

A PAKISTANI PERSPECTIVE ABOUT TV VIEWING: A QUALITATIVE STUDY

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Abstract

The aim of the study was to examine parents' perspective regarding TV viewing. For this purpose, five interviews were conducted the parents, by using convenience sampling technique. Inclusion criteria were parents having children of 11 to 13 years of age. Interviews were conducted with parents in their homes. Analysis of interviews was done by thematic analysis technique. During the interviews, four main areas were probed i.e, Parents general perception towards TV viewing, existing rules regarding TV viewing, and suggestions given by parents. The results of the present study showed that parents still use TV as an option of entertainment and learning for children but they view TV viewing as an unhealthy activity in general. They have pointed out more negative aspects of TV viewing. According to them, if TV viewing is restricted then it will result in both positive and negative consequences. Positive consequences of restricting TV time can be in the form of increased interest in studies, religious activities, physical activities and attitude towards pro social behaviors. Whereas, parents have also pointed negative outcomes in the form of health issues, effect on eye sight, behavioral issues and wandering behavior of the children.

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Parents have highlighted three aspects of TV viewing in general. If we focus on present rules made by parents for their children regarding TV viewing then in this regard there is lack of rules for children. Children can view TV any time. Secondly, TV viewing also serve as a background activity that is ongoing on side by side with other activities and third aspect is lack of alternatives available for parents in which their children can engage with. Apart from this, parents have also given suggestions regarding potential alternatives that can be used to limitize TV viewing among children. They also pointed towards role active of parents.

Key Words: TV Viewing, Pakistan, Thematic analysis, Qualitative

Introduction

Technology is the force of today's changing world and Television (TV) is a major component of it. It was first invented back in 1920 and it is one of the most powerful electronic medium of mass communication. Although, it doesn't lose its presence in lives of people by getting better and advance than its previous form (Rawlings, 2011). Now, it is not something that is only limited to people of high class, instead it is easily accessible to everyone at a very affordable price. People can watch TV channels all across the world, both national and international, which includes a wide variety of contents. It gives prospect to the viewer about different viewpoints and customs which can affect attitudes and behaviors. If we talk about Pakistan then the case is not much different. TV has revolutionized Pakistani society to accept concept of homogeneity and it also played an important role for common belief regarding multiethnic and multilingual society as a result, people value the social response of the events for gratitude of masses. It has changed life of people very dramatically (Adnan, Shabir & Khan, 2016). Now, TV has come to occupy a central place in the lives of the people. TV, to a great extent, determines the rhythm of people's life not only

in towns but in villages as well (Varghese, 2001). Only in year 2009, more than 10 million TV sets were present in Pakistan and it is still considered as a main source of entertainment for people because of living conditions of people such as inflation, poverty, and joblessness. In modern times, people prefer to stay at home than to go out for availing other opportunities of time spending and entertainment such as cinema, theater and sports. The security condition of Pakistan is also not so good because of uncertain changes in the country which inculcate fear among people. Cable on the TV has also increased the charm and options for people to select program and show of their own choice (Safdar et al., 2015). Families having less financial resources are not in the position to entertain their children with luxurious choices so they prefer to use less costly and easy to access sources of entertainment. In 21st century, use of media technology has become a large part of children daily routine. Even though more advance sources are available in the form of iPod, iPad, Smartphone, computer and tablet. Still, TV has a proper place in the family life of people and this is especially true for young children (Zulfiqar et al., 2019). So, the main aim of conducting present study was to understand that are parents still using TV as source of entertainment and learning for their children or not? Furthermore, to explore general perception of Pakistani parents regarding TV viewing of children.

Method

The following study is based on thematic analysis technique aimed to explore parents' perception related to TV viewing. Thematic analysis technique is one of the method of qualitative approach. The basic purpose of the thematic analysis technique is to search for themes or patterns that are based on different epistemological and ontological positions. The reason of using following method of analysis is that it is based on constructivist paradigm. Constructivist paradigm

gives importance to individual perspective. It also allows flexibility and adaptability to suit a wide range of data types and research aims. Furthermore, this kind of analysis allows the researcher to take an active part in the identification and interpretation of themes according to their research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Participants

