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**THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY IN CAIRO**  
School of Global Affairs and Public Policy

**EGYPTIAN MEDIA POLICIES PROTECTING CHILDREN AGAINST  
HARMFUL MEDIA AND PROMOTING POSITIVE MEDIA**

A Thesis Submitted to  
**The Department of Public Policy and Administration**

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
**MASTER OF PUBLIC POLICY WITH CONCENTRATION IN MEDIA POLICY**

**SUBMITTED BY**  
**Nour Hussien Salah Abu-Seada**

Under the supervision of  
**Dr. Hussein Amin**

**Winter 2019**

The American University in Cairo  
School of Global Affairs and Public Policy

**EGYPTIAN MEDIA POLICIES PROTECTING CHILDREN AGAINST  
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A Thesis Submitted by

*Nour Hussien Salah Abu Seada*

To the Department of Public Policy and Administration

WINTER 2019

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**EGYPTIAN MEDIA POLICIES  
PROTECTING CHILDREN AGAINST HARMFUL MEDIA  
AND PROMOTING POSITIVE MEDIA**

Submitted by Nour Hussien Salah Abu-Seada  
Supervised by Dr. Hussein Amin

**ABSTRACT**

Children are by far the most important asset for the future of any nation. Hence, any investment in them will not only reflect positively or negatively on their homeland and society, but maybe even the whole world. With the understanding that early childhood is an extremely important and critical stage for mental, physical and psychological development, it is highly important to constantly provide a healthy environment for young children in order to nourish those seeds that will harvest the future.

The General Egyptian Book Organization (GEBO) states that Television is considered on the forefront means influencing peoples lives nowadays due to having the privilege of transmitting sound, image, motion, and color. Some people may even consider it a source of information. Children, being easily influenced by their surrounding environment, are at greater risk mainly due to the ability of Television and media content to affect their development, behavior and entire life, which can either build or break them.

Several developed countries have figured out the enormous influence media can have on audience both positively and negatively, especially on the most vulnerable audience including “children”. With that in consideration, many countries have taken sufficient measures to ensure the protection of minors from being subjected to any harmful media content, or content that might not be generally suitable for their age. In addition, promote more developmental media content as an alternative for children. Unfortunately, that is not the case in most developing countries such as Egypt.

Children represent around 40% of the total Egyptian population. Basic research results suggest that many Egyptian children watch around 3 to 4 hours of television each day. This is around 21 hours weekly, 90 hours monthly, and 1095 hours yearly (which is almost one month and half of each year of their lives continuously). That's only the minimum basic figures, since many parents highlight that their children's television viewership increases dramatically on weekends, holidays, and vacations! Noting that this is not just some fun entertainment time, but rather it's thoughts, ideas, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors being absorbed by the child, becoming a huge influence on their mental, physical and psychological development, and affecting their entire life! Furthermore, research results also indicate the high need and demand for media regulations to protect children from harmful media and encourage high standard production of more positive alternatives, specially designed for Egyptian Children serving their needs and interests at different age groups.

This research focuses on:

- General understanding of the mental, physical and psychological developments of a child
- Positive and negative impacts of media on children's development and behavior
- Overview on international policies in different countries in regard to children and media
- Understanding the situation in Egypt:
  - A brief overview on the History of Child programming and policies
  - The current situation
    - What Egyptian children watch, reasons behind their preference, how it affects them, parent's concerns, what is needed, etc.
    - Child expert's opinion on current media content available for children to watch and its possible impact on their physical, psychological, and mental health, positively or negatively.
    - Views of Egyptian media professionals and academics on various issues regarding current media content and the need for regulation
- Suggested Policies to:
  - A. Protect children from harmful media content.
  - B. Promote positive media use and encourage the production of high quality local Egyptian child programming targeting different age groups.

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# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Early childhood is an extremely important and critical stage in life. According to a report by the World Health Organization (2007, p.7), ECD - Early Child Development - is considered the most important phase of the whole lifespan. The report explains that what happens to a child during those early years physically, socially, emotionally, cognitively and even linguistically can impact their “developmental trajectory” as well as their whole life. This means that such impact will strongly influence their mental, physical and psychological development on the long term. In return, affecting their education, behavior and over all well being. Hence, providing a healthy environment for children to grow and nourish in is crucial not only to raise healthy children, but also to invest in the future of homelands, societies, and maybe... Change the whole world.

Now a day, with constant technological outbreaks, media is becoming more and more accessible to a larger number of people worldwide. While increasingly occupying a larger portion of their lives and their children’s environment, media in some cases, is even considered a main source of information. If media can take such an integral role in our lives and have such a great influence on us as adults, we must be concerned, considering how it can and is shaping and altering our children’s perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors.

Today, the majority of children worldwide have easy access to media content at all times, regardless of their age. It is now commonly known that the time children spend in this digital world is not only fun entertainment time. Rather, the content they absorb from media during this critical stage of their life remarkably influences their mental, physical and psychological development. This later ripens to become their thoughts, ideas, beliefs, decisions, attitudes, and behaviors, while affecting and shaping their entire life!

## **MEDIA REGULATORY AUTHORITIES WORLDWIDE**

Noting the great influence of media, many countries established exclusive regulation authorities to regulate television, broadcast and media. Not only as a mean to reduce and/or eliminate some of the possible negative impacts, but also promote the production of more positive alternatives.

The International Television Expert Group website highlights that there are over 75 listed entities and regulatory bodies worldwide (National Media Regulation Authorities. (n.d)). Yet, only few entities are considerably affective.

Despite some criticism over efficiency, some of the actively functioning regulatory bodies around the world include:

- The Federal Communication Commission (FCC) in the United States
- OFCOM in the United Kingdom
- The AVMS in Europe
- The Medienanstalten in Germany which consists of 14 media state authorities.
- Communication Authority in the Asian Region
- The Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) in Malaysia

Surprisingly some countries in Africa have also adapted policies close to those found in more developed countries. The two main broadcasting authorities in Africa include:

- The Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA)
- The Uganda Communications Commission (UCC)

While in 2016, The Supreme Council for Media Regulation (SCMR) was established in Egypt, its role and efficiency has been a matter of debate, that will be discussed later in this research.

## **SELF REGULATION**

In countries where media content providers are voluntarily accountable to audience and society, applying self-regulation, there is less need for regulation. Unfortunately, that's not the case in most countries, especially the developing countries.



Yet, despite South Africa and Uganda being among the developing countries, they set a good example in dealing with Media Regulations, considering it of high importance as part of their developmental plan. Unfortunately, many other countries remain laid back on taking media regulation and its implementation seriously unless it has to do with political issues. Among those countries stand many Arab countries including Egypt.

On the other hand, some countries such as Morocco and Pakistan, may have a media regulatory body or agency, yet they set codes / regulations that are too general or vague to accommodate other purposes rather than consumer protection. While other countries have a very poor implementation of the rules and regulations or may not even have any regulations at all – such as the case in Egypt. In such cases, regulation, especially in relation to the protection of minors, is often necessary when media does not choose to be accountable.

## **FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION**

Some oppositional arguments against Media Regulation is concerned with freedom of speech. This is mainly due to the fact that Media Regulation started off as early as means of communication were introduced. Back then, such regulations were mainly a way to serve political interests and agendas. Yet, when it comes to the implementation of Media regulations and guidance in favor of public interest as well as the protection and embitterment of vulnerable audience like children, governmental force is essential and required. This is in order to give authorization to take effective actions or at least set the stepping-stone.

## **SHIFTING THE FOCUS**

Many research over the years studied and proved the various negative impacts of media specifically on children. However, in the past couple of years, with media becoming such an indispensable part of everyday life for both adults and children, research started shifting focus on the possibility of using this significant impact of media to positively influence children's development. Surprisingly, this includes their cognition and learning! This has led several countries to try and make use of this incredibly powerful medium and promoting its use for development. So between negative influence and positive benefits, there is a thin line that still needs more research.

## **THE CASE IN THE ARAB WORLD AND EGYPT**

Following the introduction of television and the two most prominent satellites in the Arab world – Nilesat and Arabsat - the number of satellite channels in the Arab world nearly tripled during the years 2004 and 2007 reaching more than 250 satellite TV channels (PBS, Dishing Democracy, 2007).

In November 2013, Nilesat – the Egyptian launched Satellite - alone broadcasted around 700 TV channels and over 100 digital radio channels. With nearly 76% free to air TV channels. With steadily growing viewership in the MENA region, expanding from 11 million households in 2003 to more than 43 million households in 2013 with viewership estimations of about 95 % of the households in the MENA region (Nilesat, 2014).

With around 540 free-to-air channels in the region, steadily increasing annually, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and UAE dominate the three major markets hosting almost half of the free to air channels broadcasted in the Arab world. Egypt leading the market with 18% followed by Saudi Arabia 17% and UAE 14% (Arab Media Outlook 2011-2015).

Among its fellow Arab countries, Egypt has many distinctive features. As a major regional media hub, Egypt is considered among the largest producers and consumers of content. It has one of the region's oldest media zones, the Egyptian Media Production City, launched in 1997 with the goal of producing and promoting media across all platforms. But with a population of over 90 million, ranking the most populous country in the Arab region, and a literacy rate close to 71% (Arab Media Outlook 2011-2015) such enormous variety of content exposure can surely create a hazard. Therefore, in addition to being the main Arab host for an enormous amount of content diversity, Egypt is also hosting enormous social responsibility.

Following the political uprisings in Egypt, a noticeable increase in the number of TV channels broadcasted from Cairo took place. This was mainly due to the liberalized licensing process in Egypt during that time. In the first six-month of 2011 alone, 16 new Egyptian channels were licensed to broadcast in the country (Arab Media Outlook 2011-2015).

That massive growth of alternative variety can surely sounds promising towards meeting different tastes and needs. In fact, it can actually be very intimidating. Such diversity is targeted at a public that is not on a high literacy level due to social, educational, financial, or age factors. Hence, there is a very low possibility of them legitimately comprehending how each content may be affecting them in order to decide what to watch and what not to watch, especially minors.

## **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM IN EGYPT**

In 2017, Egypt's population was estimated to be 94.8 million, with an annual growth rate of around 2%. Being one of the most populated country in the Middle East and Africa, almost 40% of the Egyptian population consists of children under the age of 18. (UNICEF, 2018)

According to UNICEF's latest report in 2018, almost all house holds in Egypt own a television set with around 98%. A 2017 analysis of television viewing habits indicates the significant amount of time Egyptians spend watching television. Results suggest that around 40% of people watch up to 4 hours of television per day. (UNICEF, 2018)

Initial results of this research also suggests that many Egyptian children watch around 3 – 4 hours of television each day, this is around 21 hours weekly, 90 hours monthly, and 1095 hours yearly (which is almost one month and half of each year of their lives). Those are only minimum basic figures. Many parents even state that their children's television viewership increases dramatically on weekends, holidays, and vacations!

With over a quarter of the population being illiterate, this is not only considered entertainment time, but TV is also considered a main source of information (UNICEF, 2018). The latest 2018 report by UNICEF also indicates that the number of Egyptians using the internet has recorded unique growth from 450,000 internet users in December 2000 to 34.8 million in June 2016!

Facebook being the most popular, with access of approximately 32 million users in Egypt, WhatsApp 58 % and YouTube 49%.

Be it in language or behavior, most of the media content provided now a days contain extreme violence, obscenity and sexuality. This is not only available to the public, but worst of all, it became easily accessible to our children. Unfortunately, due to lack of quality local children programing in Egypt, with parents considering the media platform as a new "nanny", such negative content along with foreign children programing – which has its various issues - becomes the only "available option" for our children to watch, learn from, and imitate. This is in addition to the lack of media policies for children to at least decrease some of the harm children may be subjected due during media interaction. Such technological advancement and availability, made all media content highly accessible for Children all around the world.

This led many countries to enforce laws and regulations to limit the amount of harmful content children may be exposed to. In addition, promoting the production of content that suits their age needs. Unfortunately, that is not the case in all regions, including the Middle East. Children in Egypt are being submerged in a wide range of harmful media content due to the lack of high standard local alternatives designed for each age group, in addition to a lack of media regulations to protect them. Most of the Egyptian television and media, like others, screen various content not suitable for children available to watch at all times on all channels. Hence, it is highly essential to enforce Media regulations and policies to protect children from harmful content, and promote the local production of high quality developmental content suitable for their age needs.

## **RESEARCH FOCUS OVERVIEW**

- **EARLY CHILDHOOD: AN IMPORTANT FOUNDATION FOR DEVELOPMENT:**  
A general understanding of the mental, physical and psychological development of children
- **GENERAL UNDERSTANDING OF MEDIA IMPACT**
- **CHILDREN AND MEDIA:**
  - a. **NEGATIVE MEDIA IMPACT ON CHILDREN**
  - b. **POSITIVE MEDIA IMPACT ON CHILDREN**  
**MEDIA AND TELEVISION AS AN EDUCATIONAL TOOL**
- **INTERNATIONAL MEDIA POLICIES FOR CHILDREN**
- **THE SITUATION IN EGYPT:**
  - a. Brief overview on the history of Child programming and Policies in Egyptian
  - b. The current situation in Egypt
    - i. What children watch, why it appeals to them, what they learn, behavioral changes, parental concerns, etc.
    - ii. Views of child experts on the impact of such content
    - iii. Views of Media professionals and academics on current media and the need for regulation
- **SUGGESTED POLICIES TO:**
  - 1. Protect children from harmful media content.
  - 2. Using media for positive development through the promotion of local Egyptian high quality programing targeting different age groups.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

# **SECTION (1)**

## **EARLY CHILDHOOD**

### **AN IMPORTANT FOUNDATION**

Children do not only process information differently than adults, but they even process information differently at each age group or developmental stage [Applied Developmental Psychology 24, 2003]. In the field of child development, the terms “Stages” or “Periods” are often used to express the time span where certain developments are expected to take place in a specific sequence. (Farrell, 2009, p.170)

In order to understand how children process media messages, and how their interaction with media at different stages may impact their development, understanding children’s developmental changes become a fundamental focus that needs to be considered. Hence, this section will provide a general understanding for 3 major developmental areas that are crucial during early Childhood with a power to impact a person’s whole life. This includes Physical, Psychological, and Cognitive development. Having a better understanding of those developmental areas will later aid in linking how media interaction and content may impact each age group Mentally, Physically and Psychologically. In addition to influencing character and behavior both positively and negatively.

This chapter may be informative and useful for educators, media study researchers, as well as media content creators for children. Those who may be interested in the effects of media on children but don’t have developmental psychology background.

## **A. DEFINING DEVELOPMENT**

Generally, development is the process of growth and maturity of a child physically as well as cognitively, emotionally, socially, intellectually and linguistically. [Farrell, M. (2009) p.169]

Although developmental progress may vary from one child to another, there are some general expectations for children's typical progress and development. Farell (2009) suggests that even if this generalization may not be particularly accurate on every child, it can still be considered as an indicator whether the child is progressing normally or experiencing any difficulties. Any delay or lack of progress in these generalizations may suggest that the child may have a problem that needs to be dealt with in a timely manner before intensifying into later difficulties.

Farell explains that children experiencing a “*Developmental Delay*” may progress in a typical order yet slower than other children or than typically expected. While with children suffering a lack of progress or “*Developmental Difference*”, development does not occur in its usual sequence, or worse, does not occur at all [Farrell, M. (2009) p.170/p.171]

According to Sayre, R. K. (2015), it has been evident that by the time children enter primary school significant development gaps are present between each child and broaden with time.

## **B. IMPORTANCE OF EARLY CHILD DEVELOPMENT (ECD)**

Children are the future of the world, and any investment in them during their early fundamental years of development is essential, not only for them to live a better life, but to be able to develop a better society.

*“The effects of poor development in early childhood have life-long consequences, setting children on a lower trajectory and adversely impacting a country's social and economic development.” (Sayre, R. K., 2015, p. 18)*

Young, Mary Eming (2002) along with many other scholars agree that the early years of childhood are crucially important as they provide the foundation for a whole life ahead. According to Sayre, R. K. (2015) Early Childhood Development (ECD) refers to the growth and development from the period a child is conceived to 83 months or till the age of seven. That's approximately from pregnancy to primary school.

As mentioned earlier, ECD commonly address the basic needs of children, which mainly concern health, nutrition, cognitive, linguistic as well as social-emotional development. This is due to the fact that such needs are evidently essential during the early years of childhood.

Not only do they form a base for future learning, good health and well-being, but also shape the ability to later work with others in adulthood. Shonkoff et al. (2012) highlights that ECD – especially cognitive development – is a multidimensional and sequential process, where the progress in one area has the power to impact the development of other areas (Sayre, R. K., 2015). This means that early stimulation or desertion of one developmental area has the possibility to impact other areas as well. Sayre, R. K. (2015) defines “early stimulation” as an opportunity for young children to interact with and learn from caring adults about the surrounding environment at an early age (0-24 months).

To highlight such fundamental importance of investing in ECD, Sayre, R. K. (2015) states that the World Bank has been actively supporting Early Childhood Development (ECD) not only based on governmental demand, but also due to the evident future impact of such investment on children, families as well as the whole society.

Sayre adds that in 13 years (from 2001 – 2013), the World Bank has invested 3.3 billion dollars on ECD in three main human development (HD) areas. The first education (ED). Second is health, nutrition and population (HNP). Third, social protection and labor (SP).

A growing body of literature also discuss the significantly high returns of investment made in those early childhood years, compared to investments made later in life. It became notably evident that potential returns far exceed costs. Investments in ECD are essential for children to reach their highest potential and benefit their societies and countries. This can be considered a cost-effective strategy to promote a healthy productive population. From an economic perspective, Naudeau et al. (2011) add that such investments even offer a cost-efficient way to produce capable well trained workforce, leading to better outcomes (Sayre, R. K., 2015).



## **C. FOUR MAIN AREAS OF DEVELOPMENT**

There are various fields in development, yet Naudeau et al. (2011) as well as Vegas and Santibáñez (2010) highlight four key domains which need to be addressed mainly for child development intervention. This includes: cognitive development, linguistic development, socio-emotional development, and physical well-being and growth (Sayre, R. K., 2015).

For the purpose of this research, we only focus on 3 main areas of development. This includes, Physical, Cognitive/Mental, and psychological / Socio-emotional development of children. Including Linguistic Development within the cognitive development section.

### **1. PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT:**

In all human beings, physical maturation occurs in a sequential order, where certain levels of physical maturation have to be reached before particular skills can be learned, Farrell (2009) calls this the “idea of readiness”. Yet, the rate of reaching different milestones can vary from one child to another. [Cherry, K. (n.d.). p.2], [Luxem & christopherson, 1994] retrieved from [Farrell, 2009, p.170]. Although physical, cognitive, and linguistic developmental milestones may vary from one child to the other, there are some general estimations that indicate normal development rate.

UNICEF (2011) suggest that the stage from 0 to 6 month, child development could be stimulated by offering children different object variety that contain various shapes, colors, and textures to play with. They also suggest that during this period, children need to be engaged in activities with lots of interaction for development, by talking or singing to them, clapping, playing peek-a-boo and hiding games. They also highlight the importance of showing interest in the babies responses, responding to their vocalizations, as well as encouraging their participation in the interactions.

During the period from 6 to 12 month, UNICEF (2011) asserts the importance to continue stimulation for child development. Recommending using bright colors to stimulate their interest, arranging space to allow them to crawl, roll, and move towards objects or people they are interested in. In addition, interacting with children during this stage is also important. UNICEF (2011) suggests doing so through pictures, books, stories, puppets or toys and sometimes encouraging infants to just enjoy quiet moments, as well as provide them opportunities to play alone, adding that a baby’s temperament influences how they respond to their environment.

It continues to be important to further enhance their growth and development by making such activities part of their daily routines (UNICEF, 2011). It is recommended to support their language development at this age by repeating words, identifying objects, asking questions, and reading with them. All of the above UNICEF suggestions highlight the importance of human interaction with infants for positive development.

The American Psychological Association (APA) explains that mental health has a complex interactive relationship with physical health and ability to succeed generally in life (American Psychological Association, n.d). Physical and mental health affect how we think, feel and act on the inside out.

## **2. COGNITIVE (MENTAL) DEVELOPMENT:**

Cognitive development is considered one of the most important concentrations in the field of child development, particularly during the first three years of life. This becomes an essential part of a person's overall health throughout their whole lifespan. This is due to the fact that a Childs' brain makes billions and trillions of connections while gathering information from every source to learn during those early years. During childhood the brain forms fundamental connections for learning. The connections made during childhood are said to be double the connections made as an adult.

Farrell (2009) defines that Cognitive development mainly includes the development of attention, memory, learning, language, concepts and reasoning. Highlighting that the interaction of language and thought are considered important in cognitive development. Adding that cognitive or intellectual development was seen in terms of gradual and progressive adaptations for which the child was naturally prepared, leading to adult reasoning. (Farrell, M., 2009, p169, p.178)

In cognitive development, there is strive for adaptation in which schemas represent to the child an external reality in which he can operate. The motivation to learn comes from the gap between an existing schema and incoming information, which requires the child to 'accommodate' it. (Farrell, M., 2009, p.172)

Assimilation and accommodation are the mechanisms of "equilibration" – a self-regulatory process enabling external experience to be incorporated into internal structures. (Farrell, M. (2009) p.172) from (Gallagher and Reid, 1981, p.233)

*"A baby's tiny brain is like a flower... if it's stressed, it welts... if nourished, it blooms"*

Research has indicated a major connection between cognitive development and learning. Hence, a child's cognitive development may largely impact their ability to learn. Farrell (2009) suggests that neuroscience connectionist modeling may provide a framework that provides a better understanding on how cognitive development can impact learning. (Farrell, 2009, p.171)

## **MAIN MENTAL / COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENTS**

According to Piaget "sensorimotor period" mental development in the first two years of life is vital as the child constructs cognitive substructures and affective reactions which form the basis for later perceptual, cognitive and emotional development. In addition, Intelligence developed in that period succeeds in solving many "problems of action", for example, reaching for hidden objects by constructing a system of 'action schemes' and organizing reality in terms of structure of space, time, and causality. (Farrell, M., 2009, p. 179); (Piaget, p.4)

Through 'assimilation', information about reality is treated or modified in order to become incorporated 'into structure of subject'. Each newly established connection is integrated into an existing schematic. (Farrell, M., 2009, p. 179); (Piaget, p.5)

From 4 to 10 months, Piaget suggests that intellect starts to develop with 'secondary circular reactions' involving repeating actions or behaviors while communicating with the world. For example, dropping the toy every time you give it back to them. (Farrell, M., 2009, p. 180)

According to Piaget, from 10 to 12 months, the child enters the fourth stage of cognitive development, with complete acts of practical intelligence. The baby can now coordinate several actions to achieve a goal. Yet, the means used are driven only from known schemes of assimilation. (Farrell, M., 2009, p. 180) ; (Piaget, p.11)

Around 12 till 18 months, Piaget states that's when a child enters the "Tertiary circular reaction" stage. A baby can now use trial and error to see out comes of certain actions. For example, pulling a rug to reach a toy. In addition to start finding and discovering the relation between things (Farrell, M., 2009, p. 180).

Approximately around 18 months up till 2 years of age, a child develops cognitive representations of actions and their outcomes in a stage Piaget calls “interiorisation of schemes”. That’s when a child can find new means by external and physical groping, trial and error, as well as “internalized combination” leading to sudden comprehension. For example, if a child tries to open a box by physically investigating the box and fails, they could stop, examine situation carefully and suddenly slip his finger into the crack, succeeding to open the box. (Farrell, M., 2009, p. 180); (Piaget, p.11,12) This stage Piaget described as marking the beginning of conceptual thought.

The Symbolic Function, appears in around age of 2, involving the ability to represent object, event or conceptual scheme. For example, language, mental image, or a representative gesture. (Farrell, M. (2009) p.183); (Piaget, p.51) like when a parent looks at a child a certain way and the child understands that this look means that they are doing something wrong. Or It may also include more complex manifestations of symbolic function such as deferred imitation, symbolic play, drawing, mental images, and image memories and language. (Farrell, M. (2009) p.183); (Piaget, p.91) An early indication of the symbolic function appears to be deferred imitation that starts after the disappearance of the model’. (Farrell, M., 2009, p.183)

## **IMITATION**

Imitation can start at a very early age. In sensorimotor imitation, the child begins by imitating little things such as a hand movement as it happens, and may do it again later alone as well. Piaget and Inhelder cite that a 16-month-old (1.4 Years) child imitates the action of an angry playmate several hours after the playmate left. Suggesting early imitative gesture can occur. (Farrell, M., 2009, p.183); (Piaget, p.53)

## **LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION:**

The first form of communications babies naturally know is crying, cooing, facial expression and body language. These initial communication skills are known as an early form of expressive skills. Later on, they start developing receptive and expressive skills. Receptive skills refer to the ability to receive and understand messages from other people. While expressive skills provide the ability to deliver a message through sounds, speech, sign, and writing.

To improve a child's communication and linguistic skills, it is recommended to often talk, smile, play and read to babies to help their development in acquiring those skills as well as build a strong relationship with the child. This will also help them later on to achieve more successful results in school.

Language learning is considered one of the major cognitive miracles. With thousands of different languages around the world, babies are born with an exclusive capacity to learn any of them fluently, with a keen ability to hear even the slightest distinctions between sounds.

Neuroscientist Patricia K. Kuhl studied how babies at different stages respond to the sound of their native language and the sounds of a foreign language. In one experiment they recorded the changes happening to the brain while listening to 2 similar Chinese words that may sound similar to adults that are not Chinese. They start by one word (Chi) then along it changes to (Tchi). Results show that children up to 7 month respond to the change in words, although adults may not notice the word was even changed. By the time a baby reached 11 month, they stopped responding to the change in words, both words were now heard (Chi). Similar to how adults hear it. Professor Patricia explains that "by 11 month we are not perceiving reality" we are not responding to the real differences that exist in the sounds, but rather we are listening through the filters that developed earlier in life as we mapped the sound of our language through listening.

*"The brain is a mirror of the child's developmental experience"*

### **3. PSYCHOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT:**

Many people may think that a new born child or a young child may not understand what's going on around them. It was also often thought that they may not be influenced much by their surrounding environment or what they may see on television. Yet, this common misconception is far from reality as children do create deep psychological connections even as newborns. Everything around them, even if they may not understand it, may create a large psychological impact on them subconsciously. Hence, the early years of childhood from pregnancy along with those first couple of years after birth play a major role in the psychological state of a person throughout his coming life ahead.

## **D. CHILD DEVELOPMENT THEORIES**

Farrell (2009) claims that according to Goswami (2008, p.374) contemporary theories of cognitive development have to collectively acknowledge social influences, biological aspects and constraints, in addition to knowledge construction (Farrell, 2009, p.171). Two of the well-known Developmental Theories include Piaget Cognitive Development Theory as well as Vygotsky Theory of Development.

### **I. PIAGET COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT THEORY:**

Piaget (1896 – 1980) was considered one of the most influential scholars in the area of developmental psychology, mainly interested in the “how we come to know” [Huitt, W. & Hummel, J. (2003)]. Believing that children think differently than adults, and their cognition develops as they grow, Piaget developed a stage related theory for cognitive (especially logical) development. (Farrell, M. (2009) p.172) from (Piaget and Inhelder, 1966/1969; Piaget, 1970). As mentioned earlier, his theory includes four main stages.

According to Piaget, children ages 0 to 2 are in the “Sensorimotor stage”. That’s where they gather information about the world around them through their senses (sights, taste, smell, hearing, touch). They discover how to use and move their bodies, and get the idea of object permanence.

Next from the age 2 to 7 comes the Pre-Operational Stage. At this stage, children may start developing or engaging in pretend play, and understand the concept of symbols. Piaget suggests that children during this stage are mainly ego centric, not understanding that others may have a different opinion or view other than what they know or see. For example, early at that stage, if they can’t see you, then you can’t see them idea. Another example, they could sit in front of the television and not understand that you can’t see because they can see.

Following that is the Concrete Operational Stage, starting at age 7 till 11. Children can now do concrete mental operations. This includes adding and subtracting mathematical operations. In addition to understanding, for example, that two beakers that look different could still have same amount of liquid. Before the concrete operational stage, they will most probably say the container that contains higher level of liquid contains more.

Last but not least, the Formal Operational Stage at age 11, 12 and above. At this stage, children can now reason abstract concepts. They now have the ability to think about action consequences, and reasoning out what might occur. This is when sophisticated moral reasoning starts to take place like adults and continues to develop over time.

#### **ARGUMENTS ON PIAGET'S THEORY:**

First of all, according to Donaldson (1978), Farrell (2009) states that some young children can reason at a more advanced level than what Piaget had been able to show (P.177). Farrell also suggests – according to Goswami (1998) – that during Piaget's time, there was not enough evidence available on the capacity of newborn infants for imitating and remembering.

Secondly, Farrell also claims that although Piaget focused on the interaction between children and the environment, yet there hasn't been sufficient attention given to the potential of children's environmental modification to contribute in enhancing development. Adding that the modern application of Piaget's ideas shows the importance of structuring the environment to encourage such development, mainly cognitive (Farrell, M. (2009) p. 178). Hence, this indicates that media - considered an external influence - may contribute in impacting children at a very early age either positively or negatively. Suggesting that if media used with caution can be used to aid in positive child development and learning at a very early stage.

#### **II. VYGOTSKY THEORY OF DEVELOPMENT:**

Like Piaget, Vygotsky is also considered one of the important developmental psychology scholars of his time. Vygotsky's theory mainly concerns the importance of social and cultural influences, language, and role of adults in mediating cultural learning (Farrell, 2009, p.171]. He also emphasizes the importance of a child interacting with others – who are more advanced thinkers than he is – in helping intellectual development (Farrell, 2009, p.178) from (Vygotsky, [various dates; 1978]). Again this highlights or indicates how media can be used as a tool to induce positive development for children or vice versa.

## **E. DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES / MILESTONES**

“Milestones” is a commonly used terminology in the field of child development. Farrell (2009) explains that they are indicators of progress, which a child developing normally is expected to typically reach within a certain range of time - an average age and age range for the development of a certain skill (Farrell, M. (2009) p.171). Although it's important to note that not all children develop at the same rate, but there is an average rate where children normally develop, other wise may indicate a need for professional consultation.

Piaget has put together 4 main stages children go through from the day they are born till they reach the age of 12 years and up. In this section we will briefly discuss Piaget developmental stages along with a more in depth look on some of the main developmental milestones occurring at different age groups. This shall provide a general overlook at developments occurring within these stages to help us better understand how Media may be impacting children's development. In addition, indicating how we can protect children from content that may have a negative impact on any aspect of their development and how we can use media for positive child development.

### **“SENSORIMOTOR STAGE”**

(APPROXIMATELY AGE 0 – 2)

Many Child development experts – including researchers, pediatrics, psychologists, and educators - stress on the importance of early childhood for ones over all development physically, mentally, and psychologically, especially during the first two years after birth.

According to Piaget, the Sensorimotor coordination is the Theme of the sensorimotor stage. It is the coordination of movement and sense of vision, hearing, touch, smell, and taste. (Farrell, M. (2009) p.186)

Babies develop from exhibiting reflex survival behaviors such as sucking and grasping to forming a very basic notion of causality and their role in making things happen (Farrell, M. (2009) p.173) from (Piaget and Inhelder, 1966/1969, p. 3-27).

Sensorimotor assimilation contributes in making up a substructure for future operations of thought. Intelligence in this stage contributes in organizing reality including “object, space, time, and causality”. For example, if an item was covered, a baby 5 – 7 month will think that it no longer exists.



At the age of 2 a child starts having a better understanding of the displacement concept an item can be relocated to another spot than where it was. (Farrell, M. , 2009, p.181). It is argued that sensorimotor cognition / knowledge being augmented by further experience is important – either through action or language (Farrell, M. , 2009, p.174). The Sensorimotor development underpins later development in typically developing children. (Farrell, M. (2009) p.183)

Piaget divides the first 2 years of a child – (sensorimotor stage) – into six main stages. First, “Functional Assimilation” stage from 0 – 4 weeks, where the child attains certain required reflexes important for him mainly for survival, such as feeding. Next in the “Generalized Assimilation” stage, the baby mainly generalizes the Functional assimilation on other objects, like sucking on any object that comes near his mouth, mistaking it for food, until being able to distinguish the difference later (Farrell, M. (2009) p. 179). “Cognitive substructures” constructed by the child at that time form a basis for subsequent perceptive and intellectual development. (Farrell, M. (2009) p.173) from (Ibid, p.3)

Logical development may also depend on children’s ability to reflect meta-cognitively on their knowledge. In addition, the extent to which a child can inhibit competing knowledge that may interfere with applying logic (Farrell, M., 2009, p.174) from (Goswami, 2008, p.386).

Yet, it is argued that this stage, where infants develop cognitive representations, has been demonstrated to happen much earlier than what Piaget showed. Goswami (2008) chapters 1 and 2 summarize some of these evidence (Farrell, M., 2009, p.177).

In addition, recent evidence from neuroimaging studies also indicate that cognitive representations and object permanence also occur at a much earlier age than Piaget demonstrated (Farrell, M., 2009, p.181); (Goswami, 2008, p.377).

## **“PRE-OPERATIONAL STAGE”**

(APPROXIMATELY AGE 2 - 7)

When Children develop physically, they become fully mobile and more competent communicators. Yet, their thinking is still limited by egocentricity – where a child’s judgments are based on sensory evidence. At that stage, according to Piaget, they still lack logic, focusing on one aspect to exclusion of others. For example, the Beaker Experiment by Piaget. During this experiment, researchers got two different shaped beakers with same amount of liquid, one is longer and one is wider.

The child may be able to relate that they have same amount of liquid if the containers looked the same. Yet, in this case, most children thought the longer container had more liquid as its higher in level than the other one. This indicates that during this stage, children still have inability to recognize that matter maintains or “conserves” its volume even in different forms (Farrell, M. (2009) p.173) from (Ibid, p.128).

### **“CONCRETE OPERATIONAL STAGE”**

(APPROXIMATELY AGE 7 - 11)

This stage is where Complex and systematic mental problem solving (in which mental representations are used) can take place in relation to concrete and actual events. For example, a child may know Peter has a bigger garden than David, and David’s garden is bigger than Jenny’s. By that stage, a child has the ability to mentally picture each garden and recognize that Jenny has the smallest garden. (Farrell, M. (2009) p.173).

### **“FORMAL OPERATIONAL STAGE”**

(APPROXIMATELY AGE 11 – 12+)

By that age, Concrete operations are structured and subordinated to new structures enabling the child to reason hypothetically (Farrell, M. (2009) p.173) from (Ibid, p.152). The child becomes able to use the form of logical systems to create and test hypotheses about real or imagined events. In addition, in a scientific task for instance, a child will be able to work out the rule relating weight and distance from the center of the fulcrum using a balance scale.

## **F. FACTORS INFLUENCING CHILD DEVELOPMENT**

During early childhood, children are like sponges, absorbing every thing that surrounds them, from information all the way to habits, behaviors, attitudes and even how they should react in a given situation. It is during those early years of life when we start building our perception and understanding of life, which we build upon through out our existence.

Among other things including genetics or other biological factors, external environment plays a major role in child development acting as a main influential factor controlling what that child may grow up to be as an adult.

### **EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT VS CHILD DEVELOPMENT**

As stated earlier, external environment plays an important role in a child's learning process. This process of adaptation involves a common interaction between the child and his environment, with the knowledge that a child can 'assimilate' those features of the environment.

The impact of the surrounding environment can even influence an unborn child. Ward L. (2007) asserts that as early as 17 weeks after conception, an unborn child may suffer harmful effects on his brain development if the mother is experiencing stress. Psychology expert Kendra Cherry asserts the enormous range of influences that impact children's development not only through genetics but through experiences as well. Cherry states that during early childhood, infants enter the world with limited range of skills and abilities, and with time, they experience 'remarkable' physical, cognitive, social, and emotional developments. (Cherry, K. (n.d.). p.1)

The environment also acts upon the child's cognitive structures ('schemas') by coming up with new features requiring the cognitive structures to change to 'accommodate' these features. Assimilation concerns interpretation, while accommodation has to do with the adaptation of cognitive schemes (general concepts). For example, a baby may explore a ball that is soft and pliant and assimilate its properties, later if he sees a similar looking ball may be manipulated by it at first but when he realizes it turns out to be solid or firm, will accommodate these features as well. As a child grows up the brain becomes more complex with more specializations created.

The first three years of a children's life are considered a critical stage for over all development especially cognitive development and brain growth.

Psychologist Dr. Aric Sigman supports this information in a review of the evidence in the Archives of Disease in Childhood, adding that during this time babies and small children need to have face-to-face interaction with their parents rather than sitting in front of a screen. (Boseley S., 2012)

Farrell (2009) also supports the view that externalities influence development. Adding as an example assumption that a child raised in a materially, culturally and linguistically impoverished home environment is unlikely to progress as well as one in a setting that is richer in these areas (Farrell, M. (2009) p.170).

According to Piaget's theory, 'assimilations' during early years of development build schemas in child's cognition on how things are or should be. Farrell, M. (2009) highlights the importance of these early Sensory experiences highlighting that it can provide conceptual learning opportunities as well as help the child *better understand surroundings, daily activities and everyday experiences* (Farrell, M. (2009) p.186); (Carpenter, 1994).

External environment may include things related to parents or family such as their background, education, culture, thoughts, believes, parenting methods. Or it may include society, culture, media, friends, school and all other aspects of life that may provide any "assimilations" that build "schemas" in a child's mind.

#### **USE OF ENVIORNMENT IN DEVELOPMENT**

By now we can conclude that external environment, along with other aspects in a child's life, play a fundamentally important role in children's development. Typical ways of responding to environment is associated with the different sequential stages of cognitive development. These stages are believed to be universal and invariable as they determined by maturational factors (Farrell, 2009, p.172). A Childs' development that is more rapid than the normal age ranges (according to typical developmental stages), suggests the importance of the environment in stimulating development and that the influence of language on cognitive development may be underestimated (Farrell, M. (2009) p.176). Farrell, M. (2009) also suggests that the language used and how the child perceives what is being requested of him influences outcomes (p.177).

The surrounding environment and the child's engagement and repeated experience with it largely influences their early development. Every surrounding environmental exposure / interaction contributes in a child development in one-way or another.

Hence, sitting in front of Television or digital media - as it becomes part of the external environment that captures a child's full attention - can be highly influential. As a matter of fact, engaging with media more often than engaging in real life activities may create an unrealistic environment for the child, in addition to eliminating or reducing fundamental sensory experience with real life which may influence the child's overall development.

On the other hand, if used wisely, media can be used as a positively developmental environment for a child. Same concept applies to all other surrounding environment for the child. This includes family, friends, society, etc. We need to create and surround children with a fully coordinated environment aiming at the same goal of building physically, mentally and psychologically healthy children that grow up to be fully healthy adults creating a more productive, developed, stable society.

What we do know suggests that the physical environment experienced by children impacts their cognitive and socio-emotional development across the lifespan, from the prenatal period through adulthood. The development of interventions to improve the physical environments experienced by children across the globe is thus warranted. Interventions would also offer tremendous research opportunities to examine how environmental improvements can change developmental trajectories.

## **SECTION (2)**

### **MEDIA IMPACT**

#### **GENERAL INFLUENCE**

*\*Media stands for all Audio/Visual media content and mediums*

The power of media and television to impact and influence our thoughts, behaviors, attitudes and whole life is no news. This topic gained high popularity and interest of many researchers to further understand the association between media and its possible impact on cultural, social, cognitive, psychological and behavioral issues. Examples include body image, obesity, violence, behavioral change, values, and beliefs. Many researches and scholars discuss the evident influence and impact of media on people especially children and youth.

- **MEDIA FORMS**

#### **A. TELEVISION**

Despite the digital media expansion, Television remains of massive appeal worldwide. According to the Open Society Institute / EU Monitoring and Advocacy Program (2005), Television viewership has been rising over the past 10 years, with the average viewership in Europe reaching more than 3 hours daily in 2003.

An article by the General Egyptian Book Organization (GEBO) states that Television, like other visual media forms available nowadays, is considered one of the forefront means influencing peoples lives. This is due to having the privilege of transmitting sound, image, motion, and color.

Like all other media forms, yet with farther history and wider audience, television has been a very influential media tool. Some studies on the nature of television influence on viewers explain that television scenes create impressions in viewers' minds (Alhamami, Hashem, 2015). Hence, instead of allowing them to come up with their own thoughts, it educes them with emotions that control their actions, instead of inciting the use of logical thinking. This concept can be generally applied to all audio visual media forms.

During the late 40, as early as TV was introduced in household environments, media content contributing in shaping peoples lives. Pecora, N. (2007) states that during that time in the US, TV contributed to family image or "how a family should be".

Explaining that during that period of war time, women were working instead of men. Yet, those women were encouraged to attain the family image presented in television programs back then, where the mother was in the kitchen, and the father at work. Such as that presented in the TV series aired at that time called “Father Knows Best”.

*“The daily lives of children and their families’ routines are now shaped by what they watch and when and how they interact with TV, digital tablets, smart phones, and social networks.” (Guernsey, L. 2014, p.1)*

Many researches affirm the affect television has on behavior - especially on children. Asserting that sustained television viewership was associated with behavioral outcomes (Mistry, K., Minkovitz, C., Strobino, D., & Borzekowski, D., 2007).

## **B. DIGITAL MEDIA**

In recent years, communication technology has been rapidly evolving. Creating more means of communication and a wider variety of media content. From regular television, to tablets, phones and computers, the digital media expansion has created an easy facilitated access to all media content around the world to everyone, even children. In addition to becoming heard and seen, now media has even become interactive. This has doubled its power to impact and influence, empowering its use to change, prevent, facilitate, reinforce, or reaffirm. Hence, we need to examine the changes in media use by children and teens, and understanding the impact behind it. Therefore, in addition to understanding behavioral risks of media use in early childhood, and how media use affects youths’ physical and mental health, we also need to assess all aspects of digital media use.

In addition, digital media and devices do not only have the ability to deliver messages and content, but also gather in-depth information about viewers, including their interests and activities. Such a large ocean of defined, categorized viewers creates the perfect environment for interested advertisers. Hence, now we also need to understand how advertisers reach children. In addition to the possible consequences and outcomes of this highly targeted advertising.

- **BETWEEN “EFFECT & EFFECTIVENESS”**

As mentioned earlier, media could be used to change, prevent, facilitate, reinforce, or reaffirm. Hence, we need to distinguish between the “Effect” and “Effectiveness” of Media. “Effects of media” refers to any intended or unintended consequences of mass media operations. While on the other hand, the “Effectiveness of media” is the ability to achieve given objectives (whether to attract large audience, or influence opinions and behavior in a defined way).

## **MEDIA EFFECTS**

Since the beginning of its existence, even through its early primitive forms, media has not been only used to inform, but also impact and influence. McQuail, (1979) states that up till the late 1930’s, especially in Europe and North America, media did not only have considerable power to shape opinions and beliefs, change habits of life and actively mold behavior, but also impose political systems even against resistance.

Nowadays, Media became part of people’s daily life, not only impacting their behavior, but also implies a physical and mental influence. Media content, in all forms including movies, programs, cartoons, music clips, ads, etc. are no longer a simple form of entertainment. Rather, it became a strongly influential power with the ability to induce good and evil.

The literature on media and television impact took several trends along the years. Starting with whether or not media can impact and influence, all the way to studying those various types of impact. Most research in that field proved that media was strongly influential. Yet, like anything else, media has its pros and cons. Numerous literature demonstrate the possible negative influence of media on different aspects of our lives. It could encourage negative habits and behaviors; which may even cause health problems. This includes, but not limited to, unconscious eating in front of television which may lead to obesity, addiction to shows, drop in education, negative imitation of celebrities, and promoting other negative behaviors such as smoking and drinking.

Yet, during the past several years, a new trend has emerged, challenging the proven fact that “Media is only harmful”. Several researchers focused their studies on the another side of media, exploring the possibility of using media as a constructive power. In addition, understanding how it can be used for a positive purpose. Results indicated that Media does have a potential for benefit, including positive learning, through educating people on new information in all different aspects of life around the world.



