

Participation of Media in The Context of Children with Disabilities: A Critical Analysis

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ABSTRACT:

This current attempt has been made to discuss about the participation of media in the lives of children's with disabilities that what kind of role media is playing in the context of disability? In modern times, media plays a very significant and powerful role. Images, stories in the media can deeply influence public opinion and establish societal norms. Presently there are one billion or 15 percent of the world's population is concerned with disabilities. Both the developed and developing countries, evidence suggests that persons with disabilities disproportionately represented among the world's poor and tend to be poorer than their counterparts without disabilities. Economic and social exclusion is a part of the daily lives of person with disabilities and is a breach of human rights and a major development challenge. The rich diversity of our society inclusive of all its members including persons with disabilities can help strengthen fundamental human rights and contribute to development for all persons with disabilities. It is not uncommon to see persons with disabilities treated as pity objects, charity or medical treatment have to overcome a tragic and disabling condition or conversely, presented as superheroes who have accomplished a great feat, so as to inspire the non-disabled. The depiction of disability in the media plays a major role in molding the public perception of disability. Perception portrayed in the media directly influence the way people with disabilities are treated in current society. Media platform cited as the key site of for the reinforcement of negative images and ideas in regard to people with disabilities. In this whole criteria, children with disabilities are much more suffering with this phenomenon rather than youth with any kind of disability. Disabled children grow up in an ablest world that discriminates against people with disabilities and denies them full representation in all aspects of society, including in the media. This paper aim to explore the impact of media on children's with disabilities.

Key words: Children with disabilities, Media, Representation, Pity object, Opportunities.

1. INTRODUCTION:

Media is the plural form of the word medium, which is the mean of conveying something in this case, information. Media serves many purposes, including communicating information about a subject or providing entertainment. There are many forms of media in this modern world. Television, newspapers, websites and magazines are all form of media. Media can cover a broad range of topics. News media covers local, national and world news such as stories about crime, natural disasters, world politics or important international meetings. News media include television, broadcasts magazines, articles, websites, newspapers and more. Entertainment media typically focuses on human interact stories,

movies, television shows or celebrity news. Media is frequently designed to influence public opinion. The ways in which stories are reported impact not only what people know about a subject but also their personal views about anything from policy issues to political candidates. Media can even influence how people dress and what they buy in a store. People often seek out media that reinforces their own views and opinions some people believe that this form of validation of already held opinions is harmful to being fully informed about a topic. Social media is a newer form of mass communication. People access social media sites on the internet through personal computers and cell phones. Internet users access sites like instagram, twitter and facebook to post photographs, videos, stories, opinions and more to an audience of followers. Many of the followers may be personal friends but other may follow a given sources because they find the users posts interesting or entertaining.

It is true to say that the media is an extremely important part of our everyday life and as an industry has been critical in the dissemination of information to the mass population. However the influence that the media holds our society has not always been used to society's benefit, particularly in relation to disability, where the media has continued to hold to the discrimination will be discussed through the following areas:

- The media reinforcement of impairment and the use of the medical model of disability.
- The media's creation and underpinning use of disabled stereotypes.
- The role of media influence, media organization and their employees, political agendas, the intended audience and current societal trends.
- The use of images, languages and terminology related to disability.
- The under-representation of disabled people in the media.
- The effect of media on disabled people.

As it is mentioned earlier the current attempt is concerned with the impact of media on children with disabilities. The united nation defines persons with disabilities on individuals who suffer from permanent of physical or intellectual impairment that disabled them to deal with various obstacles barriers and environments and prevent them from fully and effectively participating with each members of the community (United Nations 2007) and the term disability is an umbrella term that includes different forms such as deficiencies or physical disability that limits their particular activity in the community (WHO).

Role of Media influence:

What we see, hear and read in the media is often decided and influence by a small group of decision makers. These editors, producers, programmers and budget controller are swayed by their own opinions of disability and what they believe will being in audiences. Historically media examples, containing disabled people have largely conformed to stereotypes. These decision makers may feel that they are taking a risk by portraying disabled people outside of the stereotypes which have historically "sold well". The terminology used in this, reinforcing discrimination, using negative, disableist language devalues disabled people and can create a negative self-image.

The Disabled people over the years have been marginalised within and through the media. These areas are as follow:

- The media still tends to use the medical model of disability.
- The focus is on the impairment more than the individual.
- Disabled people are under-represented both in terms of employment in the media and portrayal in the media.
- Lots of media forms are inaccessible and broadcasting tends to be at inaccessible times.
- Mainstream media do not recognize the disabled arts, media, and culture.

Though the media are the beginning to change, it is evident that much more work is needed by the media industry and the disabled community, where mainstream media learning from the disabled media, arts and sub-culture.

Social media is a fast-emerging platform that has changed how people communicate and connect. Since these networking platform are easy to use and entertaining, they have attracted the attention of most children. Therefore, it becomes essential to discuss the effects of the social media on children. Social media, if used wisely, is a good platform to interact, learn, communicate and have fun, however if misused or excessively used, it may lead to cyberbullying, anxiety and health problems.