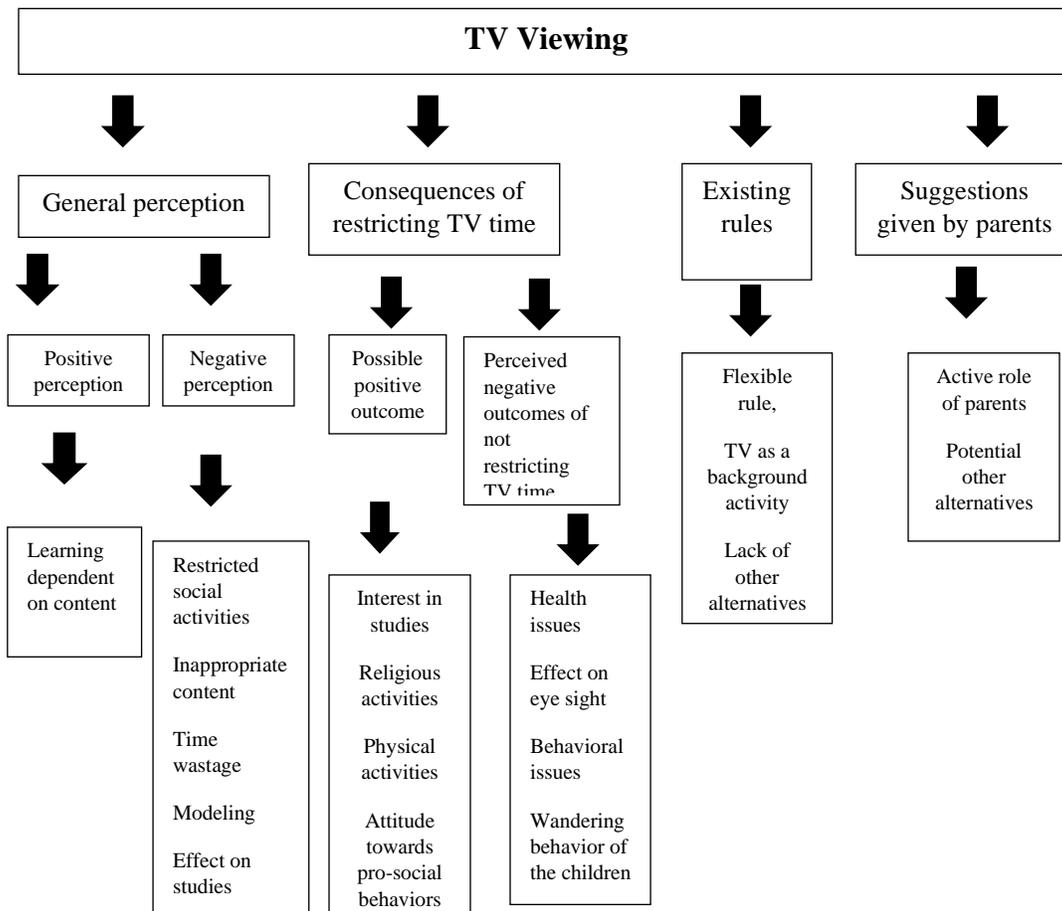
The participants were 5 parents from Rawalpindi, Pakistan. The reason of conducting 5 interviews is that it is a good sample size for thematic analysis with reference to theoretical saturation. According to Ando, Cousins and Young (2014), Theoretical saturation is the concept that is related to grounded theory, but now it is also used for thematic analysis. It is usually defined as the point at which no additional themes are found regarding a category being investigated. For each participant, recruitment information and purpose of the interview was explained by the researcher. Convenience sampling technique was used for data collection. Participants of the study are those people who were easily approachable and their children were currently school going. Table 1 represents the key demographic characteristics of the sample.

Participants' characteristics

Participant ID	Age	Gender	Education	Occupation
P1	39 years	Female	Masters	Housewife
P2	33 years	Female	Masters	Private school teacher
P3	30 years	Female	Matric	Housewife
P4	45 years	Female	F.A	Housewife
P5	41 years	Male	F.A	Business

Procedure

For the purpose of data collection, A Semi Structured Interview Guide along with demographic variables was prepared. A researcher has approached five families from Rawalpindi. After taking consent from all five participants, interviews were conducted in their local language i.e., Urdu and approximately time duration for the interviews ranged from 5 minutes to 18 minutes. Five out of 3 participants had given permission for audio recording. Researcher has transcribed 3 interviews and each transcription took almost two hours. The responses on remaining two interviews were written side by side as two parents refused to give permission of audio recording. The initial data analysis was done in Urdu and after that a summary table was created in English. The main themes created after analysis is presented under:



Analysis

Manual data analysis was done and during this process following interactive steps of thematic analysis were undertaken. Initial coding of descriptive statements have been done in English. These codes were identified through semantic approach that focused on explicit meaning of the text. Through this approach, participants' comments were used as grounds to identify the initial themes (low-order themes) (Braun & Clarke, 2006). These low order themes were then grouped together to form high-order themes in a summary table based on an inductive method. In this way, themes were generated from the data (Patton, 1990). The objective of this step was to ensure that the theme was substantially derived from an actual respondent's point of view and without any attempt to adjust the data into either an early theoretical framework or the researcher's conceptual presumptions (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Themes identified described the respondent's initial parental perception of TV time. The relevant quotes presented in the results section have been translated into English and are presented in italics followed by the participant's age, gender and occupation. (e.g., 30-year-mother student). Results are presented below under these four key themes: General perception, Consequences of restricting TV time, Existing rules and suggestions given by parents.

Setting

Interviews have been conducted at the home of participants.

Results

Four overarching themes emerged from the analyses of "parents view regarding TV viewing". These themes are their perception related to TV viewing, consequences of restricting TV viewing, existing rules regarding TV viewing and suggestions given by parents.

1. Parents' perception towards TV viewing

The first overarching theme which emerged from the data is parents perception about TV viewing. Under this theme, two sub themes have been identified as positive and negative perception.

Positive perception

Learning dependent on content

Positive perception means that parents consider TV viewing as a source of learning new things such as one of mother said that “If they are viewing something good then maybe they will observe it and then adapt it”

[اگر وہ کوئی اچھی چیز دیکھ رہے ہیں تو شاید کچھ اچھا observe کر لیں اور وہ learn کریں]
(39 year old mother housewife)

One Father has also confirmed the notion of learning by viewing TV as he says that “Children learn many things from it”

[ویسے بچے TV سے کافی کچھ سیکھتے بھی ہیں](41 year old father Businessman)

Negative perception

Restricted social activities

Negative perception means that TV viewing is related to a number of bad influences such as restricted social activities, inappropriate content, time wastage and modeling. Restricted social activities means that in the past people used to interact with each other more frequently. As a 39 years old mother (Housewife) says that “our forefathers used to engage in religious activities. They were active in social activities. But now a day, we only call each other for knowing that how is the next person? We don't like to visit each other”.

[ہمارے بزرگ اللہ اللہ زیادہ کرتے تھے تو آڑوس پڑوس میں ایک دوسرے کی خیر خبر لے لیتے تھے۔ ہم تو فون کر کے پوچھ لیتے ہیں کہ کیسی طبیعت ہے؟ ہم کسی کے گھر جانا گوارا نہیں کرتے]

While, one of father told that by spending time with others, a child can learn the importance of social interaction as it can understood from the following quotation; “They will know the importance of family time by taking care of each other”.

[تھوڑا فیملی ٹائم کی سمجھ آئے گی کہ فیملی بھی کوئی چیز ہے، ایک دوسرے کا خیال رکھنا] (41 year old father Businessman)

Inappropriate content

The second more prevalent concern highlighted by the parents is related to inappropriate content presented on the TV. It can be related to cartoons and movies of other countries especially Indian culture. As it can be better understood by the following quotation of a young mother who says, “now a days, even content represented in cartoons is not appropriate. Child’s mind will process things according to whatever she/he watches”.

[آج کل، کارٹون بھی تسلی بخش چیز نہیں ہیں۔ اگر بچہ وہ دیکھ رہا ہے تو پھر اس کا ما ٹینڈ بھی ویسے ہی چلتا ہے] (39 year old mother housewife)

Another parent also supported the notion as “Most importantly, children are learning things that are not related to our social and religious inclination”.

[سب سے بڑی چیز، ہمارے معاشرتی اور مذہبی روجحان میں جو چیز نہیں ہے، وہ بچہ جلدی پک جاتا ہے] (45 year old mother Housewife)

Another father added in saying that “They are learning Indian culture and language by viewing their cartoons and movies. By restricting TV time, we can get rid of this unwanted exposure of Indian culture and language.

