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The radio, television and cinema are very useful inventions. They can be very good tools for training and education. The tenets of faith and moral values can be propagated through these media. The thoughts of the people can be sharpened by means of these mediums. Information on agricultural and industrial developments could be disseminated through them. Awareness on the aspects of health and sanitation can be popularized through these media.

Man can derive innumerable benefits from the electronic media. But while they have advantages, they have many disadvantages for the society too.

When these media fall into the hands of irresponsible profiteers, they can put them to wrong use and create tremendous problems for the society. For their personal benefit they present programs which are harmful to the health, morals, faith and the general economy of the society. Radio and television are very widely and intensively used these days. Most people consider them only as a source of entertainment and recreation. The children and youth are literally addicted to the idiot box.

Knowledgeable people are of opinion that the Iranian children are much more addicted to the television than the children in the developed countries like America, France, Great Britain and Japan. In Iran 40% television viewers are children, 20% youth and the rest adults. It must be remembered that the childhood and youth are the prime time for education and learning.

Whether the radio and television programs are good or bad, they will have impact on the impressionable minds of the children. Watching these programs should not be considered as harmless pastime. The child should not be given freedom to watch or listen to all the programs of his choice. Many programs will definitely be harmful to the psyche of the child.

The producers of the television and radio programs should do introspection about the damage they are causing to the delicate minds of the children by presenting shows that are very harmful for the children and youth. For them it may be the freedom of expression that drives them to their irresponsible act, but

for the children and the youth, viewing these shows with keen interest, it will be sheer damnation. The parents too are responsible that they must keep a careful watch over their children's viewing of the television shows and stop them from watching bad programs.

A major part of the television programming will consist of movies and serials dealing with stories of crime, horror, murder, fights, cheating, robbery etc. The children watch such programs with great interest. These stories can be harmful to the children in many ways. For example:

- 1. The impressionable and delicate minds of the children are very proactive to outside influences. Watching such shows the children may develop restlessness, fear and horror in their minds. They may have disturbed sleep in the nights and get up shouting after seeing bad dreams. They may start getting chronic headaches. In extreme cases, on watching the horror movies they may swoon and fall unconscious.
- 2. There can be very damaging effects of such movies on the morals of the children who watch them. These movies can motivate the children to commitment of crime and sins. Sometimes the children are so much impressed with the bravado of the hero of the movie that they try to emulate him in real life and land into trouble.

UNESCO has recorded in one of it's reports that 27% of youth convicted for crimes were motivated for the act after watching similar acts in the movies. In the United States of America, amongst the juvenile criminals convicted by the courts, 10% of the boys and 25% of the girls have confessed to have drawn their motivation for the crimes from the movies they had watched.1

According to another survey, 49% of criminals caught carrying illegal firearms, commit 28% of those who commit burglaries and 21% of acts of running away from the law derived inspiration from what they have watched in the movies. It is also reported that 25% of women who take to street walking have taken inspiration from the movies showing such stories. 54% of women have gone into houses of ill repute in emulation of famous cinema actresses.2

Professor Walksman of the University of Los Angeles says:

"The radiation coming out of the television screen is very harmful for the human organs. The rays coming out of the television and other household electronic appliances are of the short wave variety and the first ill effect is that they cause headaches to those who are exposed to them for longer spells. The thinking capacity of the person will be curbed, the blood pressure will become abnormal and the white corpuscles in the blood will be affected. These waves will have lot of impact on the nerves and cause several illnesses.3

Dr Alexis Carl writes:

The radio, television and inappropriate computer games destroy the emotions of the children."4

The Daily Ittelaat in its Issue No. 15743 reports about a European student thus:

"A college student aged 18 years was arrested and produced in the court. He is accused of kidnapping the son of a film actor and demanding for a ransom of \$50,000 and threatened to kill the child if the ransom money was not paid to him. In his statement to the court the accused confessed that the thought of committing the act came to his mind on watching a movie on the televisions depicting a similar act.