Young minds are mouldable and social media can affect how your child thinks or becomes. At their change, they are innocent and cannot discern good or bad. Some common adverse affects may be:

- Social media is a vast platform and one cannot control the amount of information available here. Therefore, children may bump into inappropriate or harmful content that may affect their thinking.
- Cyberbullying is a growing trend prevalent on social media and messaging platform. It spread fear and shame among people and may have undesirable affects on children.
- Makes children less productive because much of their time is spending without doing anything important and they become addicted. These addictions may adversely affect their physical health.
- Excessive social media use may also affect your child's ability to develop interpersonal relationships.

Impact of media on children with disabilities:

As we mentioned many of the affects that media concerned with children that are very harmful. But if we are talking here about the children whom have some sort of disability, how media affect them? As they have some kind of physical deficiencies, they are not fully capable of understand all the affects media concerned.

A study from EDC and Ruderman Family Foundation is one of the first to examine the associations between social media, Cyberbullying and mental health for students with disabilities. While students with disabilities were more likely to hope and support online, they were also more likely to be cyberbullying victims, perpetrators or even both as compared to students with disabilities. Previous research has shown that cyberbullying can lead to depression and suicide chances among children. As children with disabilities have unique phenomenon, they are not that much capable like able-bodied children because of their physical deficiencies. Here media also play a very significant role to effect this group of children with disabilities. Some of the effects have shown below:

- **Ignore by media:**

In the reference of representation, media many of the times ignore children with disabilities. It may be because they need audience attention which can affect while represent disabled population of the society. So because of gaining more and more praise of get positive points, most of the times they trying to look at those whom are able bodied and productive member of the society. It is not like people with disabilities are not productive member of the society or family; they are definitely because now days they are doing many efforts, hard work through educational opportunities and other facilities.

- **Representation of persons with disabilities or children with disabilities:**

As they have some kind of physical deficiency so that they are not able to do every kind of work. Because of their physical condition it is always seemed that people called them 'bechara' etc. which affect them very keenly. And here media plays a very significant role. It is so true that media somehow make the public perceptions regarding any particular context. When media represents persons with disabilities a 'bechara' in the society, people perceptions becoming more static which results the negative attitude of society towards persons with disabilities.

- **Medical model of disability:**

Persons with disabilities are considered as marginal section of the society. They are suffering from some kind of disability because of that they are not able to do all the works that able-bodied do. It is their medical condition which cannot allow them to do some work. Here media also play an important role where when it is matter to represent them, media always showing more concern with their physical condition which can make a hurdle in their successful life. Media represents those things less in form where they overcome all those physical challenges and contribute in society as productive contributor.

- **In education:**

Children with disabilities have to face many of the barriers while receiving education. There might some of the cases where teachers are not fully trained to teach those students whom have some kind of disability. There are very less chances where teachers are trained in schools for special children. In this kind of condition they need some support from where they can learn. So now day's media no doubt plays a significant role. Children with disabilities are getting help for learning. But due to this, media also provide that type of content which is definitely inappropriately for them. These sorts of content affect their lives very badly which leads many of the problems such as Cyberbullying (cyberbullying is a bullying with the use of digital technologies. It can take place on social media, messaging platform, gaming platforms and mobile phones. It is repeated behaviour, aimed at scaring, angering or shaming those who are targeted), sexually harassment, depression and suicide etc.

- **Represents inferior position:**

In TV serials, movies and in some other show, media portrays persons with disabilities are poorer of the poor and pity object etc which somehow contributes a lot in making negative and inferior position in the society. We normally see in those shows, where children with disabilities are performing the role of beggars. As we know that media plays a very important role in making public opinion, to see this type of the content, public mostly adopted that these persons

or children with disabilities have the same position which shown on the television or on other source of media.

- **Exclusion of children with disabilities:**

The way media represents the children with disabilities, they felt excluded from the mainstream society. As media makes public opinion so that people think about them as inferior position in the society which results the negative attitude towards disabled children by society.

- **More difficulties in rural areas:**

Children from rural areas are facing more difficulties because they don't have the proper facilities or opportunities. The media which play a very important role here like in modern time internet and other facilities are definitely significant but in rural areas these services are very far away. As a result they are lacking behind than children without disabilities from the facilities which might help them in their studies and other activities. They are not able to grab that opportunities because of accessibility and economic instability. Therefore, they lag behind who have the capability to shine in the society.

- **Ignore in sports field:**

If we are talking about the media role in cover the sports activities, as we know that for disabled children Para Olympics games are available where they participated in those activities. Children with disabilities have the capability of doing well in the sports activities which should be appreciated but media doesn't cover them well because of their disability. They cover only able-bodied who are participated fully in all the activities. For getting no appreciation children with disabilities are getting disappointed which leads to less participation ahead from them.

2. Conclusion:

To discuss the whole scenario, it is concluded that although media helps a lot in access all the facilities and making everyone life easier but on the other hand, it affects on society very badly which emerged many problems. Mainly it affects the life of young people because now days they are more dependent on media and other related technologies. This present paper more stress on the impact of media on children with disabilities especially. Because of the physical problems, they are unable to understand keenly all the impacts, media concern. Media represents them as object of pity, poorer of the poor and has inferior status in the society which contributes a lot in making negative perceptions of the society.

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