

USING THE ASTRO BY A CERTAIN FOREIGN STUDENTS IN A UNIVERSITY  
CAMPUS  
“A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY”

**Asst. Prof. Dr. NAMIR HASSAN**  
**College of Education- The University of Mustansiriya**

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استخدام "الاسترو" لدى عدد من الطلبة الاجانب في مجمع جامعي (دراسة مقارنة)

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### الملخص

في دراسة لفوائد ومضار استخدام "الاسترو" في مجمع جامعي سكني ، تم مقابلة خمسة من طلبة الدراسات العليا. ان الغرض من الدراسة الحالية هو التعرف على نتائج استخدام "الاسترو" لدى عدد معين من طلبة الجامعة الاجانب المتزوجين وعوائلهم. وعلى اية حال استعملت الطريقة الظاهرانية لتحليل البيانات. ولقد اظهرت النتائج ان الفوائد كانت اكثر من المضار لكل افراد العوائل و اشار الطلبة الذين تمت مقابلتهم بان الاسترو اصبح مهم جدا لهم ولعوائلهم واصبح جزءا مكملا لعوائلهم.

### INTRODUCTION

The words Astro, Satellite, and Dish are wide used in the multimedia literatures. By installing a satellite television receiving station on the roof of your house or on the wall of your apartment, you can bring the whole world news into your living room.

The beginning of the satellite television receiving goes back to five decades ago. There are thousands of satellites' users have been lunching to map the earth's surface (Easton, 1982). However, the most exciting application of the satellite has been in the area of telecommunications.

Although most of the studies regarding to the Astro are focused on the prevalent and the benefits, also the harm of the satellite in terms of what could affect the human beings health ware (Baumgold, 1996; Sellinger, 1996). There is a lack of studies that dealt with the students' users especially those who are living in foreign context, and they depend on this device to keep them in touch with their countries news. However, certain foreign group's students who are living in a university campus focus were of this study on the phenomena of using the Astro.

### THE PROBLEM

Normally, we discuss the advantages and disadvantages of television and other media in the everyday life of an individual. Criticism on the television program; the survivor; factors which isolate people; adverse effects of television watching; information on several dependency symptoms; and significance of television as a medium were studied. Whatever its limitations, as a television-watching culture, our lives are inevitably influenced by the TV. Television distorts our views in other ways as well. According to Cederborg and

Freinkel, (1999) in the United States found that college students who were dedicated soap opera viewers tended to overestimate the number of actual married couples who had been involved in extramarital affairs, been divorced, and women who aborted fetuses.

Emotional and psychological side effects of television watching are only part of the picture. There are also many physical side effects, including obesity, sleep deprivation, and sensory development. While each may only have a slight impact, some researchers believe that the cumulative effect is life altering. But television isn't all bad. Television remains the dominant medium of information and entertainment of our age. It could make us to be in touch with the worldwide news and developments.

However, the problem of the present study is: from the perspective of the foreign married students, what are the essential advantages and disadvantages for them and for their families of using the Astro.

### **THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

People can watch whatever they like whenever they like. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to find out the phenomena of using the Astro by the foreign married students and by their families from the perspective of the students themselves.

### **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

#### *The Central Question*

What is the essential meaning of using the Astro by the foreign married students and their families in a university campus?

#### *The Issue Question*

What is essential for the experience to be described by the students and their families as being users of the Astro?

#### *The Topical Question*

How could using the Astro facilitate the life of the users?

### **LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of this study is to describe the phenomena of using the Astro by the foreign married students and by their families. Searching the available books in the libraries revealed that there are limited books that could help the researcher to accomplish his research. Limitations of getting information from the students' families considered another constraint.

### **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The finding of this study could provide beneficial in terms of the advantages and disadvantages for the foreign married students and their families. Hopefully, this study will give some highlight about some information about the phenomenon of using the Astro as an important multimedia device.

### **REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

The media's impact on people's lives in the past decades has become a popular thematic centerpiece for feature films and television programs. This chapter includes literature that

related with the phenomena of using the Astro. It includes perspectives about the relationships between TV and achievement, also TV and violence.