A 2011 case study by Diedrichs, P. C., & Lee, C., along with other studies mentioned in this research, provide evidence for negative as well as positive media influence. Such examples highlight that media impact is highly determined by its use

## **MAIN FACTORS DETERMINING MEDIA INFLUENCES AND ENGAGEMENT**

(General Control Variables for Media Influence)

### **1. AGE OF EXPOSURE:**

Cheng, S. (2010) along with other researchers, confirm that the effect of television on a child's development is likely to vary according to age as well as the media content they are exposed to. This is also known as the "neurodevelopmental stage" of the child at the time of exposure.

#### **EARLY TELEVISION EXPOSURE**

Professor Dimitri A. Christakis – Director of the Center for Child Health, Behavior and Development in Seattle - states that typical child before the age of 5 is watching about 4 hours and half of television per day. This is almost 40% of the hours they spend awake (Christakis, 2011).

Few studies have examined the impact of television viewership on infants under 3 years of age. However, theoretical and empirical evidence state that children under 30 months are at a higher risk of more adverse effects of media exposure. During this critical and fundamental stage of their development, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) suggests that children under the age of 2 should not be exposed to any kind of media at all. Explaining that such exposure may impact a Child's rapidly developing brain and cognitive development. The impact media could have on children's development during those fundamental early years of life, could lead to various health problems at a later age [Media and Children. (n.d.)].

Cheng, S. (2010) also support the AAP recommendations explaining that children under 2 years of age are more directly influenced by the amount of television exposure than the content it self, where as children older than 2 years of age may be more directly influenced by the content as they have already acquired more skills in comprehensive language.

Research results confirms that TV viewership at age 18 month [1 year 6 month] was associated with hyperactivity, inattention, and pro-social problems at a later age, although TV viewership at 30 month

[2 years 6 month] was not associated with the same issues. In addition, television and media viewership before age 3 was also associated with negative effects on reading comprehension scores (Cheng, S., 2010; Christakis, 2011).

These research results indicate that the age of viewership is an important factor to consider when studying Media impact on children. Although several researches confirm that media may be used as an educational tool for children's positive development for children above 3 years old, it is still not recommended during the early years of childhood, to avoid adverse negative effects on the child at a later age.

Children during early years of life benefit most from real life interactions. Research findings state that the more cognitive stimulation children received before the age of 3 reduced the chances of attention problems later in life. Explaining that each hour of cognitive stimulation has the possibility to reduce attention problems by almost 30% (Christakis, 2011). This includes for example, how often parents read to their child, sang to them, or even took them to the museum.

## **2. AUDIENCE BACKGROUND:**

The Content watched will have a different effect on each audience member based on several issues one of which includes their cultural, educational, religious backgrounds. In addition, the intensity of media usage also depends on various demographic and audience backgrounds.

Duursma, E. et al. (2017), examines 1464 dutch preteens screen media use and the potential differences according to child and family demographics. Research results highlight that children speaking other language and had parents born in another country were heavier media users. While children who had more books at home and read more, were more likely to be light media users. This suggests that children and their home characteristics plays an important role in children media engagement and literacy.

## **3. CONTENT:**

Media content can be identified as a major factor determining the impact of media on people, especially children. Since they are unable to fully differentiate between reality and fantasy, children are considered among the "vulnerable audience". Literature on media content focused their concern over a variety of issues.

Including but not limited to, Advertising and its effect on behavior and choices, Violence, Obscenity (Verbal and physical), sexual content, drugs and alcohol, as well as other behavioral and cognitive issues which will be discussed further in later chapters of this paper. In addition, there is also the good & evil concept, portraying that its ok to do what ever you want as long as you are a good person or if its for a good cause. For example, fighting with others who are considered bad or evil, even if that takes you to violence or other awful things.

*“Our children will inherit the world we have created and will learn from the models we have presented....  
Given the world we created and the models we have set, what is the future that we can expect for them?” (N.A)*

Obviously, media content is the main element influencing viewers. However, when studying Media influence, other factors must also be considered along with content. For instance, age of exposure as well as the duration of exposure are two of the factors impacting the outcome of media effect. Some argue that these two factors may have a major role in determining how media impacts viewers and the extent of such influence along with the content watched.

#### **4. FREQUENCY OF VIEWERSHIP & INTENSITY OF CONTENT:**

When it comes to childhood, Cheng, S. (2010) add that several studies suggest that heavy television exposure may have major effects on behavioral and social skills in early childhood. Whether the influence is positive or negative, this indication provides evidence affirming the importance to consider the amount of media exposure as well as the age of exposure “exposure timing”.

Chassiakos (2016) adds that excessive media use has also been associated with victimization, isolation, depression as well as internet addictions.

#### **5. VIEWERSHIP DURATION:**

(Duration average in relation to influence severity)

Researchers explain that before the age 3, each additional hour of viewership per day lead to a reduction in scores by 0.31 and 0.58 respectively (Cheng, S., 2010). Another research adds that each additional hour increases the chances of having attention problems by 10 % (Christakis, 2011). On the other hand, during the age 3 to 5, each hour of television viewership was associated with an increase in reading comprehension score by 0.51 (Cheng, S., 2010).

Viewership “habits” may vary from one place to another, according to local culture and each country’s circumstances. For example, according to Marius (2005), former East Germans suffering unemployment tend to watch more television than former West Germans who were not suffering the same problem. Marius also adds that large sports events, as well as major and important political events tend to draw a big number of audience as well (Marius, 2005).

## **6. QUALITY OF TIME SPENT WATCHING MEDIA CONTENT & FAMILY CONTROL / GUIDANCE (CO-VIEWING):**

In a Research published by the University of Michigan, 53% of households of 7th- to 12th-graders have no rules when watching TV. Several studies highlight how quality of time spent watching television or a specific media content generally, can influence how that content can impact behavior.

Various researches highlight the importance of co-viewing and parental guidance during children’s media exposure or interaction (Linebarger, D. L., & Vaala, S. E., 2010). Among others, Dr. Emma Raizman – a pediatrician at Cleveland Clinic – states the importance of parental guidance and control during media viewership of children. In addition to parental control options and devices, Dr. Raizman explains that when parents watch media with their children, they provide them with a better sense of the world, encourage less media viewership and increasing social interactions.

For example, researchers at the Seattle Children's Research Institute studied the effect of screen time and programming on nearly 600 families. Results show that kids, 3-5 years old, that watched with mom and dad less violent TV shows, ended up spending less time on violent programming up to a year later. They were also significantly less aggressive, exhibited more pro-social behavior, and watched more educational programming.

Chassiakos (2016) states that unmonitored media use can subject children and teens to online predators and making unwise decisions by sharing private information. This includes inappropriate texts, videos or photos.

### **QUALITY TIME WITH FAMILY**

Some people would prefer watching television rather than to spend time with family and friends. Others may adjust their work according to the times of their favorite show. People including children can get addicted to media, entertaining them selves in the wrong way.

# **SECTION (3)**

## **CHILDREN AND MEDIA**

### **GENERAL IMPACT**

Even though there were many researches, the 1<sup>st</sup> study on child and media dates back to 1911. This study was concerned with how a child's leisure time is affected by movies. Wartella and Reeves (1985) states that a review of preliminary data from 1900 to 1960 found that early media studies had an increasing emphasis on physical and emotional harm. In addition, they also focused on changes in children's knowledge, attitudes and behaviors (p.120). Furthermore, studies about violence, sex and advertising re-occurred (p.126).

In the past years, technological breakthrough provided even young children a more facilitated access to a wider variety of content that might not be suitable for their age. Generally, when a child is watching television, they are less likely to interact, move and explore. Farrell (2009) states, that when children less likely move and explore their surroundings, their ability to relate motor and sensory information is constrained. This is similar to what happens with a child with a motor disability (p.170). Hence, when children focus all their attention on Media/Television, they move less often and are considered partially impaired. Farrell adds that in such case, a child faces more implications than just motor development. They also face perceptual, cognitive, communication, social, and emotional development difficulties. (Lewis 2003, pp.153-191) retrieved from (Farrell 2009, p.170)

Many Child development experts – including researchers, pediatrics, psychologists, and educators – stress on the importance of early childhood for ones over all development physically, mentally, and psychologically, especially during the first two years after birth.

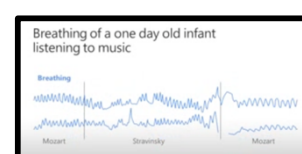
Dr. Dimitri Christakis – a pediatrician & a researcher – explains how this early stage is an extraordinary period for the brain growth of the child. He illustrates that the average brain of a newborn weighs 333 grams, and in the first 2 years of life it actually triples in size to around 999 grams – which is considered the highest brain growth period of human brain.

According to the American academy of pediatrics, children under the age of 2 should not be subjected to any television at all. Research results in the University of Michigan states that on average, children ages 2-5 spend 32 hours a week in front of a TV (watching television, DVDs, DVR and videos, and using a game console).

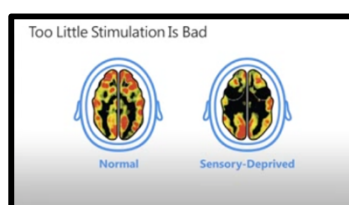
While kids aged 6-11 spend about 28 hours a week in front of the TV, 97% of it is live TV. Adding that 71% of 8 to 18 year-olds have a TV in their bedroom. Those kids spend an average of 1.5 hours more per day watching TV than kids without a TV in the bedroom.

As defined by Dr. Dimitri “The mind is fine-tuned to the world that babies inhabit”. For instance, any child born anywhere in the world can learn to speak any language fluently. Yet, if they are not exposed to certain sounds early on in the first few years of their life, they may learn to speak another language later but with a very low chance of sounding like a native speaker, sometimes even never. Dr. Dimitri gave another example of an experiment that was done on a one-day-old infant breathing pattern listening to music. The purpose of this study is to reflect how even a one-day experience, only using audio stimulation can have physiological reaction or general impact.

This is what the breathing pattern looked like:



Many researches highlight that too little stimulation in the early stages is also bad for a child’s brain development. This could take several forms including neglecting the child. This is PETSCAN for Normal Kindergartener & another that was raised in a neglected environment: (Note that the brighter colors show more brain activity)



The one on the left is the child that experienced neglect in the early stages of life – as described by Dr. Dimitri – “you will notice the areas of his brain that show no activity at all (dark color), it didn’t develop as a result of too little stimulation” (Christakis, 2011).

Too little stimulation in the early stages of brain development might be considered bad, yet over stimulation or stimulating the brain in the wrong way is also unhealthy. Rather, it can be extremely harmful, such as that occurring with overstimulation by media content. Chassiakos (2016) highlight that children under 2 years of age, learn best through interaction with the world around them.

In addition, it’s also essential for them during that period to engage in face-to-face communication. Acknowledging that aside from occasional video chats, there’s no need to begin media use at such an early age.

Studies show that parental activities with children, such as playing with blocks etc., can aid healthy child development.

One study shows that children that were engaged in activities with their parents during the age 18 to 24 month, scored higher in language learning and developing than children who didn't. Chassiakos suggests that parents and caregivers can be valuable media mentors. Explaining that they could guide older children and teens online interaction. Ensuring kids are safe, treating others with respect, avoiding inappropriate content, cyberbullying, sexting, and any communication compromising their privacy and safety. In addition, parents are advised to balance their own media use with other activities to act as a positive role model for their children.

## **SECTION (4)**

### **NEGATIVE MEDIA CONTENT & IMPACT**

Research on “Media influence” or “Media Impact” incorporates hundreds of references, articles and researches studying all different aspects of the issue. For the purpose of this research we will only focus on examples related with this paper. This includes, physical, psychological and mental impacts both positive and negative.

#### **NEGATIVE MEDIA CONTENT**

Several researches document the impact of portraying negative actions on media as a good thing. This includes smoking, drinking, violence, bad language and sexual behaviors. Such content affects the minds and behaviors of younger people. In addition to encouraging them to imitate those actions, believing that this is a good way of living as prevailed on television. Sometimes even leading to disobeying elders.

##### **A. VIOLENCE:**

Many literatures on media impact highly focuses on the negative effect of Media on children and their behavior. Specifically concentrating on the relationship between media content and violent behavior. Although few scholars believe that watching violent content or playing violent video games may relieve negative energy or violence within a person, leading to less desire for violence in real life (Stuart, K. 2014). Various studies have proved that violence shown on media or played in video games actually induces more violent behavior, especially in children (Alhamami, Hashem, 2015; Anderson, et al., 2003). Impact of Media Violence will be discussed further in the coming section.

#### **THE GOOD AND EVIL CONCEPT**

Portraying that it is acceptable to do what ever you want if you are a good person or if its for a good cause such as fighting the bad or evil. Even if that is done through violence or other awful matters.



## **B. FOREIGN CULTURE AND IDENTITY:**

Several Arab scholars state their concern over the penetration of some enforced foreign cultures through media, dreading their possible negative impact over the Arab nation thoughts, beliefs, and cultural identity. Among others, Alhassan, Ihsan Mohamed (1998) states that Arab countries have been facing several forms of deliberate cultural invasion mainly targeting teens from both genders. Being most vulnerable to influence on their thoughts, beliefs, and behavioral paths, in addition to being considered the backbone of their society, any influence that falls on a nation's youth, impacts the whole society and its future. The author adds that communication mediums, especially media channels highly serve these cultural invasions.

## **C. LANGUAGE:**

Despite the possible positive impact of improving children's language in some cases, yet, media can have a negative impact on children in relation to language.

This has mainly to do with two main issues. First, many parents would put their children in front of media believing it would help them learn the language or learn to talk faster. Yet, many child experts and studies highlight that when children are exposed to high rates of media viewership at a young age, they may experience speech delays if that's their only source of learning. Children at such a young age learn best through face-to-face interactions.

Another issue that has to do with language is that Children at a very early age can start imitating sounds or words they hear from their surrounding. Hence, children could learn and imitate inappropriate words and language they hear on the various media content they are exposed to.

## **D. OBSCENITY AND SEXUAL BEHAVIOR:**

Child experts highlight that children at a very young age of 0 to 5 are at the highest point of being sexually active. Hence, watching any inappropriate content will not only make them curious to imitate, but also puts them at risk of actions acceptable to them, leading to acceptance to sexual harassment for example, unaware that this is something bad.

## **E. ADVERTISING:**

Various literature and child experts highlight the many negative impacts of advertising on children. Including but not limited to creating financial pressure on parents, in addition to, posing numerous health risks, including obesity.

## **NEGATIVE MEDIA IMPACT**

### **1. PHYSICAL HEALTH IMPACTS**

#### **SLEEP QUALITY**

Several researches focus on media's impact on physical health. Among others, Burke, S. M. (2016) explain how excessive use of technology with its operational components of light emission, content and timing can affect sleep quality and duration. Brockmann, P. E., et al. (2016) adds that television viewership negatively impacts the time and quality of sleep for children, negatively impacting school performance. Nag, C., & Pradhan, R. K. (2012) confirms the affect of television viewership on sleep, adding that it leads to increased sleep impairment. Chassiakos (2016) suggests that screen time one hour before sleep can hinder healthy and sufficient sleep. Some studies highlight that horror movies are relatively linked to sleeping disorders & nightmares (in both children & adults). In some cases, it can sometimes even cause uncontrolled sleep urination in children.

#### **POSTURE**

Furthermore, according to [50 years of research] some of the general common physical impacts of television would include 'Frogitis' due to the child sitting with legs folded to side. In addition to 'TV bottom' or an ache in the tailbone caused by sitting too long in front of TV. 'TV tummy' is another consequence of becoming too excited or anxious while watching action or adventure content.

#### **EYE SIGHT**

Rones (1949), highlights that media devices, including television, laptops, mobiles, tablets etc. also have a potential to damage eyes and sight.

## **HEART PROBLEMS**

Additionally, Television can be a cause to other health issues depending on the intensity of the content and exposure time. For example, people with heart problems can suffer heart attacks if they were exposed to an intense horror movie.

## **WEIGHT GAIN & LOSS**

Several other researches state the effect of media on weight. This includes unconscious eating in front of television leading to obesity. Many households usually have some kind of media content playing during meals. Research shows that increased inactive media use of 1 to 1 ½ hours daily is a risk factor for obesity, as it may lead to more food consumption (Chassiakos, 2016).

Most of the people eat more when they watch television or movies. People spend most of the time front of the television rather than do any work or exercise. People become lazy, inactive, and unhealthy. Although research indicates that children need at least one hour of daily active physical activity (Chassiakos, 2016). On the other hand, some children and teenagers may be influenced by “ideal” body image promoted through media, leading to many starving themselves to achieve this image and becoming anorexic. The impact of Media on body image will be discussed further in the coming section.

## **2. PSYCHOLOGICAL & BEHAVIORAL HEALTH IMPACTS**

### **MOOD AND PERCEPTION**

In addition to the psychological stress mentioned earlier for the desire to maintain the promoted “ideal” image of beauty, researchers highlight that media impact is so powerful that it does not only impact us psychologically, yet even affects our mood. A paper by Lau, J., Lau, M., Kim, J., & Tsui, H. (2006) for example, examined the impact media coverage on the community stress levels in Hong Kong after the 2004 Tsunami. Results showed that intensive media coverage was in fact associated with different types of Tsunami related stress indicators.

## **BODY IMAGE**

Media has also been linked in many researches with psychological issues that impact physical health. Various researches highlight the influence of media on perceptions of body images. Mainly focusing on female body image and eating habits, López-Guimerà, G., et al. (2010) for example, review research on the effects of television and magazines on body image. In addition, they also examine disordered eating attitudes and behaviors of females. Result evidence were collected from studies in different fields including media psychology, health psychology, eating disorders, as well as mass communication. Results confirmed that mass media is an extremely important source of information reinforcing a concept of “ideal beauty” in being thin. Furthermore, promoting its importance and how to attain it. The authors add that repeated exposure to media along with its direct and indirect pressure to be thin creates several risk factors including body dissatisfaction, eating disorders, and over weight concerns.

This evidence however does not only impact women, but also influences how men perceive beauty and body image. Agliata, D., & Tantleff-Dunn, S. (2004) used a sample of 158 males, to study the impact of television advertisement – inserted between segments of a television program containing either “ideal male body” images or “neutral male body” images. Results also indicated that participants who were exposed to ideal image advertisements became more significantly depressed with higher level of muscle dissatisfaction than those exposed to neutral ads.

Diedrichs, P. C., & Lee, C. (2011) decided to take the issue of body image from a different perspective. Using a sample of 171 women and 120 men to investigate an effective alternative to using media’s power to influence body image. This research explored the effectiveness of advertisements that incorporated “average size” female fashion models. In addition to examining their impact on the perception of body image for both women and men. Dividing the sample into 3 groups, where one group watched ads with no models, the second group watched ads including thin models, while the last group watched ads that incorporated average size models. Results proved that ads with average size models were just as effective as the other two with no or thin models. In addition, those same ads provided a more positive body image perception to both men and women.

## **FEAR & INSECURITY**

Alhamami, Hashem (2015) explains that scenes including violence, tragic events, death and killings stimulates a feeling of insecurity and fear among children, and in some cases causing them a psychological Trauma.

## **IMITATION OF NEGATIVE BEHAVIORS**

Some researches state that even G-Rated movies, cartoons designed for toddlers, include a great deal of violence. As mentioned earlier, imitation begins at a very early age. Research shows that toddlers not only imitate things as they happen, but even after the action has passed with some time. Dr. Emma Raizman - a pediatrician at Cleveland Clinic – says that children may imitate what they see on television until it becomes their reality, creating a more violent world. (New study finds that what kids watch on TV could affect behavior, 2013).

The American Psychological Association (APA) published a 15-year longitudinal study that proves Childhood Exposure to Media Violence Predicts Young Adult Aggressive Behavior. This study was a follow-up of a previous 1977 longitudinal study of 557 children, ages 6 – 10, growing up in Chicago.

Children identified which violent TV shows they watched most, whether they identified with the aggressive characters and whether they thought the violent situations were realistic. Shows included famous cartoons watched by children at that age, such as roadrunner. The follow up study, re-surveyed 329 of the original boys and girls, in their early 20s.

They were asked about their favorite TV programs as adults and about their aggressive behaviors. Participants' spouses or friends were also interviewed and were asked to rate the participant's frequency of engaging in aggressive behavior. The researchers also obtained data on the participants from state archives, which included criminal conviction records and moving traffic violations.

Results clarified that when children, both males and females, watch violent shows and have an identification with aggressive characters of the same gender, they are more vulnerable to adapt more aggressive behavior as young adults. This is due to the fact that children at a young age perceive violent content to be realistic. The study highlights that results were regardless of family backgrounds, children's initial aggression level, intellectual capabilities, social status measured by parents' educational level or occupation, parents' aggressiveness, or parenting style (Huesmann, L. R., et al., 2003).

Detailed results show that men who watched more violent content as children, were significantly more likely to have pushed their spouse, or respond to an insult with physical violence. In addition, they were three times more likely to have been convicted of a crime than other men who watched less or no violent content as children. While women who watched high rates of violent content as children, were more likely to throw things at their spouse, respond to anger with physical violence, or commit some type of criminal act. Those women were 4 times more likely to engage in physical violence than other women who watched less or no violent content as children (Huesmann, L. R., et al., 2003).

### **NUMB TO PAIN OF OTHERS**

Another research on the Desensitizing Effects of Violent Media on Helping Others, provides two studies testing the theory of being comfortably numb to the pain of others. In the first study, participants were divided to play a violent and nonviolent video game for 20 minutes.

While completing a questionnaire afterwards, they hear a fight outside where one person is injured. Compared to those who played non-violent games, participants who played violent games were less likely to hear the fight, rating it as less serious, and took longer to help injured person.

In the second study, violent and non-violent movie attendees witness a young woman outside the theater with an injured ankle struggling to pick up her crutches before and after the movie. Participants who have just watched a violent movie took longer to help the women. Results from both studies suggest that exposure to violent media makes people numb to the pain and suffering of others. Hence, reducing the willingness to aid people in pain (Bushman, B. J., & Anderson, C. A., 2009).

### **3. MENTAL / COGNITIVE HEALTH IMPACTS:**

#### **FIELD STUDY ON THE EFFECT OF TELEVISION VIEWERSHIP DURING EARLY YEARS OF LIFE:**

This experiment was a one-year laboratory mouse model of television viewing made on mice 10 days old. The mice stayed for 42 days in a box where they were over stimulated 6 hours daily with speakers above playing sounds from cartoon network and lights surrounding them that were photo-rhythmically generated by the sounds. This reflects the same situation that children would be in when watching television at an early age. For mice, 6 hours for 42 days is as if they spent their childhood in front of television. Results assessing behavior of the open field test, measured activity and risk taking.

Generally, mice have two kinds of competing instincts. The first is avoiding being in the middle of areas to avoid risk. The second is the instinct to search for food, which sometimes forces them to explore surrounding environment.

During this experiment, normal as well as experimental mice (white color) were placed in a field with a black background with a computer tracking their movement from above. Results measuring activity and risk taking, show that normal mice, not exposed to the television medium setup, spent most of their time around the perimeter. Engaging in the general normal activity around the edge. On the other hand, experiment mice, that were exposed to the above setup, were considered hyper-active and risk taking. They exhibited a lot more general activity than a regular mouse. In addition, these mice entered and spent more time in the center than a normal mouse would.



Moreover, the experiment also measured novel object recognition and tested short term memory. Mice were placed in the testing box with two novel objects till they become familiar with them. Mice were then taken out, and one hour later, one of the objects was replaced with another novel object. Then the mice are placed back inside the box to test their reaction and how much time they spend on each object. Results indicate that normal mice were learning and spent approximately 75% of their time exploring the novel object. On the other hand, experiment mice exposed to media stimulation were not learning. They spent equal amount of time exploring both objects, old and new. Those mice spent around 50 % of time on each object as if they did not recognize the old object they previously explored. This suggests that media stimulation at an early age can impact memory and learning as well.

#### **NON-SEQUENTIAL ORDER, UNREALISTIC IMAGE & RAPID IMAGE CHANGE:**

Most of the baby programs - (specially those designed for under the age of 2) - contain non-realistic images, with no “coherent narrative”. It goes from one image to another that may not be always relevant or in “sequential order”. All that screen change and stimulation is what actually keeps the baby engaged in watching.

According to the “overstimulation hypothesis”, prolonged exposure to rapid image change during the early childhood years could precondition the mind to expect constant high levels of input / stimulation. When this happens during such critical period of brain development, it could lead to inattention in later life.

Christakis (2011) provides an example on a baby that watches an episode about farms on “Baby Einstein”. This is a selected 20 second clip about farms, which contained 7 seen changes, approximately 1 every 3 seconds. Dr. Dimitri explains that when this baby is a school child and goes to a real farm, they will find it too boring, and too slow to what they have previously inhibited. Wondering for example how come there is no sheep suddenly popping up in their face, or why do they have to walk a distance to get to another location. That’s due to the fact that you are conditioning the mind (in those early developmental stages) to a reality that doesn’t actually exist.

#### **ATTENTION PROBLEMS**

Christakis (2011), explains that there are certain things that we can do early on in a child’s life that will enhance their ability to pay attention and other things that may impede them. In that matter, television and media are one of the main things to consider. One study highlights that while content designed for kid’s entertainment may increase the chances of attention problems at school age by 60%, violent content increase chances by more than 100 % (Christakis, 2011).



## SECTION (5)

### POSITIVE MEDIA CONTENT & IMPACT

#### TELEVISION AN EDUCATIONAL TOOL

*“The television should accomplish the role of educating the public, television should instruct, educate the sense of beauty, and should civilize the people. Television should actively contribute to highlighting the old and new creations from various fields of culture, and it should promote the value, the quality and originality. Television should be used to bring people closer to human values, and culture.” (Mitu, B., 2011)*

Early Childhood is often underestimated when comes to education and learning. Modern theories and research have proven the fact that children are ready to learn at a very early age. Actually, children can learn a lot more during early childhood, as they are like sponges absorbing and gathering information all around them. Piaget sees learning as an ‘internal process of construction’ (ibid., p.2) which involves knowledge being gained through direct experience of the environment. However, learning also occurs from interplay among maturation, experience and equilibration (Farrell, 2009, p.172).

Now a day, the vast majority of children, even in disadvantaged areas, are growing up hearing, seeing, and interacting with digital media and communication technology of all kinds every day. Such digital age brings a profusion of new challenges as well as opportunities for early education. The Applied Developmental Psychology (2003) highlights that each new medium of mass communication, such as film, radio, television, and now the Internet, have brought a great concern for children’s exposure to inappropriate and harmful content. Yet, it also brought a great promise for social and educational benefits as well.

Media is such a powerfully influential tool that became indispensable from everyday life. Hence, efforts to alter its possible negative effects to positive, media could create a nourishing environment for children’s positive develop. Yet this requires content modification, parental guidance, as well as media policies to achieve the required results. Various countries including the UK have always considered television an essential factor to shape society and always had it in a central position in policy making. Their motto is Inform, Educate, Entertain.

Hashem, Harm Sheikh Aldin (2014) explains that television educational programing should conclude valuable content targeted at children. Yet, it must also appeal to them and satisfy their needs. Boyse, K. (2010) highlights that television can be educational and entertaining. Adding that it can open up new worlds for kids, give them a chance to travel around the globe and learn about different cultures.

Media could also help children gain exposure to ideas that would be hard to encounter in their own community. Boyse explains that programs presenting pro-social messages can have positive effects on kids' behaviors. In addition, positive role models in media can also encourage viewers to make positive lifestyle changes. The positive effect of television come in various types of informative or educational content.

Whether through educational programs, documentaries, movies, video clips or other forms, positive content could teach as well as reinforce positive thoughts, actions and behaviors. Once the content is well prepared with targeted positive messages, its all about the way this content will be presented in order to appeal to children and keep them interested for most benefit.

## **EDUCATING**

Chassiakos (2016) suggests that three to five year olds are recommended to engage only with high-quality educational material with a parent or caregiver who would read, interact and play along for most benefit. Education may simply provide a rich and stimulating environment for the child. This could also compensate for an impoverished home environment enabling a child in a less privileged area to develop well.

## **LANGUAGE & LITERACY DEVELOPMENT**

Broemmel, A. D., et. Al (2015) studied how e-books can impact young children's literacy development. Overall results suggest the potential of animated e-books to positively impact literacy development of young children. In addition, educational media content along with parental guidance could help older children learn language faster.

## **PROTECTING IDENTITY**

Alhassan, Ihsan Mohamed (1998) suggest that since it became almost impossible to keep our youth away from such intrusions, it is very important to educate them about it and surround them with an empowering medium from family, education, media, and religious entities to protect their minds, beliefs, and behaviors. Alhassan, Ihsan Mohamed (1998) suggests that one of the ways we can combat negative cultural invasion by empowering our youth through their surroundings including media, family, schools, and other local entities to encourage them towards a more positive bringing, thinking, behavior, morals, norms, and most importantly support them maintain their own authentic Arab identity.

## **BEHAVIORAL MODIFICATION**

Eysenck (1950) claims that behaviors are learned habits rather than unconscious actions. Hence, if behavior reinforcements are eliminated or changed, you can change the behavior itself (Perry, P., 1971, P.18). This psychological model suggests defining a behavior, then assessing the social situation to find factors reinforcing such behavior. Ullman and Krasner (1965) stated that behavior modification can be done by developing “systematic environmental contingencies” to modify the subject’s response to that situation. Perry, P. (1971) highlights that self control is one of the things that can be adapted through social learning. The first step is defining desired and undesired behaviors. Then the social learning theory can be used to promote, eliminate or modify behavior helping the child to develop self control and better self confidence.

## **EMPOWERMENT OF CHILDREN**

If properly allocated, Media can also be used as a powerful tool to empower children in various aspects of their lives. This includes helping them become more educated, learn about a wide variety of important matters related to hygiene, health, etc. Provide them with positive role models to guide them and help them understand how they can deal in various situations and aspects of life, and encourage them to be an active member of society.

## **POSITIVE VS NEGATIVE IMPACT**

Whether results support the impact of media being more positive or negative, studies mentioned in this section and later sections confirm that the different media impacts are determined by the purpose of their use. Several researchers made some recommendations to induce more positive influence on behavior through media. Yet, not enough comprehensive research done on ‘how’ can media be used to promote positive impact, while avoiding its possible negative influences. In addition, more research is also needed on how can media content can be modified to serve that purpose according to the needs of each age group.

## **SECTION (6)**

### **DIRECTING MEDIA USE FOR POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Raising a Healthy child is easier than fixing a broken adult. Alhamami, Hashem (2015) studies how content directed at children should be created, what are the standards and how to create content suitable for children at each age group. He explains that this could benefit content creators on what they need to consider when creating Media content for children. Hence, benefiting children through positive development, as well as aid in building a proper steady intellect, which will benefit the whole society.

To do this we needed to understand the previously discussed matters including:

- What can children learn, when and how (best way)
- Positive and negative effects / impacts of television
- What are age groups and (make age group divisions)
- What each age group prefers watching (content and forms)
- What content / information each age group need at this stage of their life, to learn & develop. (Age appropriate and suitable form)
- Considerations or Descriptions need to be in the content provided for each age group to make it appealing to them. (What the content needs to be like or how should it be presented for each age group).

Alhamadani, M. (1979) claims that children tend to be interested in content that they can relate to, fulfilling their psychological needs, provide them with useful information, or lower their stress level (Alhamami, Hashem, ,2015). Adding that Khudur, A. (2003) noticed that children enjoy following adult entertainment content.

- Create content according to well studied fundamentals for content creation targeted at each age group
- Include children of the targeted age group in the program / content creation process to make sure they accept and like it and interact with it, hence gaining the most benefit out of it.
- Make content according suitable with positive local culture and morals.
- Create / induce competition for higher standard and raise viewership

## **1. APPEALING CONTENT**

It is extremely important to consider that nowadays with the easy accessibility to all variety of content, Children have an appeal to adult content as well. Witley & Brocker, (1952) reported that children also watched many of the adult programs offered in prime time. A 1950 survey found that by 6<sup>th</sup> grade a child's preference was for adult variety shows and sports [Pecora, N. O., Murray, J. P., & Wartella, E. (2007)]. These indications suggests the need for further research to understand what children find appealing, in order to create developmental content that they would like to watch.

## **2. CREATING COMPATIVITY**

In the U.S. when the 3 national networks (ABC, CBS, NBC) came into the medium in the 50's – children programming went from 2.5 hours per week – to 37 hours in 1956 on the 3 National networks (Shelby, (1964) p.248) Pecora, N. O., Murray, J. P., & Wartella, E. (2007) state that in 1957, two of the national networks – CBS and NBC – began to take children entertainment to a more competitive level, airing children programs at the same time on weekend morning, mainly Saturdays, where more children are most likely to be watching as the time is more suitable and convenient for a typical child. The authors also note that a Comprehensive study of children programming [Turow, 1981] demonstrated a shift in the number of program hours to reach an average of 20 programs during the period between 1950 and 1959 after only having 10 programs between the years 1948 till 1949.

Pecora, Murray & Wartella (2007), [p.9] also add that according to [Erickson, 1995; and Hollis, 2001] the mid 50's also brought in the introduction of Disney; (AKA – The wonderful World of Disney); as well as Warner Brothers (WB) and the Paramount's library of movie cartoons like Looney Tunes and Popeye. During that time, cartoons became an important part of local lunchtime and afterschool shows.

To conclude, new media can provide benefits. Chassiakos (2016) highlights that New interactive platforms can encourage children and teens to use them for learning, connecting and communicating with family and friends. In addition, it also gives them the opportunity to engage in creative activities. Chassiakos also suggests that the key is moderation and balance. Adding that media use should not replace or displace other activities promoting healthy development and wellness. Yet, policies are required to limit the amount of violent scenes allowed in a media content based on studying how quantity and quality content would be of negative impact. For example, violent scenes including (bad language, hitting, etc. ) can not exceed 10 % of scenes for rating 18+. In addition, should not allowed at all in anything made for children or family or rating less than 13.

## SECTION (7)

### INTERNATIONAL MEDIA POLICIES FOR MINORS

*“The Audience’s right to receive creative material, information and ideas without interference but subjected to restrictions prescribed by law in democratic society” (The European Convention on Human Rights, Article 10)*

Media Regulation, self-regulatory policies and code of ethics are novel terminologies to the Egyptian Society, yet, they are crucial given the absence of ethics in content provided through out various mediums.

The 2011 outburst in the Arab world called for “freedom of expression,” which in populations with a high levels of illiteracy, poverty, and corruption became a vague term, open to individual interpretation. Arguably, “freedom of expression” can be misused for personal interests, rather than to benefit the general public. Hence, regulating the media became a harder task to achieve.

Several years ago, an “Arab Satellite charter” was suggested, yet failed to be brought to implementation. Mainly, this was due to the refusal of some Arab countries to cooperate, including Lebanon and Qatar.

Nowadays, Egypt has been going through many discussions regarding the media practice, suggesting an Egyptian Media “code of ethics”. Yet, to date, no code was applied.

As mentioned earlier, various studies worldwide suggest that an average child watches around three to four hours of media content per day. Parents interviewed during this research, highlight that media consumption increases on weekends and holidays. Since children are considered “the most vulnerable” audience, it is highly important to enforce regulations to protect them from harmful media content. In addition, there is a critical need not only to provide positive media content alternatives, but also provide training sessions for parents to decrease their child’s media consumption and increasing outdoor activities. This effort would work to ensure positive child development and education by promoting specialized programming suitable for each age group. This could defiantly contribute to their mental, psychological and even physical development.

The technology blast during the past years has penetrated almost every home around the world with content that may not be child friendly or accepted by parents.

“We all want our children to get the most from the wealth of technology available today” [OFCOM website – The OFCOM Broadcasting Code – Protecting Children]

Providing such a wide variety of content to choose from might sound tempting, yet, on the other hand, many parents are extremely concerned about undesirable content their children might come across. Harmful content may generally include violence, inappropriate scenes or language, or anything else that might not be suitable for a child / minor to watch at that age. While it could also include content against their social, cultural, or religious beliefs in specific.

In order to implement such policies in the most efficient manner, it is preferable to learn from the experience of other countries in this field. Having a closer look on policies and regulations implemented in regard to the protection of minors.

This section will provide a closer look on MRB's (Media Regulatory Bodies) around the world. As well as the policies they implement in regard to children and media. Special focus will be placed on the United States, United Kingdom and Europe being the top leading countries in such policy implementation. In addition, some referencing will be placed on relevant policies and experience of independent countries such as Australia.

This section should provide better understanding of policies needed and applicable to the situation in Egypt.

\* Suitable in this context refers to provides best / most efficient means to communicate with children of a certain age group with consideration to their mental (cognitive skills) and psychological / physiological issues.

## **IMPORTANCE OF RESEARCH**

Among other institutions with same belief, OFCOM gives high value to the importance of conducting regular research with parents and other viewers and listeners in order to understand what they think about specific issues that would help them set, reevaluate, and amend policies to be implemented in the most effective way to the benefit of the public.

“Twice a year, every year, we ask parents and the wider general public what they think about standards on TV” [The OFCOM website - What is the “Watershed”]

## **A. INTERNATIONAL REGULATORY BODIES**

### **1. UNITED STATES OF AMERICA – USA**

#### **FCC – FEDERAL COMMUNICATION COMMISSION**

The FCC is an independent U.S. government agency overseen by Congress. Since 1934, this has been the primary authority for communication law, regulation and technological innovation. The FCC regulates both Interstate and International Communication in all 50 states, the District of Columbia as well as U.S. territories. All means of electronic communication including radio, television, wire, satellite and cable come under the jurisdiction of this agency.

The FCC highlights five main goals. The first goal is to promote competition, innovation as well as investment in broadband services and facilities. Second, support the nation's economy by ensuring an appropriate competitive framework for communication revolution. Third, encouraging the highest and best use of spectrum domestically as well as internationally. Forth, revising media regulations to allow new technologies to flourish along with diversity and localism. Last but not least, providing leadership through strengthening the defense of the nation's communication infrastructure.

Through its bureaus and offices, the FCC carries several responsibilities. This includes develop and implement regulatory programs, process applications for licenses, encourage development of innovative services, conduct investigations and analyze Complaints, ensure public safety and homeland security, as well as consumer information and education.

### **2. EUROPE – EU**

#### **TWF – TELEVISION WITHOUT FRONTIERS (1989)**

#### **AVMS – AUDIOVISUAL MEDIA SERVICE (2007)**

The Audiovisual Media Services Directive aims “aims to create effective single European market for audiovisual media” in addition to “EU recommendations on protecting children/minors online and European film heritage”. It is also required to “take cultural aspects into account in all its policies” [Europa.eu / Audiovisual and Media Policies / Regulatory Framework]



The Audiovisual Media services Directive sets rules that govern EU-wide coordination of the national legislation on all audiovisual media, it covers all services with audiovisual content (Including emerging advertising techniques) – irrespective of the technology used to deliver the content. That includes both traditional TV broadcasts (linear) and on-demand services (Non-linear). So, the rules apply on any audiovisual content whether on TV, on the Internet, or on a mobile phone.

Yet, the degree of choice and user control over the service is also taken into consideration to ensure platform neutrality. And the distinction between linear and on-demand services is considered a base for the regulatory approach as the core societal values set by the AVMSD is applicable to all audiovisual media services, yet the on-demand services has lighter regulations – where the user can decide on the content and viewership timing.

In addition, one of AVMS objectives is to coordinate laws, regulations, and administrative provisions of Member states to ensure the promotion of cultural diversity through the promotion of European Audiovisual Industry. What was also interesting to consider regarding the AVMS regulation system is that most of the times they were keen to evaluate policies they implement and sometimes even request pre-policy research to suggest required and applicable regulations.

The main goals and responsibilities of the AVMS involve various matters. This includes providing rules to shape technological developments, creating a level playing field for emerging audiovisual media, preserving cultural diversity, protecting children and consumers, safeguarding media pluralism, combating racial and religious hatred, and guaranteeing the independence of national media regulators.

The AVMS had set 8 main regulations. First, is the Identification of Media Service Providers. Second, is Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred. Third, Accessibility for people with disabilities. Fourth, Qualitative Requirements for Commercial Communication. Fifth, Principle of Jurisdiction or the “Country of Origin” Principle. Sixth, Major Events of Importance for Society / Short Extracts. Seventh, Promotion and Distribution of European Works and Cultural Diversity. Last but not least, the Protection of Minors.

While studying the European Media regulatory policies, it was interesting to find out that despite one out of 8 main areas of regulations in the AVMSD exclusively focused on the protection of minors, yet most of the remaining 7 were in one way or another also related to protecting children and minors which are considered the most “vulnerable audience”.

## **INDEPENDENT REGULATORS**

Independent Regulators are considered one of the most important factors when it comes to the implementation of the whole Directive.

As stated by the AVMSD that along with the commission, Independent Regulatory Authorities for audiovisual media services are responsible for effective enforcement of the national measures transposing the rules of the Directive. This is done through supervising the programs compliance with European and National Rules, and hence, allowing more consistent application of the rules. [AVMSD – Protection of Minors – Independent Regulators] According to Article **30** of the directive Member states must take appropriate measures to provide the commission and each other the necessary information for the application of the directive through their competent independent regulatory bodies.

### **3. AUSTRALIA**

#### **ACMA – The Australian Communications and Media Authority**

Formed by merging responsibilities of the Australian Broadcasting Authority and the Australian Communications Authority on July 2005. This is an independent statutory authority ensuring effective and efficient operation of the Australian media and communications legislation, related regulations, standards and codes of practice in the public interests.

Operating on the “four worlds” of telecommunications, broadcasting, radio communications and internet.

### **4. UNITED KINGDOM – UK**

#### **OFCOM**

OFCOM is a Communication Regulator in the UK accountable to Parliament, that sets and enforces regulatory rules for TV, radio, fixed line telecoms, mobiles, postal services, and airwaves over which wireless devices operate. Established as a body corporate by the office of Communications Act 2002. Mainly funded by fees from the industry for regulating broadcasting and communications networks, along with a grant-in-aid from the Government.

*“We make sure that people in the UK get the best from their communications services and are protected from scams and sharp practices, while ensuring that competition can thrive.”* [OFCOM online – about OFCOM – What is OFCOM]

OFCOM's goals require them to ensure that the UK has a wide range of communications services, including high-speed services. Among other objectives, they are also required to ensure that there is a wide range of high-quality Television and Radio programs and services provided, satisfying different tastes and interests. In addition, ensure that television and radio services are provided by a range of different organizations. OFCOM must also safeguard audience from harmful or offensive content, as well as protect people from invasion of privacy or being treated unfairly in Television & Radio programs.

*"Meeting this duty is at the heart of everything we do."* [OFCOM online – about OFCOM]

OFCOM operates under a number of Acts of Parliament. This mainly includes "The Communication Act 2003", "Broadcasting Act 1990", "Broadcasting Act 1996", "Human Rights Act 1998", "The Wireless Telegraphy Act 2006", "The Digital Economy Act 2010" and "The Postal Services Act 2011".

OFCOM's principal duty under "The Communications Act 2003" includes several sections relevant to this research. For example, Section 3(1) highlights OFCOM's role in promoting competition. While according to Section 3(2) (e) OFCOM is required to also ensure the application of standards that provides adequate protection to members of public from offensive and harmful material in all TV & Radio services. Yet, while applying these rules, Section 3(4) requires OFCOM to consider various aspects. It requires promoting public service television broadcasting, competition, as well as promoting and facilitating the development and use of effective forms of self-regulation. Furthermore, it also promotes encouraging investment and innovation in relevant markets. OFCOM is required to apply these rules and standards in Television and Radio services in a manner that guarantees Freedom of expression as well as the protection of the most vulnerable audience including children. This section also mandates OFCOM to serve the needs of people with disabilities, the elderly and those with low incomes. Moreover, it obligates the consideration of public opinion and different interests of people. Last but not least, highlights considering the prevention of crime and disorder. Section 319(1) also highlights that among OFCOM's duties, is securing the standards objectives by setting, reviewing and revising (from time to time) Radio and Television Program content standards. [OFCOM website – The OFCOM Broadcasting Code – Appendix 1 – The Communication Act 2003] [<http://www.legislation.gov.uk> "[www.legislation.gov.uk](http://www.legislation.gov.uk) - The Communication Act 2003 – Sections (3(1)(2e)(4) – (319(1))]

Furthermore, Section 319(2) of the "Communication Act 2003" focuses on the protection of minors under 18, Prohibition of TV and Radio content that is likely to lead, encourage or incite crime or disorder, Protect the public from harmful / offensive content and applying generally accepted standards to TV and Radio content, as well as exercising responsibility with religious programming content.

