Research Article	**Manifestations of Symbolic Violence and its Consequences in Animated Film Techniques: An Analytical Study of SpongeBob Square Pants**
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Abstract:

This research aims to uncover the manifestations of symbolic violence in children's cartoons and the theoretical representations of symbolic violence in these contents, considering their importance in the formation of a child's personality. It shows how these narratives, set in an appealing and imaginative context can reveal symbolic violence aimed at imposing hidden meanings and connotations in a professionally artistic manner. This form of violence is particularly dangerous for children because it targets their mental structure, especially when presented in forms that resemble fundamental truths that are difficult to question. The paper analyses examples of symbolic violence in animation and links them to the roles, value judgments, concepts and theories that support symbolic violence against children. The research relies on content analysis of a selection of popular cartoons to identify instances of violence that include discrimination between characters, the imposition of stereotypes, and the encouragement of aggressive behavior.

Introduction:

Modern media play a significant and influential role in the lives of individuals, groups and institutions, particularly television. The latter has gained a prestigious position and has become a focal point for young and old due to its reliance on the aesthetics of color and the combination of image, sound and movement - factors that attract young children who find in it an alternative embrace to their lost family. This has led researchers to refer to it as the 'third parent' or children's companion.

Children's media is a subset of adult media, based primarily on animated films and the hidden messages they convey, which aim to distort the audience's consciousness, given the sensitivity of this developmental stage, which is fundamental to the formation of a child's personality. One of the most critical issues raised for discussion is the

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negative impact of cartoons on children's adoption of violent and aggressive traits.

The importance of this research lies in the study of the symbolic violence present in certain models of animation, which, in our opinion, has not been adequately studied. From this perspective, the central issue of this study is to explore the behavioural effects and practices of children through the analysis of examples of animated films.

Definition of the problem

Symbolic violence is a sociological concept that refers to a type of indirect violence that is exercised by imposing certain values, beliefs and ideas on others. This form of violence manifests itself in various areas, including art and culture. In art, symbolic violence can be expressed through images, symbols and ideas that carry hidden messages about power, dominance and control. As Pierre Bourdieu has pointed out, symbolic violence is a form of control exercised through dominant values, beliefs and ideas. In the world of animation, particularly in the SpongeBob SquarePants series, this kind of violence infiltrates quietly, hidden behind bright colours and beloved cartoon characters.

Animation is a visual art form that creates the illusion of movement by displaying a series of still images in a particular order and at a particular speed. This art form is an effective means of conveying ideas, emotions and stories, and has a significant impact on viewers, especially children. By analysing animation, many cultural, social and psychological aspects of society can be revealed. Thus, animation, with its flexibility and ability to embody imagination, becomes a powerful tool for conveying ideas and beliefs, including those that embody symbolic violence. In "SpongeBob SquarePants", this art is used to convey hidden messages about power, dominance and control.

This approach is used in cartoons that are primarily aimed at children and serve as both entertainment and educational tools. However, many cartoons contain hidden messages that can influence children's behaviour and values. It is therefore important to analyse the content of these films to uncover any negative or violent messages. Despite their entertaining nature, cartoons carry deep cultural and social messages. "SpongeBob" is no exception, as this series is used to convey values and beliefs that may not be immediately apparent.

The animated series "SpongeBob SquarePants" is one of the most famous and popular cartoons among children. However, a content analysis of this series reveals many examples of symbolic violence. The cartoon characters in this series interact with each other in ways that may seem funny to children, but can actually convey messages of discrimination, exploitation and violence. This leads us in this research to analyse these messages to understand how they affect children's behaviour and personality development. "SpongeBob" is a very popular cartoon series among children and therefore has a significant influence on the development of their personality and values. This makes it necessary to investigate the possible existence of symbolic violence in this series, which can affect children in various and unlimited ways.

Based on the aforementioned, we pose the following main question:

Where do the manifestations of symbolic violence lie, and what are its implications in the techniques of animated films?