[دوسرا یہ کارٹون فضول سے اور انڈیا کے ڈرامے دیکھ کر ان کی زبان اور ثقافت سیکھ رہے ہیں۔
فضول رسمیں دیکھنے سے جان چھوٹ جائے گی] (41 year old father Businessman)

Modeling

The most frequently reported view regarding TV viewing is related to modeling. Modeling means that usually children copy things, the way they see them. One of the young mother said that “Children get aggressive as most of the cartoons and movies are based on violence”.

[TV دیکھنے سے aggressive ہو جاتے ہیں کیونکہ کارٹون اور موویز میں زیادہ مارگٹائی ہوتی ہے]
(33 year old mother Private school teacher)

Another mother also said that “If a child watches movies then it also effects”.

[اگر کوئی بچہ موویز دیکھے تو بھی اثر ہوتا ہے] (30 year old mother Housewife)

Furthermore, other participants also shared the same views. View no 3: “If they are viewing programs related to fighting or this sort of things than they will definitely get hyper. My son likes to watch programs related to different projects and superman as a result, he is very hyper”-

[اگر وہلڑا نی جھگڑا اور اس ٹا نیپ کی چیز (پروگرام) دیکھ رہے ہیں تو یقیناً بچہ ویسے ہی hyper ہو جاتا ہے۔ میرا بیٹا اس طرح کے پروگرام دیکھتا ہے پروجیکٹس دیکھتا ہے اور superman دیکھتا تو وہ بہت hyper ہے] (39 year old mother housewife)

View no 4: “Children mostly learn bad things from it (TV) like inappropriate use of words and dressing style”.

[بہت سی عادات ہیں جو بچہ pick کرتا ہے۔ عموماً wording جو ہے۔ تھوڑی misbehave کرنے والی وہ use کرتا ہے، اسی طرح لباس ہو گیا] (45 year old mother Housewife)

View no 5: “They model the behaviors, whatever they watch on TV”.

[TV پر جیسا دیکھتے ہیں وہی ایک دوسرے کے ساتھ کرتے ہیں] (41 year old father Businessman)

Effect on studies

According to parents, TV viewing also effects child's interest in studies. Almost all of the parents both father and mothers have pointed towards this aspect. They run away from their studies. They don't pay attention to their studies. As a result, they get poor grades in exams and later it's become difficult to get admission in science subjects.

[پڑھا ئی سے دور بھاگتے ہیں۔ پڑھا ئی پر توجہ نہیں دیتے اور exam میں کم marks لیتے ہیں اور آگے پیچھے سا ننس سبجیکٹس میں ڈالنا بھی مشکل ہو جا تا ہے] (33 year old mother Private school teacher)

Apart from this, it also effects studies and they don't pay attention towards studies.

[اس کے بعد، بچے کی پڑھا ئی پر اثر پڑتا ہے اور وہ پڑھا ئی پر توجہ نہیں دیتے] (30 year old mother Housewife)

It effects child's education.

[بچے کی تعلیم پر اثر پڑتا ہے] (45 year old mother Housewife)

They have no interest in studies. They switch on TV and after that they start fighting with each other over the remote. They beat each other.

[پڑھا ئی پر توجہ zero ہے بس TV لگا کر بیٹھ جاتے ہیں، ریموٹ کے لیے لڑتے ہیں۔ ایک دوسرے کو مارتے ہیں] (41 year old father Businessman)

Time wastage

A Middle aged woman mentioned that TV viewing is an idle activity and is wastage of time such as "It is obvious, time gets wasted because of it (TV)".

(39 year old mother housewife) [ظاہر ہے ٹا wastage بہت زیادہ ہے اس کی وجہ سے]
[نم]

2. Consequences of restricting TV time

Parents had spoken about the consequences of restricting TV time in such a ways i.e increased interest in studies, increased interest in religious activities and more engagement in physical activities.

Possible positive outcomes

Increased interest in studies

By restricting TV time, children will be interested in studies such as one of the parent said that “They (children) will take more interest in studies”.

(30 year old [اس سے وہ پڑھا ئی پر توجہ دیں گے]
mother Housewife)

Another old aged woman also mentioned that “His/her progress in studies will be better as this is the age for studies”.

(45 year old [اس میں بہتری آجائے گی کیونکہ پڑھا ئی کرنے کا بھی ایک دور ہوتا ہے]
mother Housewife)

This feminine notion was also confirmed by one of the father. He said “They will pay attention towards their studies”.