In addition, Section 319(6) further obligates OFCOM to ensure that the standards objective of religious programs do not involve any improper exploitation to audience vulnerability, or any abusive treatment of any religious views and beliefs.

In addition to preventing harmful and misleading advertising from TV & Radio, ensuring that advertising in TV & Radio Complies with international obligations of the United Kingdom, preventing unsuitable sponsorship in TV & Radio programs, and preventing influencing peoples mind through hidden messages by prohibiting the use of techniques that might convey a message to audience without them being fully aware of it. [OFCom website – The OFCom Broadcasting Code – Appendix 1 – The Communication Act 2003] [<http://www.legislation.gov.uk> [www.legislation.gov.uk](http://www.legislation.gov.uk) - The Communication Act 2003 – Sections 319(2)(6)]

While Section 319(3) of the “Communication Act 2003” requires that these standards be made into codes, Section 319(4) obligates OFCOM to put some considerations while applying these codes / standards. This includes the Degree of harm or offense likely to be caused, size of potential audience, audience expectation of a programs nature, consideration of people who might be unaware of a programs content nature and could unintentionally be exposed to it – even if – by their own action, securing clear identification when content nature is changed, and finally maintaining Editorial Independence.

The “Communication Act 2003” - Section 319(5) - also requires OFCOM from time to time to ensure that the codes / standards in force include minimum standards applicable to all TV & Radio programs, in addition to, other specific standards applicable to particular programming type. [OFCom website – The OFCom Broadcasting Code – Appendix 1 – The Communication Act 2003] [<http://www.legislation.gov.uk> [www.legislation.gov.uk](http://www.legislation.gov.uk) - The Communication Act 2003 – Sections 319(3)(4)(5)]

Other legislations that OFCOM operates under includes the “European Convention on Human Rights” as well as the “AVMS Directive”. Some important Articles from the “European Convention on Human Rights” in the formation of “The Code” includes Article 9 stating the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion. Article 10 highlights the Audience’s right to receive creative material, information and ideas without interference but subjected to restrictions prescribed by law in democratic society. While Article 14 states the right to enjoy human rights without discrimination on grounds such as sex, race and religion. [OFCom Broadcasting Code – The Legislative Background to the Code – European Convention on Human Rights]

## **THE BRITISH BOARD OF FILM CLASSIFICATION – BBFC**

This is an independent, non for profit governmental body classifying cinema films since 1912 and videos/DVDs since the 1984 Video Recording Act. To maintain its independence, the BBFC income mainly depends on the fees charged for its services. While adjusting the fees only to cover the costs. The BBFC created the rating system found below for the UK.

## **THE CONSULTIVE COUNCIL**

An advisory forum gathering members from UK Local Authority Associations, screen entertainment industry along with other experts in the field.

## **THE ADVISORY PANEL ON CHILDRENS VIWEING – APCV**

A panel of relevant professionals and expertise, establish by the BBFC to advice on issues related with classifying works for children.

## **THE BROADCASTING CODE – “THE CODE”:**

The UK system is considered a bit complex as understanding their broadcasting regulation system involves many cross-references. In brief, as required by the “Communication Act 2003” and the “Broadcasting Act 1996”, OFCOM mainly governs Broadcast Communication (Television & Radio) through the “OFCOM Broadcasting Code” – also known as “The Code” that broadcasters must follow its rules.

The Code came into force in May 2005 - taking into account the dramatic changes affecting TV and Radio. It was mainly drawn up by the objectives of the “Communication Act 2003”, “Broadcasting Act 1996” and “Representation of the People Act 1983”. This was following an extensive research among viewers, listeners, and broadcasters.

In order to properly understand and interpret “The Code”, Broadcasters are also required to take into account the 6 considerations set by “The Act – Section 319(4)”. While checking the “Guidance” on how the code should be implemented. In addition, they also need to check the legislative background that formed the rules from the Parliamentary Acts, and relevant extracts from other legislative bodies. Among other things, OFCOM license also requires Broadcasters to observe and interpret the Standard Code and Fairness Code as references to the Broadcasting code.

As mention in Section 3(4) of “The Act 2003” applying rules and standards in Television and Radio services must be in a manner that guarantees Freedom of expression. Hence, OFCOM gives broadcasters the freedom to make programs about any issue they choose, as long as they ensure that these programs comply with the general law as well as the code. At all times, broadcasters must also make sure that program content is always justified by the context and editorial needs of the program. As identified by OFCOM context refers to editorial content of program, service on which material is broadcasted, time of broadcast, what other programs are scheduled before and after the program concerned, degree of harm or offence likely to be caused by the inclusion of any particular material, the likely size and composition of potential audience and their expectations for the content of the program in concern, the extent to which the nature of the content can be brought to the attention of the potential audience – for example by giving information and the effect of the material on viewers or listeners who may come across it unawares. [The OFCOM Broadcasting Code – Section 2 – Harm and Offense – Meaning of “Context” pg.16]

### **THIRD-PARTY CONTROL**

OFCOM also put consideration to indirect harm that could be imposed by a third party rather than the broadcaster them selves. Hence, the Act and Codes apply to the providers of the service – which has the general control. For example, if a program/service displays a link that leads to a Third party – which OFCOM may not have authority over – and the content / service or what ever is provided in that link is of concern or not abiding by the standards objective, OFCOM may require such link to be removed. In all cases, “The Code” requires that any transition from broadcaster to a Third party control must also be made clear to viewers.

### **PROTECTION OF MINORS BY OFCOM**

Nowadays, children at a very young age have the availability of various digital technologies – laptops, Ipads, Iphones, and everyday the list expands, allowing them easy access to any media content. With this consideration, OFCOM has dedicated a whole section of the Code – the first part of the Code – for protecting children and minors and ensure that they are not exposed to any material / content they are not suppose to see.

Generally, that includes rules about Scheduling of programs, Television Watershed, along with restrictions on programs that are aired right before the watershed, which might include offensive language, violence, sexual material, and dangerous/harmful material that children might imitate.

*“Protecting Children from harmful or inappropriate material on TV and Radio is one of Ofcom’s most important duties and we take it very seriously”* [OFCOM website – The OFCOM Broadcasting Code – Protecting Children]

## **RELEVANT LEGISLATIONS IN RELATION TO THE PROTECTION OF MINORS**

### **1. THE COMMUNICATION ACT 2003**

**SECTION 3(4)(H):** “(h) Special protection of the most vulnerable audience including children”

**SECTION 319 (2)(A)(F):** “(a) The protection of minors under 18” “(f) Protecting the public from harmful / offensive content and applying generally accepted standards to TV & Radio content”

### **2. THE EUROPEAN AUDIO VISUAL MEDIA DIRECTIVE – AVMSD**

ARTICLE 27 Prohibits (Totally bans) programs which “Might seriously impair” the development of Minors. While programs which “Might simply be harmful” to minors, are only allowed to be transmitted in times or means that minors will not normally hear or see them, in addition to placing a clearly identifiable warning (e.g. Visual symbol) through out their duration of airing/broadcast.

***ARTICLE 27:** “1. Member States shall take appropriate measures to ensure that television broadcasts by broadcasters under their jurisdiction do not include any programs which might seriously impair the physical, mental or moral development of minors, in particular programs that involve pornography or gratuitous violence. 2. The measures provided for in paragraph 1 shall also extend to other programs which are likely to impair the physical, mental or moral development of minors, except where it is ensured, by selecting the time of the broadcast or by any technical measure, that minors in the area of transmission will not normally hear or see such broadcasts. 3. In addition, when such programs are broadcast in unencoded form Member States shall ensure that they are preceded by an acoustic warning or are identified by the presence of a visual symbol throughout their duration.”*

## **B. MEDIA POLICIES FOR THE PROTECTION OF MINORS**

### **SECTION 1: GENERAL RULES FOR ALL AUDIOVISUAL COMMUNICATION**

**(INCLUDING TV AND ON-DEMAND)**

#### **EUROPE – AVMS**

Be readily recognizable, not use subliminal or surreptitious techniques, respect human dignity, not include / promote discrimination (e.g. based on sex, nationality, religion), not to encourage behavior harmful to health, safety, or the environment, and not promote tobacco or prescription medication. The general approach of the AVMS Directive is providing a system of graduated regulation, which also applies to the protection of minors. The less control a viewer has and the more harmful a specific content could be, the more restrictions apply.

The AVMS does not only focus on the protection of minors in one section. But rather, they interweaved this concept in almost all of the main regulations in the directive. This is to serve the interest of the general public – including the protection of vulnerable audience such as children.

*“The development of audiovisual media services in the EU must go hand in hand with the protection of the general interests of all European citizens – including the most vulnerable” (AVMS online – Protection of Minors).*

Yet, the Directive also takes in consideration that this protection for minors stays balanced with other “important values of a democratic society” such as freedom of expression. With this in mind, the remaining rules / regulations found in the AVMSD to protect minors in this section include the protection of Minors in Television Broadcasting, Protection of Minors from Commercial Communication, Protection of Minors in On-Demand Services (Online) and recommendations on the Protection of Minors & Human Dignity

#### **UNITED KINGDOM – OFCOM**

Code 1.2 highlights Broadcasters Responsibility to protect people under 18 years. It states that in the provision of the services, broadcasters must take all reasonable steps to protect people under eighteen. For television services, this is in addition to their obligations resulting from the Audiovisual Media Service Directive - in particular Article 27.



## SECTION TWO: GENERALLY ACCEPTED STANDARDS

### UNITED KINGDOM – OFCOM

OFCOM requires Generally accepted standards to be applied in TV & Radio in order to protect public from harmful / offensive content.

**Rule 2.1** “Generally accepted standards **must be** applied to the contents of television and radio services so as to provide adequate protection for members of the public from the inclusion in such services of harmful and/or offensive material.”

In addition, factual programs must not be misleading.

**Rule 2.2** “Factual programs or items or portrayals of factual matters **must not** materially mislead the audience.”

**Rule 2.3** “In applying generally accepted standards broadcasters must ensure that material which may cause offence is justified by the context. Such material may include, but not limited to, offensive language, violence, sex, sexual violence, humiliation, distress, violation of human dignity, discrimination treatment or language (for example on the grounds of age, disability, gender, race, religion, beliefs and sexual orientation). Appropriate information should also be broadcasted where it would assist in avoiding or minimizing offence.”

## SECTION THREE: PRINCIPLES OF JURISDICTION

### EUROPE – AVMS:

In this section, the AVMSD provides the **Jurisdiction criteria** to better clarify the authority each Member State has on Audiovisual Media Services established and operating in same Member State or those in other States, for a more effective implementation of the Directive’s Rules and Regulations. In addition to help prevent / decrease / solve conflicts that may occur.

The AVMSD provides the details of the “Jurisdiction Criteria” under (ARTICLE 2). [AVMSD – Principles of Jurisdiction – Article (2)]

## **PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT**

### **SECTION FOUR: RATING SYSTEMS**

#### **UNITED STATES – FCC**

##### **TELEVISION RATING**

In 1996 – Congress asked the U.S. television industry to establish a Voluntary Rating System for TV programs. The TV Parental Guidelines Rating System was then established by the National Association of Broadcasters, The National Cable Television Association and The Motion Picture Association of America.

- **TV-Y** (Directed to ALL Children) – Found only in children’s shows – Means the show is designed specifically for very young audiences, including children from 2 – 6 years old.
- **TV-Y7** (Directed to Older Children) – Found only in Children’s shows – Means the show is most appropriate for children age 7 +
- **TV-Y7-FV** (Directed to Older Children) – Means fantasy violence may be more intense or more combative than other programming in the TV-Y7 category.
- **TV-G** (General Audience) – Means the show is suitable for all ages but it is not necessarily a children’s show.
- **TV-PG** (Parental Guidance Suggested) – Means parental guidance is recommended and that the program may be unsuitable for younger children. This rating may also include: V – for Violence, S – for Sexual situations, L – for Language, D – for suggestive dialogue.
- **TV-14** (Parents Strongly Cautioned) – Means the show may be unsuitable for children under 14. This rating may also include: V - S - L - D
- **TV-MA** (Mature Audience Only) – Means the program is intended to be viewed by adults and may be unsuitable for children under 17. The program also contains one or more of the V - S - L - D

##### **HOW IT WORKS**

Rating appears in the upper left corner of the television screen during the first 15 seconds of each program and often after commercial breaks as well. They can be found in TV listings in many magazines and newspapers. Ratings are given to most television programming except News, Sports

and Unedited movies on premium cable channels.

## **HOW IT IS MONITORED**

**TV PARENTAL GUIDELINES MONITORING BOARD:** A Board that “reviews the rating guidelines and their application to television programming.” This board consists of 24 members including a Chairman, 6 Members from the Broadcast Industry, 6 Members from the Cable Industry, 6 Members from the Program Production Community as well as 5 Non-Industry Members from Public Interest groups (Selected by FCC Chairman).

## **MOVIE RATING SYSTEM**

Movie Ratings was also established based on “a voluntary system” by the Motion Picture Association of America and The National Association of Theater Owners. “A Board of parents known as the Classification and Rating Administration assigns ratings after Viewing, discussing, and voting on films.” “These movie ratings also are programmed into V-chips so that parents can use the V-chip to block movies shown on TV based on the movie ratings”

- **G** (General Audience): Material is appropriate for all ages.
- **PG** (Parental Guidance Suggested): Parental guidance is recommended and some material may be unsuitable for children.
- **PG-13** (Parents Strongly Cautioned): Some material may be inappropriate for children under 13.
- **R** (Restricted): Some material may be inappropriate for children under 17 & If shown in a movie theater, requires accompanying parent or adult guardian.
- **NC-17** (NO ONE 17 and Under admitted): Movie contains material that most parents would consider patently inappropriate for children 17 and under. If shown in a Movie Theater, NO ONE 17 and under would be allowed or admitted.

## **UNITED KINGDOM – OFCOM**

The BBFC examine and provide age rating and insights on films as well as videos prior to their release. This is to protect children from unsuitable content for their age, while helping parents to choose what they accept for their children to watch. Looking on issues relate with discrimination, horror, drugs, language, sex, nudity, violence and dangerous easily imitable behavior. Two compliance officers view the film before its release, and their decision is confirmed by the compliance manager.

Same applies to DVDs and Blu-rays as well, yet in a stricter manner due to the higher risk of underage accessibility and viewership.

Moreover, according to **Rule 1.22**, No film refused classification by the BBFC may be broadcast unless it has subsequently been classified or the BBFC has confirmed that it would not be rejected according to the standards currently operating. Also, no film cut as a condition of classification by the BBFC may be transmitted in a version which includes the cut material unless the BBFC has confirmed that the material was cut to allow the film to pass at a lower category. Or the BBFC has confirmed that the film would not be subjected to compulsory cuts according to the standards currently operating. Ratings are evaluated according to Discrimination, Drugs, Imitable behavior, Language, Nudity, Sex, Threat and Violence. Yet, it would need modification to be applicable in Egypt. The Film Rating system BBFC is currently applying includes the following:

- **U** (Suitable for all) – Should be suitable for all audience age 4+ and set within a positive framework, offering a reassuring counterbalance to any violence, threat or horror.
- **PG** (Parental guidance) – General viewing of any age, but some scenes may be unsuitable for children. Should not be unsettling for children 8 or older. Parental guidance advised.
- **12A / 12** (Cinema / Video release suitable for 12+) – Not suitable for children under 12 years old, unless accompanied by an adult.
- **15** (Suitable only for 15+) – No one under 15 may view a 15 film in cinema, rent or buy it in video.
- **18** (Suitable only for adults) – No one under 18 may view a 18 film in cinema, rent or buy it in video
- **R18** (Adult works for licensed premises only) – Legally-restricted classification for explicit works. Only allowed in specially licensed cinemas, and shops.

	DISCR.	DRUGS	IMITABLE BEHAVIOR	LANGUAGE	NUDITY	SEX	THREAT	VIOLENCE
<b>U</b>	Unlikely acceptable Unless clearly disapproved of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Must be infrequent and innocuous</li> <li>Have a clear educational purpose or anti-drug message suitable for young children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potentially dangerous or anti-social behavior young children may copy must be clearly disapproved of</li> <li>No emphasis on realistic or easily accessible weapons</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Infrequent use of very mild bad language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Occasional with no sexual context</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Very mild action and reference ex. Kissing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scary, unsettling sequence should be mild, brief, and unlikely to cause undue anxiety to young children, results should be reassuring</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Should be very mild if justified by context</li> </ul>
<b>PG</b>	Unlikely acceptable Unless: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clearly disapproved of educational/historic context</li> <li>work not likely to appeal to children</li> <li>Discrimination by characters' children may identify is unlikely acceptable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Must be infrequent and innocuous or have a suitable anti-drug message</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No details for potentially dangerous imitable behaviors children may copy if presented as safe and fun</li> <li>No glamorization of realistic or easily accessible weapons</li> <li>No focus on anti-social behaviors likely to be copied by children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mild bad language only</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allowed with no sexual content</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sexual activity may be implied discreetly and infrequent</li> <li>Reference should be mild</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Frightening sequences or situations should not be prolonged or intense</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Usually mild</li> <li>May include mild violence with no detail justified by context</li> </ul>
<b>12A / 12</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Must not be endorsed by the work as a whole.</li> <li>Aggressive discrimination is unlikely acceptable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Misuse of drugs must not be frequent, glamorized, or give instructional detail.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No promotion of potentially dangerous behavior children may copy</li> <li>No glamorization of accessible weapons</li> <li>No endorsement to antisocial behaviors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Moderate language</li> <li>Strong language may be permitted under certain conditions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May include nudity must be brief and discreet</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sexual activity may be portrayed briefly and discreetly</li> <li>Moderate reference allowed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Moderate physical and psychological threat and horror allowed</li> <li>Not frequent or sustained</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Moderate violence allowed with no focus on details</li> <li>No emphasis on injuries or blood</li> <li>Sexual violence allowed under conditions</li> </ul>
<b>15</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The work as a whole must not endorse disc. Language or behavior.</li> <li>May include racist, homophobic, other disc. Themes and language.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May show taking drugs but the work as a whole must not promote, encourage, or provide detail to that.</li> <li>Accessible highly dangerous drug use not allowed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dangerous behavior should not dwell on details that may be copied (self harm)</li> <li>Easily accessible weapons allowed under conditions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May include strong language</li> <li>Very strong language acceptable under conditions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No constraints on nudity in a non-sexual or educational context</li> <li>If in sexual context, no strong details</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sexual activity allowed usually with no strong details and not as the main purpose of the whole work</li> <li>Strong verbal reference allowed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong threat and horror allowed</li> <li>Sustained focus on sadistic and sexual threat unlikely acceptable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Violence may be strong but not focus on infliction of pain or injury</li> <li>Strongest images and sadistic violence unlikely acceptable</li> <li>Detailed verbal reference to sexual violence allowed under conditions</li> </ul>
<b>18</b>	No specific restrictions. Yet, generally content under this rating should not breach criminal law, risk harm to individuals through their behavior or society. For example, providing details on harmful behavior and make it seem appealing or enjoyable. Sexual education videos and sexual works must abide to the specified guidelines of each.							
<b>R18</b>	No specific restrictions. Yet, generally content under this rating are filtered out from main public search for having explicit / offensive titles. Will only appear after enabling adult content in an advanced search option where date of birth is required.							

## **SECTION FIVE: WATERSHED PERIOD**

### **EUROPE – AVMS**

#### **THE PROTECTION OF MINORS IN TELEVISION BROADCASTING**

ARTICLE 27 of the Directive Prohibits (Totally bans) programs which might seriously impair physical, mental or moral development of Minors. While programs which might simply be harmful to minors, are only allowed to be transmitted in times or means that minors will not normally hear or see them, in addition to placing a clearly identifiable warning (e.g. Visual symbol) through out their duration of airing/broadcast [AVMSD – Protection of Minors – Article (27)]

### **UNITED KINGDOM – OFCOM**

- **SCHEDULING AND CONTENT INFORMATION**

#### **PROHIBITED CONTENT**

Rule 1.1 obligates that Material that might seriously impair the physical, mental, or moral development of people under 18 must not be broadcasted.

#### **APPROPRIATE SCHEDULING TO PROTECT CHILDREN**

While Rule 1.3 highlights that Children must be protected by appropriate scheduling from material that is unsuitable for them. According to the code, appropriate Scheduling should be judged according to several factors. First the nature of the content. Second, the likely number and age range of children in the audience – taking into account school time, weekends, and holidays. Third, the start and end time of the program. Fourth, the nature of the channel, station, and program. Fifth, the higher audience expected for a particular channel or station at a particular time on a particular day [The OFCOM Broadcasting Code – Section 1 – Protecting the Under-Eighteens – Meaning of “appropriate scheduling” pg.7].

OFCOME defines Unsuitable Material to include everything from sexual material content, to violence, graphic or distressing imagery and swearing [The OFCOM website - What is the “Watershed”].

- **THE WATERSHED**

Rule 1.4 clearly states that Television Broadcasters must observe the watershed. According to OFCOM, the Watershed is the time when TV programs which might be unsuitable for children can be broadcasted. Outside the watershed period such content is prohibited from airing on Television. The Watershed helps parents protect their children from material that might be unsuitable or harmful for them. Generally, the watershed starts at 9 PM and ends at 5:30 AM. Hence, material unsuitable for children should not, be shown in general before 9 PM or after 5:30 AM.

#### **BEFORE & AFTER WATERSHED**

OFCOM even sets strict rules about what can be shown on TV before and after the watershed. That's when children are likely to be or might be still watching or listening. Rule 1.7 obligates that Television program broadcasted before the watershed, where children are likely to still be watching or listening, or other content that can be accessed by children, clear information should be provided about content that may distress some children should be given to the audience.

For example, frequent use of offensive language must be avoided before the watershed. In addition, in all cases, frequent use of offensive language must always be justified by its context.

OFCOM also requires that after the watershed, the transition to more adult material must not be unduly sudden or unexpected. Requiring that the strongest material should appear later in the evening while still abiding by the rules that protect viewers from offensive and harmful content. In the case of Television, as required by Rule 1.6.

OFCOM claims *taken action on more than 300 occasions when broadcasters have scheduled unsuitable content before or immediately after the watershed since 2003* [The OFCOM website - What is the "Watershed"].

#### **CONDITIONED WATERSHED**

Films, Premium Subscription Film Services, Pay Per View Services, are all considered under the conditioned watershed. As set in Rule 1.24, Premium subscription film services may broadcast films up to Rating of (BBFC 15) or their equivalent at any time conditioned that there is Mandatory Restricted Access from 5:30 AM till 8 PM. In addition, there should be a clear explanation to all subscribers to become well aware of how to use these security systems. While Rule 1.25 states that Pay Per View Services may may also broadcast films up to a rating of (BBFC 18) or their equivalent at any time conditioned that there is Mandatory Restricted Access from 5:30 AM till 9 PM.

Ensuring that enough information must be provided about the content to be able to identify if it would be suitable for children to watch or not. In addition, all viewing dates and times should be clearly available. Security systems to protect children are clearly explained to all subscribers.

\*Mandatory Restricted Access – means there is a PIN protected system (or other equivalent protection), which cannot be removed by a user, which restricts access only to those authorized to view.

Watershed restrictions included in several other rules of “The Code”, some of which will be discussed in other sections of this paper.

## **SECTION SIX: CONTENT RESTRICTIONS**

### **• OBSCENE CONTENT RESTRICTIONS**

#### **UNITED STATES – FCC**

Obscene content is not protected by the First Amendment and cannot be broadcasted at any time. The U.S Supreme Court established 3 steps to define “Obscene”. This includes first applying contemporary community standards, where an average person must define that the material as a whole appeals to the prurient interest. Second, the material must depict or describe, in an obviously offensive manner, sexual conduct. Third, the material, as a whole, must lack serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value - **LAPS**.

According to U.S Federal Law, it is considered illegal and violation of Federal law to air Obscene Programming / Content at any time, or air Indecent Programming and Profane Language during certain hours. Congress gave the FCC the responsibility to administratively enforce such laws. Hence, if a station airs obscene content at any time or Indecent / Profane content during certain times, the FCC may either revoke the station license, impose Monetary fines or issue a warning

#### **UNITED KINGDOM – OFCOM**

##### **SEXUAL MATERIAL, NUDITY AND BBFC RATINGS:**

Generally, Films Rated BBFC 18 must not be broadcast. According to (Rule 1.26) and (Rule 1.17) material equivalent to the BBFC rating of R18 must not be broadcast at anytime. Yet, these rules are found to be contradicted by (Rule 1.25) mentioned above & (Rule 1.23) - stating that BBFC 18-Rated films or their equivalent must not be broadcasted before 9 PM or after 5 AM on any service (Except for pay per view services), and even then they may be unsuitable for broadcast. [The OFCOM Broadcasting Code – Section 1 – Protecting the Under-Eighteens – Films, premium subscription film services, pay per view services / Sexual material – Rules 1.17/ 1.23 / 1.25 / 1.26]

As for “Adult sex material” according to (Rule 1.18) must not be broadcasted at any time other than between 10 PM and 5:30 AM on premium subscription services and pay per view/night service - which operates with mandatory restricted access.



In addition, measures must be taken to make sure the subscriber is an adult. Adult sex material is material that contains images and/or language of a strong sexual nature which is broadcast for the primary purpose of sexual arousal or stimulation.

Furthermore, beside rules 1.6, 1.18 and 2.3 mentioned earlier – broadcasters are required according to (Rule 1.19) that material broadcasted after the watershed which contains images and/or language of a strong or explicit sexual nature, but is not “adult sex material” as defined by (Rule 1.18) above, must be justified by the context. [The OFCOM Broadcasting Code – Section 1 – Protecting the Under-Eighteens – Sexual material – Rule 1.18/ 1.19]

Sexual representations is not allowed before the watershed or when children are likely to be watching or listening according to (Rule 1.20) unless for serious educational purpose and it must be editorially justified and limited.

As for the issue of Nudity, according to (Rule 1.21) Nudity before the watershed must be justified by the context.

## • **INDECENT BROADCAST RESTRICTIONS**

### **UNITED STATES – FCC**

The FCC defined “Indecency” as content that is clearly offensive but not to the level of obscenity. They describe it to include language or material that in context portrays or describes “patently offensive sexual or excretory organs or activities”. This is measured according to the contemporary community standards for the broadcast medium.

Unlike Obscene content, Indecent Content is protected by the First Amendment, hence, cannot be entirely banned. However, in order to protect children from being subjected to such content, Indecent Content is restricted from being aired at certain times when children are most likely to be watching television. [Obscene, Indecent and Profane Broadcasts Consumer Guide – FCC Broadcast Regulations]

### **INDECENCY RULE**

Television and Radio broadcasts that are considered to be “indecent” according to the FCC definition, are prohibited between 6 am and 10 pm.

- **PROFANE BROADCAST RESTRICTIONS**

## **UNITED STATES – FCC**

The FCC defines “Profanity” as content that includes language offensive to members of the public [Obscene, Indecent and Profane Broadcasts Consumer Guide – FCC Broadcast Regulations].

### **PROFANITY RULE**

Television & Radio Broadcasts are prohibited from airing Profane speech from 6 am till 10 pm.

## **UNITED KINGDOM – OFCOM**

### **OFFENSIVE LANGUAGE**

Generally, as required by OFCOM rule 1.14, the offensive and most offensive language must not be broadcast before watershed or when children are likely to be watching. Yet, Rules 1.15 and 1.16, allow offensive language that is justified by context or in exceptional cases in children’s programs.

**Rule 1.15** “Offensive Language must not be used in programs made for younger children except in the most exceptional circumstances”

**Rule 1.16** “Offensive Language must not be broadcast before the watershed (in the case of television) or when children are particularly likely to be listening (in the case of radio), unless it is justified by the context. In any event, frequent use of such language must be avoided before the watershed.”

Its important to highlight the need to define what “Offensive language” and “Younger children” exactly mean. In addition, “except in the most exceptional circumstances” is a very broad and vague term that should be excluded from this rule as it opens up many doors to breaching this rule and giving possibility to add content/language that may harm children. When considering children’s programs, any content that may harm them must be banned in general – be it violence, offensive language or any other content that may prejudice their childhood. Children as defined by OFCOM are those under 15 years old, hence younger children mean even younger than that!

## • VIOLENCE, CRIME AND DANGEROUS BEHAVIOR CONTENT RESTRICTION

### UNITED KINGDOM – OFCOM

Generally according to OFCOM, violence (verbal /physical), as well as dangerous behavior children may imitate, must not be featured in children’s programs unless there is a strong justification. While in other cases, such as before watershed or in times when children may be among the audience - according to the degree of violence - it must not be broadcasted or appropriately limited and justifiable.

**Rule 1.11** “Violence, its after-effects and descriptions of violence, whether verbal or physical, must be appropriately limited in programs broadcast before the watershed (in the case of television) or when children are particularly likely to be listening (in the case of radio) and must be justified by the context.”

**Rule 1.12** “Violence, whether verbal or physical, that is easily imitable by children in a manner that is harmful or dangerous: **A.** Must not be featured in programs made primarily for children unless there is a strong editorial justification. **B.** Must not be featured before the watershed (in television) or when children are particularly listening (in radio), unless there is editorial justification”

**Rule 1.13** “Dangerous Behavior, or the portrayal of dangerous behavior, that is likely to be easily imitable by children in a manner that is harmful: **A.** Must not be featured in programs made primarily for children unless there is a strong editorial justification. **B.** Must not be featured before the watershed (in television) or when children are particularly listening (in radio), unless there is editorial justification”

**Rule 2.4** “Programs must not include material, which condones or glamorizes violent, dangerous or seriously antisocial behavior and is likely to encourage others to copy such behavior – taking into account the context.”

**Rule 2.5** “Methods of suicide and self-harm must not be included in programs except where they are editorially justified and are also justified by the context.”

Regulations and restrictions on violent and dangerous behavior in media is extremely important, especially when it comes to children and minors. Yet, by not defining “Violence” or repeatedly using the term “Unless there is a justification”, OFCOM left an open door for misinterpretation and manipulation. In addition, **Rule 2.4** only mentions “programs” with out clarification, which gives a chance for such issues to be included in other genres such as movies, cartoons, etc. Hence, when it comes to applying such regulations in Egypt, more defined and strict terminologies and rules need to be considered.

- **PROHIBITION OF INCITEMENT TO HATRED**

## **EUROPE – AVMS:**

### **WITHIN THE EU:**

With consideration to the democratic right of free speech, Article (6) obligates authorities in every EU country to ensure that audiovisual media content don't contain any hate speech or incitement to hatred based on race, sex, religion or nationality.

It is important to highlight that the AVMS refers to a banning of a channel as a last resort. It has only been used a few times in the past 20 years with services coming from outside of the EU. [AVMSD – Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred – Article 6]

### **OUTSIDE THE EU:**

Since EU authorities have limited powers to take action against hate speech channels / broadcasters out side the EU, the commission regularly raises the issue in its political dialogue with countries involved – or where the broadcasters are based.

- **DRUGS, SMOKING, SOLVENTS AND ALCOHOL**

## **UNITED KINGDOM – OFCOM**

As required by OFCOM in **Rule 1.10**, broadcasters must generally avoid the including, glamorizing, or encouraging the use of illegal drugs, the abuse of drugs, smoking, solvent abuse and misuse of alcohol in children programs and other programs aired before the watershed unless there is a strong justification for it.

**Rule 1.10** “The use of illegal drugs, the abuse of drugs, smoking, solvent abuse and misuse of alcohol: **A.** Must not be featured in programs made primarily for children unless there is a strong editorial justification. **B.** Must generally be avoided and in any case must not be condoned (made acceptable/allowed as it is morally wrong), encouraged, or glamorized in other programs broadcast before the watershed (in the case of Television) or when children are particularly likely to be listening (in the case of Radio), unless there is editorial justification. **C.** Must not be condoned, encouraged, or glamorized in other programs likely to be widely seen or heard by under-eighteens unless there is editorial justification”

Despite the major importance of such rule, yet it can some how be considered weak as it allows a probability of misuse to some of the terminologies used, such as: “Unless there is editorial justification”. Also, in **1.10 (3)** “Likely to be widely seen or heard” is considerably too broad to be identified or controlled. Hence again, it may be needed to use more specific and strict terminologies when considering applying such rule in Egypt.

- **EXORCISM, THE OCCULT AND THE PARANORMAL**

#### **UNITED KINGDOM – OFCOM**

Generally, exorcism, occult, paranormal content that claims to be real must not be shown before the watershed or when children are likely to be listening. In addition, paranormal activities / practices for entertainment must not be aired when a large number of children are expected to be watching/listening - does not apply to drama, film, comedy. Yet, OFCOM does not specify the times “when significant number of children may be expected to be watching / listening”. Hence, when applying such rule in Egypt, research must be made to highlight the time frame or according to the watershed period, which must also be based on further research.

**Rule 1.27** “Demonstrations of exorcisms, occult practices and the paranormal (which purport to be real), must not be shown before watershed (in the case of television) or when children are likely to be listening (in the case of radio). Paranormal practices, which are for entertainment purposes, must not be broadcasted when significant number of children may be expected to be watching, or are particularly likely to be listening. (This rule does not apply to drama, film, or comedy.)

Additionally, OFCOM also requires content purport to be real, must be treated with objectivity.

**Rule 2.6** “Demonstrations of exorcism, the occult, the paranormal, divination, or practices related to any of these that purport to be real (as opposed to entertainment) must be treated with due objectivity.”

While highlighting that if the content is for entertainment purpose, it must be made clear to audience and listeners.

**Rule 2.7** “If a demonstration of exorcism, the occult, the paranormal, divination, or practices related to any of these is for entertainment purposes, this must be made clear to viewers and listeners.

In both cases, purport to be real or for entertainment purpose, content must not contain “life changing advice”. Which according to OFCOM means containing any direct advice for individuals which they could reasonably act or rely on concerning issues related with health, finance, employment or

relationship. [The OFCOM Broadcasting Code – Section 2 – Harm and Offence – meaning of “life-changing”] **Rule 2.8** “Demonstrations of exorcism, the occult, the paranormal, divination, or practices related to any of these (whether such demonstrations purport to be real or are for entertainment purposes) must not contain life changing advice directed at individuals.”

- **CONTENT ON RELIGION**

#### **UNITED KINGDOM – OFCOM**

Religion, Films, dramas, and fiction are exempt from Rule 2.8. Yet, religious programs must in all cases comply with provisions in Section four of the code stated below.

**Rule 4.7** “Religious programs that contain claims that a living person (or group) has special powers or abilities must treat such claims with due objectivity and must not broadcast such claims when significant numbers of children may be expected to be watching.”

Once more, Rule 4.7 uses the sentence “when significant numbers of children may be expected to be watching” with out clarification, specifying a time frame or even referencing it according to watershed.

- **HYPNOTIC & OTHER TECHNIQUES, SIMULATED NEWS AND PHOTSENSITIVE EPILEPSY**

#### **UNITED KINGDOM – OFCOM**

With media techniques and technologies available, many methods can be used to unconsciously affect peoples’ minds, and thoughts. Taking consideration to that matter, OFCOM obligates broadcasters to ensure that they do not use techniques that might convey **unconscious messages** to viewers.

**Rule 2.11** “Broadcasters must not use techniques which exploit the possibility of conveying a message to viewers or listeners, or of otherwise influencing their minds without their being aware, or fully aware, of what has occurred.”

In addition, programs that may air **hypnosis** shows for example, the person performing hypnosis in a broadcast must not say or demonstrate their complete routine or perform directly to the camera to make sure to protect the audience from being influenced by hypnoses or relevant reaction.

**Rule 2.9** “When broadcasting material featuring demonstrations of hypnotic techniques, broadcasters must exercise a proper degree of responsibility in order to prevent hypnosis and/or adverse reactions in viewers and listeners. The hypnotist must not broadcast his/her full verbal routine or be shown performing straight to the camera.”

When it comes to **acting out news program**, OFCOM obligates that it must be made clear to ensure that there is no possibility audience would misunderstand it for real news.

**Rule 2.10** “**Simulated news** (for example in drama or in documentaries) must be broadcast in such a way that there is no reasonable possibility of the audience being misled into believing that they are listening to, or watching, actual news.”

**Rule 2.12** “Television broadcasters must take precautions to maintain a low level of risk to viewers who have **photosensitive epilepsy**. Where it is not reasonably practicable to follow the OFCOM guidance, and where broadcasters can demonstrate that the broadcasting of flashing lights and/or patterns is editorially justified, viewers should be given an adequate verbal and also, if appropriate, text warning at the start of the program or program item.”

## SECTION SEVEN: INVOLVEMENT OF CHILDREN IN MEDIA

### • COVERAGE OF OFFENCES INVOLVING UNDER-EIGHTEENS

#### UNITED KINGDOM – OFCOM

OFCOM also ensures securing the identification of people under eighteen involved in sexual and criminal offence cases.

In Cases of **sexual offense**, broadcasters are prohibited from identifying minors. Clarifying that this could be either by: reporting limited info that may be pieced together with other info from another source, or unintentionally/accidentally giving inaccurate description or terminology or any other indirect way.

**Rule 1.8** “Where statutory or other legal restrictions apply preventing personal identification, broadcasters should also be particularly careful not to provide clues which may lead to the identification of those who are not yet adult<sup>7</sup> and who are - or might be - involved as a victim, witness, defendant or other perpetrator in the case of sexual offence featured in criminal, civil, or family court proceedings.”

<sup>7</sup> Defining minors age may differ in different parts of the UK

While in covering **criminal offense** cases, there are certain considerations broadcasters must take into account before identifying minors, and justification is a must for broadcasting such material as mentioned in (**Rule 1.9**)

**Rule 1.9** “When covering any pre-trial investigation into an alleged **criminal offense** in the UK, broadcasters should pay particular regard to the potentially vulnerable position of any person who is not yet an adult who is involved as a witness or victim, before broadcasting their name, address, identity of school or other educational establishment, place of work, or any still or moving picture of them. Particular justification is also required for the broadcast of such material relating to the identity of any person who is not yet adult who is involved in the defense as a defendant or potential defendant.”



## • INVOLVEMENT OF PEOPLE UNDER EIGHTEEN IN PROGRAMS

### UNITED KINGDOM – OFCOM

With the consideration that some children / minors are involved in the production process of programs, movies, and media in general, OFCOM has dedicated **Rules: 1.28 / 1.29 / 1.30 / 2.16** to set appropriate measures for this issue. These rules generally ensure / guarantee the dignity as well as the emotional and physical well fare of anyone under 18 involved in programs regardless of any agreements made by them or their guardians. In addition to ensuring that their involvement in a program or the airing of it does not cause them any distress, and that prizes received must be age appropriate to participant and the audience of the program in concern.

**Rule 1.28** “Due care must be taken over the physical and emotional welfare and the dignity of people under eighteen who take part or are otherwise involved in programs. This is irrespective of any consent given by the participant or by a parent, guardian or other person over the age of eighteen in loco parentis.”

This rule (Rule **1.28**) may be a very important rule to consider in the case of Egypt, as children now a day are regularly being exploit in the media production whether in programs, movies, or series.

**Rule 1.29** “People under eighteen must not be caused unnecessary distress or anxiety by their involvement in programs or by the broadcast of those programs.”

This rule uses the term “Unnecessary”, which is considered too vague and may open doors for breaching. Hence, it needs to be clarified in what means may it be necessary to be acceptable to cause distress or anxiety.

**Rule 1.30** “Prizes aimed at children must be appropriate to the age range of both the target audience and the participant”

In this case of (Rule 1.30), a question that needs to be put in consideration is what if the audiences are not the same age group as the participant?

**Rule 2.16** “Broadcast competition prizes must be described accurately”

## SECTION EIGHT: ADVERTISING

- **DEFINITIONS**

### EUROPE – AVMS

The AVMSD gives defines the main terms used in this section for accuracy [AVMSD – Qualitative Requirements for Commercial Communication].

**Audiovisual Commercial Communication** refers to images designed to directly or indirectly promote goods, services, or image of a commercial organization. This is either through Images included in programs, like product placements, or supplement them like traditional advertising).

**Television Advertising** is any form of broadcast announcement. Including paid or other kind of return like self-promotional purposes. This applies to public or private enterprise, as well as persons in connection with a trade, business, craft or profession to promote the supply of goods or services.

**Teleshopping** is direct offers broadcasted to the public with an outlook on the goods or services.

### UNITED KINGDOM – OFCOM

**Commercial references** are any visual or audio references to a product, service, or trade mark (whether related to a commercial or non-commercial organization).

- **COMMERCIAL TIME LIMIT**

### UNITED STATES – FCC

Weekends: 10.5 Minutes / Hour

Weekdays: 12 Minutes / Hour

Limits the commercial time which can be aired in children's television programming (originally produced and aired primarily for an audience of 12 years and younger).

This rule is prorated for programs shorter than one hour in duration. It is imposed on all Television Broadcasters, Cable Operators, Satellite Providers, and All digital video programming, free and paid.

## **EUROPE – AVMS**

As for the quality and frequency of television advertising & teleshopping, according to Article (23) it is prohibited for the duration of advertising & teleshopping spots to take up more than 20 % of any given hour of broadcasting time. This is excluding broadcasters' announcements about their own programs and public service messages and charity broadcasts free of charge [AVMSD – Qualitative Requirements for Commercial Communication – Article 23]. Furthermore, Article (24) states that Teleshopping must last at least 15 minutes and be clearly identifiable [AVMSD – Qualitative Requirements for Commercial Communication – Article 24].

Article (20) highlights that Advertising and Teleshopping should be inserted between programs. Yet, incase it is inserted during programs, it should not harm the integrity of the program or rights holders' interests. During Children's programs, Films, and News Programs, Advertising and Teleshopping are only allowed once every 30 minutes. While no advertising or teleshopping is allowed during religious service [AVMSD – Qualitative Requirements for Commercial Communication – Article 20].

## **• RULES TO COMPLY WITH COMMERCIAL TIME LIMITS**

### **UNITED STATES – FCC**

- COMMERCIAL TELEVISION BROADCASTERS**

Required to place in a Local Public Inspection Files certification as evidence of complying with commercial time limits. When stations file an application to renew FCC licenses, it must certify that no commercial overages occurred during the license term. If they did not comply with commercial time limits – they MUST explain any overages or else be prohibited from renewal.

- CABLE OPERATORS AND SATELLITE PROVIDERS**

Must also provide records verifying their compliance to the commercial time limitations and make these records available to the public. Otherwise, also explain overages.

- NON-COMMERCIAL EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION STATIONS** Prohibited from airing any commercials.

- **DISTINGUISHING COMMERCIALS FROM PROGRAMS**

### **UNITED STATES – FCC**

Young children are vulnerable to commercial messages as they may have difficulty differentiating program material from commercials. Hence, the FCC obligates programs directed at children – 12 years and under – to distinguish program material from commercials by intervening and unrelated program material.

- **PROGRAM-LENGTH COMMERCIALS**

If a program fails to adequately separate program and commercial material, the entire program duration may be considered commercial material – called program-length commercial.

- **HOST SELLING POLICY**

First, the Host Selling Policy prohibits the use of a program talent or other identifiable program characters to deliver commercials. This is during or adjacent to children’s programming featuring that talent or character. Second, it restricts “host selling” in websites where the website address appears in a children’s program. Third, according to this policy, television broadcasters and cable operators are not allowed to display website addresses during or adjacent to a children’s program. This display prohibition applies only when website addresses are displayed during program / or when promotional material is not counted as commercial time. It does not apply to - certain public service announcements, station identifications and emergency announcements.

### **EUROPE – AVMS**

According to the AVMS, Television advertising and teleshopping are subjected to the same rules as any other type of Audiovisual Commercial Communication, yet they also conform to additional strict rules. According to articles (19, 21, 22), AVMS requires that the presentation and content of the television advertising & teleshopping to be easily recognizable and distinguished by audio and visual means from other parts of the program.