This main question includes the following sub-questions:

1. Do animated films influence children's religious values and moral principles?

2. How can we identify instances of symbolic violence in "SpongeBob SquarePants"?

3. What are the dangers of symbolic violence in "SpongeBob" on children's family upbringing?

Based on the sub-questions of the study, the research is divided into the following main axes:

1. Axis One: Theoretical and Conceptual Introduction.

2. Axis Two: Research Methodology.

3. Axis Three: Content of Animated Films and Challenges in Preserving Values Among Children.

4. Axis Four: Determinants of Symbolic Violence in "SpongeBob SquarePants."

5. Axis Five: Threats of Symbolic Violence in "SpongeBob" to Children's Family Systems.

6. Axis Six: Practical Framework of the Study.

Axis One: Theoretical and Conceptual Introduction

1.1 Definition of Symbolic Violence:

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UNESCO defines violence as the use of means that target the physical, psychological, and moral integrity of others, considering psychological and moral violence to be a deeper form of violence than physical violence and more deserving of condemnation and rejection due to its greater danger. This is what is known as symbolic violence, a term that emerged in Pierre Bourdieu's early writings starting in 1976 with his book "Outline of a Theory of Practice." However, in his 1990 book "Masculine Domination," he elaborated on the analytical aspects of the concept, defining symbolic violence as the imposition of symbolic systems and meanings (such as culture) on groups or classes in a manner that they perceive as legitimate, while concealing the power relations that form the basis of the ability to impose these meanings. This concept applies to any social formation perceived as a system of power, with educational methods in all their manifestations—whether at home, work, school, or in the media—serving as a source of symbolic violence. Thus, symbolic violence encompasses all forms of social and cultural domination, often not recognized directly. A characteristic of symbolic violence is that it is unnoticed or hidden domination (Hemat Basyouni Abdul Aziz, 2014).

It is the violence hidden behind symbols, meanings and implications that permeates consciousness in the form of aggressive images against individuals, whether they are men, women or children. This violence manifests itself in a flowing system of negative signs and implications that besiege the individual with aggressive charges that lead him to the strongholds of violence and crime (Mostafa Hegazi, 2001).

In Amer Noura's thesis, "Social Perceptions of Symbolic Violence Through Wall Writings", it is stated that there is a specific type of general violence, sometimes referred to as disguised or hidden violence, which is directed at the general public, as opposed to physical or direct violence that has a specific target. Symbolic violence takes different forms and patterns that collectively signal an indirect confrontation in which its actors hide without appearing openly (Miloud Kena and Bashir Ghania, 2022).

Definition of Animation:

Animation is the process of moving drawings and shapes or figures on flat surfaces using specific artistic means for use in cinema and television (Arabic Language Academy, 2008).

Theories of Symbolic Violence

First: Theory of Moral Decay:

This theory suggests that symbolic violence manifests in educational and social institutions within societies suffering from fragmentation and collapse of the prevailing moral system. It posits that when positive human relationships are absent and respect for human rights is lacking, along with the dominance of certain social and class groups, this leads to the erosion of societal values and the breakdown of moral bonds that emphasize love, tolerance, and coexistence. Consequently, symbolic violence emerges as a legitimized form of violence among individuals in society, expressed through negative competition and the attempts of some individuals or influential groups to dominate those of lower status, resulting in widespread hostility, social oppression, and human exploitation. Thus, symbolic violence often appears after a decline in social integration. (Ali Hussein Ayed, n.d.)

Second: Theory of Social Hegemony:

Felicia (1999) proposed a theory focusing on the study of symbolic violence among individuals within groups—social, professional, educational, etc.—that hold high status. Individuals in these contexts resort to using symbolic violence as a means to achieve their goals and interests by exerting control and influence over other groups. Therefore, symbolic violence maintains the dominance of superior groups, preserving their social status and sustaining their power and social value at high ranks.

Third: Bourdieu's Theory of Symbolic Violence:

Bourdieu, through his research in the 1960s and 1970s, concluded that violence can manifest in multiple forms and dimensions of behavior. Violence is not limited to the physical and bodily realm; there exists an indirect form of violence that explicitly appears in social relationships among individuals, especially those occupying higher professional social roles. Bourdieu termed this "symbolic violence," which involves individuals in social and professional positions using certain discourses, signals, linguistic symbols, ideas, and veiled images towards those of lower status. This is done to subjugate and control them, significantly influencing their behaviors. This type of violence does not inflict physical harm but causes psychological damage, such as feelings of threat, deprivation of rights, humiliation, and diminished self-worth. This violence can be measured and recognized through individuals' perceptions of the deprivation and verbal or symbolic abuse they face in their personal and social lives. (Ali Hussein Ayed, n.d.)