### **The Relationship between TV and Achievement**

The most common images of the media and how they have been applied specially to radio and television are studied. According to Alasuutari (1999) these images can be grouped into three sets. The first set of images employs the metaphor of a channel or a window and evokes discussions about how transparent the media are or how they distort the picture they convey of outer reality. The other set of old images uses the metaphor of a square. Within these images, the media can be seen either as a marketplace or as a forum. The third and most heterogeneous set of images deals with individuals' personal relationships with the media. Within it, the media may be compared, for instance, to a friend or to addictive drugs or stimulants. After first discussing the role of cultural imagery in general, the author discusses these images of the media. Then, the author discusses how these images have been applied to radio and television. Then, the author explains the differences between the cultural images of radio and television.

The parents most likely to use television rating information, an expected small proportion of the sample, tended to employ a highly inductive style of child rearing and a highly evaluative method of television mediation. They believed that television could have significant positive and/or negative effect on the children achievement, and were more concerned with cognitive and affective level effect. Moreover, these parents had children who tended to need mediation the least average to high academic achievers who were low to mediate consumer of television (Adams, 1999). Ellis (2000) argues that scheduling is the key mechanism by which the structures of television reproduce themselves a fresh, day after day. It is the point where the perceived habits and preferences of past viewing audiences govern the arrangement of future television, providing the basic pattern of broadcasting, interpreting, and shaping the habits and actions of its viewers and nonviewers. It specifies what programs are to be made and defines the character or brand of each channel and thus the character of each national television universe. As such, it has provided a powerful bulwark against globalization.

Davis (1999) investigated the influence that audience reaction shots have on viewers' attitudes toward controversial issues discussed on television. A total of 97 undergraduate communication students participated in the study. The sample had more females (N = 69) than males (N = 28). Subjects volunteered to participate in the study to receive extra credit for a class. The experimental stimuli consisted of three versions of videotape showing a 16-minute clip from The Geraldo Rivera Show. This show was chosen because the topics discussed often focus on important social issues as opposed to more mundane matters or self-help oriented topics, which are common talk show subjects. No evidence was found to support a main effect, but evidence was found to suggest that the effects of reaction shots is contingent on viewers' beliefs that the audience holds the same position on the issue as they do.

### **The Relationship between TV and Violence**

Television's coverage of violence also influences our perception of just how much violence exists in our lives. Researchers have found a close correlation, not between the actual crime rate and people's perceptions, but between the media's coverage of violent crime and people's perceptions (Brozo, Walter, & Placker, 2002). Health care practitioners should be aware of the potential negative impact of television viewing at bedtime. In addition, Parents should be questioned about their children's television-viewing habits as part of general screening for sleep disturbances and as part of anticipatory guidance in regards to healthy sleep habits in children. In particular, the presence era television set in the child's bedroom may be a relatively under recognized, but important, contributor to sleep problems in schoolchildren (Kelly, 1996).

According to Campbell, Muncer, Guy, and Banim (1996), in the US representations of male violence in newspapers, magazines, movies, and television dominate adolescent consciousness because of popular media's marked advantage in terms of cultural entrance.

For all the potentially positive aspects of TV, there are a huge number of critics who blame it for helping to create a more violent society. According to Brozo, Walter and Placker (2002) each week as we read and discussed scorpions we offered students prompts for discovering links between our book interpretations and their environment. Pervasive in the lives of most young adults in the United States, as with ours as teachers, are media models of violent masculinity; therefore, strategies involving consideration of the media portrayals of men were often employed. One such strategy asked students to document their television TV viewing, paying particular attention to the behavior of males. Another directed students to the daily newspaper to track the number of handgun-related crimes, as well as the gender of the perpetrator and victim. These strategies brought out animated and critical discussions. While the influence of media violence on children and adults remains in dispute, there is little doubt that the number of violent crimes in the U.S. is staggering as compared with virtually all other first-world countries, and these statistics look increasingly grim for adolescents. One need only peruse facts (Garbarino, 1999; Kelly, 1996) about American males' violent acts toward others as well as acts of self-destruction to appreciate the enormity of the problem.

The parents most likely to use television ratings information, an expected small proportion of the sample, tended to employ a highly inductive (communication-oriented) style of child rearing and a highly evaluative (discussion-based) method of television mediation. Abelman (1999) mentions that parents are mostly believed that television can have significant positive and/or negative effects on children, and were more concerned with cognitive- and affective-level effects.