Yet, it does not prevent nor restrict the use of new advertising techniques. In addition, advertisement of prescription medication and tobacco products is not permitted. As for alcoholic drinks, advertisers must comply with specific restrictions, and never aim minors. Among other restrictions, alcoholic consumption must not be linked enhanced physical performance or driving, in addition to social or sexual success. It must not also claim resolving issues or encourage consumption through other means [AVMSD – Qualitative Requirements for Commercial Communication – Article 19 - Article 21 - Article 22].

## UNITED KINGDOM – OFCOM

### COMMERCIAL REFERENCES IN TV PROGRAMMING

Again as found in all broadcasting regulations viewed so far, there is a specified section for controlling advertisements that appear on television, which indicates how important it is to consider such issue. This section of the code includes “General Rules” that apply to all commercial references<sup>10</sup> on TV. In addition to “Specific Rules” specified for different types of commercial references.

**<sup>10</sup> Commercial references** are “any visual or audio references – within programming – to a product, service, or trade mark (whether related to a commercial or non-commercial organization).” [OFCOM Broadcasting Code – Commercial references in TV programming – meaning of “Commercial References”]

OFCOM also requires broadcasters to check the separate section “Code On the Scheduling of Television Advertising” – (COSTA)

The rules set by OFCOM regarding commercial references guarantees and ensures maintaining 5 main principles. This includes 1. Editorial independence, 2. Distinction between advertising and editorial content of a program, 3. Transparency of commercial arrangements, 4. Consumer protection from financial harm and surreptitious advertising, 5. Preventing unsuitable sponsorship.

### INDEPENDENCE OF EDITORIAL CONTENT

**Rule 9.1** “Broadcasters must maintain independent editorial control over programming” Clear Distinction of Advertisement from content

**Rule 9.2** “Broadcasters must ensure that editorial content is distinct from advertising” Hidden / Unclear advertising is prohibited

**Rule 9.3** “Surreptitious Advertising<sup>11</sup> is prohibited”

**<sup>11</sup> Surreptitious Advertising** “reference to a product, service or trade mark within a program, intended by broadcaster to serve as advertising and it is not made clear to the audience. Likely to be intentional if it occurs in return for payment or other valuable consideration to the broadcaster or producer.” [OFCOM Broadcasting Code – Commercial references in TV programming – meaning of “Surreptitious Advertising”]

- **ENSURING CONSUMER SAFETY FROM FINANCIAL HARM**

## **UNITED KINGDOM – OFCOM**

**Rule 9.4** “Products, services and trade marks must not be promoted in programming”

An exception to **Rule 9.4** may be found in **Rule 9.31** allowing the promotion of program related material, yet it must be editorially justified and made **only** during or around the related program.

**Rule 9.31** “Program – related material may be promoted only during or around the program from which it is directly derived and only where it is editorially justified.”

Furthermore, if program related material involves promoting availability of a product or service in return for payment then it should be kept distinct from editorial content as it could meet the definition of advertising, similarly to **Rule 9.2** above. [OFCOM Broadcasting Code – Commercial references in TV programming – Program related material note]

**Rule 9.32** “The broadcaster must retain responsibility for ensuring the appropriateness of promoting program- related material.”

**Rule 9.32** is considerably too broad, as the term “appropriateness” needs to be defined.

**Rule 9.5** “No undue prominence may be given in programing to a product, service, or trade mark. Undue prominence may result either from the presence of – or reference to – a product, service, or trade mark in programing where there is no editorial justification. Or the manner in which a product, service, or trademark appears or is referred to in programing.”

Also in relation with these rules are **rules 9.9** and **9.10** in the product placement section.

- **CHARITY APPEALS**

## **UNITED KINGDOM – OFCOM**

Generally, according to OFCOM Charity appeals are only allowed if FREE of charge since they may cause a potential risk that the audience may suffer financial harm. (To ensure consumer protection). In addition, many charities operate in competition with one another. Hence, rules aim to ensure that charity appeal benefit a range of charities.

So, according to **Rule 9.33**, broadcasting charity appeals (FREE of charge) are allowed as long as, the broadcaster took reasonable steps to ensure that there is enough evidence that the organization involved does have a charitable status and is not prohibited from advertising on TV.

While **Rule 9.34** states that “Where possible, the broadcast of charity appeals, either individually or taken together over time, should benefit a wide range of charities.” Despite **Rule 9.34** being beneficial, it is too broad/vague, it needs more explanation.

## • FINANCIAL PROMOTIONS AND INVESTMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

This section could be very beneficial to consider in the Egyptian proposal to aid in financing beneficial educational programming.

### UNITED KINGDOM – OFCOM

OFCOM notes that broadcasters may broadcast requests for donations to make editorial content or fund their service. Since such promotions and recommendations reflect a potential risk of causing financial harm to the audience, “The Code” provides some rules to ensure the four main areas of concern generally regarded for advertising are maintained and protected. First, ensure consumer safety from the potential harm when broadcasters appeal for funds from viewers. Second, ensuring editorial independence. Third, Transparency. Fourth, distinction between advertising and editorial content.

#### APPEALS TO FUND PROGRAMING SERVICES RULES

**Rule 9.36** “Viewers must be told the purpose of the appeal and how much it raises.”

**Rule 9.37** “All dentations must be separately accounted for and used for the purpose for which they were donated”

**Rule 9.38** “Broadcasters must not offer any additional benefits or other incentives to donors.”

**Rule 9.39** “Appeals for funds for programing or services must not be given undue prominence in relation to the overall output of the service.”

**Rule 9.35** “When broadcasting financial promotions and investment recommendations, broadcasters must comply with the relevant provisions in Appendix 4 to this Code”.

- **SPONSORSHIP**

## **EUROPE – AVMS:**

In Article 1(1) (k), the AVMSD identifies Sponsorship as any contribution public or private, shown during a program but not as part of the plot to promote for a sponsor that contributes in financing the program.

In addition, Article (10) set requirements sponsors and sponsored programs need to meet. Obliging sponsors to be clearly identifiable to the audience and not allowing them to influence content or scheduling of programs. In addition to other various restrictions related with specific products and services, and prohibiting the encouragement of direct purchase. [AVMSD – Qualitative Requirements for Commercial Communication – Article 1 (1)(k) – Article (10)]

## **UNITED KINGDOM – OFCOM**

### **DEFINING SPONSORSHIP**

Generally according to OFCOM, sponsorship includes promoting a name, product, service, or trademark in return for financial support of a program. Sponsorship rules are mainly to ensure:

- Editorial Independence
- Distinction of program content from advertising
- Protect against unsuitable sponsorship
- Ensure transparency of sponsorship arrangements

General, sponsorship must only identify the sponsor, it may not encourage any call to action or promote or advertise the sponsor or their product.

Hence, any reference to sponsor resulting from commercial arrangements will be treated as product placement and must comply with product placement rules of the code (9.6 to 9.14).



Yet there are limited circumstances where sponsor can be referenced in a program it is sponsoring based on commercial arrangements. If an accidental reference to a sponsor occurred – not due to commercial agreement – they must still comply with rules **9.1** to **9.5** about the general advertising principles.

## **CONTENT & SCHEDULING**

Sponsorship arrangements should not create or distort program content to become a tool or a vehicle to promote for the sponsor. Rules 9.17 and 9.18 along with Rules 9.1 to 9.5 - (Regarding editorial independence, distinction, hidden adv., consumer safety, and undue prominence) - have the same goal of protecting editorial independence and control over programs from sponsors and advertisers.

Rule 9.17 *“Sponsorship must comply with both the content and scheduling rules that apply to television advertising”*

Rule 9.18 *“A sponsor must not influence the content and/or scheduling of a channel or programing in such a way as to impair the responsibility and editorial independence of the broadcaster”*

## **PROHIBITED AND RESTRICTED “SPONSORS”**

Any sponsor prohibited from advertising on television may not sponsor programs or channels as stated in rule 9.16.

Rule 9.16 *“Programing (including channels) may not be sponsored by any sponsor that is prohibited from advertising on television”.*

Considering Rules 9.11 and 9.13 (Regarding prohibited from Product Placement) in addition to Rule 9.16 mentioned above, Rule 9.23 Obligates that in the case of prohibited product placement, sponsor credits may not be shown.

Rule 9.23 *“Where a sponsor is prohibited from product placing in the program it is sponsoring, sponsorship credits may not be shown during the sponsored program.”*

## **CONTENT PROHIBITED FROM BEING SPONSORED**

Rule 9.15 *“News and current affairs programs<sup>14</sup> must not be sponsored”*

<sup>14</sup> **Current affairs programs** are briefly “programs containing explanation and/or analysis of current events and issues.”

## SPONSORSHIP CREDITS

In addition to Rule 9.23 mentioned earlier regarding Sponsorship credits, broadcasters are also required to consider the following rules in this matter.

**Identification and Requirements:** OFCOM considers Sponsorship Credits as a **must** to clearly identify to the audience - the sponsor, their identity, and the relation between them and the content being sponsored.

**Rule 9.19** “Sponsorship must be clearly identified by means of sponsorship credits. These must make clear: a. The Identity of the sponsor by reference to its name or trade mark. b. The association between the sponsor and the sponsored content

OF COM also requires sponsorship credits to remain brief.

**Rule 9.24** “Where a sponsorship credit is included in a program trail, the credit must remain brief and secondary”

## SCHEDULING SPONSORSHIP CREDITS

Airing of sponsorship credits must be at the beginning and/or during and/or at the end of the program. It May also be broadcasted when entering and/or leaving a commercial break during that sponsored program. While other sponsored content / channels requires sponsor credits to be aired in an appropriate time ensuring the identification of sponsorship to the audience.

**Rule 9.20** “For sponsored programs, credits must be broadcast at the beginning and/or during and/or end of the program.”

## DISTINCTION OF SPONSORSHIP CREDITS

Sponsorship credits must be distinct from editorial content and advertising.

**Rule 9.21** “Sponsorship credits **must be** distinct from editorial content”

In addition, Sponsorship credits around and during sponsored programs must not be encouraging action or purchase.

**Rule 9.22** Sponsorship credits must be distinct from advertising, in particular:

- Sponsorship credit **around** sponsored programs must not contain advertising messages or calls to action. It must not encourage purchase or rental of products or services of sponsor or third party. The focus must be the sponsorship arrangement itself . . . for the sole purpose of helping to identify the sponsor and/or the sponsorship arrangement.

- Sponsorship credits **during** programs must not be unduly prominent. Must consist of a brief, neutral visual or verbal statement identifying the sponsorship arrangement . . . Must be static and must contain no advertising messages, calls to action or any other information about sponsor or its products or services.

## PERMISSIONS, EXCEPTIONS AND REQUIREMENTS OF SPONSORSHIP CREDITS

**Rule 9.25** “Program-related material<sup>\*</sup> may be sponsored and the sponsor may be credited when details of how to obtain the material are given. Any credit must be brief and secondary, and must be separate from any credit for the program sponsor.”

**Rule 9.31** “Program-related material<sup>\*</sup> may be promoted **only** during or around the program from which it is directly derived and **only** where it is editorially justified.”

**Rule 9.32** “The broadcaster must retain responsibility for ensuring the appropriateness of promoting program- related material<sup>\*</sup> .”

<sup>\*</sup> **Program-related material** are generally products or services directly derived from the program to let viewers benefit and engage with the program. It does not count from the advertising amount permitted as long as such reference is made only for editorial reasons, not for advertising. [OFCOM Broadcasting Code – Commercial references in TV programming – Program related material – meaning of “Program-related material”]

## • PRODUCT PLACEMENT (PP)

### EUROPE – AVMS

The AVMSD clarifies the definition of “Product placement” in (ARTICLE 1 (1) (m)) as any form of audiovisual commercial communication featuring or referencing a specific product, service, or trademark within a program in return for payment or other consideration. A reference to a product as part of the program. Article (11) indicates that only programs produced after 19 December 2009 are obligated to abide by the rules on “Product Placement”. In addition, paid Product placement is generally prohibited – especially in children programming. It is only allowed in certain kinds of programming under certain rules and audience must be clearly notified with that. Yet, product placement of some products are prohibited under any circumstances – such as tobacco and prescribed medication.

While on the other hand, “free of charge product placements” – such as those used in prizes and props – are allowed in all kinds of programs – including children’s programming.

Member States have the authorization to decide otherwise. [AVMSD – Qualitative Requirements for Commercial Communication – Article 1 (1)(m) – Article (11)]

The AVMS also provides Member States accessibility to additional strict rules and guidelines to be able to better organize and implement the broadcasting regulation process, that’s as long as these rules comply with the EU law. These rules can be found in (ARTICLE 4) of the AVMSD. [AVMSD – Qualitative Requirements for Commercial Communication – Article (4)]

In relation with Commercial Communication, there is also (ARTICLE 9(1)) – found below in the section for “Protection of minors” – this article provides a list of restriction and prohibited audiovisual commercial content.

## **UNITED KINGDOM – OFCOM**

### **DEFINITION**

OFCOM defines **Product placement** as when a company pays a TV channel or program maker to include its products or brands in a program.

“Product placement is the inclusion in a program of – or of a reference to – a product, service or trade mark where the inclusion is for a commercial purpose, and is in return for the making of any payment, or the giving or other valuable consideration, to any relevant provider or any person connected with a relevant provider, and is not prop placement.” [OFCOM Broadcasting Code – Commercial references in TV programming – Product placement (and prop placement) – meaning of “Product placement” (statutory definition in the UK legislation)]

The Broadcasting Code sets rules about What, Where and How Product placement should be allowed according to European and UK law. These rules apply to all programs broadcast on channels licensed by OFCOM, in addition to some channels broadcasted outside the UK.

### **PROGRAMS ALLOWED TO INCLUDE PRODUCT PLACEMENT**

Product placement is allowed in the UK only for certain types of program genres such as those stated in Rule 9.6 of the code.

Rule 9.6 “*Product placement is prohibited except in the following program genres: a. Films (including Dramas and Documentaries) made for cinema, television or other audiovisual media services. b. Series made for television or other audiovisual media services (Including serials) c. Sports programs d. Light entertainment programs*” Despite that, OFCOM does not define what “Light entertainment programs” mean.

## **PROGRAMS NOT ALLOWED TO INCLUDE PRODUCT PLACEMENT**

While those programs genres must comply with the rules set by the Broadcasting code in regard to product placement, some programs in these genres made for UK audience are prohibited to include product placement all together such as those set out in Rule 9.7 and 9.12.

Rule 9.7 “Programs that fall within the permitted genres must not contain product placement if they are: a. News programs.  
b. Children’s programs<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Children’s program in this context is “a program made for a television program service or an on-demand program service, and for viewing primarily by persons under the age of sixteen.” [OFCOM Broadcasting Code – Commercial references in TV programming – Product placement (and prop placement) – meaning of “**Children’s Program**”]

Although in an earlier section of the code, OFCOM defines children as those under 15.

**Rule 9.12** “Product placement is not permitted in the following: **a.** Religious programs. **b.** Consumer advice programs. **c.** Current affairs programs”

## **PRODUCT PLACEMENT GENERAL RULES**

Product placement must not influence content and scheduling of a program according to **Rule 9.8.**

**Rule 9.8** “Product placement must not influence the content and scheduling of a program in a way that affects the responsibility and editorial independence of the broadcaster.”

On a side note, OFCOM clarifies that there must always be sufficient editorial justification to include product placement. It has to be relevant to what the program is about, and not create or distort content to serve the purpose of product placement.

## **PRODUCT PLACEMENT CONTENT MUST NOT BE PROMOTIONAL**

According to **Rules 9.9** and **9.10**, references to placed products, services, and trade marks **must not** be promotional or unduly prominent. This means it should not give products or services too much prominence. Broadcasters are also required to refer to “the OFCOM Guidance” for further info on how to apply these two rules.

## PROHIBITED PRODUCTS

**Rules 9.11 and 9.13** of the broadcasting code restrict certain products to be product placed. Yet, this section is really important to consider when regarding advertising in general in the Egyptian case, as the huge amount of advertising and low quality standards advertised is one of the main problems parents and many people complain about in Egyptian television now a day.

For instance, Products that cannot be placed in any program in general include medicines that may only be prescribed, in addition to Cigarettes and other tobacco products.

In UK programs, guns and weapons are not allowed to be advertised. In addition, product placement can't include various products and services. This includes but not limited to alcoholic drinks, gambling products, prescription medicines, baby milk, food and drink that is high in fat, salt, or sugar (HFSS)

**13**

**13** Foods / products High in Fat, Salt, or Sugar – **HFSS** – are defined by the nutrient profiling scheme which was devised by the UK's **Food Standards Agency**. [OFCOM Broadcasting Code – Commercial references in TV programming – Product placement (and prop placement) – note on HFSS]

**Rule 9.11** “The product placement of the following products, services, or trade mark is prohibited: a. Cigarettes or other tobacco products, b. Placement by or on behalf of an undertaking whose principal activity is the manufacture or sale of cigarettes or other tobacco products, c. Prescription-only medicines”

**Rule 9.13** “The product placement of the following is prohibited: 1. Alcoholic drinks, 2. Foods or drinks high in fat, salt, or sugar (“HFSS”), 3. Gambling, 4. Infant formula (baby milk), including follow-on formula, 5. All medical products, 6. Electronic or smokeless cigarettes, cigarette lighters, cigarette papers, or pipes intended for smoking, 7. Any product, service, or trade mark that is not allowed to be advertised on television.

## PRODUCT PLACEMENT IDENTIFICATION

If a UK program contains product placement, the TV channel is required to display a special logo to make audience aware that the program makers were paid to include products in that program.

**Rule 9.14** “Product placement **must** be signaled clearly, by means of a universal neutral logo, as follows: **a.** At the beginning of the program which the placement appears, **b.** When the program recommences after commercial breaks, **c.** At the end of the program”

In addition, when a broadcaster acquires a program with product placement – that they did not produce, commission the program personally or through someone else they know or are related to (for example programs coming from out side the UK or that were originally broadcasted outside UK) there is no signaling requirement. While they do not have to display the PP logo, yet they must comply with other

relevant rules. Yet, any program that was intended to air in an OFCOM licensed channel – even if aired outside UK – has to display the product placement logo.

On the other hand, when a broadcaster acquires a program from a 3<sup>rd</sup> party on the condition to air the product placement included in that program, broadcaster must ensure that the audience are made aware of that product placement.

## **PROP PLACEMENT**

- **UNITED KINGDOM – OFCOM**

Unlike product placement, prop placement is not paid for to be included. Broadcasters may pay to get them or sometimes get them for free, rather than getting paid to include them.

- **DEFINITION**

“Inclusion in a program of - or of a reference to – a product, service, or trademark where the provision of the product, service, or trade mark had no significant value, and no relevant provider – or person connected with a relevant provider - has received any payment or other valuable consideration in relation to its inclusion in, or the references to it in, the program, disregarding the costs saved by including the product, service or trade mark or a reference to it in a program.”  
[OFCOM Broadcasting Code – Commercial references in TV programming – Product placement (and prop placement) – meaning of “Prop placement”]

Prop placement involving the supply of products or services that are of “significant value” will be treated as product placement and must comply with rules 9.6 to 9.14

## **SECTION NINE: THE PROTECTION OF MINORS FROM COMMERCIAL COMMUNICATION**

### **EUROPE – AVMS:**

Articles [1(1)(k) / 1(1)(m) / 4 / 10 / 11 / 19 / 20 / 21 / 22 / 23 / 24 / 25 / 26] provide rules and regulations to protect the general public, especially vulnerable audience including children - from Television advertising, sponsorships, and product placements. Yet, the AVMSD adds Articles [1(1)(h) and 9(1)] specifically and directly targeting the protection of minors from audiovisual commercial communication (AVCC). These articles generally define Audiovisual Commercial Communication (AVCC) and Mandate that AVCC must not Cause Physical or Mental harm to minors, directly exploit minors' inexperience or credulity, encourage minors to pressurize parents to make a purchase or Aim alcohol audiovisual commercial communication at Minors nor encourage excessive alcoholic consumption [AVMSD – Protection of Minors – Article **1(1)(h)** – Article **9(1)**].

## **SECTION TEN: PARENTAL CONTROLS**

### **UNITED STATES – FCC**

- **CHILD SAFE VIEWING ACT**

Passed by the Congress in 2007 to direct the FCC to study advanced blocking technologies that may be used to protect children from indecent or objectionable audio or visual programming. Giving special focus on studying currently available blocking technologies and rating systems [FCC-The v-chip: Putting Restrictions on What your child watch].

In 2009, the FCC findings highlighted the availability of advanced blocking technologies and parental controls. Yet, there was nothing available that works on all types of media platforms. In addition, available technologies varied in means of cost, adoption rate, and consumer awareness. They also found a need to educate parents on the most effective means available for television parental control. Finally, also in 2009, the FCC issued a notice of inquiry titled “Empowering parents and protecting children in an evolving media”. The purpose of this inquiry was to elaborate means to help parents and children take advantage of the opportunities available through electronic media while protecting children from their risks.



- **THE V-CHIP:**

The V-chip is like a content filter for parental control. It works in parallel with the U.S. Rating system, allowing parents to block television content with specified ratings they wouldn't want their children to watch. It is important to note that the V-chip may work on any rating system.

- **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE V-CHIP:**

In order to implement the V-Chip parental control, starting January 2000, the FCC required that all new television sets 13" or larger must include a V-Chip.

In addition, "Digital-to-analog converter boxes" used on older analog televisions with antenna must also add V-Chips. [FCC-The v-chip: Putting Restrictions on What your child watch]. Those who have old TV sets with no v-chip and pay for TV service, have the right to ask their supplier to provide them with a setup box with a v-chip, with a possible extra fee. Further more, The FCC also obligates that personal computers with a television receiver and a monitor 13 inch or more, must have a v-chip as well [FCC-The v-chip: Putting Restrictions on What your child watch].

## **EUROPE – AVMS:**

The AVMS directive highlights the fact that protection of minors cannot work without parental responsibility. In 1999, the Directive obligated the commission to submit a study on the advantages and disadvantages of methods that would facilitate parental control of what their children watch, including – but not limited to – filters, rating systems, etc.

## **SECTION ELEVEN: PROMOTING LOCAL DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAMING (WITH LIMITED ADVERTISING)**

This section is considered very important in regard to the issue of promoting local production and programing of the country in order to promote, protect and strengthen its National Identity and Culture, while gaining more financial contribution from this production. This also relates to the over-all purpose of this paper in promoting the production of adequate Local Egyptian innovative children programming.

### **UNITED STATES – FCC:**

- **Children’s Television Act (CTA):**

Television has been proven to have a potential to significantly shape our children’s development. Hence, in 1990, the U.S. Congress enacted the **Children’s Television Act (CTA)** to increase the amount of educational and informational programming available on television for children. This act obligates both commercial and non-commercial broadcast stations to offer educational and informational children’s programming. In addition, Television licensees, Cable operators and Satellite providers **MUST** limit the amount of commercials aired during children’s programming.

“The CTA requires each broadcast television station in the United States to serve the educational and informational needs of children through its overall programming, including programming specifically designed to serve these needs (Core Programming).” “It also Limits the amount of time broadcasters and cable operators can devote to advertisements during children’s programs.” – [FCC – Children’s Educational Television / Consumer Guide]

- **CORE PROGRAMING:**

According to the FCC description, Core Programming is designed to serve the educational, informational, intellectual / cognitive, social and emotional needs of children 16 years old and under. According to the FCC, core programing is mainly identified to serve the educational and informational needs of children. In addition, it must have a duration of at least 30 minutes and aired between 7 am and 10 pm with a regularly scheduled weekly program.

The FCC also requires to identify core programing through displaying the symbol E/I on the television screen throughout the full airing of the program. This is to indicate that the program aired is specially designed to educate and inform children.

- **RULES AND GUIDELINES TO IMPLEMENT CTA:**

To make sure the CTA is implemented properly, the FCC has imposed some rules and regulations. First, Television stations must air at least 3 hours per week of Core Programs. Second, Core Programs must be identified by displaying the symbol E/I through out the program. Third, stations are also required to provide information about core programs in advance to parents and consumers to notify them when the program will be aired. Fourth, FCC requires Commercial TV stations to Complete and File Quarterly Children’s Television Programming Reports. This is to identify the stations core programs “Educational / Informational programming” along with any other efforts to comply with the CTA and FCC obligations. They also need to make these reports available to the public.

As for Digital Broadcasters, FCC obligates them to air at least 3 hours per week of core programming on the stations main programming stream. Digital Broadcasters that choose to multicast more than one stream of video programming, the minimum amount of core programming the station must air increases in proportion to the amount of free video programming offered by the broadcaster on multicast channels. In addition, all Digital Broadcasters Must Comply with Commercial time limitations set in another section. Furthermore, the FCC restricts the display of commercial website address during children’s programming – for both analog and digital programming. The display of internet website addresses during programs directed to children, 12 years and under, is allowed only if website meets certain criteria. To meet this criteria, websites must offer substantial amount of “bona-fide program related” or other non-commercial content. In addition, such websites must not be primarily intended for commercial purpose, including e-commerce or advertising. Moreover, the page that viewers are directed to on that website must not be used for e-commerce, advertising, or other commercial purposes either. For example, must not contain links with “store” label, or links to another page with commercial material. Furthermore, in addition to the “Host Selling Policy”, website ‘Home Page’ and other ‘Menu Pages’ must also be clearly labeled to distinguish the commercial from non-commercial sections.

## **EUROPE – AVMS:**

- **PROMOTION AND DISTRIBUTION OF EUROPEAN WORKS**

The AVMS directive highlights their overall goal to promote cultural diversity and heritage in Europe by strengthening the competitiveness of the European audiovisual industry. Mainly articles 1, 13, 16 and 17 of the directive are aimed for this purpose, with guidelines to help in better understanding, and monitoring the implementation of these rules.

ARTICLE (1) Mainly focuses on legally defining which Audiovisual Productions are considered “European Works” and which are not. It defines “European works” mainly as works originating in Member States, as well as European Third States party to the European Convention on Transfrontier Television of the Council of Europe. This includes work made by or supervised and controlled by one or more producers established in one or more of those States [AVMSD – Promotion & Distribution of European Works – Article (1)].

While the goals of (ARTICLES 13, 16 and 17) are mainly to promote the “European Works”. ARTICLE (13) Focus on the “On-demand audiovisual media service” and its ability to promote - the production of and access to - “European Works” by obligating Member States to report to the commission every 4 years on the implementation of European works in on-demand services, then the commission reports to the European Parliament and Council [AVMSD – Promotion & Distribution of European Works – Article (13)]. While (ARTICLE 16) mainly requires broadcasters to reserve the majority of their transmission time for European works in general – not specifying how that is to be calculated. ARTICLE (17) requires them to reserve at least 10 % of their transmission time or alternatively 10 % of their programming budget for recent European works created by independent producers [AVMSD – Promotion & Distribution of European Works – Article (16) – Article (17)].

## **SECTION TWELVE: ENFORCEMENT PROCEDURES**

### **UNITED STATES – FCC**

First of all, enforcement of obscene / indecent / profane material rule is based on documented complaints from the public. After reviewing, if violation really did occur, further investigation is made.

Context is the main determinant when it comes to whether certain material really is considered obscene, indecent, or profane. In that regard, when the FCC staff receive a complaint they must analyze what was actually aired, the meaning of what was aired, and the context in which it was aired. Hence, in addition to the date and time of the broadcast, the complainant must provide detailed information on what was exactly said or depicted during the broadcast. In addition to the channel or frequency of the accused station.

Next, if the information provided in the complaint is not sufficient enough to prove the violation of obscene / indecent / profane material rule – FCC staff sends the complainant a letter denying the complaint, or deny it through public order. They may also send a dismissal letter explaining the deficiencies and how to reinstate it. In this case, complainant can file a petition or reconsideration through re-filing with additional information required.

On the other hand, if the FCC determines that the material complained about was in fact obscene, indecent or profane, a notice of apparent liability (NAL) is issued. The NAL is a preliminary finding that the law of the FCC rules has been violated [obscene, indecent and profane broadcasts consumer guide – FCC broadcast regulations]. When FCC issues a Forfeiture Order, this preliminary finding may be Confirmed, Reduced, or Rescinded.

## **SECTION THIRTEEN: PARENTAL GUIDE TO FINDING EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING**

### **UNITED STATES – FCC:**

#### **KidVid - SEARCH ENGINE FOR PARENTS**

On the FCC Website, Parents can find something similar to a search engine to find educational programming for their child, from a list of educational and instructional programming - through a tool the FCC has provided called **KidVid** – Showing channels, schedules, and websites for programs from commercial broadcast television available in the parents' area.

### **EUROPE – AVMS:**

#### **IDENTIFICATION OF MEDIA SERVICE PROVIDERS**

In Article 5, the AVMSD obligates Member States to ensure that audience can have easy, direct, and permanent access to necessary information about the media provider at any time needed. This includes the media service provider name, their geographical address of establishment and direct contact information containing electronic mail address or website for rapid communication [AVMSD - Principle of Identification – Article 5].

## **SECTION FOURTEEN: ACCESSIBILITY FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

### **EUROPE – AVMS:**

According to ARTICLE (7), member states must encourage service providers under their authority, to ensure accessibility for people with visual or hearing disability. This includes elders and suggests accessibility through sign language, subtitles, audio description and easy menu navigation [AVMSD – Accessibility for people with disabilities – Article 7].

## **SECTION FIFTEEN: PROTECTION OF MINORS IN ON-DEMAND SERVICES (ONLINE)**

### **EUROPE – AVMS:**

With the recent technological outburst, online content is becoming the new trend of the coming generations that is considered of growing importance. Now kids starting the age of 2 years old – if not earlier – are using Ipads, laptops, mobile phones and other on-demand services – on their own or with the help of their parents – to watch videos, cartoons, or play games. Hence, *The Audiovisual Media Service Directive (AVMSD)* provided rules to regulate on-demand service, in order to protect minors from harmful or inappropriate content they might find. Article (12) obligates Member States to make sure that children / minors don't have access to on-demand media content that might harm them [AVMSD – Protection of Minors – Article (12)]

### **• RECOMMENDATION ON THE PROTECTION OF MINORS & HUMAN DIGNITY:**

The AVMSD supplements (Article 12) with the 1998 first legal rule regarding online content of audiovisual and information services. In addition to the 2006 Recommendations on the protection of minors and human dignity by the European Parliament and Council. This also helped in understanding the new challenges in electronic media and online services that may need to be considered in that process.

The 1998 Recommendation Calls for guidelines to develop National Self-Regulation through National Legislation to protect minors and human dignity in all electronic media. Generally, this recommendation asks Television Broadcasters to try new digital methods of parental control (ex. Personal codes, control chips (such as that in the US), and filtering systems). While requiring Online Internet Service Providers to develop codes of good conduct to better apply and clarify current legislation [AVMS – Protection of Minors and Human Dignity – 1998 Recommendations]. Where as the **2006 Recommendation** – Based on the 1998 Recommendation – extends the scope to include several online media concerns. This includes media literacy, sharing the experience and practices between self-regulation, co-regulation, and regulatory bodies, taking action against discrimination in all media, and the right to reply. According to the 2006 Recommendations, Member States are required to consider various aspects. First, promoting measures to combat all illegal activities harmful to minors on the internet. Second, drawing up codes of conduct in cooperation with professional and regulatory authorities at national and community level. Third, encouraging the audiovisual and on-line information services industry to avoid and combat all discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation, without infringing freedom of expression or of the press. Fourth, taking actions to enable minors' responsible use of audiovisual and on-line information services, in particular through media literacy. They also encourage the audiovisual and online information service industry to step up its efforts through positive measures for the co-operation and exchange of the best practices between regulatory, self-regulatory, and co-regulatory bodies, in addition to, creating filters that would prevent pornography from the Internet and increase content labeling.

With the fast pace of technological development in consideration, Member States are required to promote and develop appropriate means other than legal regulations to adapt with these developments, including co-regulation and self-regulation. The AVMS considers that their Directive and the 1998 and 2006 recommendations complement each other.

## CONCLUSION

This section mainly reviewed three of the most important regulatory bodies world wide and the policies and regulations they have set in order to protect children and minors from harmful media content. Defining “harmful content” may vary, yet it generally includes bad / unacceptable behavior, violence, offensive language, sexual content, and other explicit material that children may try to imitate or be influenced by mentally and psychologically. Despite different meaning these terms may hold, or how each country or person may define them, it is to a high extent agreed that they are not accepted in general.

## **Remarks on the Regulatory Bodies and Policies:**

Generally, when dealing with children's policies, first thing that is required by all 3 regulatory bodies is to define "Children" more clearly. As for example, US states in one section that children "16 and under" then in another part they mention "Children 12 and under".

### **The FCC – (US):**

Could be considered the briefest system and policies, yet considering some very important issues in an efficient manner such as:

- A Rating System
- Commercial Time Limitations
- Profane and Obscenity Rules

### **AVMS – (Europe):**

Very simple and the most organized of all 3 bodies, yet considering most of the important issues that all serve the public's interest. As mentioned above, "it was interesting to find out that despite one out of 8 main areas of regulations in the AVMSD exclusively focused on the protection of minors, yet most of the remaining 7 were in one way or another also related to protecting children and minors which are considered the most "vulnerable audience".

### **OFCOM – (UK):**

The most complicated and strict system, it contains very specified and detailed policies – with special excel in content limitation – yet, some sections may need reconsiderations of terminologies used in order not to be too vague as they are, in order to avoid breaching.



## **SECTION (8)**

### **MEDIA IN EGYPT**

With the introduction of private media, satellite channels, and online content, it became harder to monitor and control the enormous amount of content provided. Hence, it is not only important to study and understand the nature of children programming, but also consider policies to protect children from content that might not be appropriate for their age. As well as, promote more developmental programming appealing for children at different age groups. Yet, in order to promote and increase healthy media content for children, several factors must be put in consideration. First, we need to take a closer look at what children actually watch now days, as well as the options available for them.

Basic research suggests that many Egyptian children watch around 3 – 4 hours of television each day, this is around 21 hours weekly, 90 hours Monthly, 1095 hours yearly. As a minimum suggestion, this is approximately one month and half of each year of their lives. Television viewership is known to increase a lot more on weekends, holidays, and vacations.

As a national goal, most developed countries started building more developmental media content, as well as creating policies to protect their children from harmful media content. Yet, unfortunately this is not the case in most developing countries such as Egypt.

#### **HISTORY OF CHILDREN PROGRAMS IN EGYPT**

Children's programming in Egypt dates back to the 1960's with a show called 'Asafir AlGanah' or Paradise Birds. This weekly episode presented by Prominent Egyptian presenter Salwa Hegazy, was among the earliest shows designed for Children in Egypt. In an online article about old children programs in Egypt, the author - Mohamed Fathy – describes that Salwa Hegazy was the first Egyptian presenter to be called 'Mother'. In addition to being an intellectual lady, Salwa Hegazy was also a poet. She won several poetry prizes, while some of her work was even translated and published in French. Hosting a program containing valuable messages, in addition to her uniqueness, she easily entered children's hearts and remained a memorable person in their life.

After Salwa Hegazy passed away in 1973, in continuation of the "Paradise Birds" program; a similarly selected presenter – Nagwa Ibrahim - presented the new version of the program.

As described in an online article that Nagwa Ibrahim was very interactive with the talented children that appeared in this new version of the program, one of them became a prominent actor now a day – Layla Elwy.

**Sabah Elkheer** was also a weekly episode program aired on Channel 1 from National TV. In this program, Nagwa Ibrahim (Or as known back then Mma Nagwa) would appear with Bo2loz (a puppet created by Mahmoud Rahmy Creator of the famous Egyptian Children program “Boggy & Tamtam”). Bo2loz was narrated by actor Sayed Azmy who was said to have an incredible ability for the voice over adding a fun spirit to the character, which was also one of the factors that added to the success of the program. Generally, we can say the fun spirit and interaction and connection the whole cast had with the children was a very important factor in the success of this program. After a while, due to financial issues the program stopped airing for years, and came back with a new version that was not successful and soon after also stopped airing.

In the 80’s another weekly episode program was introduced, known as ‘Cinema El-Atfal’ (Kids Cinema), airing old animation movies. This program was hosted by Afaf Alhelawy, another host that was later called ‘Mma Afaf’. While the movie played presenter Afaf Alhelawy would translate the movie. But the unique part about this program is that most of the children in the 80’s memorizes the programs title song “Cinema Alafal Cinema”. Later on, Afaf Alhelawy decided to retire from appearing on television all together, and once again that brought this program to an end.

During the 1990’s, came another successful hit in programs targeted to children, known as ‘Arousty’ ( My Toy). Presented by Samya Sharaby (Also known as Mma Samya) along with 2 new puppet characters (Mizo and Misho), who use to quarrel together along the program. Despite the simplicity of the riddles they provided; yet, the show continued for several years. This show was more of a guessing game, where they tell the children several clues / info to be able to guess the right answer of what these clues were talking about using the theme word “Arousty”. Also during the 90’s, came a show known as ‘Yo7ka Anna’ (Once upon a time). This was actually considered the first television attempt to switch from female presenters in children programming to male presenters. In addition to referring to a presenter as (Father) rather than (Mother). Yo7ka Anna became a very successful story telling program presented by Maged Abd El-Razek, that use to read to children around 5 years old in the studio different kinds of stories and comment on them till he was almost 50 years old. Maged AbdEl-Razk was known for his calm and heartfelt way in presenting. To an extent that some described getting the feeling that he would come out of the screen at anytime to hug you and kiss you and go back to continue the program.

During the new millennium, 2000's came another program called *Le3b 3yal* (Child play). This program was mainly supposing to be like a serious conversation between the presenter and the children about different topics. Yet, responses from young children were very spontaneous and funny, one of the reasons the program was a hit at its time. It started with the entrance of satellite television to Egyptian homes. Presented by the prominent Egyptian actor Ahmed Helmy (which later also presented another children's program called "Man syrbah al Bonbon (who will win the Bonbon) – Same idea of who wants to be a millionaire but with questions suitable for children and prizes relevant to their age group – Considered an educational program". Both programs considered among the most successful children programs due to the spontaneity by Ahmed Helmy and the children. In addition to those main television programs for children, during the late 80's and early 90's there were also the famously known, *Boggy & Tamtam*, *Amou Foad*, *Nelly & Sherihan Riddles*. In addition to *Bakkar*, and several other cartoons and programs that might have not reached the same popularity, yet, use to gather the whole family around the TV set, not only children. Finally, in 2016, came a program called *Banat w Welad* (Boys and Girls), presented by *Salma Sabahy*.

The mentioned programs were briefly considered the top known children programs from the 60's till today, unfortunately for the past several years and since the beginning of satellite most children have been introduced to a new world of media, where they not only have access to cartoons and kids programming, but everything else with no restrictions. Since Egypt has not been very effective in producing the required amount of "suitable" children programing (in means of content and way of presenting it) most Egyptian children are now spending their time absorbing foreign content, ideas, traditions, and behaviors.

## **MEDIA REGULATORY BODY AND POLICIES IN EGYPT**

In 2016, The Supreme Council for Media Regulation (SCMR) was established in Egypt, yet its role and efficiency has been a matter of debate that will be discussed further in the data analysis section. The SCMR recently created media regulatory code, yet, unfortunately, this code is too broad, and lacks recognition to the protection of minors from harmful content or increasing more specialized local content for Egyptian Children (Like most international bodies). In addition, most importantly, it Lacks activation and efficient implementation.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

When it comes to media and children, two grand claims arise. Optimists see new opportunities for a huge expansion of available knowledge, creativity, self-expression, and participation, hence supporting diversity, difference and debate. Although this could lead to positive human development, on the other hand, others fear the end of childhood, innocence and traditional values, that's where media can have a negative impact on people [Livingstone, Sonia (2002); Alharafsh, Khaled Abdel Aziz, (2011)]. When it comes to education, opinions also vary whether television assists in educational delay or development [Alharafsh, Khaled Abdel Aziz, (2011)]. Since both claims may have a taste from reality, it is important to take both perspectives in consideration when trying to regulate such diverse and powerful medium.

This research tackles media issues along with child development; hence, various theoretical frameworks within communication, psychology, and child development literature will be used to provide different perspectives to serve the purpose of this research. Each of these theories along with the most common Child development theories provided later in this research contains separate qualities that will offer a better understanding and explanation of the phenomenon observed.

The first theory used is The Social Learning/Cognitive Theory (SLT)/(SCT). The second is Displacement Theory. Last but not least is The Cultivation Theory. In addition to the three main theories this research focuses on, other theories like Hypodermic needle / magic bullet theory, Mainstreaming, Reinforcement theory, Agenda Setting theory, and social cues approach could also be considered very valid theories to this research.

## **1. SOCIAL LEARNING THEORY (SLT)**

### **SOCIAL COGNITIVE THEORY (SCT)** (expanded version of SLT)

Since the beginning of time, people have been learning through observation of different models around them. Children gain experience, morals and behavioral models through social raising, family behaviors or practices, nurseries, schools, religious entities, friends, and communication mediums [Alhamami, Hashem, (2015)].

It can be said that Children's culture is actually a mix of traditions and norms. Children inherit thoughts, opinions and traditions from their parents, families as well as the environment they live in, eventually, creating society. [Alhamami, Hashem (2015)]

Although family and school may be highly influential on children, yet media also has an incredibly high ability to change people's perspectives, views and behaviors. Surrounding children's daily lives, through its variety of content and forms, media is considered to have a complementary role to families in raising children, assisting in children's social learning before they even get to school [Alharafsh, Khaled Abdel Aziz, (2011); Alhamami, Hashem, (2015)].

Social and Cognitive Learning theories will be a main framework used for this research. Since every day media is becoming more and more integrated as a main source of information and non-dispensable part of children's daily life, I find this theory essential in providing a better understanding of how Media content could possibly be affecting and reflecting on children in Egypt now days. In addition to identifying to what extent media could be influencing our children's thoughts and behaviors physically and verbally. Hence, contributing to verify our need to set recommended polices limit harmful impact while benefiting from that influential medium for positive development.

### **SOCIAL LEARNING THEORY - SLT**

SLT, the first theory proposed for this research is an early 1960's theory by Albert Bandura – expanded on later in 1977 – suggests that behavior is acquired through observational learning of the environment, meaning that people learn by observing others [Bandura (1986) retrieved from Brett (2011) p.4: McLeod (2011)]. SLT combines behavioral and cognitive theories [O'Rourke, 2003, 2006]. Bandura suggests that internal and external forces are equally important in influencing behavior [O'Rourke, 2003, 2006] explaining that research demonstrated repeatedly that responses induced by underlying forces might be stimulated, reinstated, or even eliminated just by changing external sources of influence or environmental forces [Bandura, 1971].

Various personality doctrines explain that behavior resides in inner forces such as beliefs, needs, cognitive knowledge, drives and impulses that often operate unconsciously for being formulated through absorbed and accumulated processing of the surrounding environment during the early years of childhood where major development takes place [Bandura, 1971: O'Rourke, 2003/2006]. While others support the impact of externalities of environmental factors including resources, physical setting and consequences that follow the action or behavior [O'Rourke, 2003/2006]

## **BOBO DOLL EXPERIMENT**

In 1961, Bandura conducted what was known as the “bobo doll experiment” where he tests 36 girls and 36 boys ages 3 to 6 to test children’s aggression learning through modeling, proving that children do learn social behavior including violence and aggression through observation of others.

Children were divided to three groups where one was exposed to viewing a violent model, the second group was exposed to a non-violent model, and the third group was not exposed to any model at all. All children were pretested to evaluate their violence and aggression levels before the experiment took place. Each child entered separately in a room filled with toys and things to play with – violent and non-violent – in addition to a large balloon like doll “bobo doll” and left to play with whatever they choose, most children from all groups ignored the bobo doll before the model entrance. After observing the behavior of the child playing alone, a model then enters the room.

Children from group (A) witness - the aggressive model – attacking the bobo doll, physically and verbally. While group (B) witness - the non-aggressive model - sitting quietly playing with non-violent toys ignoring the bobo doll. As for group (C) – no model enters with the child at all.