Manifestations and Forms of Symbolic Violence:

1. Symbolic violence takes on a collective character, practiced by a group of individuals in society, regardless of the

applied form.

2. It has a social character, occurring within society irrespective of the causes, whether political, economic, or otherwise.

3. Symbolic violence is characterized by its use of a range of symbols, signs, and implications, which may include social issues such as deviance, expressed verbally, in writing, or graphically.

4. It manifests through "images," regardless of their source, whether produced by a particular group or by state institutions. For instance, media such as television can convey images that embody symbolic violence, with profound effects on the emotions and feelings of youth, provoking negative emotions such as fear, anxiety, and distress due to their representation of pain and social problems or due to trivialization. These violent images significantly impact youth, as they are the most targeted through words, symbols, and representations, leading many to imitate and replicate these images. Bourdieu directly addressed this, holding media responsible for the symbolic violence it portrays across its various channels, particularly condemning the intellectual class for overlooking the content presented by these media and allowing all segments of society to consume these programs without critique. On one hand, this media may also portray other positive images that reveal the underlying truths of societies or even systems. (Youssef Mohammed Tamar, 2015)

2. Research methodology

In terms of methodology, the researchers in this study used an analytical method. This approach involves the study of phenomena or scientific problems through the systematic analysis of media content, with the aim of arriving at logical explanations based on evidence and reasoning. This allows the researcher to establish a clear framework for the problem, which helps to identify the research findings at the end of the study.

In this research we used simple scientific observation, which is one of the data collection tools. This method involves gathering information by observing and understanding the manifestations of symbolic violence and its implications in the animation techniques of cartoons. We focused on analysing the content of the series *SpongeBob SquarePants*, without omitting or neglecting any elements. This tool allows for a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under study in order to analyse it and obtain the desired results.

The importance of this research lies in identifying the reflections of symbolic violence in the animation of cartoons aimed at children. This will enable us to use these implicit analyses to develop processes for monitoring and tracking manifestations of symbolic violence disseminated in cartoons. This includes proposing analytical and theoretical perspectives on the dangers and benefits that can frame the phenomena of symbolic violence, particularly within SpongeBob SquarePants. This, in turn, can strengthen the principle of independent and responsible awareness of all forms of symbolic violence promoted by different animated products in different media.

The aim of this study is to search for new cognitive and methodological mechanisms that can contribute to preserving the principles and standards related to the refinement of cartoon content aimed at children (research on symbolic violence in SpongeBob SquarePants). To propose a set of solutions to facilitate the control of exposure to such unacceptable media content, to verify its sources and causes, and to confront all forms of moral decay that are among the negative aspects of the production of animated films (towards ethical and legal regulation of animation techniques to adapt to the religious identity of children).

2.1 Study perspective and data collection tool

This study, which focuses on analysing the manifestations of symbolic violence in *SpongeBob SquarePants*, is based on cultural cultivation theory and the content analysis tool. In this analysis, we will explore how this theory contributes to our understanding of how values and beliefs, including those related to symbolic violence, are transmitted through media content, and how the content analysis tool can be used to uncover these hidden values and beliefs.

Cultural Cultivation Theory posits that media, including cartoons, instill certain values and beliefs in audiences, especially children, who tend to imitate what they see. In the context of SpongeBob SquarePants*, it can be argued that this series contributes to instilling some values and beliefs that may carry implicit violence.

- Symbolic violence as an implicit value: Some behaviours in the series, such as Mr Krabs' exploitation of SpongeBob or Plankton's relentless desire for control, can be expressions of symbolic violence. These behaviours are presented in a comical manner, making it difficult for young viewers to grasp the harmful nature of these actions.

 - Repetition and reinforcement: These behaviours are repeated in different episodes, which reinforces their acceptance in the minds of the viewers. Thus, children who watch the series regularly may become accustomed to these actions and accept them as normal.

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_ Role model influence: The cartoon characters in the series serve as role models for children. When children see their favourite characters behaving in a certain way, they tend to imitate these actions.