[(41 year old father [پڑھا ئی پر توجہ دیں گے]
Businessman)

Increased interest in religious activities

By restricting TV time of children, we can develop an inclination towards religious activities. According to the parents, children will have their interest increased in religious activities. One of mother said that “See, our forefathers did not have it (TV) they were more engaged in religious activities”.

[دیکھیں، ہمارے بزرگ کے پاس یہ (TV) نہیں تھا تو وہ زیادہ اللہ اللہ کرتے تھے] (39 year old mother housewife)

The same notion was supported by the other mother in such a way that “Islamic books should be included as a part of their extra-curricular activities”.

[اس کے علاوہ اسلامی کتب کو غیر نصابی سلسلے میں شامل کیا جا ئے] (45 year old mother House wife)

Increase physical activities

Another aspect of restricting TV viewing time is to engage them in physical activities. Two of the mothers depicted this notion as following: “If he will go outside and play, he will exert himself as a result he will be less vulnerable to diseases”.

[وہ باہر جا ئے گا، باہر activity کرے گا، کھیلے گا تو پھر exercise ہو جائے اور بیماریوں سے محفوظ رہے گا] (39 year old mother housewife)

“If their TV time will be restricted then they will get more involved in physical activities. They will be more active and fit”-

[اگر TV کا ٹائم کم کیا جائے تو اس سے وہ زیادہ physical activities میں involve ہو سکتے ہیں۔ جس سے وہ فٹ اور active رہیں گے] (33 year old mother Private school teacher)

Increased interest towards prosocial behaviors

By restricting TV time, children' behavior can be better such as one of father said "Firstly, they will not watch movies themed on violence as they fight with each other due to them.

[ایک تو یہ مارگٹا ئی والی فلمیں کم دیکھیں گے، جن کی وجہ سے لڑتے ہیں] (41 year old father Businessman)

While, one of other parent has said that "His/her behavior will improve too".

[اس کا رویہ بدلے گا، اگر نافرمانی کی ہے تو وہ بھی بہتر ہو جائے گا] (45 year old mother Housewife)

Perceived negative outcomes

With positive consequences, parents have also pointed out possible negative outcomes of not restricting TV time as well. The negative outcomes of unrestricted TV time are addictive behavior, effect on eye sight, effect on physical health, behavioral issues.

Behavioral issues (stubborn, irritating behavior towards other)

Another issue related to TV time restriction is behavioral. Participants have said in their interviews that if child's time of TV viewing is restricted then they will get stubborn or they will irritate others Such as one of the mother said that "Specially young children of age 7, 8 or 9 years get stubborn".

[خصوصاً 7, 8, 9 سال کے بچے ضد کرتے ہیں]

or

"If I have forcedly switched off the TV or placed remote in the cupboard then either he goes outside or irritates his sisters".

[اگر میں نے پکڑ کر زبردستی TV off کر دیا اور remote locker میں رکھ دیا تو یہ تو باہر چلا جا ئے گا یا اپنی بہنوں کو تنگ کرے گا] (39 year old mother housewife)

Another mother also addressed this notion “Children don’t obey orders. When they are called then they will keep on saying that “coming, I will do it (assigned task) sooner”. This behavior is irritating.

[بچے تابیداری میں پیچھے چلے جاتے ہیں کہ بات ماننا۔ اس کو آواز دو تو ہر بات میں یہ کہنا کہ آیا۔ تھوڑی دیر میں کرتا ہوں۔ اس چیز سے بڑی کوفت ہوتی ہے] (45 year old mother Housewife)

Father has also pointed out about child’s stubborn behavior in such a way “there is not any rule of TV viewing in our home but I tell them not to watch it during exam but still they watch it.

[نہیں کوئی اصول نہیں۔ ہاں، exam کے دنوں میں سختی کرتا ہوں۔ TV بچوں کو بالکل نہیں لگانے دیتا لیکن لگا لیتے ہیں، نہیں رہتے] (41 year old father Businessman)

He adds furthermore saying, “Now, those who are sitting calmly will disturb others in the home. They will fight. They will annoy their mother more, if their TV time will be restricted. He feel fears from me and stays at home”.