Results show that children who were exposed to the aggressive model responded with more imitated and non-imitated aggression than those who were exposed to the non-aggressive model or no model. Boys were more likely to imitate physical aggression and aggression made by the same gender than the opposite gender. [McLeod, 2011, 2014]

## **CRITICISM AND RESPONSE**

Whether controlled by inner forces, or external influences, these concepts were challenged, criticized and faced several limitations for claiming that a person is driven helplessly by these unconscious factors, which underestimates and neglects human cognitive power and intellectual capabilities.

In response to that, Bandura explains that from a social learning view, a person is not controlled by either views, but rather through “continuous reciprocal interaction between behavior and its controlling conditions” [p.2]. Bandura (1977) explains that modeling is more than simple imitation, but rather the behavior that follows exposure may be influenced by the rules made through observation of what is the appropriate behavior, the context of the observed behavior, in addition to consequences or rewards that follow [Van Evra, 2004, p.4]. This clarifies that learning and development are in fact influenced by cognition, behavior and environment [Bandura (1986) from Brett (2011) p.4] rather than a “Monkey see Monkey do” process. In that sense, a person will observe the behavior in action as well as taking in consideration the environmental circumstances and consequences of the behavior before imitation. Of course, with children, cognitive understanding is different from that of an adult.

### **SOCIAL COGNITIVE THEORY – SCT**

Later on, Social Cognitive theory came as an expansion by Bandura (1986,1994) to the Social Learning Theory, providing a more in-depth understanding of the learning process, distinguishing between learning and performing behaviors. SCT was widely used to explain how viewers might learn aggression through media violence, suggesting that new behaviors can be acquired directly through experience or indirectly through model observation. Yet, a person does not perform everything they learn, but rather, absorbed information goes through a process that includes Attention, retention, behavior production and motivation, which may or may not lead to performing the behavior [Evara, 2004]. Also as discussed later in this research that one’s behavior is also impacted with other external factors including age, gender, family background, previous experience, cognitive and social level, etc.

For example, Alharafsh, Khaled Abdel Aziz, (2011) states that the impact level of television on children could be influenced by previously gained factors from social upbringing or other surroundings away from television, which could actually impact whether or not one accepts content and how they perceive it.

Many scholars agree that a child could gain behaviors from surrounding social environment, hence, with higher viewership, many of our children’s acquired knowledge could actually come from what they see on television, and in sometimes even learning how to deal in many situations as viewed on television and imitating characters they see in media, especially if their upbringing or previously gained experience and knowledge aids in accepting television content with no logical analysis [Alharafsh, Khaled Abdel Aziz, (2011)]. Of course the younger the age and the less experience one has to distinguish between realistic and unrealistic becomes harder.

Personally, I believe attention and motivation are two of the main factors that contribute in one's behavior. The attention process determines what the observer picks up from what is viewed, is influenced by the observer's cognitive skills, preferences, values, preconceptions and the observed action relevance or importance to the observer [Evara, 2004]. Even if a person learns a certain behavior, that does not determine whether the person actually preforms it or not.

Choosing whether to actually preform a certain behavior or not can be determined by several factors, including but not limited to personal standards and values, in addition to motivation or discouragement related with that behavior. The motivational process can be direct, vicarious reinforcement, or self-produced, where a person is either encouraged or discouraged to perform an action or learned behavior. According to (Bandura, 1994) a person is more likely to perform a behavior that was rewarded physically (tangible), or even psychologically than a behavior that was not rewarded or resulted in negative outcomes such as punishment, even if they only observed the reward or punishment through other people's experience [Evara, 2004 / p.4]. In Bandura's 1961 Bobo-doll experiment for example, children who did not see any punishment fall on the observed aggressive model, were more likely to engage in aggressive behavior as well following the viewing. Unlike children who saw punishment following the aggressive behavior they observed did not engage in aggressive behavior, yet they inhibited the aggressive behavior until the post viewing conditions changed (no punishment) then they too engaged in aggressive behavior. [Evara, 2004, p.3]

Guerra, Nucci, & Huesmann (1994) further explain that behavior can be motivated not only through tangible rewards, but also psychological rewards including self-esteem, control over someone, or social labeling / status. While disapproval, injury, or disrupted social relationships can also contribute in negative representations that can inhibit aggressive behavior [Evara, 2004, p.5]

This could further explain one of the real life examples found in cartoons, if a child sees a so called "Super hero" going around fighting, hitting, and killing people in a claim to "save the world", the child might relate that its acceptable to behave in such aggressive manner if he/she believes it is for a "good cause".

"With development, aggressive behavior is increasingly governed by normative standards of acceptable conduct. These standards serve as guides for information processing in different situations, and ultimately influence social behavior." [Guerra et al., 1994, p.18]



## **APPLICATION OF SLT AND SCT IN CHILD AND MEDIA RESEARCH**

### **HISTORY**

Brett (2011) uses SLT as one of the theoretical frameworks for a Literature Review on the Effects of Media Technologies on Children's Physical and Psychosocial Development. Brett states that according to the SLT theory, knowledge is acquired through the observation of models, such as interpersonal relations as well as media sources. According to Olsen et al.(2009) Brett states that this could explain the correlation between media and it's contribution to violence and aggression, suggesting that constant exposure to a behavior or a repeated observation of a particular behavior could lead to "assimilation" of relevant behavior in the viewer, even if it results in negative consequences. Evara (2004) also uses the SLT theory as one of the three main theoretical perspectives used in the book "Television and Child Development"

### **VARIABLES AFFECTING MODELING**

Variables that may impact television's modeling influence must also be considered, this may include similarities between viewer and model, credibility of the model, similarities and differences between model and real-life characters in a child's environment, as well as the child's perceived reality of what is being observed and his motivational state.

### **LIMITATIONS TO THE THEORY**

Evara (2004) states that not all children imitate content watched on television regardless of prior learning, observed consequences or context. The author also claims that the relation between watching a certain type of content such as aggression is not particularly linked with a child's behavior. Meaning that it may be possible that the more violence children watch, the more violent they become, or claiming another assumption, that children who have violent background may choose to watch more violent content.

Although Evara's view maybe to some extent valid, yet the impact of media and television remains magnificent to overweight these assumptions.

## **SLT CONTRIBUTION TO THIS RESEARCH**

As Evara (2004) describes, models may be teachers, inhibitors, dis-inhibitors, social prompts, or just simply emotion arouasers that can shape the conception of the reality and values. These functions may even often operate together, where an observed model could be a teacher and inhibitor at the same time. Or an observed behavior done by others may prompt a behavior learned earlier by the observer but was inhibited and not acted on.

Huesmann (1988) states that according to the script theory, through observational learning children acquire “behavioral scripts” that can be activated later by the environment or memory activation [Evara, 2004]. Thus, since media is considered an observational learning medium, even if children don’t immediately imitate observed behaviors, yet they are acquiring new “behavioral scripts” in their minds, with a chance of engaging in it later on. Long-term impact of Social Learning and Social Cognitive Theory may not be as clear as their short-term effects, which were demonstrated in many laboratory experiments such as in Comstock & Strasburger (1993b) and Comstock & Scharrer (1999) [Evara, 2004]. Protecting children from learning bad behavior while promoting more developmental content “modeling” positive or desired behavior remains an essential need, which SLT and SCT can contribute in achieving through their essential components.

## **2. DISPLACEMENT THEORY (DT)**

### **a. LIMITED TIME: MORE = LESS**

We have a Limited Time in our life, hence, the More of one thing means the Less of another. Individuals have a limited amount of time in their life, as referred to by Lee & Kou (2002) a type of Social Capital. Hence, the more time one spends in one activity will take up from the time remaining for other activities. This becomes a concern when a child's time is not invested wisely, where some activities such as television cut back on the time remaining for fundamental activities considered essential for a healthy, positive child development, such as physical activity and interaction in the real world, in addition to family and friends. [Neuman, (1991)] Through [K&L (2002)].

*"Under the limits of free time, investments of time spent on, one behavior may affect the time that can be spent on another behavior"* Rhodes, R. E., & Blanchard, C. M. (2011).

Displacement Theory (DT) basically suggest the time a child spends on media takes away from the time they have to engage and interact in real life, which may impose health risks. According to Brett (2011), this theory assumes that using media is a choice, leading to the fact that the more time children spend engaged with media, the less time they have for other real life activities such as spending time outdoors playing, socially interacting with others, or doing sports and schoolwork. Brett (2011) adds that this increases health risks on a child physically and psychologically.

Despite some researchers doubts that decreasing television viewership will certainly increase physical activity [Mutz, Roberts & Van Vuuren (1993)], A.O. Musaiger, O.L. Lloyd, S.M. Al-Neyadi, A.B. Bener, (2003) found in their research results on Lifestyle factors associated with obesity among male university students in the United Arab Emirates, that those who watched television for four hours or more each day were at a higher risk of obesity. A deeper look on the association of television with obesity and physical exercise will be provided later in the literature review for this research.

*"For most of us, the amount of time available for the consumption of various types of media is limited. Thus, the basic model of time displacement assumes a zero-sum relationship for amount of time invested in various activities.*

*Consequently, when a new media activity is introduced into our scheduled lives, we may expect a corresponding reduction in the time spent with other media activities and/or non-media tasks."* Kayany, Joseph M., and Paul Yelsma

(2000)

Rhodes, R. E., & Blanchard, C. M. (2011) add that preliminary evidence for time displacement in physical activities for example has found support by lab-based research, and more support among adults than youth. The authors suggest that this may be due to youth affording more leisure time compared to adults, which may have less time to engage in more activities.

Soon after the introduction of Television, research started studying its possible effects on children's development, personality, relationship with family, and social interaction among children. Yet, while assessing initial effects, due to the novelty of the medium at that time, long-term effects were not yet certain. Hence, only speculations about the implication of noticed effects for the future could be made [Riley, Cantwell & Ruttiger (1949)] [Maccoby (1951)]. DT has also been used to study the displacement effect of television on other issues such as reading and buying news papers and magazines, as well as public library circulation. [Belson (1961)] [Parker (1963)].

Brett (2011) clarifies that many researchers use the Displacement Theory (DT) to guide research on the media effects on children, especially health related.

## **b. PREVIOUS LITERATURE USING DT**

Studies on DT and time displacement have been taking place for around five decades, mainly conducted in regard to television [Lee & Kou (2002)]. Recently there has been a large focus on the displacement effects of online media and communication as well. Some studies have supported the ideology of Media's Displacement theory, where time spent on media reduced the time spent on other real life activities and interactions, some of which may be important for child development.

Apart from child development, the displacement concept found popularity in other various fields. Some studies were found to support the Displacement Theory from a different perspective. The idea that the more time spent on one thing reduces the time spent or left for something else. For example Kayany, Joseph M., and Paul Yelsma (2000) examine the displacement effect of online media on other media as well as on family communication. Although not primarily focusing on the displacement affect of media on real life interaction, yet the data they gathered from 84 households including 185 people did indicate that first of all, online media use was significantly different among genders and generations. In addition, it did have an affect on the time spent in family conversations, as well as, reading newspapers, telephone usage and even television viewing.

The researchers also indicated the possibility of functional displacement, where online media is gradually displacing television as a primary source of information. While several researchers also focused on online communication and its displacement effect for valuable real life interactions. Kraut et al. (1998); Nie (2001); Nie, Hillygus & Erbring (2002) believe that online communication displaces valuable time that could be spent in real life with existing friends, hindering adolescents' well being. [Valkenburg, P. M., & Peter, J. (2007)]

On the other hand, some studies revealed contradicting results. When it comes to online communication and questioning its displacement effects on well-being, among others, Valkenburg, P. M., & Peter, J. (2007) state that some authors including themselves, as well as, Bryant, Sanders Jackson, & Smallwood (2006); Gross (2004); Subrahmanyam, Kraut, Greenfield, & Gross (2000) all support the "simulation hypothesis" suggesting that online communication may actually enhance existing friendships if time spent online was primarily used to maintain contact with friends, hence, the displacement effect is not fulfilled on friendship, but rather communication between friends is encouraged, which empowers adolescent's well-being. Using mediation analysis, Valkenburg, P. M., & Peter, J. (2007) supported this ideology through their online survey with 1,210 Dutch teenagers between the age of 10 and 17, with results backing the stimulation hypothesis against the displacement hypothesis.

Lee and Kuo (2002) conducted a research using Displacement Theory to examine the relationship and impact Internet use has on 6 defined activities - considered important to childhood development from the authors point of view. This includes: Television viewing, newspaper reading, radio listening, sports and physical exercise, interaction with family and socializing with friends. The research also tested the perception level for the Internet, television, newspaper and radio as important sources of information. Their research results showed that increased Internet use may have decreased television viewing, but stimulated newspaper reading, radio listening, and socializing with friends with no significant impact on physical activities and interaction with family members. In addition, the same research participants perception that media in general is an important source of information was increased in the following year.

Several researches have questioned the displacement effects of media and television as well. Some studies suggest that media viewership was not concretely related or linked with a reduction or increase in other activities. For instance, Mutz, Roberts & Van Vuuren (1993) conducted a study testing past conceptualizations assuming televisions displacement over other leisure activities.

Following a critical review of previous displacement literature, the researches examine data from an 8 year panel study following the introduction of television to South Africa, claiming their use of various methodological approaches to illustrate the inconsistency in previous studies regarding the matter.

They stated that their research results show that the displacement mechanism is asymmetric in nature, where a rise in television viewership may have forced out some of the other activities, yet a decrease in viewership did not lead to a parallel increase in levels of any of these same activities, adding that these results were more recognizable in Radio use and movie attendance.

When it comes to question whether media positively or negatively impact development, and takes away from the time spent in real life interaction and activities, hence, hindering growth and development, opinions may vary. Yet, one fact remains, that we do have limited time in our life span, and we need to use it wisely.

### **3. CULTIVATION THEORY**

(A Mass Communication Theory)

*“The idea that television colors our perception of the world.”*

~ Mass Communication Theories, (n.d)

Basically suggesting that Mass media can shape or cultivate audience perception of social reality, constructing a version of the world that becomes an accepted reality, Cultivation Theory was first introduced by Gerbner, and later expanded on by Gerbner and Gross in 1976 through their research “Living with television: The violence profile. Journal of Communication, 26, 76” initiated in the mid 60’s to study media effects as well as provide better understanding of whether or not television viewership really does have an impact on the audience ideas and perceptions, and how that could be possible. [Davie, 2010], [Mass Communication Theories, n.d]

The theory also suggests that there are several important variables that may influence cultivation effects. On top of these variables is the thought that high frequency of television viewership increases media influence and susceptibility to media content impact as well as supporting a higher belief of its validity and realism. For example, audience with high frequency of viewership of violent content may have a higher chance of being impacted by the Mean World Syndrome – or the belief that the world is far worse and a more dangerous place than it actually is. Cultivation Theorists suggest that heavy viewers, which absorb more media, are more likely to be influenced, and that television viewership can have long-term impact on audience attitudes. [Mass Communication Theories, n.d]

This theory primarily focuses on studying television violence impact, but also expands to other issues such as gender, and cultural representations.

# **1. CULTIVATION VARIABLES**

## **HEAVY VIEWERSHIP**

Evera (2004) suggests that the amount of viewership exposure is a major variable to consider when looking at televisions impact on thoughts and behaviors according to Cultivation theory, where it is thought that the heavier the viewership, the higher the impact.

It is assumed that the more television viewership increases, the more likely a person is to believe TV's version of reality, specially is they have little or no direct experience with viewed topic, like viewing information about certain groups that the person may not have contact with [Evara, 2004].

According to Gerbner, Gross, Morgan & Signoricelli (1980, 1982, 1986) Cultivation hypothesis suggests that heavy television viewership cultivates perceptions of the world consistent with what is being portrayed on television. This may lead heavy viewers to give more "TV like answers" or answers similar to those portrayed on television rather than real life answers [Evara, 2004]

**Cultivation Differential** identifies who's to be considered heavy and light viewers. It describes the extent to which a certain attitude is shaped by television exposure.

There is a large distinction between light and heavy television viewership with in cultivation theory perspective. Light television viewers are more likely to have more sources of information from having more time to read, interact, or gain real life experience that take up their time and displaces television time (Opposite of Displacement Theory). While on the other hand, heavy television viewers (like perceived by Displacement theory) take up much of their time viewing television, hence, they have less time for other activities, limiting and decreasing behavioral models and sources of information other than TV [Evara, 2004]

Shurum (1995) stated that the difference between the estimates of heavy and light viewers is important, yet Potter (1986) clarifies that the amount of viewing alone is not the only reason for cultivation effects as this process involves more complex variables than level of viewership [Evara, 2004]. Rubin et al. (1988) supported this claim explaining that linking cultivation effects only with TV exposure omits important variable and factors such as antecedents, program choice or perceived reality, adding that response bias may explain these cultivation effects [Evara, 2004]. Hence, all other influencing variables must be taken in consideration as well.



## HEAVY VS LIGHT VIEWERSHIP

Despite the claims that people's differences, background, experience and information – that may have been acquired from other sources than tv – can actually impact television's influence level, yet, according to the Mainstreaming concept – Television has the ability to move people toward a common view of the world, where certain ideas, attitudes, activities are considered normal or sometimes a trend. According to Gerbner et al. (1980), mainstreaming refers to the concept that the overall television impact overrides any differences of audience as it somehow leads heavy viewers to share a “commonality” despite any of their differences, which light viewer may not have [Evara, 2004]. Television may cultivate mainstreamed perceptions about the world and about people as well. For example, increasing fear and mistrust among heavy viewers which tend to have higher sense of risk and danger, believing that the world is mean and selfish (Signorielli, 1987) in addition to having more interpersonal distrust with the belief that people can't be trusted or will take advantage of others [Evara, 2004].

Rubin et. al. (1988) suggest that there is a need to study the impact of viewer choices and individual differences further when measuring television's cultivation impact, with the communication alternatives and diversity consistently expanding. [Evara, 2004]

## PERCIEVED REALITY / RELEVANCE

When television becomes the only source of information, it creates a high risk of impact, yet when content is relevant to the viewer, television's impact becomes even greater [Evara, 2004]. Potter, (1986) states that the level of perceived reality as well as level of identification with television characters needs to be taken in consideration [Evara, 2004]. According to the **Resonance Concept**, when a topic portrayed in media or on television has personal relevance to a person or group that's when the correlation between heavy viewership and television impact are clearest as this adds weight to the content viewed, amplifying the impact [Evara, 2004] yet, the degree of relevance may also affect the level of impact. The more relevant the viewers finds the content, people and situation observed on television are with the people and situations he sees in real life, the higher the chance they will consider televised content a perceived reality.

This is due to associating television characters and situations to those in real life and therefore increasing the credibility or believability of content observed where the observer is then more likely to be susceptible to TV's influence [Evara, 2004].

Potter (1986) adds that the more realistic TV is perceived the more likely it is to be taken seriously and believed, specially by those who tend to perceive TV as a useful source of information [Evara, 2004] The booming of reality shows in recent years may surely indicate something in that matter. Of course, there is a much higher expectation for this to occur with children due to their limited experience in general.

*“Cultivation is not unidirectional; its pull depends on where viewers are in relation to the mainstream of the TV world.”*

~ Evara, (2004, p.9)

## **2. INTENSITY AND REPETITION OF MESSAGES**

[Repetition cultivates our thoughts and beliefs]

Gerbner et. al (1994) explain that the *“difference between symbolic and objective reality can demonstrate how TV facts are incorporated into the belief of heavy viewers about the world.”* [Evara, 2004, p.9] That means if we look at violence portrayals on television for example, TV content may encounter a much higher intensity of violence than that actually happening in reality in the daily life (other than the reality of conflicting countries). Evara (2004) states that TV characters encounter violence a lot more compared with individuals in the real world, in a ratio that may reach 50 % engaging in violence on TV vs. only 1% per year actually happening in reality. Hence, even if people know that there is violence in the real world – whether or not they have seen it them selves – viewing such high intensive doses of violence on television in means of violence level and commonality in different media means, may create a repetition of such images in their minds that would get them to believe that this is actually happening in reality with the same frequency. This belief intensifies when television is considered the main source of information, audience have limited experience or perceive television content as portraying or mirroring reality.

Gerbner et. al (1994) reported that when matching groups of heavy viewers and light viewers were compared, results showed that long term exposure to frequent violence cultivates the image of a mean and dangerous world where it is more believed that greater protection is needed and most people cant be trusted. [Evara, 2004]

Some people may assume that if they understand that television content is not real, then they are safe from the influence, yet Gerbner et. al. (1994) states that even then, cultivation still considers the impact on viewers, as one’s worldview or perception can be affected by lessons repeatedly learned from television [Evara, 2004]. Salomon (1981a) also suggests that repeated exposure makes content viewed

part of one's schemata, where we become more familiar with it [Evara, 2004]. According to the "Drip effect" – relative to cultivation effect – knowledge and information are picked up from television even when watching for entertainment [Evara, 2004].

Channel variety could be negatively influential when considered to assist in the repetition of bad behavior on a variety of channels. On the other hand, having a larger variety of channels may assist in decreasing television mainstream, by providing positively influential content, creating more options for viewers to choose from.

Evara (2004) states that Perse et. al found higher exposure to broadcast type channels lead to more interpersonal distrust than specialized cable channels which lead to less mistrust and fear of crime due to variety of options – not limited to one view. Evara (2004) suggests that cable – as a new media mean introduced at that time – could weaken mainstream impact over time.

Although same concept could be considered for the media medium variety and technology available now, yet most media content now may be actually mainstreaming similar general thoughts in different portrayals, while violence and obscenity are highly increasing in all mediums.

This could be an indicator that television could be used for positive influence as well when providing more channels that provide more positively influential content alternatives motivating / stimulating positive behaviors.

### **3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS AND VARIABLES**

According to the **Limited Effects Theory** Media's influence on an audience is limited by individual differences between audience members, social categories, and personal relationships, **yet according to** Gerbner et al. (1994) television still plays a fundamental part in that dynamic interaction process between viewers characteristics and watching certain content among messages and contexts [Evara, 2004].

Evara (2004) suggests that television does not simply create images and beliefs; rather the impact is derived from the collaboration of more than one variable. When measuring the impact of media and television content – especially on a child's development and experience, according to Evara (2004) we need to consider interaction among several variables to have a better understand of the cultivation effects.

These variables include age, cognitive maturity, developmental level, attention, perceived realism, relevance to the viewer either personal or relevance with the people around the viewer, experience with television and the viewing context, gender, socioeconomic level, family attitude and background, in addition to other social and emotional variables.

Developmental factors are also important, Evara (2004) states that heavy viewers receive and respond to information differently in each age group. Their needs, motivation for viewing, ability to comprehend, retain television information, experience and interpretation scripts are very different.

Evara (2004) claims that if we consider through cultivation theory that viewing media and TV content may create a certain perception of the world to the viewer, then maybe the opposite is true as well, where the viewers' pre-conceptions of the world (from other factors other than TV) may be the actual determinants of the person's viewing habits and program choices. Ex. Because he is a violent person from environmental conditions, he chooses to watch violent content.

#### **4. TELEVISION AND CHILDREN**

(According to Cultivation Theory)

Despite any difference in variables, due to their limited knowledge and experience, Children are more vulnerable to the impact of television content, especially when other sources of information are limited or absent, television's impact is even greater.

As mentioned earlier, according to CT the more realistic / relevant the content is, the more influence it has and more likely to be perceived real and accepted as the reality of the world. Hence, when it comes to children, many research has proved that the impact of media and television is much higher and much more magnificent. Bar-on, 2000; Potter, 1986, 1988; Rubin, 1986; Van Evar, 1998 have all pointed out that due to young children's limited, they find television content more realistic, and are unable to distinguish between reality or realistic content and unrealistic content [Evara, 2004] leading to a much stronger impact. This impact is even greater when TV is the main source of information and there is less input by family and friends. The fewer alternatives or competing sources of information children have to compare the information received from television with the more likely TV will have a greater impact. Gerbner et. al, (1986) explains that personal interaction and affiliation may reduce cultivation by providing alternative sources of information [Evara, 2004] In alignment with Gerbner's view is **Social Network Theory**, the study of how the social structure of relationships around a person, group, or organization affects beliefs or behaviors.

Yet, Evara (2004) points out the importance of looking at long-term developmental differences between children who were “brought up” on television as a main source of information or portraying / defining reality for them to a large extent (heavy viewers) and between those who had limited tv experience in means of being a source of info. (had more role models in reality, or sources of information, real life experience, etc) and viewership duration in total

## **5. CULTIVATION THEORY PREVIOUS LITERATURE**

### **RESEARCH PROVING TELEVISION NEGATIVE CULTIVATION INFLUENCE**

Many researches support the claim that television can negatively influence, thoughts, beliefs and behaviors. Huston et. Al (1992) reported that children with heavy television viewership showed high concern about getting sick and have a higher perception of medical relief and over the counter remedies. While Gerbner et. al (1994) state that heavy exposure to violence cultivates a mean image of the world and people, Shrum (1996) supported the claim against television stating that heavy viewers in the study have significantly higher estimates than light viewers for the frequency of real world crime and material disputes [Evara, 2004]

### **OPPOSITION AND CRITISIZM**

On the other hand, regardless of the major focus made on exposure levels by the Cultivation Theory and research, several researchers had a different perspective. Rubin et al. (1988) for example, states that negative effects depended more on specific content rather than heavy and ritualistic viewing. While Rubin, Perse and Taylor (1988) found that high viewership exposure was associated with perceived safety and regardless of exposure levels, respondents felt safe and connected to others [Evara, 2004]. These conflicting results found in literature could indicate a higher impact of content in comparison with exposure level.

Last but not least, Shrum (1995) suggests that most survey used in cultivation research created / involved Heuristic processing where involvement in a judgment task is low in addition, one feels pressure to make a judgment or answer quickly. Hence, influencing their response, especially passive viewers, which might have gave in accurate answers [Evara, 2004]

## **6. SUMMARY**

TV has greatest impact when viewed heavily or when considered the only / main source of information and other sources are limited). Yet, when measuring television's influence, some variables must be taken in consideration as well (although some impact bypass all differences, such as the case with children). Even though heavy viewers are more profound to believing televisions perception as the reality about the world, personal backgrounds must be taken in consideration as it may be influencing their acceptance or readiness for television impact. Another important aspect cultivation theory considers is that the more realistic Television content appears and the more relevant it is to the viewers, the more likely it is to be perceived realistic and actually impacts viewers perception of reality. Yet, since children have limited experience and knowledge of reality, where most things are considered new for them, anything may be relevantly realistic as they already don't have much experience or previous information. Hence, children are more vulnerable to perceive this new information as real cause not much previous info would contradict that new perceived information, again especially if they have few or limited other sources away from television or media.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **QUALITATIVE RESEARCH**

In an attempt to have a better understanding while covering the core aspects of the topic to be able to reach the aim of this paper, this research will be mainly depending on Qualitative Research Methods. This will also provide a more in-depth look on the current situation in Egypt, which will contribute in providing more efficient policy recommendations.

Research Methods include, but not limited to:

- Literature Review on various aspects concerning the topic, providing fundamental information on: child development, positive and negative media impact, as well as background knowledge on the situation in Egypt.
- Study of International Media Policies for children, to benefit from previous experiences in the field while adapting relevant policy recommendations for the Egyptian Media.
- Personal in-depth interviews with parents, children, child Experts (including pediatrics, psychologists, Educators etc.), Media Experts and officials to understand the situation in Egypt, as well as analyze current media content in general, and those targeting children in specific. In addition, evaluate recommended policies according to their need, validity and applicability in Egypt, for the protection of minors from harmful media and promotion of positive media use.

**CHAPTER V**  
**RESULTS AND ANALYSIS**

**IN-DEPTH OVERVIEW  
ON THE SITUATION IN EGYPT**



## **SECTION (1)**

### **PARENTS AND CHILDREN**

In-depth interviews were conducted for this research helped to create a more in-depth understanding on the situation in Egypt now a day. In addition, interviews with children and parents provided an several indications on the relationship between Egyptian children and media and the various impacts and risks it has. In addition, the interaction with parents and children also helped in knowing their feedback on the content currently available for children to watch, and understanding their main concerns, likes, dislikes, and hopes for future development regarding that matter. There were Ten officially approved recorded interviews with parents (Females) age range late 20's to 40's, with children under 16 years old.

#### **SAMPLE BACKGROUND**

##### **Candidate 1:**

23 years (F)  
Middle Class  
Not working at time of interview / Masters in Chinese Linguistics  
**1 Child**  
    **Boy** 2 years old (Nursery)

##### **Candidate 2:**

29 Female  
Upper Class  
Pharmacist  
**2 Children**  
    **Girl** 5 years old  
    **Girl** 7 years old

##### **Candidate 3:**

30 years (F)  
Middle Upper Class  
At the time of interview was not working  
**2 Children** (International System)  
    **Girl** 3 years old (Nursery)  
    **Boy** 6 years old (School)

##### **Candidate 4**

32 years (F)  
Upper Middle class  
Major in Psychology - Works as a KG1 Teacher  
**2 Children** (International Schools)  
    **Girl** 5 years old  
    **Boy** 10 years old

##### **Candidate 5**

35 years (F)  
Middle Class  
Works as a Teacher in a nursery  
**4 Children** (English Schools)  
    **2 Twin Girls** 9 years old  
    **Boy** 7 years old  
    **Girl** 6 years old

The other five candidates were among the media professionals, academics and child experts interviewed.

## **MAIN INTERVIEW RESULTS:**

- **TOP WATCHED CHANNELS:** Disney Channels, YouTube, Netflix, MBC 3, Cartoon Network, as well as regular television channels. Domination to YouTube and Disney.
- **TOP WATCHED TELEVISION CONTENT:** Disney Movies/Cartoons, other cartoons, Light comedy Arabic movies, sports, reality shows, and Egyptian Television series
- **REASON FOR WATCHING THESE CHANNELS AND CONTENT:**
  - Almost all parents interviewed thought that these were the available options, with no alternatives
  - Those with younger children highlight that's specially in times when they needed time for them selves, while the children would be engaged in something, even if they are not very fond of the content available. One parent added that she usually tries to take her kids outdoors to engage in activities instead of sitting in front of TV, yet she also sometimes falls in the trap of "let them watch to have some time off"
- **POSITIVE CONTENT:** Most parents agreed that television could be more beneficial through providing more educational / Informative programming in a way that would appeal to children according to their age and mentality of the time being, in an entertaining form. Teaching younger children more vocabulary, educational songs and health practices.
- **NEGATIVE CONTENT:**
  - Negative actions and language children might learn or imitate (leading to the children to lose their childhood innocence at a very early age). That includes:
    - **Picking up in appropriate language** or dialogue accent (includes cursing, vulgar, obscene, etc....). Several highlight the imitation of Mohamed Ramadan way of talking
    - **Imitation of Violence**

Several cases also violent actions and thoughts children imitate from media, also with special highlight on Egyptian Actor Mohamed Ramadan.

**Case 1:** In the in-depth interviews, a 13-year-old child (A Class Family) mentioned learning about soft weapons when he was the age of 9 from such movies. He asked one of his colleagues to buy him one, with money he got for lessons, and took it to school. When the teacher found out, the child's response was taken from that same movie "If you tell anyone I will kill you"

**Case 2:** One of the parents (C Class Family) mentioned that her 11-year-old son, after watching such movies, he started threatening his sister to kill her. One time actually grabbing a knife before the family members interfered.

- **Watching inappropriate scenes in movies, drama and advertising** (Romance, kissing, nudity, love scenes, etc....)

**Case 1:** In an in-depth interview, one of the child psychiatrists interviewed highlight a case of a girl (upper middle class) watching porn to go tell her friends that she does similar matters with someone she is in a relationship with. The Psychiatrist highlight that the girls parents are thought to be strictly religious and the mother stayed for almost two years in denial refusing to tell the father in fear of his response.

**Case 2:** In an in-depth interview with one of the parents (C class family), the mother highlights that after her 9-year-old daughter started seeing romantic scenes on television, she would stay at the door of her parent's room every night trying to listen to them.

**Case 3:** In an in-depth interview with one of the parents (upper middle class family) highlights that her daughter 6 years-old watches Disney movies which might regularly have kissing scenes. Believing that's what keeps people together, she asked her mother is she can kiss a boy at school not to be separated, even though the mother explained that she shouldn't do this in a decent manner, the following day she saw the little boy kissing her daughter and the daughter was shocked to see her mother looking, knowing that she is doing something wrong.

One of the Parents explained during the interview that this is something that will eventually happen when it would be normal for them to get exposed to that kind of stuff at that stage. Yet she added that she believed this should happened at a later age when they are older in order to give them a chance to actually live and enjoy each stage of their life the right way. At that young age, they need to enjoy their childhood and the innocence that accompanies that.

- **Viewership of Egyptian Channels & Content:** Most parents said their children do not watch Egyptian channels or Egyptian children programming. Unless they find a nice Arabic movie or something.
- **Reasons:**  
Mainly include no available options. And most of options provided are no technically or mentally adequate for the children now a day. Foreign programming seems to be more appealing to their age, mentality and interest.

- **Content affects on Children's behavior:** Most Parents agree that television DOES have an effect on children's behavior (negatively & Positively)

One Parent added during the interview that they might even sometimes listen, believe, and do what is said on television more than they would to what their parents say.

#### **Specified Results & Recommendations:**

- Parents that had boys among their children were more concerned about violent content that parents who only have girls. As boys were more interested in that kind of content, and may even imitate it or apply what they watch while playing with their siblings.
- Most of the parents were also concerned about their children absorbing foreign concepts and Ideas that are not compatible with our culture or religion. In addition to a materialistic lifestyle.
- Parents of girls were more concerned about their girls getting more awareness / high awareness of their feminism at a very early age than normal.

A parent of a 5-year-old girl mentions during the interview how surprised she was when her little girl one day told her: "Mommy I can't go to the club like that, my hair isn't straight enough"! \*\* (The little girl watches teen beach, and other stuff like Hana Montana etc.... and Mashaa' Allah She is a very pretty blond girl)

## **SECTION (2)**

### **CHILD EXPERTS**

In-depth interviews were made with three child experts to get a closer look on child development, and how media can impact children not only in theory, but through real cases they had experience with from their field. These interviews were very beneficial in confirming and validate the data and information provided earlier in the literature review. As well as provided an in depth look on the hidden side of media impact on Egyptian society and children as the case mentioned above in the parent interview section

#### **PANEL OF CHILD EXPERTS INCLUDED:**

- 1. DR. MAHA EMAD EL DIN**  
TEENAGE PSYCHIATRY CONSULTANT  
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR AND HEAD OF PSYCHIATRY DEPARTMENT  
BANI SWEIF UNIVERSITY
- 2. Dr. SAHAR DAWOOD**  
CHILD PSYCHIATRIST  
PHD IN CHILD MENTAL HEALTH
- 3. MARIAM MEDHAT**  
FOUNDER OF PARENTING FORMULA  
PARENTING COUCH

## **SECTION (3)**

### **MEDIA PROFESSIONALS AND ACADEMICS**

#### **LIST OF INTERVIEWEES:**

##### **A. MEDIA EXPERTS**

- A. NAELA FAROUK**  
*Head of National Egyptian Broadcast, Maspiro*
- B. NADIA MABROUK**  
*Head of Radio Networks, Maspiro*
- C. MAGDY LASHEEN**  
*Advisor of the President of the National Information Authority*
- D. HISHAM SILIMAN**  
*Head of DMC Network*  
*Owner of Hama Film Production*
- E. ABDELLATIF EL MENAWY**  
*CEO and Editor in Chief, Al Masry Al Youm*
- F. ALBERT SHAFIK**  
*Extra News Channel Director*
- G. MARIAM NAOUM**  
*Egyptian Drama Author/Writer*
- H. SANAA MANSOUR**  
*Egyptian TV Presenter*
- I. GALAL AWARA**  
*Deputy of Culture and Information Committee*  
*The House of Representatives*  
*Former TV Presenter*

##### **B. MEDIA ACADEMICS**

- **DR. RASHA ALLAM**  
*Assistant Professor and Associate Chair*  
*Journalism and Mass Communication Department, AUC*
- **DR. HOWAIDA MOUSTAFA**  
*Head of Radio and Television Department*  
*Mass Communication Department, Cairo University*
- **DR. MONA EL HADIDI**  
*Mass Communication Professor*  
*Mass Communication Department, Cairo University*
- **DR. HANAA MAREAY**  
*Assistant Professor*  
*Mass Communication Department, MSA*

##### **C. NGO**

- 1. OLFA G. TANTAWI**  
*Communication for Development Officer, UNICEF Egypt*

## 1. VIEWS ON CURRENT MEDIA CONTENT IN EGYPT

MARIAM NAOUM, SANAA MANSOUR, GALAL AWARA, MAGDY LASHEEN,  
NAELA FAROUK, ALBERT SHAFIK, ABDELLATIF EL MENAWY, HISHAM SOLIMAN  
DR. HANAA EL MARAEY, DR. RASHA ALLAM, DR. HOWAIDA MOSTAFA, DR. MONA EL HADIDI

Almost all media professionals and academics whom were asked this question (11 out of 11) were generally not satisfied with the content provided in Egyptian media now a-days, referring to a deterioration in the context of the content provided.

*“We have a problem in the product quality and context.”*  
~ **Abdel Latif El Menawy** - CEO & Editor in chief in Al Masry Al Youm

*“I find it very weak and much on a much lower standard than it is suppose to be. There is so much rudeness “Esfaf” in programs, with no consideration to the language used, and the content it self is very weak”*  
~ **Dr. Hanaa’ Maraey**, Assistant Professor, MSA University

Few added that there are some attempts to provide content that’s generally acceptable, yet, such attempts are few.

*“Despite few artistic attempts to respect audience, yet, if we compare those attempts made for serious productions with a message respecting the intelligence of audience with other productions made for entertainment and attention grabbing, the percentage would be very low.”*  
~ **Mariam Naoum**, Egyptian Drama Writer and Author

*“There is a wide variety of content and talents available, some are local, some from the Arab world, and many foreign with the availability of satellite. They also differ in quality in means of technicality and content. I can’t generalize because we have decent content and low quality content. Some are creative and others are not up to the standards.”*  
~ **Dr. Mona El Hadidi**, Media Professor, Cairo University

*Not to give a harsh and unfair assessment for current media system, even if we have lots of concerns yet there are some good trials to provide something to serve media functions to inform, educate or entertain. Some try to provide something good while others focus on getting fast revenue so they provide low quality programs that aren’t just useless, but can also harm our culture, traditions and intellect, imposing beliefs that don’t suit us and harm children. This includes anything that would get advertisers for quick revenue. Even in drama, something’s are very violent while others try to regain what we use to watch many years ago conveying cultures and traditions and values.*  
~ **Dr. Rasha Allam**, Assistant Professor and Associate Chair, AUC

Opinions and concerns highlight various issues. On the top of the list was providing content that's mainly based on advertising agents. Thus, seeking to grab attention and gain higher viewership despite of anything else.

*"Channels other than DMC, search for what advertisers want and that's what they mostly include. In DMC, we took a decision not to do that, instead we will get advertisers and audience to search for us by constantly exploring how we can do something different because that's what makes people succeed."*

*~ Hisham Soliman, Head of DMC Network and owner of Hama Film Productions*

*"You shouldn't provide inappropriate content to get more viewership. Some drama works averse from what they should be doing by using words, or scenes that may hurt young children, contain violence, blood, and fights. That sort of content is not acceptable at all"*

*~ Naela Farouk, Head of The National Broadcast Maspiro*

In addition, with the absence of a clear strategy and media message, as well as the wide spread of talk shows, media in Egypt became an unplanned medium with no goal.

*"Talk shows focus on creating on air fights between guests to gain more views and advertisers with no added value. "*

*~ Dr. Rasha Allam, Assistant Professor and Associate Chair, AUC*

*"Since the start of talk shows, media became a daily event medium"*

*~ Magdy Lasheen, Advisor of the President of the National Information Authority, Egypt*

*"There is a big problem with the absence of clear strategy and the media message we want to deliver whether in political, social or cultural matters."*

*~ Abdel Latif El Menawy - CEO & Editor in chief in Al Masry Al Youm*

*"Academically, Media consists of a sender, receiver and a message, hence, we must design the message. Then the message goes through a medium to the receiver to create feedback. Who here in Egypt creates a message?"*

*~ Galal Awara, Deputy of Culture & Information Committee in The House of Representatives*

Several media professionals and academics highlight various issues in the content provided. Adding that the wide range of content produced daily, has lead to unrecognizable works and insignificant content with repetitive material which lacks variety and incorporates more entertainment programing, rather than content for public benefit, or cultural awareness and promotion.

*"Today I watch numerous series everyday that I don't remember their names, because of the many options available."*

*~ Hisham Soliman, Head of DMC Network and owner of Hama Film Productions*



*"This has all created some sort of interruption to the viewer, for what to watch from the large variety available"*

*~ Naela Farouk, Head of The National Broadcast Maspiro*

*"There is no programing or anything presented to benefit the public. Either its fully political or programs for singing, dancing, and non sense. There is no content, which is suppose to be found everywhere in the world."*

*~ Sanaa Mansour, TV Presenter*

*"I think Egypt is still going through instability since 2011 and 2013 and this is all reflected in the context provided now, with more of personal views rather than actual study of the nature of the society."*

*~ Abdel Latif El Menawy - CEO & Editor in chief in Al Masry Al Youm*

*"There is a lack of cultural programs, and content became very weak, shallow and insignificant. Nothing that would feed the mind. We need to have entertainment but we also need to have something intellectual. . . . In addition to not being able to help coming generations to admire our customs and traditions, if we were able to present it to them in an appropriate manner that's in step with the era we live in, we will defiantly see a change in the manners we see now a-days, which was a result of models they saw in media that got very successful doing so and gaining tons of money from it. With out mentioning names, but many actors and producers came out in recent times who degraded the public taste."*

*~ Dr. Hanaa' Maraey, Assistant Professor, MSA University*

*"Drama is steering away from what it should be presenting in our developing countries, when we have the chance to produce drama we should use that to develop cultural and intellectual integrity. Drama writers are considered opinion leaders, hence they must take partial responsibility in enlightening and developing the society, occupying their time with important matters."*

*~ Dr. Mona El Hadidi, Media Professor, Cairo University*

*"From a drama writing perspective, I thought we came a long way in working on real topics that interests people, while providing entertainment. Yet, very few entertainment programs deserve watching, the majority is not the best. Hence, no one watches them unless they don't have another option. Other than what is being broadcasted in Ramadan, there is nothing to watch. Talk shows are repetitive, and not fully transparent. If they don't respect my inelegance, I wont give them my time. Those who have the ability to subscribe in paid channels, will turn to that option for movies and drama series. "*

*~ Mariam Naoum, Egyptian Drama Writer and Author.*

Furthermore, some find that the majority of drama productions in Egypt recently is irrelevance and does not represent the majority of Egyptian public by highly focusing on low human instincts. Few have linked that to social media impact over broadcast media, creating open channels for anyone to broadcast their own content with no limitation or regulation, even if lacking educational or ethical background, have certain agendas, or is against our customs and traditions. Adding that this could be among the reasons that made people blunter in the content they present on television.

*“Social media has created a platform where every individual has their own private, television, radio and journalistic channel. Giving anyone a chance to video record them selves saying their opinions with no limitation or regulation to the process, and with no ethical or educational background. That person may have a certain agenda, intentions, or could be trying to spread something against our customs and traditions. In addition, Social media made some people blunter than what television should be presenting to the audience.*

*~ Naela Farouk, Head of The National Broadcast Maspiro*

## **2. NEGATIVE MEDIA MESSAGES IN EGYPTIAN MEDIA**

### **MOST CONCERNING CONTENT**

HISHAM SOLIMAN, ABDELLATIF EL MENAWY, ALBERT SHAFIK, NAELA FAROUK,  
NADIA MABROUK, MARIAM NAOUM, DR. HANAA EL MARAEY,  
DR. RASHA ALLAM, DR. HOWAIDA MOSTAFA, DR. MONA EL HADIDI

While Head National Egyptian Broadcast, Mrs. Naela Farouk, highlights that governmental channels totally stay from any content that may contravene with Egyptian customs and traditions, Mrs. Naela along with all media professionals and academics whom were asked this question (10 out of 10) highlight their various concerns over the negative messages provided in current Media content, and the absences of a clear vision to media content and messages, with no policies to regulate the matter.