2.2 Content analysis tool and the detection of symbolic violence

By applying the methodology of content analysis to different episodes of the "SpongeBob SquarePants" series, we can reveal the presence of symbolic violence and identify its different forms. This can be achieved through:

- Dialogue content analysis: Examining the words and phrases used by the characters, particularly those that express authority, exploitation and control.

- Behavioural analysis: Analysing the behaviour of characters, how they interact with each other, and how relationships between characters are portrayed.

- Symbol and image analysis: Examining the symbols and images used in the show and how they help to convey messages about power and dominance.

3. The core themes of cartoons and the challenges of preserving children's values

It is widely accepted that cartoons and animation are an essential part of children's culture and serve as a means of moral education. They can instil values and ethics that shape children's behaviour and actions. However, the negative impact of these programmes cannot be overlooked, either because of content that conflicts with desired ethical standards or because of the way in which children engage with the themes presented in these programmes.

Watching cartoons can have a number of negative effects on children, including:

- Many children's programmes undermine or distort ethical values and principles, often reflecting values that differ from those of our Islamic communities. This can manifest itself in behaviours that are unacceptable in our culture, such as shouting at parents, spying, inappropriate viewing and the use of forbidden language such as cursing and swearing.

- The portrayal of gender relations and friendships may normalise romantic interests by presenting them as commonplace, along with increased depictions of immodesty and sexual innuendo, which may lead children to perceive such behaviour as acceptable.

- There may be a decline in taste, with children becoming accustomed to crude imagery and silly antics, and finding these absurdities humorous, which affects their character and behaviour, leading them to imitate trivialities.

- These programmes can encourage children to challenge and mock authority figures such as teachers and parents.

Overall, while cartoons serve as an important tool for entertainment and education, they also pose significant challenges in upholding the values of goodness, honesty and integrity among young viewers. https://shorturl.at/r6vSO

Animation as a means of learning and entertainment

From this perspective, cartoons are one of the most important means of entertainment and learning for children. They have a major influence on the formation of their characters and values. As cartoons have evolved, so have the challenges for parents and educators in preserving values such as goodness, honesty and integrity. Many of these films contain conflicting themes that can promote undesirable ideas such as intense competition, violence and materialism. It is therefore important for parents to be sufficiently aware when choosing appropriate content for their children and to discuss with them what they are watching in order to reinforce positive values.

4. Determinants of symbolic violence in SpongeBob SquarePants

The pilot episode of "SpongeBob SquarePants" first aired on Nickelodeon in the United States on 1 May 1999, following a televised broadcast of that year's Kids' Choice Awards. The show was critically acclaimed around the world and became hugely popular in its second season. The feature film SpongeBob SquarePants was released on 19 November 2004, and a sequel is in development for release on 13 February 2015. On 21 July 2012, the series was revived with the airing of its ninth season, beginning with the episode "Extreme Spots".

Despite its huge popularity, the series has been the centre of controversy, with criticism focusing on its sexual themes. The show has been nominated for fifteen Emmy Awards, winning the award for Outstanding Animated Programme in 2010. It has also won numerous awards, including sixteen Annie Awards (winning six times) and four BAFTA nominations for Children's Programming (winning twice). In 2011, a new type of mushroom called "Spongeform Squarepants" was created, mimicking the name of the character SpongeBob. https://shorturl.at/FSuC5

Children all over the world have fallen in love with the charming character of SpongeBob SquarePants. Not only is SpongeBob's time on TV limited, but he is also available on DVD and YouTube, and for some people SpongeBob

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fills their days non-stop. The show's message revolves around a love of work and hard work, as well as loyalty in friendship, which is commendable on the surface. We all try to instil these values in our children. But the hardworking yellow SpongeBob never asks for holidays, nor does he like them. He is an exploited worker who is aware of his exploitation but does not complain or object; he enjoys being the victim. This exploitation leads to the first and most dangerous negative point: he willingly gives up his rights and does not care whether he gets them or not; the important thing is to continue working, even if unpaid, like a millstone. These messages are clear and expressed directly through the character, ensuring that the message reaches the child without confusion. For example, when the "Lemotoda" invaded and closed the Krabby Patty restaurant, SpongeBob sat at the door of the restaurant crying over a lost day's work. When Mr Krabs forced him to take a day off in accordance with workers' rights, SpongeBob saw the day off as a punishment and began to make up excuses to continue working, albeit unpaid. His greatest ambition is to remain a chef, and he openly admits that he loves greasy food. His best days are when he works non-stop and repeats, 'I'm ready'. (Muzan Murshid, "The Hidden Messages in SpongeBob Animation", Journal of Future Builders, Syrian Monthly Magazine, Issue 10, July 2014, p. 109).

