception of the world being unfair, unclear and unjust. Viewers of such programs develop the tendencies of being insensitive to other people and situations and they often cultivate the sense of always being in danger of some sort and are vulnerable or are dependent on other people for their own wellness or quality of life and circumstances. The shows on TV inculcate the feelings of superiority or inferiority in people and they develop behaviors and situations to act accordingly in their daily lives. People become indifferent towards others and the human instincts of love, care and affection start diminishing. The society is increasingly becoming insensitive in many respects and teenagers tend to become aggressive and bully the youngsters in schools or colleges. (4)

After analyzing those empirical studies and comparing them with Georges Gerbner cultivation theory, we are convinced that comedy TV shows with sexual content have a big impact on adolescents’ sexual behaviors. I agree with specialist who encourage that television should rate correctly all program before broadcast, make an announcement of the appropriate age to watch the show and encourage the media to have more sexual education programs for young adolescents.

Reference

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