One of the highest, most common concerns received from all interviewees, including media professionals and academics, is the **excessive violence and crimes** portrayed in Egyptian media now a day, especially in television drama.

*“Within my limited viewership like many others, I find that there are no standards for violence to what could be aired or what should not. The matter is left to the impression of the one managing and taking the decision to broadcast, with no clear standards to measure this matter.”*

*~ Abdel Latif El Menawy - CEO & Editor in chief in Al Masry Al Youm*

*“The biggest issues we have are violence and suggestive dialogue. As a writer I write the events according to the context, it is up to the director on how to visualize it. Yet, I don’t believe it is important to show detailed violence unless needed for understanding something within the context of the work.”*

*~ Mariam Naoum, Egyptian Drama Writer and Author*

*“How can young teens be watching all that amount of killing, crimes and violence? Some would say that they can access that on social media, yet, that too needs to be regulated. I don’t know how, but we need this in Egypt to become more developed with out destroying our community.”*

*~ Naela Farouk, Head of The National Broadcast Maspiro*

*“The amount of violence children are being subjected to makes them unable to differentiate between violence and being powerful. They now see power as holding guns, and hitting others, confusing children.”*

*~ Nadia Mabrouk, Head of Radio Networks Maspiro*

*“The many representations made reflecting Egypt as if it is all about bullying and fights, not being able to reflect beautiful side in a good manner”*

*~ Dr. Hanaa' Maraey, Assistant Professor, MSA University*

*“I find there is a high dose of violence, especially in drama, the models presented as role models are not positive.”*

*~ Dr. Howaida Mostafa, Head of Radio and Television Department, Cairo University*

*“We have very expensive productions in Drama like “El Ab el rawhy” but it all evolves around mafia families, weapons and power. I don't think the cinema offers anything good either. We have sobky movies, which are all about killing, weapons, drugs and drug dealers which teaches the new generation bullying and violence... The good movies are usually found in festivals but that's one facing 10 of the low quality movies which involve any non sense to get money.”*

*~ Dr. Rasha Allam, Assistant Professor and Associate Chair, AUC*

Few agree that under very limited circumstances, **justifiable violence which includes a state authority fighting crime** is acceptable, yet with specific conditions. This includes not airing in times when younger children are likely to be watching, while receiving age and content rating appropriate to the production. In addition, scenes that contain violence, should be part of a whole work that serves a good cause, not having a whole production of intensive violence exceeding most of the scenes. While of course **never glamorizing the violence or negative behavior, or portraying violent citizens as hero's**. Several Interviewees referred to the **spread of children and youth imitation to Egyptian Actor Mohamed Ramadan**.

*Here we are fighting an enemy. Unlike when talking about poor areas using weapons or taking someone's clothes off and dressing them as a women like in Mohamed Ramadan movie, where people did actually copy that scene in reality. This is in addition to many other incidents, where one boy actually killed another copying another movie. This is unjustifiable violence. Those movies that include unjustifiable violence portrays a certain category of people with a certain lifestyle as a symbol of power and courage. Then, people who go to similar areas like that of the movies start relating and remembering scenes from the movie that they imitate when placed in similar situations. Inspiring more violence.*

*~ Dr. Rasha Allam, Assistant Professor and Associate Chair, AUC*

Furthermore, various interviewees also highlight an increasing deterioration in the **dialogue level and increase use of sexual content** and romantic relationships whether or not they are legal. With high dependence on using **offensive language, words, and sexual inclinations**, several interviewees refer to Sobky movies which such content along with violence summarizes their production.

*“What concerns me the most is the language being used in movies”*

*~ Dr. Hanaa' Maraey, Assistant Professor, MSA University*

*“As for the Egyptian drama it is deteriorating, and there is obvious decline in dialogue level, and the terms used are not appropriate for media.”*

*~ Dr. Mona El Hadidi, Media Professor, Cairo University*

*“I produced many movies which include el hroub, el mohager, el maseer, skout hanswar among others. At that time my girl turned 5 years old, I decided not to produce any movies with kissing. Since then I have been producing many other successful movies with out any kissing scenes, like zarf tark, mido mashakl, teer enta, etc . most of which are comedies.”*

*~ Hisham Soliman, Head of DMC Network and owner of Hama Film Productions*

As previously highlighted, another main concern was around the effects of advertising. Mainly **focusing on gaining higher viewership to attract advertisers**, which was not only thought to **limit content variety**, but also **lowers the quality of the context**. Providing any content that would aid to achieve this goal.

*“The negative aspect about Egyptian media is that it seeks to satisfy the advertiser rather than the audience”*

*~ Hisham Soliman, Head of DMC Network and owner of Hama Film Productions*

*“Channels need to have more coordination, you can't have all channels airing same content, there needs to be a variety instead of leading audience to go for foreign channels.”*

*~ Dr. Mona El Hadidi, Media Professor, Cairo University*

*“To attract audience viewership, I shouldn't create a negative impact or a crisis in my country and its customs and traditions. This is unawareness with national responsibility. We must first study the impact of any production being made on all scales of society. We must be aware that a big division of society is not on a high level of awareness and education. We must be considerate of who we are addressing and the illiteracy rates in the Egyptian society.”*

*~ Naela Farouk, Head of The National Broadcast Maspiro*

Another concern that was brought to discussion by various interviewees, was the numerous **impacts commercials have on audience**, especially the younger ones.

*“Advertisings effect is even more dangerous, providing a more appealing visionary and promoting unhealthy products.”*

*~ Nadia Mabrouk, Head of Radio Networks Maspiro*

Furthermore, the **portrayal of undesirable behavior as acceptable, by glamorizing the action or using it in a comedy scene**, was also among the concerns of various respondents. This includes but not limited to discrimination, sexual harassment, men hitting women, physical and non physical violence, child labor and abuse. Some state that even if a positive message was intended, the inability to appropriately portray them may lead to negative results.

*“The state needs to highlight that some thoughts that are not acceptable in our society must not be portrayed as normal or acceptable. Its not that we don’t portray these issues, but its about how it is portrayed. This needs someone very analytical and professional to assess.”*

*~ Mariam Naoum, Egyptian Drama Writer and Author*

*“In media we shouldn’t portray negative or wrong behavior as a hero, that’s now done.”*

*~ Dr. Rasha Allam, Assistant Professor and Associate Chair, AUC*

Last but not least, several interviewees highlight that the majority of content provided is unsuitable for children with no alternatives or content specially designed for children or youth.

*“A child is not supposed to be subjected to content that involves a lot of betrayals, killings, even if not pictured in the scene, but the type of words said and conflicts going on and so forth. But that’s what happens in most homes, children are watching that.... Even the drama which is suppose to be suitable for child viewership such as comedies in Ramadan, mainly depends on verses indicating sexual ideas. We can’t ask a comedy drama to be only for children, but there are no alternatives. Hence, the problem is not about what is being presented, its about not having other alternatives.”*

*~ Mariam Naoum, Egyptian Drama Writer and Author*

*“The impact on children is worse, they will start imitating the actions and language with out comprehending. If teens may consider those they see as role models, and imitate them knowing they are doing something wrong, Children will be worse. Children will be psychologically more impacted and will connect to what they watch until they can imitate what they were exposed to unlike Teens or adults who may chose to imitate something at a certain situation or not”*

*~ Dr. Rasha Allam, Assistant Professor and Associate Chair, AUC*

*“We have an illiteracy problem, but that doesn’t mean all audience will be influenced by media, mostly it’s the teenagers who can’t watch children’s content anymore, yet they don’t have enough knowledge yet to watch adult content either.*

*This is the age group that really needs to have special production for their age.”*

*~ Mariam Naoum, Egyptian Drama Writer and Author*

### **3. APPEAL OF CONTENT VS AUDIENCE INTEREST**

HISHAM SILIMAN, ALBERT SHAFIK

Among others who believed that most media production seeks high viewership to gain more advertising and profit, with no considerations to benefit or harm of audience, Mr. Albert Shafik – Extra News Director, 2019 – highlighted that despite the various issues in the media content provided, such content appeals to audience because the society is no longer interested in family and child matters, but rather seek entertainment of things to talk about, which won't be present through family drama. In addition, Mr. Shafik adds that new generations are more interested in watching action scenes and technology used in production.

On the other hand, while Mr. Hisham Soliman – Head of DMC Network and owner of Hama Film Productions – agrees that majority of broadcasters seek what brings advertiser's attention, yet, had a different perspective along with few other interviewees. Believing that audience search for good content, hence, when broadcasters provide that, advertisers will seek that content rather than providing content seeking advertisers. Adding that DMC had a successful experience with producing good content off Ramadan, such as “Abu El 3arousa” not only gaining high viewership and attracting advertisers to them, but also creating competition where other channels started producing similar content.

*“It's not that what they present is what audience want, because audience want good content. If you provide them with that, they will remain with your channel. But to provide the audience with what they want, we must first understand what they want. . . Now when audience find strong cinematic works like el feel el azra2, sahar el layali, or even programs and series with no celebrities, they watch it.”*

*~ Hisham Soliman, Head of DMC Network and owner of Hama Film Productions*

*If there is a good production people will watch, and that can present good values like back in time*

*~ Dr. Howaida Mostafa, Head of Radio and Television Department, Cairo University*

#### **4. DOES CURRENT MEDIA CONTENT REFLECT SOCIETY OR VISE VERSA**

Interviewees didn't seem to have a preference in this regard, stating that it goes both ways. Highlighting that drama should reflect society, yet it depends on how it is presented. Although some interviewees highlight that drama exaggerates reality to some extent.

*"You can change the reality if you present appropriate dramatic treatment through media. Unfortunately, most series now a day focus on betrayals, stealing, decline in morals, and drugs. We can't deny that this may be present, yet it has been exaggerated, its not as big as they portray it. The focus on the negatives became much higher than the focus on the positive giving the belief that this is the reality, providing a bad image about Egypt, especially that the Egyptian drama is highly requested in all Arab countries, we need to put more highlight on the positive aspects in parallel as well"*

*~ Dr. Hanaa' Maraey, Assistant Professor, MSA University*

*"Drama in developing countries that lack intellect and education, must not only reflect society, it must also act as a spark of hope. Helping the youth have better hopes and dreams like being part of the development of the society, or being beneficial instead of running away from reality through drug use or gain money in any way."*

*~ Dr. Mona El Hadidi, Media Professor, Cairo University*

#### **5. EGYPTIAN NATIONAL TELEVISION CONTENT STANDARD**

Some media professionals highlight that National television use to provide a much wider variety of quality entertainment as well as informative and educational content than what it is providing now. In addition, highlighting the regression in the important role it used to play serving the public benefit.

*"In most countries around the world, local media channels are with the highest popularity and credibility as people can relate to it. Unfortunately, here in Egypt those local channels including those serving rural areas are very poor quality, providing outdated content. They need to be leaders and play their roles in serving the publics interest."*

*~ Dr. Mona El Hadidi, Media Professor, Cairo University*

Professionals presiding Maspire explained the challenges National TV has been facing following the 2011 up rise, and how it's not receiving enough support to gain back its important role. Clarifying that these challenges not only include financial issues, but also a large number of employees and resources that are not efficiently utilized. Highlighting that up to date, National Television content abides by all Egyptian ethical standards, customs and traditions, leaving the choice of viewership for audience.

*"Private channels may also have more appealing production means, but that's something we are currently trying to apply in Local Egyptian Television. We started the development process by switching channel one to HD quality, making exceling change in content, décor, photography, technicality, but with out departing from appropriate media content ever."*

*~ Naela Farouk, Head of The National Broadcast Maspire*

## **6. CURRENT FAMILY CONTENT AND IMAGE IN EGYPTIAN MEDIA**

The majority of media professionals highlight that there is a **strong draw back in the production of family series and content**, with **low representations of typical Egyptian families and children**. Suggesting that this **lack of interest to create family content is due to the constant search for what brings higher revenue**.

*The simple Egyptian middle class family is not highly represented. Again this is due to the absence of having clear message for those making the media work.*

*~ Abdel Latif El Menawy - CEO & Editor in chief in Al Masry Al Youm*

*“Family series that address the Egyptian family are very rare to find something, and there is nothing available for Egyptian Children. Producers search for what has achieved financial success earlier and unfortunately continues the same path until its completely overused then they start looking for something new to present and so forth.”*

*~ Albert Shafik – Extra News Channel Director*

Several respondents also highlight that the majority of the available productions which include the Egyptian family, either **reflect exaggerated matters that may be irrelevant to a typical Egyptian family**, or **portraying stereotypes for rich and poor**.

*“The majority of Drama productions doesn’t represent the Egyptian public or women or anything at all. The majority of the works makes you feel that it is totally irrelevant with our life, how many people have relatives spending all their time in bars, and nightclubs, are drug dealer or holding weapons, shooting each other and kidnapping people. I feel that the drama productions available focuses on the lowest human instincts.”*

*~Sanaa Mansour, Egyptian Television Presenter*

*“I can’t generalize, some work put effort in working on certain realistic themes, reflecting reality, which can sometimes be negative, while other works take the easier way of telling a story with no details. But that type of series children should not watch, because authors don’t put in mind not to write certain matters because there may be children watching, because they shouldn’t its not directed to them.”*

*~ Mariam Naoum, Egyptian Drama Writer and Author*

*“I find that children are not even represented enough in drama. Its all negative portrayals. For example, most children are either shown working in a coffee shop or at a mechanic and being subjected to physical violence, whether in drama or cinema. While usually portraying children in rich families suffering from psychological issues or ignorance of the parents. I don’t have to portray that children in rich families must be spoiled and drug addicts. Should provide good values instead.”*

*~ Dr. Rasha Allam, Assistant Professor and Associate Chair, AUC*



*“They need to be aware of the population and the different age groups, and dedicate a certain amount of broadcast time for the production and airing of suitable content accordingly. In addition to understanding and supplying content suitable for each demographic location as well.”*

*~ Dr. Mona El Hadidi, Media Professor, Cairo University*

Several respondents also indicate that most family series now **don’t provide parental guidance to raise children in an appropriate manner.**

*“Even programs made for a family or women, they don’t provide beneficial information for parenting this is because media has taken a different role than what it is suppose to do.”*

*~ Magdy Lasheen, Advisor of the President of the National Information Authority, Egypt*

*“Drama also uses children in a very bad manner. Such as in the series “Kaeno embareh”, they portrayed a young child being treated very badly, with out even stating the result of the mothers’ neglect to the child. No focus what so ever given to that matter. Even if parents want to raise their child well, they don’t have correct information on how to treat the child in the right manner to bring up a stable child.”*

*~ Nadia Mabrouk, Head of Radio Networks, Maspiero.*

*“Drama and reality lake Communication between members, awareness of parents of their children’s problems, usually reflected as parents busy working and spoiled kids. While reality doesn’t only include this example. The other figure should be represented as well, those who care about their children and focusing with them. But as a writer I guess what most think of is what is needed to move the drama along, despite the general impact that may have.*

*~ Mariam Naoum, Egyptian Drama Writer and Author*

Among other issues that were raised was **the need to have a goal and message in the content provided, while adding more focus on values, customs and traditions and avoiding stereotypes.** Highlighting the **important role and ability of media to empower children and families by providing positive role models.** Various references were made to the old Egyptian family series **including the well known series “Wanees”** by Egyptian Actor Mohamed Sobhy, and the decline in similar productions for the family.

*“Television plays an important role in the lives of the majority of people and children especially those in simple families. Hence, this can be used to enforce values, directing their interests, presenting positive role models to embed positive human values in their lives. Presenting a negative image about women and men in families could deteriorate family relations, we need the media to empower the personal relations between the family not the opposite. It can also help the family bond after watching through discussion and talks.”*

*~ Dr. Mona El Hadidi, Media Professor, Cairo University*

*“The production that has millions spent on it, could add good values in context with the drama, but this needs awareness of the writers, and care to deliver a message to the audience .... Fathers for example are usually portrayed as a source of income, although the father has a very important role in raising children.”*

*~ Nadia Mabrouk, Head of Radio Networks, Maspire.*

*“We use to have things like Wanees, Hamada ezzo, and other things for the family. Now that has decreased for the market. Since it needs to have something that would attract people. Unfortunately, since that may not be very attractive for audience, producers retreat from it as well.”*

*~ Albert Shafik – Extra News Channel Director*

*“The Egyptian family has changed now, wanees talked about issues in an age different than today. Some drama works spotted this change and portrayed it. For example, the series by Yehia el Fakharani last year, which tried to present some of the issues that families can be facing these days with new generations and their different way of thinking”*

*~ Naela Farouk, Head of The National Broadcast, Maspire.*

In addition, some productions addressing the Egyptian family, sometimes **portray ideas, scenes, and language not suitable for families and children**. Few respondents have mentioned a series called **“Sabea Gaar”** or Seventh Neighbor, highlighting that although it might be good initiative for family series, yet may have some content issues that may not be suitable for every Egyptian family.

*“When a drama production portrays children, who is meant to watch it when it is a production that children is not suitable for children to watch. It portrays values, scenes, language and other negative issues against our upbringing.”*

*~ Magdy Lasheen, Advisor of the President of the National Information Authority*

*“I only watched a couple of episodes from sabea gaar, It’s a family series that addresses neighbors, which is something we haven’t had for a while, but it contained negative issues. Like a girl standing on the stairs of her building smoking with a neighbor that she likes. This could create an image that children can do such things with out their parents knowing.”*

*~ Nadia Mabrouk, Head of Radio Networks, Maspire.*

*People are loving a series airing now called 7<sup>th</sup> neighbor because its close to the typical Egyptian family, and millions have related to it. Of course it might have some negatives and bad models but as mentioned these are things that are already present, and they are trying to make awareness and treat the matter.*

*~ Dr. Hanaa’ Maraey, Assistant Professor, MSA University*

On the bright side, various interviewees have highlighted that within this limited range of available family series are **few that address the Egyptian family in a decent manner. High credit was commonly given to the Egyptian series produced by DMC channel called “Abu El Arousa”** or Father of the Bride, representing the typical middle class Egyptian family. Head of DMC network, Hisham Soliman, explain that this series narrates the story of every father with a daughter getting married, and with children school age, portraying the conditions and dreams of a typical Egyptian middle class family.

*You rarely find a stable family, like the one portrayed in “Abu El 3arousa”. I really like this series because it represents the simple Egyptian middle class family, portraying things that are familiar to us. It reaffirms our values and traditions about the family and ethical values outweighing materialistic values. These are the type of things I like to watch and would like my kids to watch.*

*~ **Dr. Rasha Allam**, Assistant Professor and Associate Chair, AUC*

*“Giving importance to portraying the Egyptian family is not just to create a trend but rather we have a management keen to create meaningful media. When we achieve that, we have advertisers come to our door. We are now rated one of the highest to get ads. Our commercial clients know that they place their ads in a respectable place that doesn’t include indecent words, that is always seeking success in a different manner than others.”*

*~ **Hisham Soliman**, Head of DMC Network and owner of Hama Film Productions*

## **7. CURRENT LOCAL CHILDREN MEDIA CONTENT IN EGYPT**

Almost all professionals and academics whom were asked in this regard (10 out of 10) agreed that local media content for children is almost “non-existent”. Highlighting the drawback and absence of high quality Egyptian content or programming designed specifically for children, has lead children to watch other content not suitable for their age due to the lack of alternatives.

*“There is no child targeted media. They started to be limited to working on daily events, rather than on media basic role which is entertainment, education, and awareness. This has lead children to watch things with their families that are irrelevant to them, teaching them things that is not for their age. We have a problem that we don’t know the time where most children are watching, and we don’t have content created for them.”*

*~ Magdy Lasheen, Advisor of the President of the National Information Authority, Egypt*

*“First, there is not enough consideration given to content provided for children like there use to be. Most of the child directed content is through private specialized satellite channels. Yet when it comes to the local or private Egyptian television channels, its very limited.”*

*~ Dr. Howaida Mostafa, Head of Radio and Television Department, Cairo University*

*“There is almost no presence for Egyptian programming for children, even the local channel that was specialized for family and child is now called the family channel. At some point we did have acceptable local programming, or at least puts efforts in an attempt to be up to the ethical and professional standards. For example, Samia Sharabi Program, “hewar m3 el kobar” program and Cinema El atfal. Now, there is almost no interest in Local programing for children in Egypt”*

*~ Dr. Mona El Hadidi, Media Professor, Cairo University*

*“The children programs currently available have some nice programs, but trifle. For example, DMC channel has a morning show hosting children copying a program Ahmed Helmy has made over 15 years ago, but what is the added value to the child. If we don’t come up with our own content, they will be attracted to other content. Most children have their phones, and can access other content, hence we have to bring our own content to protect them.”*

*~ Dr. Rasha Allam, Assistant Professor and Associate Chair, AUC*

*“The availability of children programing is extremely weak in comparison with other social, cultural, or news programs. I feel that the Egyptian child is very oppressed from being represented in the drama or programs, there is almost no space available for children programing, hence they are victimized and that leaves them only with the option to view other stuff from countries and culture different than ours, and of course that may have a negative impact on them and teach them things totally different than what we should implant in them. That’s mainly because we didn’t provide them with an alternative.”*

*~ Dr. Hanaa’ Maraey, Assistant Professor, MSA University*

In 2019, there are around four main child related programs aired on Egyptian Media. The first local production is a program called “Banat w Welad” or “Girls and Boys” launched in 2016, by AlNahar Channel, airing to date. This program was first presented by Salma Sabahy, followed by Alaa Gawish later in January 2019.

*“Unfortunately these programs don’t address children’s’ minds, nor direct their behavior. Children now are smarter and need something with higher technology, something they can see them selves in. Unfortunately, these programs are considered light entertainment (shallow) programs for children but neither leads children to get attached to it nor address their minds.”*

*~ Albert Shafik – Extra News Channel Director*

Extra News Channel Director, Albert Shafik, states that from his previous experience in Al-Nahar Channel, that “Boys and Girls” program an attempt to help provide something Egyptian for children, yet, use to bring very low revenue. Highlighting that developing the program, means the need to invest more money, and since it doesn’t have much revenue, this means more loss.

Also in 2016, Al Kahera Wal Nas Channel produced another local Egyptian program called “Al Abakera” or “The Geniuses”. Targeting high school and university age, this program is sponsored by an Egyptian National Bank, providing financial prizes that goes to supporting the Egyptian Public Educational System and development of public schools in Egypt. Since 2016, the program has created around four seasons, and is still airing to date. This program does not seem to be very popular and was almost never mentioned during all interviews. Personally, I believe the program idea and goal is to some extent positive, yet, requires some modification in idea, application and practice.

A similar program I believe could be a beneficial reference in this regard is a 2018 foreign production by NBC network called Genius Junior, hosted by American Celebrity Neil Patrick Harris, who is known for his comedy roles and participation in various children animations and movies. This children game show provides children a chance to test and show their cognitive talents and abilities with extraordinary challenges and teasing techniques to their brain. This is done through a sequence of rounds that escalate in level through out the episode, involving various disciplines including math, memory, logic, spelling, etc. This is something highly needed in Egypt, not only will it encourage children and families to focus more on cognitive development, but also empower children to have higher goals and focus on more important aspects in life like self focus and development, rather than imitation of negative behaviors of others.

By the end of 2018, came the local production of two American inspired programs. Some respondents highlight that although such programs may provide a fresher look to the idea of child programming, yet could include some issues.

*“There is no consideration to child programming, and if any consideration was given, most probably it would be reproduction of foreign programs presented with the same format. This idea is present every where around the world, we can’t say its negative, yet due to copy rights, they must keep the same format and overall program style, but the issue is about the content provided and about the topics and values we care to transfer to our children.*

*These programs defiantly **provided a fresher look to children’s programs than the traditional child program** style which was mainly depended on direct awareness or story telling. In addition, it gave children the opportunity to have an **active role** in the program, **not only a receiver**, which is another positive aspect that could get the child to better express themselves, which is an important and positive matter. Hence it would be important if used to serve ideas, behaviors and values. It also doesn’t have the violence that children could see in cartoons or the violent content older children see in drama or series. Yet it lacks providing information, or emphasizing positive actions which traditional programs use to focus on. Providing a deeper content, values and behaviors. The old traditional programming provided more educational, awareness and intellectual content, the ones provided now focus more on entertainment with lack of intellect and education.*

*On the other hand, even if this is intended to build their personality, it could have some negative impact on the participating child as well as the child watching. Sometimes this places the child in a role older than his age, and puts him in a position of feeling like a celebrity which could impact him and the child watching him.*

*~ Dr. Howaida Mostafa, Head of Radio and Television Department, Cairo University*

*“As for the Arabic content available it mainly depends on dubbed foreign material. I criticize that despite the long history of Egypt and some Arab countries, till now we don’t have an Arabic cartoon character that we were able to create and promote to the whole Arab world.”*

*~ Dr. Mona El Hadidi, Media Professor, Cairo University*

The first was a children’s prank show called “Miss Understand” presented by Egyptian Actor Shaimaa Saeed on the ON E channel. This program is inspired by the 2012 ABC Jimmy Kimmel Live Detective show. The Miss Understand show has brought many criticism regarding how children are communicated to during the program.

The second show is a kid’s talent show production by MBC Egypt Channel. This program presented by the Egyptian Actor Ahmed Helmi, was titled “Little Big Stars” since it was the Arabic version of the 2016 NBC network – American show “Little Big Shots” by Steven Harvey.

Despite that some professionals haven't followed the show, various professionals have praised Ahmed Helmi's ability to communication with children based on his past successful works. While on the other hand, few raised a concern that this show might address children in a way that is older than their age.

*"Unfortunately, I haven't seen it, but Ahmed Helmy had a previously very successful program with children, that everyone was watching from children to teens. I think with Ahmed helmys' character; he can address children's minds through the way he communicates questions, attracting the highest number of children"*

*~ Albert Shafik – Extra News Channel Director*

*"The new Ahmed Helmy Program on MBC is nice, but to artificial in my opinion. Unlike a foreign program where they host kids, entertain and educate them."*

*~ Dr. Rasha Allam, Assistant Professor and Associate Chair, AUC*

Regardless of preference, almost all media professionals that were asked in this regard agree that all available programs have various issues that makes them not the best option for young children. Opinions covered issues related to lack of awareness and proper preparation inline with targeted age groups. This includes the imitation of foreign programs with unawareness on possible impact of what is being presented on children, having unspecialized figures working on the production of child programing, addressing kids in the wrong manner, which may have also lead to less influence or connection with children. In addition, the majority of productions are mainly for entertainment rather than education, development, raising values and directing or guiding child behavior.

*"We can't say that any of the three programs are powerful. We need to be aware of the age groups and address each age group in the suitable manner for their age. In addition, specify the target group before making the production."*

*~ Hisham Soliman, Head of DMC Network and owner of Hama Film Productions*

*"Overall, I can't evaluate them as negative or positive, because unfortunately their impact is almost non existent."*

*~ Albert Shafik – Extra News Channel Director*

*"I saw some parts of Ahmed Helmy program as well as the program presented by Shaimaa Saed, haven't been following them, but according to what I saw they are all foreign formatting."*

*~ Dr. Howaida Mostafa, Head of Radio and Television Department, Cairo University*

*"We historically have an issue with the standard of child programs presented. Its either an imitation with no awareness or sufficient preparation, or looking at the child mentality in an inferior way, so dealing with the child in the wrong manner"*

*~ Abdel Latif El Menawy - CEO & Editor in chief in Al Masry Al Youm*

*“Content provided now is very far from children, there is nothing we can say that grabbed their attention, because they also have access to social media, providing a much wider variety, so they aren’t as connected to television. Children now want to be an active part of the production, so I can’t just get a child to sit in the studio and tell them a story, I must involve them in the process. Even those at home, make a program for children and those at home can participate with those on television”*

*~ Naela Farouk, Head of The National Broadcast, Maspiro.*

*“When creating a child program, most channels bring presenters with least capabilities. Even in schools, they choose the newest teachers with least experience to deal with children, when as a matter of fact the opposite should be done. The one who deals with children must have experience with children and knows how to deal with them and deliver information in the proper manner. All that is not done correctly neither in Egyptian media nor society”*

*~ Nadia Mabrouk, Head of Radio Networks, Maspiro.*

*“Excuse my word, but now the programmers haven’t studied child psychology, upbringing, sociology or even media. Same goes for directors, and how they should assign different factors to serve each age group.”*

*~ Dr. Mona El Hadidi, Media Professor, Cairo University*

*“Child programming available for children now in general might have good things but it doesn’t communicate matters relevant to us, fit the Egyptian context or the challenges we have right now. Like water consumption, electricity, recycling, health and food, which could be taught to children in a good manner.”*

*~ Dr. Rasha Allam, Assistant Professor and Associate Chair, AUC*

*“Programs must be up to date with the current generation, communicating with the new generations the way that suits them now. Which means you can’t talk to them like they are less than you or deal with them the same way like people did back in time.”*

*~ Dr. Mona El Hadidi, Media Professor, Cairo University*

*“It doesn’t keep up with modern intellect of children, the fast past performance. The technological era we currently live in requires a much faster and stronger performance with more thrill. They don’t care about the values that we need to implant in children, and providing them with indirect enlightenment and awareness in so many issues, like for example how to take care of their health, or the type of food they choose. This could be presented to them in a very cheerful way through stories and cartoons to deliver very important messages and meanings to what they can do to take care of their health. This is not present at all, unfortunately all the content available encourages unhealthy things including food types as the simplest example in addition to so many other issues.”*

*~ Dr. Hanaa’ Maraey, Assistant Professor, MSA University*



## 8. FORIGN MEDIA CONTENT AND EGYPTIAN CHILDREN

The majority of Media Professionals and academics (10 out of 10) highlight that the top viewed foreign content includes Disney Channel, Disney Junior, Disney Movies, Pixar Movies, YouTube content, Netflix, and Bra3em. Agreeing that despite such foreign content and channels providing high quality content especially designed for children, however, fosters numerous downsides. This includes serving entertainment purposes rather than target child cognition and/or behavior.

*“Positive aspects include opening up children’s minds by demonstrates more stories, places, and has some sort of variety in the information provided. But on the other hand, it doesn’t provide characters’ children can relate/get attached to, develop their talents nor lead to a positive behavior of the child. It lacks communicating child behavior and cognition. It is content only for entertainment.”*

*~ Albert Shafik – Extra News Channel Director*

*“If we want to build young children, we need to provide them with positive examples, and if we are to present negative models, that is mainly to present how positive models can help them. . . In addition to teaching them values, we also need to teach them how to think, and understand that each child is different.”*

*~ Hisham Soliman, Head of DMC Network and owner of Hama Film Productions*

In addition, many added that most of the foreign content Egyptian children watch are irrelevant with our society, culture, needs, and life in general. Adding that some content may depict ideas, beliefs, values, misconceptions, stereotypes, scenes, and words that are incompatible with our Egyptian society, customs and tradition. Highlighting that such content lacks values and information we want to teach our children, while immersing them in large amount of violence.

*“The majority of the content in general is good, although its not reflecting the Egyptian culture. There are certain issues we need to take care of. For example, the cartoons talking about accepting homosexuality, this is something we need to make sure our children are not exposed to.”*

*~ Dr. Rasha Allam, Assistant Professor and Associate Chair, AUC*

*“Those channels that broadcast dubbed movies are disastrous. They air large amounts of violence, leading that now the simplest thing kids want to play with are guns since they are regularly subjected to it. Unlike the old Egyptian productions like Bakar and boloz which presented good values and information for children.”*

*~ Nadia Mabrouk, Head of Radio Networks Maspiro*

*“When we announced that we will start preparing to launch DMC kids, the Japanese embassy contacted me offering 600 hours of their cartoon for free, which I thought was a great start. I took the material, yet, when I started watching the content, it’s full of violence, and this is not the message I want to deliver. This is a very big responsibility.”*

*~ Hisham Soliman, Head of DMC Network and owner of Hama Film Productions*

*"I can't generalize that all foreign content is good or bad. They may be innovative but have issues. If the foreign media content for children contains beneficial values or educational information its ok, but the problem is with those who may encourage violence or stereotypes to any nationality or religion. We need to chose the proper content for the early childhood suitable for Egyptian children."*

*~ Dr. Mona El Hadidi, Media Professor, Cairo University*

Some also highlight that despite the possibility of improving children's foreign language, foreign content has a very high threat on our culture and identity. Various interviewees highlight how imported content glamorizes foreign identity, demolishing the Egyptian national identity, language and patriotism.

*"Disney content addresses the family in general. . . The media directed at children in television, was able to introduce a very positive image about the American society, that's why you find many youth saying they wish to go there, when in fact it is the total opposite."*

*~ Hisham Soliman, Head of DMC Network and owner of Hama Film Productions*

*"The coming generation suffers the lack of identity, copying every thing from the west in their songs, culture, customs and traditions, and celebrations and forgot our own culture till it is diminishing, and even look at it in an inferior way. The way the west glamorizes them selves in their programming, drama and songs made got a whole generation to follow believing that such imitation is classy. Especially when on the other hand, here the media was at rest from production or creativity, and found it easier to import already made programs or copy them which has no uniqueness, missing out on creativity."*

*~ Dr. Hanaa' Maraey, Assistant Professor, MSA University*

*"It makes the child more connected to the English language and culture because they don't have any Egyptian models, banishing the culture of his Egyptian home country that should be raised with the child and make him proud of."*

*~ Albert Shafik – Extra News Channel Director*

Among other channels, a couple of respondents have referred to an Arab Children Channel called Barae'm, clarifying how it may provide an Arabic alternative to western content, yet emphasizing the many hidden negative messages it conveys indirectly.

*"I highly disagree with this channel because they transmit ideas to children that they shouldn't. For example, that the Arab Gulf is financing Egyptians, and that Qatar is the greatest among the Arab countries. They don't say that directly, yet, they do it cleverly. In addition, they use words not suitable for Egyptian homes."*

*~ Hisham Soliman, Head of DMC Network and owner of Hama Film Productions*

*“Unfortunately, even Qatar understood the importance of having content addressing children and made channels like AlJazeera Kids and Bara3em, and that’s what our children watch.”*

*~ **Mariam Naoum**, Egyptian Drama Writer and Author*

Last but not least, many respondents state their concern over foreign content exceeding local content provided for children, leaving no other alternatives for Egyptian children to watch other than content that may impose various potential risks on children’s development, behavior, thoughts, and identity.

*“Inaccurate choices of content consistent with the nature of the society and the prevailing culture, could lead to distortion. The solution is having strong local product based on studies and understanding more than filling time.”*

*~ **Abdel Latif El Menawy** - CEO & Editor in chief in Al Masry Al Youm*

*“Many parents leave their children open access to television, and youtube being subjected to foreign content. My daughter leaves her son to watch youtube, with limited time, but she doesn’t know what he is watching.”*

*~ **Nadia Mabrouk**, Head of Radio Networks Maspiro*

*“There is more foreign content available for children, yet, despite that being rated by age, doesn’t mean that content suitable for another society would be suitable for us. Not all parents would be able to watch the whole content before allowing their children to watch it, mostly if the age group rating is suitable, they would allow them, and maybe surprised with unwanted content while watching.”*

*~ **Mariam Naoum**, Egyptian Drama Writer and Author*

*“The foreign content that is designed specially for children, puts in consideration their age groups, mental abilities, and what can impact them. But unfortunately there is nothing here made locally in Egypt specially for children.”*

*~ **Dr. Rasha Allam**, Assistant Professor and Associate Chair, AUC*

## **9. LACK OF LOCAL MEDIA PRODUCTION FOR CHILDREN IN EGYPT**

As stated earlier, all interviewees, including media professionals, academic, child experts and parents agree to a clear lack of sufficient high quality local media content for children in Egypt, referring to it as almost “non-existent”.

*“We don’t have enough media production for the young age. We need to have a cartoon channel for Egyptian children. But in order to make a production for children now a day, we need to engage children at home as well.”*

*~ Naela Farouk, Head of The National Broadcast, Maspiro.*

*“I’m not really following up, but as far as I know from the surrounding that this is not present”*

*~ Abdel Latif El Menawy - CEO & Editor in chief in Al Masry Al Youm*

*“Local Egyptian child content is almost nonexistent. we don’t have anything Egyptian.”*

*~ Albert Shafik – Extra News Channel Director*

*“The media scene for children today is unstable, children are the last thing they consider”*

*~ Magdy Lasheen, Advisor of the President of the National Information Authority, Egypt*

*“There are no programs mainly designed for children. We use to have programs for children in Ramadan, now nothing is offered other than Ramez and other non sense which children watch and is the worst example you can provide children with.”*

*~ Mariam Naoum, Egyptian Drama Writer and Author*

*“All channels around the world provide content for children, but here in Egypt we don’t have any production for children. We must have programs, writers, and content creators for Egyptian and Arab children. But this is not present at all.”*

*~Sanaa Mansour, Egyptian Television Presenter*

*“My grandson is now singing “mama zmanha gya” which is a very old song because he has no updated alternatives. The other options he likes is tamer Hosney song besho2ak”*

*~ Nadia Mabrouk, Head of Radio Networks Maspiro*

*“Other than those programs discussed, I don’t find any attention given to child programing”*

*~ Dr. Howaida Mostafa, Head of Radio and Television Department, Cairo University*

*“There is almost no Local production of children programing in Egypt, and if it was present it is of very poor quality”*

*~ Dr. Mona El Hadidi, Media Professor, Cairo University*

Several reasons were commonly addressed mainly in regard to lacking financial resources, advertisers, and availability of specialized authors for child content. Some explain that this is probably due to the absence of awareness to the high importance of providing specialized local content designed for children at different age groups. In addition, most interviewees referred to the high concentration on means of profit and increasing viewership and revenue, with the backing up of governmental role.

*“Believing that children are too young to get attention, there is no awareness of the importance to produce specialized programing for children since they are the future that will build our society”*

*~ Nadia Mabrouk, Head of Radio Networks Maspire*

*“In DMC we try not to depend on advertisers, but at the same time we don’t want any loss. If a child program was not strong enough with powerful content and celebrity, we will all lose. Because when producing a child program, I won’t find an advertiser calling me to sponsor the program. . . Our main problem is who will pay for those programs.”*

*~ Hisham Soliman, Head of DMC Network and owner of Hama Film Productions*

*“It does not make profit, it is very high in cost, and has a very low advertising revenue. Consequently, no body risks to go pay a large sum of money to produce a program for children, knowing that the return will not provide the cost”*

*~ Albert Shafik – Extra News Channel Director*

*“Unfortunately, most production now thinks of profit and materialistic matters more than anything else. Hence a whole age group was neglected from being represented in media”*

*~ Dr. Hanaa’ Maraey, Assistant Professor, MSA University*

*“Child programs are believed to be costlier than content for adults. In order to make content for children you need to provide means to attract them”*

*~ Nadia Mabrouk, Head of Radio Networks Maspire*

*“Unfortunately we don’t have any high quality local programing produced for children at all, mainly because its not profitable. Even if such programs would bring profit or ads, they don’t take the risk. Which advertisers would come to that when the advertising pie has been the same for several years. The most things money is spent on is drama production. Hence you find all channels copying each other”*

*~ Dr. Rasha Allam, Assistant Professor and Associate Chair, AUC*

Almost all media professionals did agree that producing a local Egyptian child program in such a competitive medium available now, requires having a specialized production team and authors since it must be something appealing to the child not only content wise, but also production wise in order to compete with the high standard quality of programs and content children became use to watching on other foreign channels like Disney, Netflix, YouTube, etc.

*“For a children’s program to be good enough, it must have good décor, very up to date with the latest technology, all children must look good, the picture must be high quality, exceeding children’s expectations. The competition now is between us and Netflix or YouTube for example. Children can now access any kind of content they wish for on YouTube, with a production we may not be able to compete.”*

*~ Hisham Soliman, Head of DMC Network and owner of Hama Film Productions*

*“Many things have changed and developed, if we as media producers and decision makers keep up with that, I prefer we stay as we are and don’t do content for children.”*

*~ Hisham Soliman, Head of DMC Network and owner of Hama Film Productions*

*“When we watch any English content made for children like movies, cartoons or programs, the first thing you think of is how they got that idea and how they were able to Annalise and narrate this idea in such a way. On the other hand, when someone here writes for children, they write in a very meaningless manner with no innovative ideas. It is all limited to very poor ideas with a generation of social media.”*

*~Sanaa Mansour, Egyptian Television Presenter*

*“It is important to provide educational content, we must not provide it in a tough way that might not be suitable for children, especially that we are communicating with an age group that’s not easy to attract. We must attract their attention through impressive high quality production. The early childhood stage needs more attention and consideration as there is not much content designed for them”*

*~ Dr. Howaida Mostafa, Head of Radio and Television Department, Cairo University*

However, few highlighted that the Egyptian media already creates many highly expensive productions, with highly professional production teams which are well educated, creative, and up-to-date with the latest implementation techniques. References were made to the high production made in advertising and other drama productions which may be similar to that found in foreign content. Claiming that it may not have the same vision for messages, but when a good concept is found Egyptian production teams can provide professional implementation. Adding that the main problem is the absence of qualified child authors to provide a unique idea and content for implementation not financial or production resources.

*“Now we have a more developed technology that we can use to impress children while providing them with valuable and interesting information they can learn from. But there is no consideration for that now. That’s because we are using the easy way of taking ready made programs and copying them.*

*~ Dr. Howaida Mostafa, Head of Radio and Television Department, Cairo University*

*“Production is not like writing, its more technical, and they are well educated and updated with the latest techniques and equipment in market. Hence, if they can present their message to reach the audience in couple of seconds like in commercials, the same thing should apply to children. First we need to have a vision and author, then implementation will come easily afterwards.”*

*~Sanaa Mansour, Egyptian Television Presenter*

*“There are various child programs that have a very high production, brings revenue and has a decent impact on children as well (Stating examples, ahmed helmi, etc.), This means that the private sector has the ability and will to produce and fund such message when they find it.”*

*~ Olfa Tantawi, Communication for Development Officer, UNICEF Egypt*

*“I always worked on children’s programs and I know this story. They are just trying to find excuses. If anyone found an impressive idea for child program that will be successful, bring revenue and will spread around the Arab world, they will defiantly produce it, and spend money on it maybe more than drama. But there are no child authors to begin with. Producers whether public or private have their own vision, and they are smart enough to chose what to invest their money in and what not to. So its not about money, maybe that use to be an issue back in the days but not now.”*

*~Sanaa Mansour, Egyptian Television Presenter*

*“Previously we didn’t have the same high tech available now, yet now, we don’t have specialized writers for children. Its not about reproducing a foreign program, we need the assistance of professionals specialized in writing for children, which we use to have previously, that’s why those old programs were considered developed at their time and of high value as well. Now we have the technological ability not the creative or intellectual ability. I’m not sure what is the issue now, but maybe there are people with ideas, yet, no one interested to produce it. That’s why I believe the government and local media have a role to provide those writers with the needed support, because maybe they have ideas that doesn’t find enough attention. That’s why some writers believe that writing for drama will be more beneficial, thinking about the outcome and financial matters, forgetting the moral outcomes, leading to more focus on entertainment programming and drama.”*

*~ Dr. Howaida Mostafa, Head of Radio and Television Department, Cairo University*

Despite that, as Dr. Howaida mentioned, authors who did make an attempt to write content for children highlight their struggle to find someone who agrees to produce their work on a professional high quality standard. The well known Egyptian Drama Writer, Mariam Nauom, highlights her passion to write for children. After graduating, she worked for an extensive time on preparing dubbing dialogues for Disney cartoons. Later, she also participated in writing part one of the Egyptian Child Series called “Zaza and Gargeer”. During the in-depth interview, Mariam disclosed her personal experience of writing an animation series for children on environmental importance.

*“I wanted to work on this project because I believed we had many resources that we can use more efficiently and value our environment more, and thought that children and the new generation can do so.”*

*~ Mariam Naoum, Egyptian Drama Writer and Author*

Unfortunately, receiving no support on production and implementation, lead Mrs. Naoum to lose interest in writing any more child content.