Based on the ideas presented in this section, there are several determinants that contribute to the emergence of symbolic violence in the SpongeBob cartoon, which can be observed in the social relationships between the characters and in the small social structures presented in the work. One of the most prominent determinants is the symbolic class difference between Mr Krabs and SpongeBob, where the former exploits the latter's weakness to get the maximum amount of work for the minimum amount of pay, reflecting a pattern of economic and social exploitation. Furthermore, the focus on materialism and the pursuit of quick material gains, as exemplified by the character of Plankton, reinforces a culture of consumerism and fierce competition, creating a competitive environment that can lead to forms of symbolic violence. In addition, the negative stereotyping of characters, such as the portrayal of Patrick Star as lazy and stupid, reinforces the idea that intelligence and hard work are not necessary to achieve happiness, thereby diminishing the value of knowledge and learning.

5. The Fifth Axis: Threats of Symbolic Violence in the SpongeBob SquarePants Series on Children's Family Systems

Animation is an important form of entertainment for children, contributing to their education and introducing them to new concepts. Children are always attracted to the shapes, colours and sounds present in animated series. As a result, the producers of these series deliberately focus on these aspects, which explains the huge number of animated shows produced each year, given the high demand from children. In any society, at any time and in any place, a child does not pass a day without watching at least two or three episodes, and sometimes we find children who spend their whole day in front of the television watching their favourite cartoons (Ben Rabah Ilham, 2020).

Childhood is crucial for the development of a child's personality and leaves lasting impressions throughout their lives. Childhood experiences accompany individuals into adolescence, youth, adulthood and old age. A child's growth is linked to family activities and the availability of real-life experiences that allow them to practice and develop behaviours. Childhood serves as the foundation for personality formation, as a person's experiences and lessons in childhood are the raw materials for various active forces and activities they will encounter in later stages of life. Thus, the well-being of a person's physical, psychological and social development, as well as their success and happiness, all depend on their childhood and its balance and harmony (Ben Omar Samia, 2012).

Returning to the semiotic representations of the fifth axis, despite its comedic nature, the SpongeBob series poses potential threats to children's family systems. By presenting unhealthy behavioural models, such as Mr Krabs' exploitation of SpongeBob, the series reinforces values that can have a negative impact on family relationships. Children may become accustomed to seeing exploitation and unequal treatment as normal, which could lead them to accept unbalanced roles within their families. In addition, the focus on materialism and personal gain, as exemplified by the character Plankton, can diminish the importance of family relationships and social bonds, negatively affecting family cohesion. Furthermore, the absence of strong and cohesive family models in the series may weaken the value of family among children, making them more vulnerable to outside influences.

6. The practical framework of the study:

6.1 Method of study

The choice of method is not arbitrary; it is based on a number of considerations, the most important of which is the nature of the subject under study, which determines the appropriate method. Therefore, the method we have chosen is the descriptive-analytical method, because it allows us to respond to the problem we have posed regarding the manifestations of symbolic violence in the animation techniques of animated films, using the "SpongeBob SquarePants" series as an example.

Sample of the study:

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A sample can be defined as a part or aspect of the units of the original community relevant to the research, represented in such a way that it bears their common characteristics. This model or part allows the researcher to avoid studying all the units, also known as items, of the original community, especially in cases where studying all these units is difficult or impossible. Samples are usually selected according to scientific principles and methods. (Amer Qandlaji, 1999, p. 137)

In this study, we resorted to the sampling method because we were unable to conduct the study on all units of the research community, given the extensive nature of the community represented by the total episodes of the third season of the animated series aired on MBC3, which consisted of 37 episodes. Therefore, we opted for a sample size in which the sample size to be studied should be more than 10%. (Youssef Tamar, 2007)

This led us to analyse 10 episodes of the animated series "SpongeBob", which represented 27.02%. We used a random sampling method by writing numbers on slips that numerically corresponded to the list, folding them so that the numbers were hidden, and placing them in a box. The samples included:

Episodes	Episode title	Duration
Episodes 7	The Evil Burger	22:03
Episodes 10	The Prison	21:20
Episodes 14	The Heavy Guest	19:26
Episodes 21	The Party Pooper	19:22
Episodes 30	The Accident	22:04
Episodes 12	The Rare Hat	21.03
Episodes 8	The Box of Imagination	22.03
Episodes 19	The Wet Paint	19.23
Episodes 34	Samson's Army	21.09
Episodes 2	Beach Patrol	22.02

Data collection tool:

In this study, we relied on content analysis as a data collection tool. To provide a brief overview, content analysis as a scientific tool and systematic approach emerged in the mid-20th century and has seen extensive development in various fields of knowledge such as social sciences, literature, economics and politics.

Content analysis is defined as an indirect research method used to process written texts, audio recordings and visual materials, regardless of the time period they belong to. It is also used by researchers in fields that study human activities, social movements and individual behaviour (Ahmed Ben Marsli, 2007).

In our analysis, we adopted the unit of idea as the unit of analysis, alongside counting as a method of measuring the frequency of occurrences. The following categories of analysis were identified:

1. Form Categories:

  - Basic data: This includes an identification card for the "SpongeBob" series, addressing:

   - Production Source: United Plankton Pictures in association with Nickelodeon Animation Studios.

   - First broadcast date: 1 May 1990.

   - Length: 15 or 30 minutes.

   -Number of episodes: 268.

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- Language: English.

- Number of seasons: 14.

- Language category:

Language Used	Frequency	Percentage
Modern Standard Arabic	76	69.72
Colloquial Arabic	3	2.75
Mixed Arabic and English	11	10.09
Sign Language	19	17.43
Total	109	100

The table above shows that the use of Arabic is predominant in the SpongeBob series with 69.72%, followed by sign language with 17.43%. The use of mixed Arabic and English accounts for 10.09%, while colloquial Arabic accounts for 2.75%.

The data in this table suggests that the use of Modern Standard Arabic in the SpongeBob series is a strategic linguistic choice, reflecting the creators' commitment to reaching out to Arab children around the world and providing rich cultural content that enhances their linguistic identity. Despite the diversity of colloquial Arabic dialects, Modern Standard Arabic is a unifying language that brings all Arabs together. In this way, the series helps to teach children the correct rules of Arabic and instils in them a love and appreciation of the language, preparing them for the challenges of academic and professional life.

Music and sound effects category:

Ratio of Influences	Frequency	Percentage
Sounds	103	45.57
Calm Music	12	5.30
Loud Music	74	32.74
Scary Music	37	16.37
Total	226	100

From the figures in the table above, we can see that sounds are one of the most used effects in the SpongeBob series, accounting for 45.57%. These sounds accompany almost all of the characters' visuals and dialogue, including "screams, laughter, crying, pain", in addition to natural sounds such as rain, wind, animal noises, waves and more. This is because the series is aimed at young children, which requires the characters to be brought to life and the events to be made more real. These sounds have significant meanings and convey different messages, much like words express emotions and ideas.

Loud music is then used at a rate of 32.74%. Although loud and high-pitched sounds often have a negative effect on children, causing stress and anxiety, their use in animation can increase children's responsiveness and improve their responses to danger signals.

In addition, frightening sounds were used in 16.37% of the programmes, which can be attributed to the series' association with fantasy. Conversely, soothing sounds were used at a lower rate of 5.30%.

Drawings and pictures category:

Category of Drawings and Images	Frequency	Percentage

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Clear Drawings and Images	45	54.87
Complex Drawings and Images	36	43.90
Total	82	100

From the data in the table above, it can be seen that clear drawings and pictures were mainly used in the "SpongeBob" series, accounting for approximately 54.87%. In contrast, the use of complex drawings and images was around 43.90%.

This data reflects the producers' consideration of the target audience, "the child". A study by "Mikri Finance" noted that the animations in this series are specifically designed for different age groups of children, taking into account their mental and psychological capacities. However, some images can be complex for children in the early stages of life, especially those that mix reality and fantasy. This increases the likelihood that children will be influenced by the content they see, including symbolic violence. This type of imagery was used in the SpongeBob series at a rate of approximately 43.90%.