[ابھی جو آرام سے بیٹھے ہیں پھر گھر میں دوسروں کو تنگ کریں گے۔ بچے کا TV کا ٹائم کم کیا جائے گا تو ماں کو زیادہ تنگ کریں گے۔ مجھ سے تو ڈرتے ہیں اور گھر میں آرام سے بھی بیٹھ جاتے ہیں]

Wandering behavior

Parents have pointed out that if TV time is controlled then it leads to bad behaviors. As three parents among all have pointed out about it. A father of the child said that if TV viewing time will be restricted then “Children will become licentious/wanderer”.

[بچے آوارہ گرد ہو جائیں گے] (41 year old father Businessman)

Two mothers had similar views as of the father. One of them said “If TV time will be restricted then boys will go outside and come home late. They will also join bad company. Girls will waste time on mobile or on another thing”.

[اگر TV کا وقت کم کیا جائے تو بچے جو لڑکے ہوتے ہیں وہ باہر چلے جاتے ہیں۔ گھر دیر سے آنے کی عادت پڑ جاتی ہے۔ غلط society میں اٹھتے بیٹھتے ہیں۔ لڑکیاں موبائل یا کسی اور کام میں وقت ضائع کرتی ہیں]

(33 year old mother Private school teacher)

Health issues

Parents have shared the view that if child’s TV viewing time is not restricted, he/she will face issue related to their health such as one of the mother said that “If a child sits continuously in front of TV then he/she will have issues like cough, flu, throat etc.

[اگر ہر وقت بچہ بیٹھ کر TV دیکھ رہا ہے تو اس کا زکام، نزلہ اور گلہ خراب یہی نہیں ختم ہوتے]

(39 year old mother housewife)

While, father has addressed this issue by explaining it in a positive manner that if TV viewing is restricted then children’s ability to memorize things will be better such as “Their memory and eye sight will remain intact”.

[دماغ جلدی کمزور نہیں ہوں گے۔ نظر محفوظ رہے گی]

(41 year old father Businessman)

Effect on eye sight

One of the issues that mostly parents have pointed as a result of not restricting TV time is of eyesight. Viewing TV for long hours usually affects eye sight of the children. As two mothers and a father participant have mentioned this issue in their interviews and this view can be best understood by the following

quotations. “My youngest son also wears glasses because he had used laptop and TV a lot”.

[میرے سب سے چھوٹا بیٹا کو glasses لگی ہی اسی وجہ سے ہیں کہ وہ لیپ ٹاپ use کرتا تھا اور TV بھی بہت دیکھتا تھا] (39 year old mother housewife)

“If child has a habit of viewing TV continuously then it effects their eye sight”-

[اگر لگاتار بچہ دیکھتا رہے گا تو نظر پر اثر بھی پڑتا ہے] (30 year old mother Housewife)

“His eye sight got weak as he watches TV from a short distance”.

[اس کی نظر کمزور ہو چکی ہے کیونکہ TV میں گھوس کر دیکھتا ہے] (41 year old father Businessman)

3. Existing rules regarding TV viewing

When parents were asked about existing rules regarding viewing, one of the mother said that “I have definitely made a rule regarding TV viewing as these days children have holidays and I have told them that they can either watch TV for 2 hours straight or divide the timings. So, it’s up to them whatever they do with each other’s consensus”.

[میں نے انہیں بتایا ہے کہ یا تو وہ 2 گھنٹے مل کر دیکھ سکتے ہیں یا پھر ٹائم divide کر لیں۔ یہ ان کی مرضی ہے وہ الگ الگ (اپنی مرضی کا پروگرام) دیکھیں یا مل کر دیکھ لیں] (39 year old mother housewife)

Another mother also told that “I don’t allow them to switch on the TV till they complete their homework.

[جب تک سکول کا کام نہ complete ہو جائے، TV لگانے کی اجازت نہیں دیتی] (33 year old mother Private school teacher)

Some parents did not have any rules regarding TV viewing as they have trained their children in such a way they do not feel a need of having rules. One of the mother said “It totally depend on you that how you train your children. As I have told you that my children fear from me and if I don’t switch on TV then they can’t switch it on themselves. It is not an issue with the routine they have.