*“I have written an animation series for children that’s been sitting in my drawer for almost 12 years! Mainly because who will be willing to produce an animation series for children, which is very costly, with out a guarantee to gain profit? Since the government doesn’t do that either, hence, producing specialized content solely for children is no one’s interest. Honestly I haven’t thought of writing anything for children afterwards, because I felt that no one cares, and I’m fighting against air mills, so I didn’t try again”*

*~ **Mariam Naoum**, Egyptian Drama Writer and Author*

Mariam Nauom strongly believed that such content will bring revenue at some point, yet, explains that someone needs to take the initiative for others to be encouraged. She clarifies that up to year 2017 they have been trying to find producers to support their project, yet no one is willing to take a risk. Hence, if any budget was offered, it would always be very low, which would create content that is not appealing for children.

*“We must look at what we are competing with, since its animation, which is Disney. If we don’t do something as high quality no one will watch, and that requires a lot of money which no one is wiling to pay.”*

*~ **Mariam Naoum**, Egyptian Drama Writer and Author*

The majority of interviewees highlight that writing meaningful content and creating specialized content for children, which addresses them in an appealing manner while providing content suitable for the needs and interests of each age group, is one of the hardest tasks. Adding that the Egyptian content we are looking forward to creating must not only be appealing for children in production means, but also needs to address children in an appropriate manner, educate them, and increase their knowledge. In addition, it must also provide values and topics relevant with our Egyptian society. All of which requires professionals along with a lot of effort, research, study, planning, and needless to say money to ensure proper implementation.

*“Among our channel network, we have a channels called DMC kids that hasn’t been launched yet. This is because in order to launch it we need to have competitive content not any material. The hardest thing in the world is addressing children. We want to direct the Egyptian child to benefit from the programs we provide. In order to do so, we need cooperation from everyone, from the state, from our society’s celebrities’. We wont be able to do it alone”*

*~ **Hisham Soliman**, Head of DMC Network and owner of Hama Film Productions*



*“Creating media programs for children is something that we are required to study and work on. Children programming is not just an implementation of a program idea. We must have a survey and do a scientific study first to see the age groups we are targeting, how they think, their mental understanding capability, and their interests and what they would like to watch in order to know the program we need to create. Because this is one of the hardest programs to create. We can’t have a program for children in general, it must be targeting a specific age group, because each age has different interests.”*

*~ Naela Farouk, Head of The National Egyptian Broadcast, Maspiro.*

*“Children programs in general must achieve both entertainment and benefit for children. Providing them with information, implant good values or encourage them to think while entertaining them. Hence, all children programs, must involve qualified experts in sociologically, educationally and psychologically, like many of the large media organizations do worldwide.”*

*~ Dr. Mona El Hadidi, Media Professor, Cairo University*

*“There must be professionals to work on such programs, that enjoy working with children, in order to create something good for them, like Ahmed Helmi”*

*~ Naela Farouk, Head of The National Egyptian Broadcast, Maspiro.*

*“Most of Egypt’s problems are related to education. Writing for children is a talent and creativity but also needs proper education in order to have good writers and content creators for children.”*

*~Sanaa Mansour, Egyptian Television Presenter*

*“Writing for children is harder than writing for adults”*

*~ Dr. Howaida Mostafa, Head of Radio and Television Department, Cairo University*

*“Writing for children is harder because you need to study, each age group and their own language of communication. You need to balance between the theoretical mental capability in text books and the reality they are living. Kids now a day think differently. When writing for adults there are a lot of conflicts and problems that you can write about, but when it comes to children, ideas are more limited and you have to focus on a certain topic you want to communicate with them. Hence, it needs more effort.”*

*~ Mariam Naoum, Egyptian Drama Writer and Author*

## **10. MEANS TO INCREASE LOCAL HIGH STANDARD PRODUCTION FOR CHILDREN IN EGYPT**

### **GOVERNMENT VS PRIVATE MEDIA**

In response to this question, most interviewees referenced to the important role of state and government have to increase local high standard production for children. Highlighting that the backing of governmental role along with National Television in creating specialized content for children and families has left the matter in the hands of private media institutions. Some have suggested having governmental policies obligating channels to create more variety and specialized programming.

*“The absence of such role from local television, maybe for reasons out of their hand, mainly for funding’s issues among others, has left the matter in the hands of private media which has a different strategy based on profit rather than the role of creating awareness. The programs they are interested in are what will bring advertisers”*

*~ Galal Awara, Deputy of Culture & Information Committee in The House of Representatives*

*“Local Egyptian television played a major role in this matter, now backed away leaving the matter to private sector”*

*~ Dr. Howaida Mostafa, Head of Radio and Television Department, Cairo University*

*“The government should put laws for channels before giving licenses, to provide a variety in content which includes dedicating space for child dedicated content suitable for their age with consideration to the time they can watch television”*

*~ Dr. Hanaa’ Maraey, Assistant Professor, MSA University*

*“Through regulations, the SCCM can make a certain quota, meaning if you are opening a private channel, you must make children’s programs like other countries abroad. That will lead people to produce high quality programming to attract advertisers.”*

*~ Dr. Rasha Allam, Assistant Professor and Associate Chair, AUC*

Though, some interviewees argue that creating such awareness and specialized content isn’t the role or responsibility of private media which is profit based.

*“This isn’t something that can be done by individuals in a market based on how much is paid and how much will come in return”*

*~ Albert Shafik – Extra News Channel Director*

*“I don’t believe it’s the role of private producers, the state can fund and producers can take the lead in production with low or no return. But not invest from their own money to do a project as a donation, its not their role. I can’t blame them, if they loose money they wont be able to produce again, it’s the role of the state.”*

*~ Mariam Naoum, Egyptian Drama Writer and Author*

*“You can’t force to provide content about intellect and education as they are looking for fast profit and success. They are not required to do so, but local television is, since their major role is educating and providing awareness.”*

*~ Dr. Howaida Mostafa, Head of Radio and Television Department, Cairo University*

The majority highlights the important role of state and government along with National Television to bring back and promote media content especially designed for children in Egypt, referencing to the history of National Egyptian Television with the support of the government in creating such major productions and cinematic works which carry a message despite the revenue return, creating a counter balance with other productions made for profit.

Yet, various interviewees also add that this needs to be done with the support and cooperation of private media and other relevant institutions. Highlighting that the ability of Egyptian National Television to provide more airing time for the public benefit, and reach people with a specialized strategy to serve this cause, could provide ideas and encourage others in the private sector to adapt the same strategy.

*“The government is the one who can bare this as it is part of its awareness and developmental role. At some point when this was no longer present, the focus became on producing what ever will bring revenue, because in the end its business. It became a matter of which celebrity and topic will bring us more revenue. All the remaining of what will the story be, became personal efforts of directors and authors. Some want to deliver a message while others just want to gain higher viewership. We use to have alternatives, productions like Sobky movies were present but we also had the cinema agency which was a governmental agency producing films. This is not available now.”*

*~ Mariam Naoum, Egyptian Drama Writer and Author*

*“The solution is that this would be adopted by social, international, and governmental institutions. The Egyptian government needs to adopt this to safeguard its culture. Private Media Could participate by helping the state produce programs for children, but with a share that would guarantee that the revenue will cover the cost. Because the private sector is mainly concerned about how much I will spend and how much I will gain back.”*

*~ Albert Shafik – Extra News Channel Director*

*“No one can do this head start other than the state. Having something made for children all year long is a national project, not just entertainment. Like we use to have Bakar and sesame street, even if it was a sponsorship.”*

*~ Mariam Naoum, Egyptian Drama Writer and Author*

*“It’s the states decision, to believe that this is an important role to take. The government is the one capable of making productions that doesn’t target fast profit but rather with a main goal to provide clear messages for different sectors of society, including children of course. Hence, yes, there is a major role on the government, if it doesn’t do, no one else will, leaving gaps.”*

*~ Abdel Latif El Menawy - CEO & Editor in chief in Al Masry Al Youm*

Several media professionals heading Maspire also agree on the important role of the government along with National Egyptian Broadcasts for being the most capable bringing back and promoting more specialized content for children.

*“Private producers are now in control of Drama Market, there is nothing to be done unless the government produces a major influential Drama production that would obligate private production to adopt the same strategy.”*

*~ Nadia Mabrouk, Head of Radio Networks Maspire.*

*“Any government is supported by four main sectors, executive authority, legislative authority, judicial authority and media, which is known as the fourth authority. We have one that was lost, which is media. . . We use to have a department for children in every channel, with a strategy, plan, and vision. We have seen many media figures succeeded through child programming which presented values.”*

*~ Galal Awara, Deputy of Culture & Information Committee in The House of Representatives*

*“Starting with something that already has a base, like in the National Egyptian Television, along the years that’s how we already worked.”*

*~ Magdy Lasheen, Advisor of the President of the National Information Authority, Egypt*

Yet, despite their high interest in public benefit over revenue, they lack of sufficient funding to produce high quality programming. Hence, it became a task hard to achieve with out the support of private entities, and finding means to bring revenue.

*“I personally worked on child series for around 25 years, but we had the opportunity at that time to get funding to do so. Now the matter became very difficult, because the media has changed, marginalizing many roles like children, family, women, and so on. Hence, I disagree to putting the role on the government. We use to provide decent arts and get a big revenue from drama productions, and layali el television concerts. It’s difficult for the government to make such production now, it needs funding. We need to create awareness among the drama production teams..*

*~ Magdy Lasheen, Advisor of the President of the National Information Authority, Egypt*

*“I would recommend that there would be revenue, because the obvious problem here is production. There must be sponsors from the beginning to be able to provide high quality programs.”*

*~ Galal Awara, Deputy of Culture & Information Committee in The House of Representatives*

Naela Farouk, head of the National Egyptian Broadcast Maspiro, states that national television does offer some child programming, which includes story telling and similar content. She acknowledges that this is not what attracts the majority of children now, and that this is something they do need to work on.

*“The local Egyptian channels sometimes provides content for kids but not high quality at all, it lacks the impressive factor.”*

*~ Dr. Howaida Mostafa, Head of Radio and Television Department, Cairo University*

While funding seems to be the biggest issue facing National Television and government with the high cost of production required and highly paid celebrities, several media professionals offer their support and provide personal suggestions to help aiding this dilemma.

Hisham Soliman, head of DMC network and owner of a film production company highlights DMC's willingness to cooperate with the Egyptian state, along with UNICEF, private media and other entities concerned about this matter. Recommending such cooperation to create four morning hours of a variety of specialized content for children targeting different age groups. This should also make consideration to recruiting airing time according to the viewership possibility of each age group.

*“We can make all sorts of content in those four hours, for example 25 min. series for teens and cartoons made by the professional companies we have. If all people cooperate together with the child as their main interest and concern not the profit, we would create something remarkable.”*

*~ Hisham Soliman, Head of DMC Network and owner of Hama Film Productions*

While UNICEF official clarifies their willingness to cooperate, they highlight the importance of private sector as well.

*“At UNICEF we are currently cooperating with Hisham Soliman at HAMA productions to produce a series for children. But in the end, as an organization, our financial capability and role is limited, hence, we need to activate social will among the private sector.”*

*~ Olfa Tantawi, Communication for Development Officer, UNICEF Egypt*

Egyptian drama writer Mariam Naoum, suggest that if the government/state was able to provide sufficient fund to cover only the technical cost of producing high quality content, compatible with the productions available now, many media professionals would be interested to cooperate or even donate their time to participate in such national project to create content for Egyptian children and do something beneficial.

*“If you say come and donate your time to do something 2D like Bakaar I’ll refuse because I’d feel like wasting my time since no one will watch, so there is no benefit. In order to do so, it really needs to be a national project meaning investing real costs on technical matters not the people. Some people will be interested to join, others won’t. In addition, there are many talented young people who don’t have high rates, and can work under the supervision of professionals in the field who can donate their time to supervise, and teach the younger ones who have more passion and time. The hardest part is the implementation.”*

*~ Mariam Naoum, Egyptian Drama Writer and Author*

## **ACADEMIC STUDIES AND SPECIALIZATION**

Other recommendations that were brought to discussion, included the need for more specialized media professionals as well as academic studies and practice.

*“There has to be specializations. I admonish “B3teb ala” mass communication faculties for not making a specialization for creating media content for children like we have for radio and television, advertising, and journalism. Delivering messages for a child is much more different than anyone else. This is a whole study on its own than needs more attention from media academics to encourage more production of children programs.”*

*~ Dr. Hanaa’ Maraey, Assistant Professor, MSA University*

## **MAKING USE OF DIGITAL MEDIA**

Last but not least, some suggest making use of Social Media, since many children and youth are already more attracted to it.

*“All the new generation is directing towards the digital, leading some international products to go towards advertising in digital rather than traditional media”*

*~ Dr. Rasha Allam, Assistant Professor and Associate Chair, AUC*

*“Another aspect to consider is that children are now not focusing on television only, they now have a wider range of choices from the technology available, ipads and youtube. So all this has impacted and lead to a draw back in child programing.”*

*~ Dr. Howaida Mostafa, Head of Radio and Television Department, Cairo University*

*“There must be an initiation. It should start online, since you are targeting the new generation, which most probably doesn’t watch television, unless in certain times like Ramadan, that’s when you can target them. But other than that I believe there should be digital content using characters or actors, to attract people first and create the hype and atmosphere for it. Then we can see if someone wants to o something like that on a larger scale.”*

*~ Dr. Rasha Allam, Assistant Professor and Associate Chair, AUC*

## **11. SCMR ROLE AND EFFICIENCY**

The Majority of media professionals did not believe the SCMR is currently efficient in regulating media. The majority either refused to make official statements in this regard, while some others were unaware of the SCMR role altogether. Few respondents provided suggestions for better performance, mainly in regard to including people from the industry in the process, to be more aware on issues and appropriate measures to solve them.

*“Who are the people in the commission, and how are they regulating media with out sitting with the people working. It’s a new entity, but I can’t see what they have done on real ground. Or maybe they did things I don’t know.”*

*~ **Mariam Naoum**, Egyptian Drama Writer and Author*

*“Its not just about laws and banning, and stopping presenters who said something wrong or someone who made a problem. What’s more important is to find people who understand the industry and what television and advertising mean... To be more efficient, they need to have a committee of specialized people who are actually working in television and advertising, not just a committee to put rules.”*

*~ **Albert Shafik** – Extra News Channel Director*

*“They need to have a research center in side the commission with experts that highlight every issue that comes up and sends it to media mediums to implement something targeting the solution to that issue.”*

*~ **Nadia Mabrouk**, Head of Radio Networks Maspire.*

## **12. THE NEED FOR MEDIA REGULATIONS TO PROTECT MINORS**

The majority of media professionals, academics, child experts and parents interviewed agree on the need to have Egyptian media regulations.

*There must be codes and laws to protect both sides, society and media. This has been an old request; I still believe the importance of putting it in consideration the coming period. I think this is the idea of role integration between society, law institutions, media institutions and NGOs. This is all under a legal frame protecting both sides, the society and media.”*

~ **Abdel Latif El Menawy** - CEO & Editor in chief in Al Masry Al Youm

*“Media regulation has very high importance for people who are irresponsible, which are many. Many people would be seeking profit, so they would do anything to achieve that target. I agree with media regulation, but while giving out decisions, they must give people a chance to be informed (Motale3een) of these decisions.”*

~ **Hisham Soliman**, Head of DMC Network and owner of Hama Film Productions

*“Of course, laws are regulators. Every place in the world has regulators for the media process. But with out crossing over media rights. Meaning that I regulate laws without crossing out the audience right for information. Freedom of expression, speech and freedom of knowledge.”*

~ **Albert Shafik** – Extra News Channel Director

*“Broadcasters must abide by the codes of ethics.”*

~ **Dr. Mona El Hadidi**, Media Professor, Cairo University

*“In order not to negatively impact the viewer we must have a directive, laws and convention that we all participate in, including private channels as well as the social media. Public channels are known for their commitment in this matter, and this comes internally from people working, they learned to have self regulation.”*

~ **Naela Farouk**, Head of The National Egyptian Broadcast, Maspiro.

*“We need to wake up and sincerely face our problems. There must be an upper hand placing laws and have censorship to protect the public taste from further down grading. This cannot be done by one entity; many sides need to collaborate with sincerity to protect the public taste from what is being presented.”*

~ **Dr. Hanaa' Maraey**, Assistant Professor, MSA University

Yet, despite agreeing to the importance of having media regulations, few professionals were a bit reluctant at first about the idea of media regulation questioning the regulation process.

*“I'm against censorship with the traditional meaning of the intervention of many entities. We are in a double standard society, what's being reflected is that we are a conservative and religious society, but the fact is the total opposite, so who will place these regulations? And will that be just another knife for censorship on the people working in the media.”*

~ **Mariam Naoum**, Egyptian Drama Writer and Author



Hence, various professionals highlight important considerations to regulate the matter and guarantee media rights as well. Main points discussed were in regard to creating a committee of experts and professionals to be included in the policy recommendations and decision making process.

*“There should be someone specialized in children to explain what can harm a child, but there must be People from the production as well, writers, directors, etc. some of these people worked hard to reach what they reached, so you can’t just notify them that these are the new rules you have to abide by without involving them. Its something that includes creativity not just a job.”*

~ **Mariam Naoum**, Egyptian Drama Writer and Author

Head of DMC Network Hisham Soliman adds that while directing people, media regulations must also give people chances, decisions shouldn’t be sudden and extreme.

*“Don’t ban someone from coming out on television for saying something wrong, rather put rules to what’s not acceptable and if it was done afterwards then you can penalize the person. You can’t take a decision not to broadcast a whole series after it was produced. Before issuing such decision you must have another rule to view a full script before shooting. You can’t be giving a final decision with out providing guidelines through out the process.”*

~ **Hisham Soliman**, Head of DMC Network and owner of Hama Film Productions

While Nadia Mabrouk, Head of Radio Networks in Maspéro highlights that the regulation of Drama Series is not under the Commission supervision. Since the production of drama series are sometimes made by episode before airing, it becomes hard to regulate. Hence, when placing regulations this is another matter that needs to be put in consideration.

*“There’s no processes for censorship, production team provide a short description of the work or idea they will be producing to the committee, then they work and broadcast with no further time available for any further censorship. Only movies are reviewed prior to release, not drama series, since sometimes they finish the episode the night before airing.”*

~ **Nadia Mabrouk**, Head of Radio Networks Maspéro.

On the other hand, Egyptian Television Presenter Sanaa Mansour had a different opinion totally against having media regulations, highlighting that this will not be applicable in Egypt.

*“We can’t have regulations, as long as you have social media available for everyone, everything will be available for children. It will be a waste of time to put regulations. We don’t even have production for children, so no one will abide by that. In the united states, public television doesn’t have any advertising and if funded by organizations like petroleum companies for example, and produce sesame street and so many other things for children with no revenue return.*

*Yet they get tax deductions for that, hence, you can provide them with regulations to abide by. Such countries have the philosophy of donating a section of their incomes for others, we don't have that."*

*~Sanaa Mansour, Egyptian Television Presenter*

## **SETTING POLICIES VS FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION**

The majority of interviewees didn't find a contradiction between setting policies and freedom of expression when done in an appropriate manner and making considerations to the points mentioned earlier. Rather, some even believed it may open up to more freedom.

*"There is no country in the world that operates with out laws and guidelines. If we are keen to abide by rules related to the lightest personal matters that may affect us, why wouldn't we as content creators have the same consideration to what we present on screen. If someone cursed on television, the audience who chooses to watch it may be mistaken, but we can't hold them accountable, but we can hold the broadcaster or channel owner accountable in order not to provide such content. They may have broadcasted what brings them money, but in the end we need to regulate media to bring out a special generation."*

*~ Hisham Soliman, Head of DMC Network and owner of Hama Film Productions*

*"I believe rating systems would open up more freedom. If I'm writing a +18 movie I would have more freedom knowing that this is targeted to ages 18+, hence, censorship will also provide me more freedom. Yet, producers may fear ratings as it may restrict broadcasting later in the evening or night.*

*~ Mariam Naoum, Egyptian Drama Writer and Author*

*There is a difference between freedom of expression and speech and between who works in this field. You can't say that someone will make a program to discuss freedom of speech or freedom of expression with middle education, or hasn't worked in journalism or read about media and messages and what it means for people to express their views. Hence, how can he/she moderate a discussion between people.*

*~ Albert Shafik – Extra News Channel Director*

### **13. SUGGESTED MEDIA POLICIES NEEDED**

Most suggested media policies were mainly concerning providing appropriate rating system, watershed period, regulating advertising, and benefiting from international experience in this matter. In addition, having self regulation and abiding by the Egyptian customs and traditions.

Providing an efficient rating system that was not only age based, but also content based was among the top required policy by the majority of interviewees. In addition to creating parental awareness and media literacy in highlight to the important role of parental guidance and co-viewership.

*“Today television reaches the whole audience, its not true that just because you have a remote you can switch the channel in the appropriate time, but having a rating system, even on programs through out the whole duration of airing will give parents this option. In addition, there must also be self regulation, decision makers, must consider first if they will accept their children and family to view this content they will create or not. If not, they shouldn’t create it in the first place. Because parents wont always be next to their children while watching.*

*~ Hisham Soliman, Head of DMC Network and owner of Hama Film Productions*

*“I once went to a movie with my son which was suppose to be a family movie, and left in the middle as all the jokes made were sexual and obscene. I don’t mind it being done, but with a proper rating. Another movie, made by my friends whom I love and respect, also had many thoughts that were tolerating harassment as something acceptable and comedy, which is also is not suitable for children. Ratings should not only be based on actual words and obvious matter but even ideas and what is between the lines. This is the difference between censorship by an employee and someone professional in the matter.”*

*~ Mariam Naoum, Egyptian Drama Writer and Author*

*“Some are starting to make content rating, which is a good initiative available worldwide, but it also needs implementation by the family because it doesn’t mean that because the rating is there children wont watch. There is a role on the family as well, its not the media responsibility alone.”*

*~ Dr. Howaida Mostafa, Head of Radio and Television Department, Cairo University*

*“There is also an important role for parents, where they have to co-view with their children.”*

*~ Dr. Rasha Allam, Assistant Professor and Associate Chair, AUC*

Creating a watershed period to air content not suitable for children was also a requested regulation. As many media professionals, academics, child experts and parents highlight, television is available in every home and children are susceptible to be watching television with their families through out the day or even when their families are not around.

*“Broadcasting the programs unsuitable for children after midnight like in the US, with no repetition in the morning, while providing a clear statement for parents to know this. This is a mistake made in drama, even with ratings, I can’t ask a child to get away from television when something inappropriate appears. We always worked on drama knowing it enters every Egyptian home, abiding by certain values and dialogue level.”*

*~ Magdy Lasheen, Advisor of the President of the National Information Authority, Egypt*

Another highly requested regulation focused on commercial time limit, what is allowed and what is prohibited from being advertised, and the type of content that can be included in advertising and what shouldn’t.

*“In Egypt, you can have a series that is 40 min duration, with **advertising** breaks is more than 10 to 15 mins. There is no limit, this is supposing to be a regulatory matter. This is available abroad, not here.”*

*~ Albert Shafik – Extra News Channel Director*

*“Should respecting viewers and their time. If a series containing famous stars, suppose to be 30 minutes in duration, it would take more than hour because they air ads after the starting credits and every 2 minutes afterwards. That’s disrespectful for the audience time. Unfortunately, even some news programs in local channels air ads in the beginning and middle of news cast, which is ridiculous.*

*~ Dr. Mona El Hadidi, Media Professor, Cairo University*

Things against culture etc.

*“Supposedly what is being followed in media is that any customs and traditions that our society rejects, is supposedly prohibited from being spread, focused on, or promoted whether directly or indirectly. Even if the main goal is to reject it, if we keep putting the spot light on anything too much, it creates negative impact rather than positive.”*

*~ Naela Farouk, Head of The National Egyptian Broadcast, Maspiro.*

Furthermore, various interviewees highlight the importance of having qualified figures working in the media field generally, and with children specifically. Suggesting to at least earn a certain amount of working hours or adequate relevant trainings to guarantee proficiency, education, and knowledge.

*“In order to increase the level and standard of Egyptian Media, media institution should be obligated to develop their staff. This could be done through requiring them to provide all editors, presenters, etc. a constant set of obligatory training workshops to become more qualified, learn about content, messages, social regulations and what they mean.”*

*~ Albert Shafik – Extra News Channel Director*

## **14. ENSURING EFFICIENT IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICIES**

To ensure objectivity and efficient implementation based on professionalism rather than job hierarchy among other measures, some media professionals believed that the media regulatory body needs to be an independent entity. Suggesting the formation of a committee of representatives from various fields related to children, women, broadcasting channels, producers, authors, and directors.

*“As a writer it’s a bit binding to find every now and then new rules to what to do and what not to. Even if their concerns are not relevant to my interests, but its annoying to find every time a new entity with new rules, with professionals that are no longer in the field, who are not updated with the latest in the market. They need to include practitioners in the field and new generations who are more up-to-date. This would make it more logic to comply.”*

*~ Mariam Naoum, Egyptian Drama Writer and Author*

Furthermore, several media professionals add that involving media practitioners in the process of policy development rather than informing them with new sudden policies will encourage and facilitate the implementation process.

*“There should be research made by professionals that has been done on certain issues to make us accept the discussion. Involving media professionals in the process rather than giving them rules already made to abide by will engage them as being part of the solution, not to enforce opinions on them. When you have producers and channels on your side that will all help. When everyone is part of the decision they will abide because they were part of the decision.”*

*~ Mariam Naoum, Egyptian Drama Writer and Author*

Mariam Naoum explains that the government should take the role of creating dialogue between media professionals, and leave them to come up with the solution. Highlighting that it’s everyone’s target to do something beneficial and successful with high viewership, and that no one would write with the intention to harm, rather they just want to be seen. Explaining that reference to them as the professionals in the field and requiring them to help in finding solutions will be more acceptable than stating that these are the new government rules and you must apply them. Although this would oblige people to abide, forcing channels to edit any unsuitable content, yet, that could create a very bad atmosphere for creativity.

*“Some writers have the talent to write about thing in a way that makes people hate that issue, hence, you would be limiting those who want to help. My way of helping is not excluding issues we want to fight, but rather I raise it in a way that people hate it by the end of the work. We can agree on regulations that are logical and acceptable not just banning for the sake of limitation.”*

*~ **Mariam Naoum**, Egyptian Drama Writer and Author*

Various interviewees also suggested that such policies and regulations must be mandatory with penalties to ensure abidance and implementation.

*It must be mandatory for institutions. we agree on the policies and then enforce it on institutions. Then when this institute comes to contracting with a presenter or advertiser etc., it will notify them with the rules. Starting from fines all the way to permanent banning (Eqaf tam). Paying a fine, then a fine plus temporary pause for a certain time, then permanent banning.*

*~ **Albert Shafik** – Extra News Channel Director*

## **CHAPTER VI**

### **SECTION (1)**

#### **EGYPTIAN MEDIA POLICY PROPOSAL FOR THE PROTECTION OF MINORS**

It is recommended to adopt and adjust the following policies to be implemented in Egypt for the protection of Children and minors (under 18) from harmful television content and promote Egyptian innovated children programming that helps their Mental (cognitive) and Physiological (emotional) development positively.

#### **1. IMPROVING REGULATORY AUTHORITY (SCMR) EFFICIENCY**

A Primary authority for the communication law, regulation and technological innovation to bring all means of electronic communication under the jurisdiction of one agency. It shall regulate both Interstate and International Communication – of Radio, Television, Wire, Satellite and Cable all around Egypt.

Shall aim to covers all services with audiovisual content (Including emerging advertising techniques) – irrespective of the technology used to deliver the content. Rules apply on any audiovisual content whether on TV, on the Internet, or on a mobile phone. Keen to evaluate policies they implement and sometimes even request pre-policy research to suggest required and applicable regulations.

*“A system of graduated regulation, applies also to the protection of minors. The less control a viewer has and the more harmful a specific content could be the more restrictions apply.” AVMS*

Ensures the application of standards that provide adequate protection to members of the public from offensive and harmful material in all TV and Radio services.

*“We make sure that people in the UK get the best from their communications services and are protected from scams and sharp practices, while ensuring that competition can thrive.” “We all want our children to get the most from the wealth of technology available today” ... “Protecting Children from harmful or inappropriate material on TV and Radio is one of Ofcoms’ most important duties and we take it very seriously” OFCOM*

## GOALS, AIMS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Providing** Leadership in strengthening the defense of the nation's communication infrastructure.
- **Supporting** nation's economy through ensuring appropriate competitive framework for the unfolding of the communications revolution.
- **Encouraging** highest and best use of spectrum domestically and internationally.
- **Encouraging Development of Innovative services.**
- **Encouraging** Competition, **investment** and **innovation** in in Broadband services and facilities.
- **Ensure the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion**
- **The Audience's right to receive creative material, information and ideas without interference but subjected to restrictions prescribed by law in democratic society**
- **Developing and Implementing** regulatory programs for:
  - **Consumer Information and Education.**
  - **Preserving** cultural diversity
  - Applying generally accepted standards to TV
  - Protection of the public from harmful or offensive Television and Radio material/content, especially the **most vulnerable audience** including **children /minors under 18**
  - **Combating** racial and religious hatred
  - Prohibiting TV and Radio content that is likely to lead, encourage or incite crime or disorder
  - Applying rules and standards in Television and Radio services in a manner that **guarantees Freedom of expression**
  - Meet the needs of **persons with disabilities**, of the **elderly** and of those on **low incomes**



- Ensure a wide range of high-quality Television and Radio programs are provided that satisfies different tastes and interests
- Ensure Television and Radio Services are provided by a range of different Organizations
- Preventing harmful and misleading advertising
- Advertising in TV and Radio to Comply with Egyptian laws and regulations
- Preventing unsuitable sponsorship in TV and Radio programs
- Preventing influencing peoples mind through hidden messages by prohibiting the use of techniques that might convey a message to audience with out them being fully aware of it.
- **Promoting** the fulfillment of the purposes of **public service television broadcasting Competition** and facilitating the development and use of **effective forms of self-regulation**
- **Conducting Investigations and Analyzing Complaints.**
- **Revising** media regulations so that new technologies flourish alongside diversity and localism.
- **Secure** the standards objectives by setting, reviewing and revising (from time to time) Radio and Television Program content standards.

## 2. POLICY SETTING COSIDERATIONS

1. Formation of rules and regulations must involve an **advisory committee of experts in relevant fields (not limited to media)** in the formation and decision making process.
2. **Involving public opinion** in decision-making and the formation of rules and regulation.

*“Most of the FCC rules are adopted by a process known as ‘notice & comment’ rulemaking”. That is where the FCC notifies the public that it is considering either adapting or modifying rules on a certain subject / issue and seeks their opinion, which they put in consideration while developing the final rules.*

3. **Federal Advisory Committee Act** – ensures advise made by the advisory committees is Objective and accessible to the public.
4. Consideration to the **public opinion** and different **interests of people**
5. **Degree of harm** or offense likely to be caused
6. **Size of potential audience**
7. **Audience expectation** of a programs nature
8. Consideration of people who might be **unaware of** a programs **content nature** and could **unintentionally be exposed to it** – even if – by their own action
9. Securing **clear identification** when **content nature is changed**
10. Maintaining **Editorial Independence**
11. From time to time to ensure that the codes / standards in force include minimum standards applicable to all TV and Radio programs, in addition to, other specific standards applicable to particular programing type.
12. **Importance of Research:** high value to the importance of conducting regular research with parents and other viewers and listeners in order to understand what they think about specific issues that would help them set, reevaluate, and amend policies to be implemented in the most effective way to the benefit of the public.

*“Twice a year, every year, we ask parents and the wider general public what they think about standards on TV”*

### **3. RECOMMENDED POLICIES FOR EGYPT**

**\* FIGURE 1.1**

POLICY TITLE	DESCRIPTION
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>SECTION (1)</b> <b>GENERAL GUIDELINES</b></p>	
1. Respect Human and Child Rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Egyptian media providers must respect human and child rights in all media content provided.</li> </ul>
2. Applying Generally accepted Egyptian standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Television and Radio content must abide by the Generally Accepted Egyptian standards to protect public from harmful / offensive content that is not culturally accepted in the Egyptian Society.</li> <li>Socially / culturally unacceptable behaviors, actions, and ideas must not be glamorized or portrayed as acceptable in any media content.</li> </ul>
3. Prohibition of inducing/promoting Discrimination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prohibition of any content including, inducing and/or promoting directly or indirectly any kind of Discrimination based on gender, nationality, ethnicity, race, religion, looks, body type, disabilities or any other type of Discrimination.</li> </ul>
4. Prohibition of encouragement to behaviors and/or products harmful to health, safety, or environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Content or products that might encourage negative behaviors that may harm peoples health, threat their safety, or negatively impact the environment is prohibited.</li> </ul>
5. This code shall be applied on all Egyptian governorates, and applied on all content broadcasted on any licensed channels	

**PROTECTION OF MINORS (UNDER 18)**

**SECTION (2)  
RATING SYSTEM**

**1. Movie/Film Rating System**

- **G** (General Audience): Material is appropriate for all ages.
- **PG** (Parental Guidance Suggested): Parental guidance is recommended and some material may be unsuitable for children.
- **PG-13** (Parents Strongly Cautioned): Some material may be inappropriate for children under 13. Parental Guidance / company is recommended.
- **R18** (Restricted): Movie contains material that is inappropriate for children under 18. If shown in a movie theater ID must be provided and NO ONE Under 18 would be allowed or admitted.

**CHILDREN TARGETED MEDIA:**

- **TV-Y** (Directed to ALL Children) – Found only in children’s shows – Means the show is designed specifically for very young audiences above 2 years of age.
- **TV-Y4** (Directed to Older Children) – Found only in Children’s shows – Means the show is most appropriate for children above 4 years of age.
- **TV-Y8** (Directed to Older Children) – Found only in Children’s shows – Means the show is most appropriate for children above 8 years of age.
- **TV-Y8-FV** (Directed to Older Children) – Means mild justifiable\* fantasy violence may be present unlike other programming in the TV-Y8 category. Must be a small part of the whole work (not exceeding 10%) while offering a positive reassuring counterbalance to any violence. \* Justifiable means serves a major purpose in the composition of the work for educational, awareness purposes only.

**2. Television Rating System**

### GENERAL AUDIENCE MEDIA:

- **U** (Suitable for all) – Means the show is suitable for all ages above 4 years old but it is not necessarily a children’s show.
- **TV-G** (General Audience) – Should be suitable for all audience age 8+ and set within a positive framework, offering a reassuring counterbalance to any violence, threat or horror.
- **TV-PG** (Parental Guidance Suggested) – Means parental guidance is recommended and that some scenes may or the program may be unsuitable for children under 13 years old, unless accompanied by an adult. This rating may additionally include the letters: **V** – for Violence, **S** – for Sexual situations, **L** – for Language, **SD** – for suggestive dialogue, **D** – for drugs, smoking, and alcohol use.
- **TV-15** (Parents Strongly Cautioned) – Means the show may be unsuitable for children under 15. This rating may additionally include the letters: **V** – for Violence, **S** – for Sexual situations, **L** – for Language, **SD** – for suggestive dialogue, **D** – for drugs, smoking, and alcohol use, **E** – for exorcism or paranormal content
- **TV-18** (Suitable only for adults / Mature Audience Only) – Means the program is intended to be viewed by adults and unsuitable for children under 18. This rating may additionally include one or more of the letters: **V** – for Violence, **S** – for Sexual situations, **L** – for Language, **SD** – for suggestive dialogue, **D** – for drugs, smoking, and alcohol use, **E** – for exorcism or paranormal content
- **R18** (Adult works for licensed premises only) – Legally-restricted classification for explicit works. Only allowed in specially licensed cinemas, and channels.

**SECTION (3)**  
**WATERSHED PERIOD**

**1.** Content not suitable for children under 18 years of age must only be aired during certain hours when children are not likely to be watching – abiding by watershed rules

- Obligates that unsuitable material/content which might be harmful or seriously impair the physical, mental, or moral development of minors under 18 are only allowed to be transmitted in times or means where minors will not normally hear or see them. In addition to placing a clearly identifiable warning (e.g. Visual symbol) through out the duration of airing/broadcast.
- Television Broadcasters must observe the watershed. The Watershed is the time when TV programs (with a rating above TV-15) not suitable for children can be broadcasted. Outside the watershed period such content is prohibited from airing on Television.
- Unsuitable Material is defined to include everything from sexual material content, to violence, graphic or distressing imagery, bad language and swearing.
- Children must be protected by appropriate scheduling from material that is unsuitable for them. The Watershed helps parents protect their children from material that might be unsuitable or harmful for them.



- Appropriate Scheduling should be judged according to several factors:

**First:** Nature of channel, station, and program.

**Second:** Nature of content

**Third:** The start and end time of the program.

**Fourth:** The likely number and age range of children in the audience – taking into account school time, weekends, and holidays.

**Fifth:** The higher audience expected for a particular channel or station at a particular time on a particular day

- During the Child Safe TV period outside the watershed, any content rated above TV-15 may not be broadcasted.

#### **BEFORE AND AFTER THE WATERSHED**

- When children are likely to be or might still be watching or listening. Television program broadcasted at the start of the watershed at 9 PM, where children are likely to still be watching or listening, clear information and warning about the content that may distress some children should be provided to the audience.
- Frequent use of offensive language must be avoided at the start or near the end of the watershed. In addition, in all cases, frequent use of offensive language must always be justified by its context.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At the beginning and end of the watershed period, the transition to more adult material must not be unduly sudden or unexpected. Requiring that the strongest material should appear later in the evening and before the watershed period ends with reasonable time to avoid having any children being mistakenly subjected to such content, abiding by the rules that protect viewers from offensive and harmful content.</li> </ul>
<p>2. Recommended Watershed period</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The watershed starts at:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ On Schooldays: Starts 9 PM and ends at 6 AM</li> <li>○ On Weekends, Vacations, and Holidays: Starts 11 PM and ends at 6 AM</li> </ul> </li> <li>• This means that material not suitable for children should not be shown before 9 PM or after 6 AM on Schooldays, nor before 11 PM or after 6 AM on Weekends, Vacations, and Holidays</li> <li>• <b>CHILD SAFE TV:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>From 6 AM to 9 PM</b> on School Days</li> <li>○ <b>From 6 AM to 11 PM</b> On Weekends, Vacations, and Holidays</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**SECTION (4)**  
**CONTENT RESTRICTION**

**1. Obscene Content Restriction  
Sexual Material and Nudity**

- Generally, Obscene content (material that contains images and/or language of a strong sexual nature or nudity) must be rated R18
- Content rated R18 must not be broadcast at anytime on open public or private channels.
- Considered illegal and violation of law to air Obscene Programming / Content at any time, or air Indecent Programming and Profane Language justified by context during certain hours.
- 3 steps to define “Obscene”:

**First:** Applying contemporary community standards, where an average person must define that the material as a whole appeal to the prurient interest.