Content categories: This begs the question, "What was said?"

- Theme category: This refers to the predominant theme in the content of the series and is classified into:

Topics	Frequency	Percentage
Fictional Themes	5	50
Ethical Themes	3	30
Comedic Topics	2	20
Total	10	100

The data in the table above show that fictional themes dominated the "SpongeBob" series, accounting for about 50% in a sample of 10 episodes examined. Ethical themes followed with 30%, while comedic themes had the lowest percentage at 20%.

These numerical results indicate that fictional themes had the largest share in the "SpongeBob" series, which can be attributed both to their nature and to the target audience, which is defined as children. Imagination is a child's unique world and is essential for their growth and development. Through imagination, children learn to take control of their own world and create a new reality that corresponds to their feelings and thoughts. This imaginative world helps children build their identity, develop creative skills and express their emotions in different ways.

Dr. Saad bin Said Al-Rifaie, a writer and critic, emphasises the importance of imagination in enriching children's culture and satisfying their psychological needs for exploration, creativity and innovation, especially in preschool and early childhood. At this stage, children can discover new worlds through imagination, free from the constraints that adults impose. Some educators view children's imagination as a negative behaviour that leads to lying, overlooking its innate cognitive potential that is influenced by environmental factors. Children can form mental images beyond the ordinary, and the role of adults is to harness and positively direct this ability to acquire knowledge and culture through stories that combine knowledge with accompanying fantasy, satisfying children's needs and nurturing their talents and abilities for future innovation and creativity. (Salah sharif). https://www.alriyadh.com/1962353

Actors category: This refers to the characters who drive the events of the series and is classified as follows:

Active Characters	Frequency	Percentage
SpongeBob SquarePants	10	27.77
Mr. Krabs	10	27.77
Sheldon Plankton	2	5.55

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Patrick Star	1	2.77
Sandy Cheeks	2	5.55
Samson	1	2.77
Karen	2	5.55
Pearl Krabs	1	2.77
Mrs. Puff	1	2.77
Larry the Lobster	3	8.33
Officer Nancy	1	2.77
Fish Head	1	2.77
Health Inspector	1	2.77
Total	36	100

The numerical data in the table above show that SpongeBob and Patrick are the most frequently appearing characters, accounting for approximately 27.77%, with each appearing an average of 10 times in the 10 episodes analysed. They are followed by Squidward with 8.33%. This is followed by the characters Plankton, Sandy and Mr Krabs with equal percentages of 5.55%. The characters Karen, Mrs. Puff, Pearl, Officer Nancy, the Fish Head and the Inspector each appeared at the same rate of 2.77%, with their appearances being singular due to the series' characteristic of changing themes from episode to episode. For example, the Inspector appeared once as a new character in the prison episode.

The frequent and consistent appearances of SpongeBob and Patrick are logical, as the entire series revolves around these two characters, while the appearances of other characters depend on the nature and theme of each episode.

1. Category of symbolic violence: This was classified according to what was presented in the theoretical framework of the study:

Manifestations of Symbolic Violence	Frequency	Percentage
Social Nature	4	4.25
Collective Nature	12	12.76
Specialized Nature Specialized Violence(e.g., insults and swearing)	35	37.23
Value Denial	7	7.44
Psychological Alienation	7	7.44
Image Nature	29	30.85
Total	94	100

In the table above, the percentages of symbolic violence varied considerably across the series. The category of social violence accounted for 4.25%, typically involving violence within the politics and economy of society, which is the lowest percentage as the series focuses primarily on imaginative themes rather than social issues.

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The category of collective violence, i.e. violence perpetrated by a group of individuals regardless of its form, is associated with psychological and biological factors leading to violent behaviour and accounted for 12.76%.

Specialised violence, such as insults and verbal abuse, had the highest percentage at 37.23%. This included a range of verbal insults and vulgar phrases such as 'ugly', 'disgusting', 'repulsive' and 'bad', which fall into the category of derogatory language towards individuals.

The category of images related to violence was not far behind specialised violence, accounting for 30.85%. This was identified by analysing scenes with explicit or implicit sexual connotations, such as "the naked mermaid statue" and "deviant sexual scenes", which can confuse children and distort their understanding of gender relations. Some images also depicted exaggerated violence and aggression.