The police is of opinion that several such instances have come to their notice that the youths get motivated to commit crimes on watching movies on the television. A ten years old boy in Mashad , after watching a Karate show on the television, kicked his friend so hard that boy collapsed instantaneously and died. 5

The Deputy Minister for Education and Training, Mr. Safi Niya says:

"When the television is there to effectively provide evil lessons, the best of teachers cannot do anything!"6

(Majalla Maktab Islam, v 18, Issue 1)

One Cuban boy, Ronny Zamora, murdered a 83 years old woman. He did this crime in Florida and is now serving a life sentence in a prison there. His parents have sued three American television channels for damages to the tune of \$2,500,000. He has produced evidence that the child had learnt about manslaughter from the television programs. Last September there was a hearing of the case in the Court when it was mentioned that when the child was small he was very fond of watching television and used to sit in front of it for eight hours at a stretch. A night before the crime, the youth watched a movie on the television where robbery at a rich woman's house was depicted.

A pretty girl of fifteen years, whose name was Razaia, watched a horror movie on the television. She was so horrified watching the movie that she fell down dead on the ground. When she saw in the movie that a white person was scalping the skin of the head of a black girl in the movie, she shouted in horror and had sudden cardiac arrest. The doctors said that she had a brain hemorrhage.

Dr Jalal Baremani, an expert in psychiatry says:

"The horror and adventure movies have a negative impact on the minds of the children. It is noticed that a child watching a film depicting violent acts tried to imitate the hero and beats his brother or sister. Such movies can have a very negative effect on the future personality of the child. Watching horror movies the children become timid and cowardly. Violent movies motivate them to become violent themselves. The effects of these exposures will be there in the minds of the persons, and they might themselves get motivated to commit violent acts.

Another psychiatrist, Dr. Shukr Allah Tariqati says:

"The effects of watching bad movies on the minds of children cannot be denied. These movies have such negative effect on the children that when they grow into adults, they might themselves commit wrong acts under the influence of the movies they had seen long ago. If therefore advise the parents not to allow their children to see such bad movies. They should take particular care to see that the children don't watch movies made and certified to be watched by adults only. They should ensure that the children don't watch any movies shown on the television after 10 PM. These are generally adult movies."

A professor of the Tehran University, and Criminologist, Dr Ridha' Mazloomi says:

"Most of the movies shown on the television and cinema houses are harmful for our society. Their effects are so dangerous that watching a movie, a girl lost her life due to cardiac arrest seeing a horrible scene. I can put it boldly that most of the crimes and acts of terror in this world are directly related to the effects of watching movies."

Dr Arnold Fremani, who works in a hospital at New York, has proved with advanced electronic gadgets that the migraine headaches and nervous weaknesses in persons are due to listening to blaring music on the FM Radio stations.8

The Newspaper, The Times, in one of its issues of 1964 writes:

"A pediatric doctor, made observations at two air force bases that the children of the staff in the age group of three to twelve years continuously complained of headaches, sleeplessness, insomnia and tummy troubles like diarrhoea. Medically, they were not able to establish any cause for the symptoms. After a detailed investigation it was established that the children spend long hours in front of the television screens. The doctors recommended that the children should be stopped from watching the television. This regime was effective that the complaints like headaches, nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea in the children had tapered off. 9

The thoughtful parents who love their children should not allow them to watch television for long hours, particularly in the nights. They should allow them to watch only such programs that are not harmful to their spirit and mind.

- 1. Majalla Maktab Islam, v 15, Issue No.11.
- 2. Majalla Maktab Islam, v 15, Issue No.11.
- 3. Majalla Maktab Islam, v 18, Issue No.1.
- 4. Majalla Maktab Islam, v 15, Issue 3
- 5. Majalla Maktab Islam, v 15, Issue No.11.
- 6. Majalla Maktab Islam, v 18, Issue No. 1.
- 7. Daily Ittelaat, 10 Aban, 1352
- 8. Majalla Maktab Islam, v 15, Issue 3
- 9. Paiwandhai Kudak wa Khanwada, p. 131

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