## **THE PROCEDURES**

To conduct a qualitative research regarding to the phenomenon of using the Astro by the foreign married students in a university campus, certain steps should be taken.

## **ASSUMPTIONS AND RATIONAL FOR THIS STUDY**

First of all the nature of the research questions of this study requires a qualitative approach to conduct this study. The important of this study comes from the conflict between the studying aims and the consuming time for watching the Astro. Therefore, this phenomenon needs to be explored in details. This study tries to search in-depth in the advantages and

disadvantages of watching the Astor and the time that the students or their families spend. Searching in this phenomenon led the researcher to use qualitative approach.

### **THE TYPE OF DESIGN USED**

The statement of problem of the present study needs a qualitative approach to answer the research questions. This study had been set a few research questions in order to solve the problem of the study.

#### **Definitions of Terms**

For the purpose of this study, the following terms were defined.

*The Astro*: a multimedia device that includes several orbit channels, which two of them are Arabic channels namely Al-Jazeera and ART, and televising for 24 hour a day.

*Student*: a foreign married who is living in a university campus. He is pursuing his master or PhD degree, and he has scholarship from his government.

*Family*: a wife and children who are attended with the student.

### **DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES**

Since the phenomenon located is in a university campus, therefore the research assistant was interviewed five students who are using the Astro. The group of those students is representing ten out of eleven families who are belonging to same nationality. The researcher was asked orally if they willing to involved in this study, and then he got their permission to tap the interviews. They informed that they could quit at any time. The research assistant did his interview with the students individually and at their accommodations, and depth interview done using the recorder. The interviews were transcribed and stored in a computer files. The themes were encoded in order to analyze.

The following instructions were given to the students:

Describe a personal experience of using the Astro that considered advantage.

Describe a personal experience of using the Astro that considered disadvantage.

Describe your family experience of using the Astro that considered advantage.

Describe your family experience of using the Astro that considered disadvantage.

A description of using the Astro by each student and his family was recorded. The researcher was asked a question when it was necessary, and for the flow of the interview. The length of the interviews varied from 15 to 20 minutes.

### **TREATMENT OF DATA**

The raw data of this study were transcribed of each respondent. According to Colaizzi (1978) several steps should have used:

The raw data of each respondent were read several times in order to make a sense of them.

Significant statements were extracted to represent the phenomenon. Phrases and sentences that considered same or nearly same were extracted too. Clusters of themes were extracted from the data. The clusters of themes were referred back to the original data in order to a sure the validity of the themes. An exhaustive description of the advantages and disadvantages for all family members were resulted from the structures of the themes. Finally, the descriptions formulated were returning to the respondents to validate the original experience.

## ANALYSIS OF DATA

The research question of this study was as follows: What is the essential meaning of using the Astro by the foreign married students and their families in a university campus? Taped interviews of five respondents were transcribed. The significant statements became the raw data for the analysis of the present study. Different lists of extracted themes were separate for student, wife and kid because of the different directions and themes. The advantages and the disadvantages for the final analysis were depends on all the groups. After eliminated the duplicate statements, the remaining significant statements regarding to the advantages are presented in the tables 1, 2 and 3.

**Table 1: Student Significant Statement: Advantages**

Statement	
1	Best device
2	Fast
3	Capability to updating the information
4	Live watching and listening
5	Gives more than one option for the event
6	The timing difference
7	Keeps you in touch with the wide world
8	More facilitative
9	Televising for 24 hours a day
10	Variety of channels
11	Existence of teaching channels
12	Shows the latest technology
13	Addressing the usual audience
14	Very important
15	Enhance the English language
16	Necessary
17	Useful
18	Follow the news in Arabic or in English
19	Existence of some cultural programs
20	Existence of Arabic channels
21	Likes the Internet
22	Attract your attention
23	Includes scientific channels
24	Suitable
25	Gives you a big imagination
26	Watching sport news

Example: Statements 1-6 are from the following transcription: “it is the best device. It is better for you to use the Astro comparing with others usual sources because it is fast first, its capability to updating the information. .... in the Astro you can watch and listen directly... this is one. Secondly, the variety of the news sources, for instance, there is CMBC, CNN, Al-Jazeera, MBC on the ART and so on. This number of channels can gives you more than one option for event... then, certainly getting the news from the Astro is better comparing with other sources, and this is considered very important.”