[جیسا کہ میں نے یہ آپ کو بتایا ہے کہ بچے میرے سے ڈرتے ہیں کہ وہ میں TV بند کر دوں تو ان کی جرات نہیں ہوتی کہ وہ TV آن کریں۔ ان کی روٹین ایسی ہے کہ کوئی مسئلہ نہیں ہے] (30 year old mother Housewife)

While, another parent said that he has removed the restriction of TV view because of the incident happened in the past and he thinks that it’s better for them to let the child watch TV instead he goes outside and causes problem for them. It can be better understood by the following quotation “We have not made any rule for TV viewing as once he went outside and did not come back, we were so worried so it’s better to let him watch TV and stay at home”.

[اس کے لیے نہیں کیے ہوئے کہ ایک بار پہلے بھی پتہ نہیں کہیں نکل (چلا) گیا تھا اور واپس نہیں آیا ہم سب بہت پریشان تھے۔ اس لیے بہتر ہے TV دیکھے اور گھر بیٹھا رہے] (41 year old father Businessman)

He still feels a need of rules regarding TV viewing “Yes. We have to restrict TV time by suggesting specific time for it. For example you can watch TV in this time period and cannot watch TV other than this time”.

[ہاں لیکن تھوڑی سختی کرنی پڑے گی پھر کوئی مخصوص ٹائم رکھنا پڑے گا کہ اس ٹائم کے دوران دیکھ سکتے ہیں۔ بس اس کے علاوہ نہیں] (41 year old father Businessman)

Another mother also confirmed his idea in a way “TV viewing should be fixed”.

[TV کا وقت فیکس کر دینا چاہیے] (33 year old mother Private school teacher)

TV as a background activity

Some parent use TV as a background activity which goes on side by side with other activities. They feel TV viewing as a normal everyday activity. One of the father supported his idea in this way “Now a days, it is very difficult to restrict TV timing as everything goes besides it like eating, dressing, and even homework is done sitting in front of it”.

[وقت کم کرنا آج کے دور میں ناممکن ہے۔TV کے ساتھ سب کام ہوتے ہیں، کھانا، پینا، کپڑے بدلنا۔
ہوم ورک بھی TV کے آگے بیٹھ کے ہوتا ہے] (41 year old father Businessman)

While, mothers mentioned that they don't switch on the TV if no one is around. “If TV is on then my youngest son is sitting in front of it and viewing it”.

[اگر TV آن ہے تو میرا سب سے چھوٹا بیٹا ضرور دیکھ رہا ہے] (39 year old mother
housewife)

If the TV is on and I say to them that open your bags then they don't do it till I switch it off.

[اگر TV آن ہے اور میں کہوں کہ بیگ کھولو تو یہ بیگ نہیں کھولیں گے جب تک میں TV بند نہ کروں] (30 year old mother Housewife)

Lack of alternatives

Parents have specially mentioned that they lack safe alternatives for child apart from TV viewing. “By viewing TV at least he stays at home”.

[اس لیے بہتر ہے کہ TV دیکھے لیکن گھر رہے] (41 year old father Businessman)

One of the mother mentioned that “Parents need other activities for children as children cannot stay idle, this is not in their nature”.

[والدین کو بچوں کو alternative provide کرنا۔ ایسے بچوں کو فارغ نہیں بیٹھا سکتے۔ یہ ان کی nature نہیں ہے] (39 year old mother housewife)

4. Suggestions by parents

Potential alternatives

Parents have pointed potential activities apart from TV viewing for children; to build child's interest in healthy activities such activities related to cooking or art. Two of the mothers have said that "Children take interest in kitchen activities and this is applicable to both boys and girls".

[بچے کچن کے کاموں میں بہت interest لیتے ہیں۔ لڑکے بھی لیتے ہیں اور لڑکیاں بھی لیتی ہیں] (39 year old mother housewife)

A Young mother also said "If someone has an interest in coloring or art activities etc then they will get more interested in recycling of things".

[اگر کوئی آٹ سا نیڈ پر ہو۔ coloring، چیزیں کو recyle کرنا وغیرہ ، ایسی چیزوں کی طرف زیادہ متوجہ ہوں گے] (33 year old mother Private school teacher)

Role of parents

Parents have also pointed out active role of parents in child's life and it's their responsibility to take care of their child's needs. 39 years old mother mentioned that "Parents should give proper time to their children. If they will not do it then children will definitely go other way round. Among parents, one of them should be friendly so child can comfortably share anything with him/her while the other one should be strict for them so they can get the idea that he/she has done something wrong (housewife).