**Second:** The material must depict or describe, in an obviously offensive manner, sexual conduct.

**Third:** The material, as a whole, must lack serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value - **LAPS.**

	<p><b>INDECENCY CONTENT FOR ENTERTAINMENT:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• “Indecency” is defined as content that is clearly offensive but not to the level of obscenity. Includes language or material that in context portrays or describes patently offensive sexual meanings or activities. This is measured according to the Egyptian community standards.</li><li>• Television and Radio broadcasts that are considered “indecent” for entertainment purpose must be rated TV-18 and are prohibited between 6 am and 9 pm. (Considering an extra hour according to watershed rules)</li></ul>
<p><b>2. Indecent Content Restriction</b> (Offensive content, but not level of Obscene)</p>	<p><b>FOR EDUCATIONAL / AWARENESS PURPOSE:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sexual representations are not allowed before the watershed or when younger children are likely to be watching or listening unless for serious educational/awareness purpose and must be editorially justified and limited as a small part of a whole.</li><li>• Must be rated TV15 or higher with clear warning and clarification which includes: S – for Sexual situations/representations, L – for Language, SD – for suggestive dialogue.</li><li>• In order to protect younger children from being subjected to such content, Indecent Content is restricted from being aired at certain times when younger children are most likely to be watching television, must be aired later in the night.</li></ul>

<p>3. Profane Content Restriction (Offensive Language, etc.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Profanity” is defined as content that includes language offensive to members of the public.</li> <li>• Offensive Language must not be used in programs made for children at all.</li> <li>• Offensive language must not be broadcast before watershed or when children are likely to be watching. Hence, Television and Radio Broadcasts are prohibited from airing Profane speech from 6 am till 9 pm.</li> </ul>
<p>4. Violence, Crime and Dangerous Behavior Content Restriction</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dangerous Behavior, or the portrayal of dangerous behavior, Crime and Violence (verbal /physical) must not be featured in programs made primarily for children at all to avoid being imitated by children.</li> <li>• Under the justifiable conditions of Rating TV-Y8-FV, mild fantasy violence may be portrayed for awareness/educational purposes only.</li> <li>• Media content containing Dangerous Behavior, or the portrayal of dangerous behavior, violence, or crime: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must not include material, which condones or glamorizes violent, dangerous or seriously antisocial behavior or encourage others to copy such behavior.</li> <li>• Detailed methods of suicide and self-harm is prohibited.</li> <li>• Must be appropriately rated from TV-PG or higher (according to level of violence, crime, and dangerous behavior) with clear warning and classification: V - for Violence.</li> <li>• Must not be featured before the watershed when children may be among the audience, unless there is editorial justification within context. In which case, violence must be limited and justifiable by context as a part of the whole work and only ratings from TV-PG to TV-15 may be broadcasted before the watershed.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

5. Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With consideration to the democratic right of free speech, all media content must not contain any hate speech or incitement to hatred based on race, sex, religion, nationality or any other matters.</li> </ul>
6. Drugs, Smoking, Solvents and Alcohol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Media content made primarily for children (with children targeted media rating) is prohibited from featuring any use of illegal drugs, the abuse of drugs, smoking, solvent abuse or alcohol.</li> <li>The use of illegal drugs, the abuse of drugs, smoking, solvent abuse and misuse of alcohol in Media works:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Should be avoided when possible</li> <li>Must be editorially justified serving the context as part of the whole work</li> <li>Must be rated TV-15 or higher with a clear warning and classification: <b>D</b> – for drugs, smoking, and alcohol use.</li> <li>Should be aired later in the day when younger children are not likely watching</li> <li>Prohibited from being glamorized, encouraged or condoned (featured as acceptable/allowed) the use of illegal drugs, the abuse of drugs, smoking, solvent abuse and misuse of alcohol.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
7. Exorcism, Occult and Paranormal Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrations of exorcism, the occult, the paranormal, divination, or practices related to any of these that purport to be real:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prohibited before watershed or when children are likely to be among the audience.</li> <li>Must be rated TV-18 with clear warning and classification: <b>E</b>- for exorcism or paranormal content</li> <li>Must be treated with due objectivity.</li> <li>Must not contain life changing advice directed at individuals. This includes any direct advice for individuals which they could reasonably act or rely on concerning issues related with health, finance, employment or relationship.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If a demonstration of exorcism, the occult, the paranormal, divination, or practices related to any of these is for entertainment purposes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must be made clear to viewers and listeners.</li> <li>• Must be rated TV-15 or higher (depending on level of content) with clear warning and classification: E- for exorcism or paranormal content</li> <li>• Must not contain life changing advice directed at individuals. This includes any direct advice for individuals which they could reasonably act or rely on concerning issues related with health, finance, employment or relationship.</li> <li>• Should not be broadcasted when significant number of younger children may be expected to be watching</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>8. Subliminal messages, Hypnotic and other similar techniques to make an unconscious impact on audience/viewers / stimulated news and photosensitive epilepsy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broadcasters must not use techniques which exploit the possibility of conveying a message or <b>subliminal message</b> to viewers or listeners, or influencing their minds without them being aware, or fully aware, of what has occurred.</li> <li>• When broadcasting material featuring demonstrations of <b>hypnotic techniques</b>, broadcasters must exercise a proper degree of responsibility in order to prevent hypnosis and/or adverse reactions in viewers and listeners. The hypnotist must not broadcast his/her full verbal routine or be shown performing straight to the camera.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Simulated news</b> (for example in drama or in documentaries) must be broadcast in such a way that there is no reasonable possibility of the audience being misled into believing that they are listening to, or watching, actual news.</li> <li>• Television broadcasters must take precautions to maintain a low level of risk to viewers who have <b>photosensitive epilepsy</b>, unless the broadcasting of flashing lights and/or patterns is editorially justified. In such case, viewers should be given an adequate verbal and also, if appropriate, text warning at the start of the program.</li> </ul>
<p>9. Content on Religion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Religious programs must have a specialized and authorized religious figure to discuss religious matters and provide religious advice.</li> <li>• Religious programs that contain claims that a living person (or group) has special powers or abilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must treat such claims with due objectivity</li> <li>• Must be rated TV-15 or higher</li> <li>• Must not broadcast such claims before watershed or when significant numbers of children may be expected to be watching</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



**SECTION (5)**  
**INVOLVEMENT OF CHILDREN IN MEDIA**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Generally, ensure safety and securing the identification of people under eighteen involved in sexual and criminal offence cases.</li><li>• Coverage of <b>Sexual Offense Cases</b> involving minors:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Broadcasters are prohibited from personal identification of minors.</li><li>• Broadcasters should also be particularly careful not to provide clues which may lead to the identification of minors who are - or might be - involved as a victim, witness, defendant or other perpetrator in the case of sexual offence featured in criminal, civil, or family court proceedings.</li></ul></li><li>• Coverage of <b>Criminal Offense Cases</b> involving minors:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Broadcasters are obliged to consider and ensure safety of any minor who is involved as a witness or victim as a priority. Practicing extreme caution before identifying their name or any still or moving picture of them, and must be justifiable.</li><li>• Parental consent must be taken before identifying or recording with or taking footage of the child.</li><li>• Detailed personal information like address, identity of school or other educational establishment, place of work, or any other mean which may place the Childs’ safety at risk is prohibited.</li><li>• Particular justification and caution is also required for the broadcast of such material relating to the identity of any minor who is involved in the defense as a defendant or potential defendant.</li></ul></li></ul>
<b>1. Coverage of Offences Involving Under 18</b>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• With the consideration that minors may take part in media production, appropriate measures generally to ensure and guarantee that:</li><li>• Due care must be taken over the physical, mental and emotional welfare and dignity of people under eighteen who take part or involved in media production. This is irrespective of any consent given by the participant or by a parent or guardian.</li><li>• Minors under eighteen years of age must not be caused any distress or anxiety by their involvement in media works or by the broadcast of those works.</li><li>• Minors must not engage in the actual actions which may be harmful for their health physically, mentally, psychologically or emotionally even if justifiable by context. For example, engaging in a sexual action, using drugs, smoking, or engaging in other actions which may impact their wellbeing.</li><li>• Minors must not work over hours, must have adequate time to rest and practice their life as a child.</li><li>• Makeup used on minors must be suitable for their sensitive skin, to ensure no long term health impacts on the child.</li><li>• Prizes aimed at children must be appropriate to the age range of both the target audience and the participant</li></ul>
2. Involvement of children under 18 in Media (including Drama, programs and Advertising)	
3. Interviewing Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Abide by the rules of Involvement of children under 18 in media</li><li>• The presenter interviewing minors must be trained and qualified to interview minors</li><li>• Interview questions must be age appropriate and must not be misleading, intimidating, or cause any distress for the child</li><li>• Ensure physical, mental, psychological and emotional welfare of the child through out the interview.</li></ul>

<p>4. Children and Families in Media</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must not glamorize and/or promote bad family behaviors and relations, nor portray it as something encouraged or accepted.</li> <li>• Broadcasters must ensure to provide sufficient relevant and realistic portrayal of Egyptian children and families in Egyptian media, that represents all sectors of society, while counterbalancing negative Egyptian family and child representations.</li> </ul>
<p>5. Privacy Rights of Children in Media</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring full privacy rights to children whom are involved in media production</li> </ul>

**SECTION (6)**  
**ADVERTISING**

1. Commercial Time Limit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• It is prohibited for the duration of advertising spots to take up more than 20 % of the content duration. This is excluding broadcasters' announcements about their own programs and public service messages and charity broadcasts free of charge.</li><li>• Advertising spots should be inserted between programs. Yet, in case it is inserted during programs, it should not harm the integrity of the program or rights holders' interests.</li><li>• No advertising spots allowed during news casts</li></ul>
2. Commercial Time Limit in child programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Limits the commercial time which can be aired in children's television programming (originally produced and aired primarily for an audience of 12 years and younger).</li><li>• Abide by the commercial time limit rule to 20% of content duration.</li><li>• During Children's programs, and News Programs, Advertising spots are only allowed once every 30 minutes.</li></ul>
3. Protection of Minors from Commercial Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Child targeted programs with rating less than TV-Y8 must contain limited advertising not exceeding 10% of the duration of the specified content.</li><li>• Advertised products and services in Children targeted media must be relevant and suitable for the audience age group.</li><li>• Must not Cause Physical or Mental harm to minors, directly exploit minors' inexperience or credulity, encourage minors to pressure parents to make a purchase or aim harmful products commercial communication at Minors.</li></ul>

	<p><b>PROHIBITED PRODUCTS/SERVICES DURING CHILD TARGETED CONTENT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Products or services which may have a negative impact on Children's physical, emotional, mental wellbeing are prohibited during the broadcast of child targeted content.</li> <li>• Any product of service generally prohibited from advertising on television</li> <li>• Products or services that are generally considered dangerous, harmful, or may cause health problems and physical harm.</li> <li>• Prescription medication and medical products</li> <li>• Tobacco products, electronic cigarettes, lighters, or any product intended for smoking</li> <li>• Alcoholic drinks.</li> <li>• Placement by or on behalf of an undertaking whose principal activity is the manufacture or sale of cigarettes or other tobacco products or alcoholic drinks.</li> <li>• Food and drink that is high in fat, salt, or sugar.</li> </ul>
4. Commercial Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commercial content must be relevant and or appropriate with the programming content being broadcasted during the airing of the commercial.</li> </ul>

<p>5. Clear Distinction of Advertisement from content</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Programs directed at children – 12 years and under – must clearly distinguish program material from commercials in a manner younger kids would understand.</li><li>• The presentation and content of television advertising must be easily recognizable and clearly distinguished by audio and visual means from other parts of the program.</li><li>• <b>PROGRAM-LENGTH COMMERCIALS</b>, if a program fails to adequately separate program and commercial material, the entire program duration may be considered commercial material.</li><li>• <b>HOST SELLING POLICY</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Prohibits the use of a program talent or other identifiable program characters to deliver commercials during or adjacent to children’s programming featuring that talent or character. Neither feature it in websites where the website address appears in a children’s program.</li><li>• Television broadcasters are not allowed to display commercial messages during children’s program. It does not apply to station identifications and emergency announcements.</li></ul></li></ul>
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<p>6. Independence of Editorial Content</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broadcasters must maintain independent editorial control over programming.</li> <li>• Broadcasters must ensure that editorial content is distinct from advertising.</li> <li>• Hidden / Unclear / Surreptitious Advertising is prohibited. This means references to a product, service or trade mark within a program, intended by broadcaster to serve as advertising and it is not made clear to the audience. Likely to be intentional if it occurs in return for payment or other valuable consideration to the broadcaster or producer.</li> </ul>
<p>7. Ensuring Consumer Safety From Financial Harm</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No undue prominence may be given in programing to a product, service, or trade mark. Undue prominence may result either from the presence of – or reference to – a product, service, or trade mark in programing where there is no editorial justification. Or the manner in which a product, service, or trademark appears or is referred to in programing.</li> <li>• Must not direct buying messages to children to pressure parents to buy a certain product or service.</li> </ul>
<p>8. Prohibited Content/Products</p>	<p><b>Ensuring Consumer Safety from physical Harm:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advertised products and services are prohibited from making fake claims</li> <li>• Products or services that are generally considered dangerous, harmful, or may cause health problems and physical harm are prohibited from being advertised or promoted.</li> <li>• Advertising Prescription medication and medical products is prohibited</li> <li>• Advertising Tobacco products, or any product intended for smoking is prohibited</li> <li>• Advertising Alcoholic drinks is prohibited</li> </ul>

**SPONSORSHIP RULES MAINLY TO ENSURE:**

1. Ensure transparency of sponsorship arrangements
2. Obligating sponsors to be clearly identifiable to the audience and not allowing them to influence content or scheduling of programs
3. Editorial Independence
4. Distinction of program content from advertising
5. Ensure consumer safety from financial and physical harm
6. Protect against unsuitable sponsorship

**DEFINING SPONSORSHIP:**

- Sponsorship is identified as any contribution public or private, shown during a program but not as part of the plot to promote for a sponsor that contributes in financing the program.
- Sponsorship includes promoting a name, product, service, or trademark in return for financial support of a program.
- Sponsorship must only identify the sponsor; it may not encourage any call to action or promote or advertise the sponsor or their product.
- Any reference to sponsor resulting from commercial arrangements will be treated as product placement and must comply with product placement rules of the code.

**9. Sponsorship Guidelines**



## CONTENT AND SCHEDULING

- Sponsorship **must** comply with both the content and scheduling rules that apply to television advertising
- A sponsor **must not** influence the content and/or scheduling of a channel or programming in such a way as to impair the responsibility and editorial independence of the broadcaster

## PROHIBITED AND RESTRICTED “SPONSORS”

- Programming (including channels) may not be sponsored by any sponsor that is prohibited from advertising on television.

## CONTENT PROHIBITED FROM BEING SPONSORED

- News and current affairs programs containing explanation and/or analysis of current events and issues must not be sponsored.

## SPONSORSHIP CREDITS

### • IDENTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

- Sponsorship must be clearly identified by means of sponsorship credits. These must make clear: a. The Identity of the sponsor by reference to its name or trade mark. b. The association between the sponsor and the sponsored content
- Where a sponsorship credit is included in a program trail, the credit must remain brief and secondary

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>SCHEDULING SPONSORSHIP CREDITS</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• For sponsored programs, Sponsorship credits must be broadcast at the beginning and/or end of the program ensuring the identification of sponsorship to the audience.</li><li>• It may also be broadcasted when entering and/or leaving a commercial break during that sponsored program ensuring the identification of sponsorship to the audience.</li></ul></li><li>• <b>DISTINCTION OF SPONSORSHIP CREDITS</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The sole of sponsorship credits is for the purpose of helping to identify the sponsor and/or the sponsorship arrangement.</li><li>• Sponsorship credits must be distinct from <b>editorial content</b></li><li>• Sponsorship credits must be distinct from <b>advertising</b></li><li>• Sponsorship credit must not contain advertising messages or calls to action.</li><li>• It must not encourage purchase or rental of products or services of sponsor or third party.</li><li>• Sponsorship credits <b>during</b> programs must not be unduly prominent. Must consist of a brief, neutral visual or verbal statement identifying the sponsorship arrangement. Must be static and must contain no advertising messages, calls to action or any other information about sponsor or its products or services.</li></ul></li></ul>
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<b>10. Program-Related Material</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Products or services directly derived from the program to let viewers benefit and engage with the program.</li><li>• Does not count from the advertising amount permitted as long as such reference is made only for editorial reasons, not for advertising.</li><li>• Program-related material may be sponsored and the sponsor may be credited when details of how to obtain the material are given. Any credit must be brief and secondary, and must be separate from any credit for the program sponsor.</li><li>• Program-related material may be promoted only during or around the program from which it is directly derived and only where it is editorially justified.</li><li>• The broadcaster must retain responsibility for ensuring the appropriateness of promoting program- related material.</li></ul>
<b>11. Product Placement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• “Product placement” is when a TV channel or program maker is paid to include products or brands in a program or make reference to a product as part of the program.</li><li>• It is any form of audiovisual communication featuring, including or referencing a specific product, service, or trademark within a program for a commercial purpose in return for payment or any other consideration to any relevant provider or any person connected with a relevant provider, and is not prop placement.</li><li>• Product placement is only allowed in some program genres under specific rules.</li><li>• Product placement of any products that might potentially harm audience health and safety are prohibited under any circumstances.</li><li>• Broadcasters may add their own additional rules and guidelines in this matter, as long as they don’t conflict with set rules or laws.</li></ul>

#### **PRODUCT PLACEMENT IDENTIFICATION**

- If a program or content contains product placement, the TV channel is required to display a universal neutral **PP** logo **a.** At the beginning of the program which the placement appears, **b.** When the program recommences after commercial breaks, **c.** At the end of the program.

This is to ensure audience are aware that the program makers were paid to include products in that program.

#### **PROGRAMS ALLOWED TO INCLUDE PRODUCT PLACEMENT**

- Product placement is only allowed in the following program genres:
  - Films (including Dramas and Documentaries) made for cinema, television or other audiovisual media services.
  - Series made for television or other audiovisual media services
  - Sports programs
  - Light entertainment programs (like cooking shows, etc.)
  - Children's programs

#### **PROGRAMS NOT ALLOWED TO INCLUDE PRODUCT PLACEMENT:**

- Product placement is prohibited in the following programs even if they fall within the permitted genres:
  - Religious programs
  - Consumer advice programs
  - Current affairs programs
  - News programs

#### **PRODUCT PLACEMENT GENERAL RULES**

- Product placement must not influence the content and scheduling of a program in a way that affects the responsibility and editorial independence of the broadcaster.
- Must always have sufficient editorial justification to include product placement. It has to be relevant to what the program is about, and not create or distort content to serve the purpose of product placement.
- References to placed products, services, and trade marks must not be unduly prominent or give products or services too much prominence.

#### **PRODUCTS PROHIBITED FROM PRODUCT PLACEMENT**

- Any product of service prohibited from advertising on television is prohibited from product placement
- Products or services that are generally considered dangerous, harmful, or may cause health problems and physical harm.
- Prescription medication and medical products
- Tobacco products, electronic cigarettes, lighters, or any product intended for smoking
- Alcoholic drinks.
- Placement by or on behalf of an undertaking whose principal activity is the manufacture or sale of cigarettes or other tobacco products or alcoholic drinks.
- Infant formula or Baby milk
- Food and drink that is high in fat, salt, or sugar.

	<p><b>PRODUCT PLACEMENT RULES FOR CHILDRENS PROGRAMS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children’s program in this context is any content made primarily for children with any of the child targeted media rating on television or on-demand digital service.</li> <li>• Must abide by all the product placement rules and guidelines</li> <li>• Products must be age appropriate and program relevant</li> <li>• Products which may be harmful or cause physical, emotional or mental harm to the child are prohibited.</li> <li>• Products which may cause financial burden on parents are prohibited.</li> </ul>
<p><b>12. Charity Appeals</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure consumer protection, Charity appeals and donation collection ads are only allowed if FREE of charge: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Since they may cause a potential risk to cause audience to suffer financial harm.</li> <li>○ In addition, many charities operate in competition with one another. Hence, rules aim to ensure that charity appeal benefit a range of charities.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Broadcasting charity appeals (FREE of charge) are allowed as long as, the broadcaster took reasonable steps to ensure that there is enough evidence that the organization involved does have a reputable charitable status and is not prohibited from advertising on TV.</li> </ul>

### 13. Financial Promotions and Investment Recommendations

- Broadcasters may broadcast requests for donations to make editorial content or fund their service.
- Since such promotions and recommendations reflect a potential risk of causing financial harm to the audience, broadcasters must comply with some rules to ensure the four main areas of concern generally regarded for advertising are maintained and protected.
- First, ensure consumer safety from the potential harm when broadcasters appeal for funds from viewers.
- Second, ensuring editorial independence.
- Third, Transparency.
- Fourth, distinction between advertising and editorial content.

#### **APPEALS TO FUND PROGRAMMING SERVICES RULES**

- Viewers must be told the purpose of the appeal and how much it raises.
- All identations must be separately accounted for and used for the purpose for which they were donated
- Broadcasters must not offer any additional benefits or other incentives to donors.
- Appeals for funds for programing or services must not be given undue prominence in relation to the overall output of the service.
- When broadcasting financial promotions and investment recommendations, broadcasters must comply with the relevant provisions in advertising section of the code.

## **SECTION (7)**

### **MONITORING AND ENFORCEMENT RULES**

- All Egyptian media broadcasters must abide by the mentioned regulations, violations may lead to issuing a warning, impose Monetary fines or penalties, and in some cases revoke the station license.
- Enforcement of regulations is based on the monitoring authority as well as documented complaints from and the public including date and time of the broadcast, detailed information on what was exactly said or depicted during the broadcast, and the channel or frequency of the accused station.
- If violation does not exist, case will be denied
- If the material complained about did violate the rules, a notice of apparent liability (NAL) is issued. This is a preliminary finding of the rule violations. If the broadcaster complies, this preliminary finding may be Rescinded with the annual license renewal if no further violations are made.
- If further violations were made, and the broadcaster had three or more NALs in his file during annual license renewal, depending on the level of violations, must either pay a fine, be penalized, or prohibited from license renewal.
- When stations file an application to renew licenses, broadcasters are also required to provide records and evidence verifying their compliance with commercial guidelines, certifying that no commercial breaching occurred during the license term. If any breaching was detected, it must be justified or depending on the level of violations, must either pay a fine, be penalized, or prohibited from license renewal.



**SECTION (8)**  
**POSITIVE MEDIA USE**

1. Production of high quality Local child programming with limited advertising targeting each age group needs and interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>CHILDREN'S TELEVISION ACT (CTA)</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Each broadcast station in Egypt both commercial and non-commercial is required to offer Core Programming – educational and informational programming specially designed to serve children's needs as part of the overall stations programming.</li><li>• Limit the amount of commercials aired during children's programming.</li><li>• Sole purpose is to increase the amount of educational and informational programming available on television for children.</li></ul></li><li>• <b>CORE PROGRAMMING</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mainly designed to serve the educational, informational, intellectual / cognitive, social and emotional needs of children under 18 years of age.</li><li>• Must have a duration of at least 30 minutes and aired between 6 am and 8 pm with a regularly scheduled weekly program.</li><li>• Core programming must be identified through displaying the symbol E/I on the television screen throughout the full airing of the program to indicate that the program aired is specially designed to educate and inform children.</li><li>• Must be appropriately rated</li></ul></li></ul>
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	<p><b>ENFORCEMENT RULES AND GUIDELINES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Television stations must air at least 3 hours per week of Core Programs on the stations main programming stream.</li><li>• Core Programs must be identified by displaying the symbol E/I through out the program.</li><li>• Stations are required to provide information about core programs in advance to parents and consumers to notify them when the program will be aired.</li><li>• Stations must complete and file Quarterly Children’s Television Programming Reports. This is to identify the stations core programs “Educational / Informational programming” along with any other efforts to comply with the CTA.</li><li>• Must Comply with regulations set in advertising sections.</li></ul>
<p><b>2. Promotion and Distribution of High standard Local Egyptian works</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Broadcasters are required to reserve at least 10 % of their transmission time or alternatively 10 % of their programming budget for recent Egyptian works, either created by the broadcaster or by independent producers<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• “Egyptian works” are mainly works originating in all Egyptian governorates. This includes work made by or supervised and controlled by one or more producers established in one or more of those governorates</li></ul></li><li>• Broadcasters are encouraged to reserve the majority of their transmission time for Egyptian works in general</li><li>• Making use of On-demand audiovisual media service and its ability to promote the production of and access to Egyptian Works.</li><li>• Overall goal to promote cultural diversity and heritage in Egypt by strengthening the competitiveness of the Egyptian audiovisual industry.</li></ul>

<p>3. Promotion of high standard family content</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage the production of family series that are child friendly, addressing the needs, interests and realistic representations of Egyptian families and children, with provide positive models and guidance, counterbalancing any negative representations.</li> <li>• Ensure providing awareness and healthy parenting models for parental guidance.</li> <li>• Must be a rating equal to or less than TV-PG</li> </ul>
<p>4. Parental Guide to finding Educational Programing (eg. Gobooz, Kidsvid search engine)</p>	<p><b>EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMING SEARCH ENGINE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating a website or search engine where Parents can easily search for and find educational programming for their child, from a list of educational and instructional programming available.</li> <li>• Showing channels, schedules, and websites for programs from commercial broadcast television available</li> </ul>
<p>5. Media Literacy and Parental Guidance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>CHILD SAFE VIEWING RESEARCH</b></li> <li>• Requires regular studies on advanced blocking technologies that may be used to protect children from harmful or objectionable audio or visual programming.</li> <li>• The SCCM shall submit a study on the advantages and disadvantages of methods that would facilitate parental control.</li> <li>• Giving special focus on studying currently available blocking technologies and rating system.</li> <li>• Making sure parents are educated about the findings and available methods for parental control</li> </ul>

<p>6. Training for media professionals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All media broadcasters are required to provide adequate regular training for their media crew to insure providing the best quality programming and media content for audience.</li><li>• Any person working with/on child programming must take appropriate relevant training before working on the child program and/or deal with children.</li><li>• Broadcasters are required to provide all documentation proving their abidance and trainings provided during their annual license renewal.</li></ul>
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**SECTION (8)**  
**PARENTAL CONTROL**

1. Identification of Media Service Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure that audience have easy, direct, and permanent access to necessary information about the media provider at any time needed. This includes the media service provider name, their geographical address of establishment and direct contact information containing electronic mail address or website for rapid communication</li></ul>
2. Content Filters (e.g. V-Chip)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>THE V-CHIP</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A content filter working in parallel with the Egyptian Rating system, allowing parental control by blocking television content with specified ratings they wouldn't want their children to watch. The V-chip may work on any rating system.</li></ul></li><li>• <b>IMPLEMENTATION OF THE V-CHIP</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Requires that all new television sets to include a V-Chip.</li><li>• Personal computers with a television receiver and a monitor 13 inch or more, must have a v-chip.</li></ul></li></ul>
3. Mandatory Restricted Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Require a password to view certain channels or access certain content that has been previously filtered and blocked.</li></ul>

## PROTECTION OF MINORS IN ON-DEMAND SERVICES (ONLINE)

### SECTION (9)

#### ONLINE / DIGITAL MEDIA

#### 1. Internet Safety/Digital Literacy for Children and Parents

- Obligates making sure that children / minors don't have access to on-demand media content that might harm them.
- Understanding the new challenges in electronic media and online services that may need to be considered in that process.
- Calls for guidelines to develop National Self-Regulation through National Legislation to protect minors and human dignity in all electronic media.
  - Internet Service Providers are encouraged to develop codes of good conduct to better apply and clarify current legislation
- Promotion of media literacy
- Sharing the experience and practices between self-regulation, co-regulation, and regulatory bodies
- Taking action against discrimination in all media
- The right to reply.
- Promoting measures to combat all illegal activities harmful to minors on the internet.
- Drawing up codes of conduct in cooperation with professional and regulatory authorities at national and community level.
- Encouraging the audiovisual and on-line information services industry to avoid and combat all discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or

	<p>any other form of discrimination without infringing freedom of expression or of the press.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taking actions to enable minors' responsible use of audiovisual and on-line information services, in particular through media literacy.</li> <li>• Encourage the audiovisual and online information service industry to step up its efforts through positive measures for the co-operation and exchange of the best practices between regulatory, self-regulatory, and co-regulatory bodies</li> <li>• Creating filters that would prevent pornography from the Internet and increase content labeling.</li> <li>• Promote and develop appropriate means other than legal regulations to adapt with these developments, including co-regulation and self-regulation.</li> </ul>
2. Restricting Inappropriate Content Access	<p>Online content with a rating TV18 and above must have ID Requirement, set of entry Questions, or other efficient means of age verifications.</p>

**SECTION (10)**

**ACCESSIBILITY FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

1. Sign Language – On/Off
2. Subtitles – On/Off
3. Audio Descriptions – On/Off

- Ensure accessibility for people with visual or hearing disability, including elders.
- Broadcasters must ensure accessibility through on and off options for sign language, subtitles, and/or audio description.



## **4. EGYPTIAN RATING SYSTEM EXPLAINED**

### **A. HOW IT WORKS**

Examine and provide age rating and insights on films as well as other television content prior to their release, to protect children from unsuitable content for their age. In addition, help parents choose what they accept for their children to watch. Looking on issues relate with Discrimination, Drugs, Dangerous behavior, Imitable behavior, Language, Nudity, Sex, Threat, Violence and horror.

No film refused classification may be broadcast unless it has subsequently been classified or has been confirmed that it would not be rejected according to the standards currently operating. Also, no film cut as a condition of classification may be transmitted in a version which includes the cut material unless it has been confirmed that the material was cut to allow the film to pass at a lower category, or that the film would not be subjected to compulsory cuts according to the standards currently operating.

Rating appears in the upper left corner of the television screen through out the program, show, drama, or other content. Should also be found in TV listings in magazines and newspapers. Ratings are given to all television content except News, Sports and premium/subscription cable channels/foreign channels.

### **1. HOW TO MONITOR**

TV PARENTAL GUIDELINES MONITORING BOARD: A Board that “reviews the rating guidelines and their application to television programming.” This board consists of 24 members including a Chairman, 6 Members from the Broadcast Industry, 6 Members from the Cable Industry, 6 Members from the Program Production Community as well as 5 Non-Industry Members from Public Interest groups (Selected by Chairman).

### **2. MOVIE RATING SYSTEM**

A Board of parents known as the Classification and Rating Administration assigns ratings after Viewing, discussing, and voting on films. These movie ratings also are programmed into V-chips so that parents can use the V-chip to block movies shown on TV based on the movie ratings.

Two compliance officers view the film before its release, and their decision is confirmed by the compliance manager. Same applies to DVDs and Blu-rays as well, yet in a stricter manner due to the higher risk of underage accessibility and viewership.\* **FIGURE 1.2**

**CHILDREN TARGETED MEDIA RATING DESCRIPTION**

<b>RATING</b>	<b>TV-Y</b>	<b>TV-Y4</b>	<b>TV-Y8</b>	<b>TV-Y8-FV</b>
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Directed to ALL Children</li><li>• Designed specifically for very young audiences 2+</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Directed to Older Children</li><li>• Most appropriate for children 4+</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Directed to Older Children</li><li>• Most appropriate for children 8+</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Directed to Older Children</li><li>• Most appropriate for children 8+</li><li>• Mild justifiable* fantasy violence may be present</li></ul>
<b>OBSCENITY/NUDITY</b>	PROHIBITED	PROHIBITED	PROHIBITED	PROHIBITED
<b>INDECENCY (S-SEXUAL SITUATIONS) (SD – SUGGESTIVE DIALOGUE)</b>	PROHIBITED	PROHIBITED	PROHIBITED	PROHIBITED
<b>PROFANITY (L-LANGUAGE)</b>	PROHIBITED	PROHIBITED	PROHIBITED	PROHIBITED

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild justifiable* fantasy violence may be present unlike other programming in the TV-Y8 category.</li> <li>• Must be justified by context and is a small part of the whole work (not exceeding 10%)</li> <li>• Must offer a positive reassuring counterbalance to any violence.</li> <li>• * Justifiable means serves a major purpose in the composition of the work for educational, awareness purposes only.</li> <li>• Must be incriminated and never glamorized or promoted or condoned, ensuring safety of child from imitable behavior.</li> </ul>
<b>VIOLENCE</b> (V-VIOLENCE)	PROHIBITED	PROHIBITED	PROHIBITED	
<b>CRIME</b> (V-VIOLENCE)	PROHIBITED	PROHIBITED	PROHIBITED	PROHIBITED
<b>DANGEROUS BEHAVIOR</b> (V-VIOLENCE)	PROHIBITED	PROHIBITED	PROHIBITED	PROHIBITED

<b>DRUGS</b> (D-DRUGS)	PROHIBITED	PROHIBITED	PROHIBITED	PROHIBITED
<b>THREAT</b> (E- EXORCISM OR PARANORMAL CONTENT)	PROHIBITED	PROHIBITED	PROHIBITED	PROHIBITED

**SECTION (2)**  
**DOUBLE VALIDATION RATING**  
**\* FIGURE 1.3**

## POLICY RATING ANALYSIS - JANUARY 2019

**SNA** – STRONGLY NOT APPLICABLE, **NA** – NOT APPLICABLE, **N** – NEUTRAL, **A** – APPLICABLE, **SA** – STRONGLY APPLICABLE  
**NI** – NO IMPORTANCE, **LI** – LOW IMPORTANCE, **N** – NEUTRAL, **I** – IMPORTANT, **HI** – HIGH IMPORTANCE

POLICY	RELATIVE VALIDITY / APPLICABILITY					RELATIVE IMPORTANCE					TOTAL VALUE	
	SNA	NA	N	A	SA	NI	LI	N	I	HI	APP.	IMP.
SECTION (1) GENERAL GUIDELINES												
1. Respect Human and Child Rights		2		2	7				1	10	7/11 SA 2 A 2 NA	10/11 HI 1 I
2. Applying Generally accepted Egyptian standards			1	6	3			2	4	4	6/10 A 3 SA 1 N	4/10 HI 4 I 2 N
3. Prohibition of inducing/promoting Discrimination (ex. Based on gender, nationality, race, religion, looks, body type, etc.)		2			9					11	9/11 SA 2 NA	11/11 HI
4. Prohibition of encouragement to behaviors and/or products harmful to health, safety, or environment		2	1	1	7				3	8	7/11 SA 1 A 1 N 2 NA	8/11 HI 3 I
5. This code shall be applied on all Egyptian governorates		1		2	8				3	8	8/11 SA 2 A 1 NA	8/11 HI 3 I

## PROTECTION OF MINORS (UNDER 18)

**SECTION (2)**  
**RATING SYSTEM**

<b>1.</b>	<b>Movie/Film Rating System</b>		1		3	7				1	10	<b>7/11 SA</b> 3 A 1 NA	<b>10/11 HI</b> 1 I
<b>2.</b>	<b>Television Rating System</b>		1		3	7				2	9	<b>7/11 SA</b> 3 A 1 NA	<b>9/11 HI</b> 2 I
<b>3.</b>	<b>Online Rating System</b>		2	1	1	7			1		10	<b>7/11 SA</b> 1 A 1 N 2 NA	<b>10/11 HI</b> 1 N

**SECTION (3)**  
**WATERSHED PERIOD**

<b>1.</b> WATERSHED RULES: Content not suitable for children must only be aired during certain									<b>7/11 SA</b> 1 A 1 N 2 NA	<b>7/11 HI</b> 2 I 1 N 1 LI
	2	1	1	7		1	1	2		
<b>2.</b> Recommended Watershed period	6 AM – 8 PM									
	6 AM – 8 PM (10 PM for Violence)									
	6 AM – 11 PM									
	6 AM – 8/9 PM									
	10 AM – 8 PM									
	7 AM – 2 AM (DMC)									
	7AM – 7 PM									
	6AM – 10 PM (Maspiro Head)									

SECTION (4) CONTENT RESTRICTION												
1. Obscene Content Restriction (Sexual, Nudity, etc.)			1	1	9			1	1	9	9/11 SA 1 A 1 N	9/11 HI 1 I 1 N
2. Indecent Content Restriction (Offensive content, but not level of Obscene)			2	2	6			2	2	6	6/10 SA 2 A 2 N	6/10 HI 2 I 2 N
3. Profane Content Restriction (Language, etc.)		1	2	2	5			2	1	7	5/10 SA 2 A 1 N / 2 NA	7/10 HI 1 I 2 N
4. Violence, Crime and Dangerous Behavior Content Restriction		1	1	3	5			1	2	7	5/10 SA 3 A / 1 N 1 NA	7/10 HI 2 I 1 N
5. Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred		1	3	1	5			2		8	5/10 SA 3 N 1 A 1 NA	8/10 HI 2 N
6. Drugs, Smoking, Solvents and Alcohol		2		4	4			1	2	7	4/10 SA 4/9 A 2 NA	7/10 HI 2 I 1 N
7. Exorcism, Occult and Paranormal Content		1	2	1	6		1	1		8	6/10 SA 1 A 2 N 1 NA	8/10 HI 1 N 1 LI
8. Content on Religion			4	2	4			3	2	5	4/10 SA 4/10 N 2 A	5/10 HI 2 I 3 N
9. Hypnotic and other techniques, stimulated news and photosensitive epilepsy			1	3	5			1	3	5	5/9 SA 3 A 1 N	5/9 HI 3 I 1 N
10. Enforcement Rules			3	2	4		1	2	1	5	4/9 SA 3 N 2 A	5/9 HI 1 I 2 N 1 LI



**SECTION (5)**  
**INVOLVEMENT OF CHILDREN IN MEDIA**

<b>1. Coverage of Offences Involving Under 18</b>	1		1	2	5		1			9	<b>5/9 SA</b> 2 A 1 N / 1 NA	<b>9/10 HI</b> 1 LI
<b>2. Involvement of children under 18 in Media (including Drama and Advertising)</b>	2		2	1	5	1		1	2	6	<b>5/10 SA</b> 2 N 2 SNA 1 A	<b>6/10 HI</b> 2 I 1 N 1 NI
<b>3. Interviewing Children</b>	2		1	2	5	1			2	7	<b>5/10 SA</b> 2 A 2 SNA 1 N	<b>7/10 HI</b> 2 I 1 NI
<b>4. Portrayal of Children and Families in Media</b>		1	3	3	2			2	3	4	<b>3/9 A</b> <b>3/8 N</b> 2 SA / 1 NA	<b>4/9 HI</b> 3 I 2 N
<b>5. Privacy Rights of Children in Media</b>	1		1	3	4				2	7	<b>4/9 SA</b> 3 A 1 N / 1 SNA	<b>7/9 HI</b> 2 I

SECTION (6) ADVERTISING													
1. Commercial Time Limit	1	2	1	2	4	1		1	1	1	7	4/10 SA 2 A / 1 N 2 NA / 1 SNA	7/10 HI 1 I / 1 N 1 NI
2. Commercial Time Limit in child programs	1	2	1		6	1		1	1	1	7	6/10 SA 1 N 2 NA / 1 SNA	7/10 HI 1 I / 1 N 1 NI
3. Distinguishing Commercials from Programs	1	1	2	1	4	1	1	1	1	5		4/9 SA 1 A / 2 N 1 NA / 1 SNA	5/9 HI 1 I / 1 N 1 LI / 1 NI
4. Ensuring Consumer Safety From Financial Harm		2	1	2	4			2		7		4/9 SA 2 A 1 N / 2 NA	7/9 HI 2 N
5. Ensuring Consumer Safety From physical Harm		2			6			1		7		6/8 SA 2 NA	7/8 HI 1 N
6. Prohibited Content/Products				2	5			1		6		5/7 SA 2 A	6/7 HI 1 N
7. Sponsorship Guidelines		1	2	1	4			2	1	5		4/8 SA 1 A 2 N / 1 NA	5/8 HI 1 I 2 N
8. Product/Prop Placement			3	1	3			1	4	2		3/7 SA 3/7 N / 1 A	4/7 I 2 HI / 1 N
9. Charity Appeals			1	2	4				1	6		4/7 SA 2 A / 1 N	6/7 HI 1 I
10. Financial Promotions and Investment Recommendations		1	3	2	1		1	2	3	1		3/7 N 2 A 1 SA / 1 NA	3/7 I 2 N 1 HI / 1 LI
11. Protection of Minors from Commercial Communication			1	2	4				2	5		4/7 SA 2 A / 1 N	5/7 HI 2 I

**SECTION (7)**  
**POSITIVE MEDIA USE**

<b>1. Promotion of Developmental Content and Programing</b>			<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>				<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4/8 SA</b> 2 A / 2 N	<b>5/8 HI</b> 2 I
<b>2. Promoting the production of high quality Local Developmental child programing with limited advertising targeting each age group needs and interests</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>				<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4/7 SA</b> 1 A / 1 N 1 NA	<b>5/7 HI</b> 2 I
<b>3. Promotion and Distribution of Local Egyptian works</b>			<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>			<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6/8 SA</b> 1 A / 1 N	<b>6/8 HI</b> 1 I / 1 N
<b>4. Children's Television Act</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>4</b>				<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4/6 SA</b> 1 N / 1 NA	<b>4/6 HI</b> 2 I
<b>5. Core Programing</b>			<b>2</b>		<b>4</b>		<b>1</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4/6 SA</b> 2 N	<b>4/6 HI</b> 1 I / 1 LI
<b>6. Enforcement Rules</b>			<b>2</b>		<b>4</b>			<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4/6 SA</b> 2 N	<b>4/6 HI</b> 1 I / 1 N

SECTION (8) PARENTAL CONTROL													
1. Identification of Media Service Providers		2		1	5					1	7	5/8 SA 1 A / 2 NA	7/8 HI 1 I
2. Content Filters (e.g. V-Chip)		1		2	5					1	7	5/8 SA 2 A / 1 NA	7/8 HI 1 I
3. Mandatory Restricted Access		1		2	5					2	6	5/8 SA 2 A / 1 NA	6/8 HI 2 I
4. Parental Guide to finding Educational Programing (eg. Gobooz, Kidsvid search engine)		1		2	5					1	7	5/8 SA 2 A / 1 NA	7/8 HI 1 I
5. Media Literacy and Parental Guidance		1		1	6					1	7	6/8 SA 1 A / 1 NA	7/8 HI 1 I

**SECTION (9)**  
**ONLINE / DIGITAL MEDIA**

1. Internet Safety/Digital Literacy for Children and Parents		2			6					1	7	6/8 SA 2 NA	7/8 HI 1 I
2. Restricting Inappropriate Content Access (e.g. ID Requirement, set of entry Questions, etc.)		1		2	5					1	7	5/8 SA 2 A / 1 NA	7/8 HI 1 I

**SECTION (10)**  
**ACCESSIBILITY FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

<b>1.</b> Sign Language – On/Off		1	1	2	4					2	6	<b>4/8 SA</b> 2 A / 1 N / 1 NA	<b>6/8 HI</b> 2 I
<b>2.</b> Subtitles – On/Off		1	2	1	4			1	2	5		<b>4/8 SA</b> 1 A / 2 N / 1 NA	<b>5/8 HI</b> 2 I / 1 N
<b>3.</b> Audio Descriptions – On/Off		2	2		4		1	2		5		<b>4/8 SA</b> 2 N / 2 NA	<b>5/8 HI</b> 2 N / 1 LI

**SECTION (11)**  
**OTHER**

Media practitioners OTH		1	1	1	3		1	1	1	3		<b>3/6 SA</b> 1 A 1 N / 1 NA	<b>3/6 HI</b> 1 I 1 N / 1 LI
Training for media professionals			1	1	5					7		<b>5/7 SA</b> 1 A / 1 N	<b>7/7 HI</b>

## SECTION (3)

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMENDATIONS

All research results indicate a clear need for mandatory media regulations, not only to protect minors from harmful media content, but also to provide better local productions specially designed to serve the needs and interests of each age group as an alternative.

We defiantly need to protect our children from harmful media content and usage, yet it is not possible to ban them from using media all together. Even with strict supervision, with the availability of social media and wide spread of televisions, child curiosity will find its way.

*“For a variety of reasons children may not use media located in the home, and they may use media elsewhere which they lack at home” . . . “Children may diverge from adults in their perceptions of everyday practices precisely because their actions represent tactics to resist or reinvent the adult-created contexts in which they live”*

~ Graue and Walsh, (1998); Livingstone, Sonia (2002), p.4

It is also a difficult matter to completely ban harmful content from being produced. Even if we were able to ban it from being aired on television, internet has its doors wide open for everyone. Hence its highly important to educate our youth and parents on how to deal with media. We cannot neglect either the fact that this new medium is extremely powerful and most importantly appealing to children, youth and even adults. Hence, we should also make good use of it. If we wont able to ban harmful content from being produced, why not use this great medium and produce content that would be more appealing, entertaining and beneficial to the whole public, including children and adults?

Media and technology are super tools, yet we need people to learn how to engage back in real life and benefit from every second in their life, connecting with one another, learning, developing, growing, enjoying the reality, and allow media and technology the appropriate portion in their life for the right use and not let media and technology allow real life a small portion of their time!

*“Not only do new media add to – and in the process transform – existing leisure options, but also existing practices mediate the appropriation of new media into daily life”*

~ Livingstone, Sonia (2002) p.2,3

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Several studies suggest a number of steps that parents and society can take to prevent or reduce this negative effect of television, in addition to personal suggestions:

### 1. GOVERNMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

#### THE CREATION AND EFFICIENT IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICIES

- A. Protects children from being exposed to harmful and offensive media content.
- B. Promoting and developing national innovative, creative, informative and entertaining high quality child programing. This should serve the needs and interests of each age group, helping positive mental, physiological and behavioral development.

### 2. MEDIA RESPONSIBILITY

#### A. ABIDE BY MEDIA POLICIES TO PROTECT MINORS

Taking necessary procedures to ensuring efficient implementation and abidance to policies to protect children from being exposed to harmful media.

#### B. DEVELOP BETTER CONTENT

Invest more time, money and effort to create professional local content especially designed to serve the needs and interests of children in Egypt. Such content should be appealing, entertaining as well as informative and educational. Seeking professional advice and involvement of child experts to create such content will aid in children's mental, psychological, and behavioral development.

*"It is a variation on the 'if you can't beat 'em, join 'em' idea, If the screens are going to be on, let's concentrate on the content, and how we can make it work for children."*

Dr. Dmitri Christakis - Director of the center for child health, behavior and development at Seattle Children's Hospital / a professor of pediatrics at the University of Washington and one of the American Academy of Pediatrics' executive committee on children and media, YouTube

### **3. PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY**

#### **1. LESS TELEVISION EXPOSURE**

Children under 2 years of age must not be exposed to any media content at all.

Older children should have limited daily media exposure up to 1 or 2 hours' maximum

Children should not have television set in bedrooms

Children media interaction should be co-viewed or monitored

*“For years physicians have been advocating that children should not watch television more than 2 hours / day, yet children in the United States still watch an average of 3-4 hours / day.”*

~ Sherry Boschert, *“TV content affects children's behavior over time”*

#### **2. ENCOURAGE CHILDREN TO SPENDING MORE TIME IN REAL LIFE**

#### **3. SPENDING TIME OUTDOORS**

For positive development, Children should be encouraged to spending more time outdoors playing and interacting with the environment and surroundings, rather than sitting using various forms of media.

#### **4. COMMUNICATING WITH OTHERS**

SPECIALLY FAMILY AND FRIENDS

A study by the university of Michigan – suggests that time spent in real family interaction is much more beneficial than those programs designed for children at a young age.

#### **3. PARENTAL SUPERVISION AND CO-VIEWING**

Several child experts and studies highlight that parental co-viewing and comments on programs seem to reduce the negative effects of media on children. One study highlights that co-viewing and parental guidance during viewership could reduce the impact of violent scenes on the child. It is thought that this is probably due to reducing the child's identification/connection with the person committing the violent act, and hence reduces the child's perception that the violence is real, therefore, reducing the likelihood of the child implementing that violent act after seeing it on TV.



#### **4. USING PARENTAL CONTROL AND GUIDANCE**

In addition to selective viewership, where parents pick out content they allow their children to watch, using parental control options like the V-chip technology among others, gives parents a way to control what to allow to be broadcasted on television at home. Yet, that is only applicable with the availability of content-based rating system not only age-based. This guides parents and allows them to judge content and its intensity rather than just choosing according to age suggestions. (Longitudinal Relations Between Children's Exposure to TV Violence and Their Aggressive and Violent Behavior in Young Adulthood: 1977 – 1992)

In general, researchers say implementing and upholding some of these changes at home could benefit a child's behavior. Yet, if we are looking to have a more developed country and nation, then we must understand that when it comes to raising children specially in their early years, as Dr. Dimitri – a Pediatrician and a researcher – said “If you change the beginning of the story, you change the whole story”! But may we add, “We need to write our own unique story that maintains our identity and language!”

## **SECTION (4)**

### **LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH**

Considering the safety of children and ensuring their well being is a highly crucial matter that requires extensive research and study. When it comes to introducing policies and rules in a medium that is not use to having such restrictions, makes implementation very challenging. Limitations of this research includes not being able to connect with a higher number of parties involved in the matter, yet, the in-depth interviews made with a range of media professional, academics, child experts, parents and children, provide a clear view on the current situation. Further research is needed to ensure more accurate policies and efficient implementation.

## SECTION (5)

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