

A Theoretical Appraisal of Models that Argue Against Mediated Violence

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Abstract

Most violent acts exhibited by children and young ones in the society have most often been attributed to influence by the mass media. Theorists and communication scholars have attempted to either confirm or refute such claims in their various studies on mediated violence. This study therefore set out to examine some theoretical frameworks on mediated violence, with particular reference to theories which argue against holding the media entirely responsible for violent display by children who are often exposed to televised violence. The assumptions are always that there is a strong link between real-life violence and exposure to violent media contents. This paper adopted the limited effect paradigm and critically analysed the Uses and Gratification and the Social Cognitive Theories which attempted to dilute the 'all-powerful' picture painted by the mass media by identifying media consumers as active partakers of media contents and that behavioural change depends much on the factors - environment, people, behaviour, and generally culture. The paper concludes that the media are definitely powerful but must exercise this power in agreement with the media audience. In essence, it is our reasoned

argument in this paper that the media alone could not be held responsible for violent conduct in children or individuals but that a nexus of factors must interplay for such influence to happen. In other words, this paper aligns with the notion that the media exert considerable level of influence on media consumers, but very unlikely to be all-powerful.

Keywords: Media Effect, Mediated Violence, Children, Limited Effects