[parents کو بچوں کو ٹائم دینا چاہیے۔ اگر وہ ہی دیں گے تو پھر وہ negative کی طرف نہیں چلے جائیں گے۔ parents میں سے کسی ایک کو friendly ہونا چاہیے تاکہ بچہ اس سے اپنی بات کر سکے اور دوسرے کو تھوڑا سخت بھی، تاکہ اسے پتہ ہو کہ اس نے کچھ غلط کیا ہے]

Two other mothers had similar views such as “Children should be involved in other activities like household etc as it is a good activity”.

[گھر کے کاموں میں اگر ساتھ involve کیا جائے تو یہ ایک اچھی چیز ہے]
(33 year old mother Private school teacher)

“Child’s interest in studies should be developed”.

[بچے کو زیادہ سے زیادہ study پر لگایا جائے](45 year old mother Housewife)

Discussion

The present study explored Parents’ perspective regarding TV viewing. The qualitative data revealed general perception related to TV viewing, consequences of restricting TV viewing, existing rules regarding TV viewing and Suggestions given by parents. In general perception regarding TV viewing, parents revealed that it can have both positive effects and negative effects. Positives effects are very much dependent on the type of content that is being presented on TV. Positive effects of TV viewing is also reported by Nieman (2003) that TV is a powerful teacher and Viewing *Sesame Street* is a serial which showed that how young children can learn valuable lessons such as racial harmony, cooperation, kindness, simple arithmetic and the alphabet through an educational television format. The following Serial also helped in improvement of reading and learning skills of children.

In general, Pakistani parents reported that TV viewing is associated with negative outcomes that can be inform of restricted social activities, inappropriate

content, Time wastage, Modeling behavior and effect on studies. All these aspects are also highlighted by previous research such as Torrecillas-Lacave (2013) reported in his study that some parents had pointed negative concept of television in a way that these days quality of the TV content is poor and is specially directed towards material presented on it which signifies certain desire for improvement. Dorey et al. (2010) reported that several parents who took part in their study have also expressed concern regarding content of TV programs that are based on sexual and violence references. Effect on studies was reported by Sajjan (2013) in a way that parents have felt that as children are continuously viewing TV for long hours than usual. As a result, they are lagging behind in their studies. They are unable to pay proper attention and their grades are also getting affected by it. Vandewater, Bickham and Lee (2006) conducted study on “Time Well Spent? Relating Television Use to Children’s Free-Time Activities”. The results of the study revealed that it is very disappointing that American children spend most of their time as viewing TV (waste of time) that it is a quite interesting hobby for them as a pastime. Positive consequences of restricting TV time can be in the form of increased interest in studies, religious activities, physical activities and attitude towards pro-social behaviors. Whereas, parents have also pointed negative outcomes in the form of health issues, effect on eye sight, behavioral issues and wandering behavior of the children. Sajjan (2013) has reported that TV can affect children health, their behavior and most important their family life in negative ways. When children time of TV viewing can be restricted then it can affect their health as another study has also reported that TV takes time away from children to play and perform healthy activities. So, when children watch TV for a longer period of time then they become physically unfit and more likely to consume high fat and high energy snack foods which makes a substantial contribution to their obesity (Nieman, 2003).

If focus is paid on existing rules regarding TV viewing then parents reported variety of responses as some said that they have made rules regarding TV viewing to some past experience that happened to them, while the other parent has made modification in rule as a result of some event happened to them. There is variation of opinion in these aspects; it might happen to role of culture. Culture has offered flexibility regarding rules and regulation for TV viewing. In the present study, parents have given suggestion regarding active of parents to actively engage with their children and also provide them alternatives other than TV. The following notion is also pointed by Nair and Thomas (2013) that it is necessary for parents to engage their children in activities that nurture closeness, sharing of thoughts and opinions. Despite of busy routine of parents, it is their responsibility to improve overall family environment by spending time with children, helping them in completing their homework and taking them outside for different kinds of activities. Dorey et al. (2010) also pointed out that parent can provide their children alternative activities to TV viewing such as e.g. by organizing outdoor activities.

Conclusion and limitations

Although the following study has provided valuable information about parents' perception regarding TV viewing but the findings are based on a very small sample (N=5) which was recruited from Rawalpindi. Hence, it does not represent perception of parents' in general. More research is needed in this area to get better understanding of parents' perception regarding TV viewing by using a variety of methodological approaches and by recruiting large number of participants in the study.

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