These images and their implications can influence children's emotions and feelings, evoking negative emotions such as fear and anxiety, which can lead to a mindset that is not in line with the morals of their society. In addition, the depiction of anger and destruction falls within the scope of symbolic violence.

The categories of denial of values and psychological alienation were equal at 7.44% each. These types of violence diminish an individual's worth and represent a rejecPositive traitstion of the ideas, values and social norms with which an individual has been brought up. Psychological alienation refers to a sense of separation or estrangement that an individual feels from themselves or their community.

Traits Category: This refers to the characteristics of the main characters around whom the series revolves and is classified into:

Traits Category		Frequency	Percentage
Positive traits	Intelligence	17	8.85
	Imagination	65	33.85
	Playfulness	35	18.22
Negative Traits	Foolishness	33	17.18
	Mischievousness	42	21.87
Total		192	100

The results in the table above show that the highest percentage of traits used in the series was in the category of positive traits, specifically the trait of imagination, which accounted for 33.85%. This was followed by the trait of playfulness, with 18.22%, while the lowest percentage of positive traits was for intelligence, with 8.85%.

In terms of negative traits, foolishness and mischief were identified with 17.18% and 21.87% respectively. These results can be interpreted in the light of the results of the previous table, which showed that the most common themes in the series were fictional.

General findings of the study:

- The use of Arabic in the "SpongeBob" series is predominant (69.72%), which contributes to teaching children the correct rules of the Arabic language and fostering a love and appreciation for it, which prepares them to face academic and practical challenges.

- Sound effects are one of the most used elements in the series, accounting for 45.57%, accompanying almost all the images and dialogues of the characters. This is because the series is aimed at young children and requires a lively portrayal of characters and realistic events.

- Clear drawings and images were most frequently used, accounting for 54.87%.

- SpongeBob and Patrick were the most frequent characters, accounting for 27.77% each, each appearing on average 10 times in the episodes analysed.

- Social violence accounted for 4.25%, while collective violence, linked to psychological and biological factors,

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accounted for 12.76%. Specialised violence, such as insults, had the highest percentage at 37.23%. Images of violence accounted for 30.85% and both value denial and psychological alienation were equal at 7.44%.

- The highest percentage of traits used in the series is within the positive traits category, specifically fantasy at 33.85%.

Recommendations and suggestions:

- Undertake a comprehensive content analysis of the series' episodes to identify recurring patterns of symbolic violence and to identify characters who play key roles in conveying these messages.

- Compare cultural contexts by contrasting the series' content with various cultural and social norms to assess the prevalence of these patterns of symbolic violence in other cultures and to identify contributing factors.

- Investigate the impact of viewer age on the understanding of symbolic violence in the series, identifying which age groups are most susceptible to these messages.

- Develop measurement tools to understand the impact of viewing the series on children's beliefs and behaviours, exploring the relationship between exposure to symbolic violence and acceptance of aggressive behaviour.

- Work with content creators to produce animation that promotes positive values and reduces violent content.

- Raise awareness among parents by organising programmes on the importance of choosing appropriate content for their children and how to deal with exposure to symbolic violence.

- Encourage scientific research into the impact of media on children to identify factors that influence their reactions to media content.

- Develop educational curricula that promote critical thinking and media literacy among children, enabling them to distinguish between fact and opinion, and between positive and negative behaviour.

Conclusion

In light of this thorough analysis of the "SpongeBob SquarePants" series, several findings emerge that reveal the profound impact of symbolic violence in this famous cartoon. The analysis has shown that, despite its comedic and playful nature, the series carries hidden messages that include various forms of symbolic violence that are clearly evident in the social relationships between the characters and in the micro-social structures presented in the work.

The essence of this research is to highlight the role of media, particularly animated content, in shaping children's values and beliefs. The analysis suggests that the symbolic violence in the series can have a negative impact on the development of a child's personality and contribute to the entrenchment of undesirable values such as exploitation, materialism and extreme competitiveness.

Based on the results of this study, it can be concluded that the study of symbolic violence in artistic works, especially those aimed at children, is of paramount importance. Such studies help us to understand the mechanisms through which values and beliefs are transmitted, and contribute to the development of tools and methods to identify and counter these mechanisms effectively.

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