**Table 2: Wife Significant Statement: Advantages**

Statement	
1	Available of Arabic channels
2	Gives the opportunity to follow several programs
3	Sense of homeland programs
4	Contact with homeland
5	Mother tongue spoken inside the house
6	Feeling of some kind of safety
7	Following several cultural programs in Arabic Language
8	Following several cultural programs in different languages
11	Keeps in touch with new scientific knowledge
12	Enhance the English language
13	Enjoying
14	Filled the emptiness
15	Watching an Arabic computation
16	Many options
17	The Arabic channels
18	Suitable

<b>9</b> Watching a scientific programs	<b>19</b> In touch with the wild world
<b>10</b> Watching movies	<b>20</b> Expand the knowledge

Example: Statements 1-6 are from the following transcription: “available of some Arabic channels which involved recently in the Astro like Al-Jazeera and ART gave her the opportunity to follow several beneficial programs which normally she followed them ...in the homeland.... she is in contact with the homeland. Secondly, existence of some who specks your language inside your house, and you are in the alienation, I think it is a very important agent that could lead you to feel some kind of safety, even if this safety is just a morally ”

**Table 3: Kid Significant Statement: Advantages**

<b>Statement</b>	
<b>1</b> Benefit a lot	<b>9</b> Discharge the child energy
<b>2</b> Available of certain channels	<b>10</b> Hearing a music
<b>3</b> Televising cartoon in English	<b>11</b> Suitable
<b>4</b> Device for learning foreign language	<b>12</b> Includes useful channels
<b>5</b> Teach them how to arrange their time	<b>13</b> Developing the ability in trail
<b>6</b> Appreciate the time concept	<b>14</b> Teach them how to be fluent
<b>7</b> Important for developing the child cognitive ability	<b>15</b> Developing of sharing concept
<b>8</b> Interesting in watching	

Example: Statements 1-6 are from the following transcription: “our children were benefit a lot from the Astro. This happened as a result of availability of some of the channels which televising cartoon in English ...as a device for learning foreign language. Secondly, the child generally benefit from the Astro to arrange her time. She becomes appreciate the time concept.”

For the disadvantages, the same procedures were carried out. The significant statements are listed in the tables 4, 5, and.6.

**Table 4: Student Significant Statement: Disadvantages**

<b>Statement</b>	
<b>1</b> Time consuming	<b>9</b> Cannot control the self
<b>2</b> More liberality programs	<b>10</b> Televising dislike things
<b>3</b> More openly programs	<b>11</b> High costs
<b>4</b> Televising what could harm the audience	<b>12</b> Could lead to put the study a way
<b>5</b> Sometimes it’s attack a certain minority	<b>13</b> Some channels are useful
<b>6</b> Sometimes it’s attack a certain majority	<b>14</b> It has a negatives
<b>7</b> Televising very sensitive programs	<b>15</b> Some channels are in conflict with the culture and reality
<b>8</b> Loss a sense of time	<b>16</b> Negative for Muslim

Example: Statements 4-6 are from the following transcription: “It could harm non Muslim also. It could harm the citizen as a general. You could see in the movie meaning things to attack some times a certain minority or certain majority. One of the subjects that could discuss in your house considered... very sensitive”

Table.5: Wife Significant Statement: Disadvantages

Statement			
1	Time consuming	5	Could bring some negative things
2	Sometimes it could lead to ignoring the home duties	6	Could bring the problem
3	Could used in negative ways	7	Could be harm device
4	Limited the thinking		

Example: Statements 4-7 are from the following transcription: “limited her thinking in disadvantages things. It could bring some negative things for the family from the Astro. She is watched for example Liberality woman or who spend her money here and there, and the wife could try to do same things in her house. I think it is a dangerous thing for the family. Meaning that the problems could shift from the Astro, rather than it is role as useful device. The Astro could be harm device for the family”

Table 6: Kid Significant Statement: Disadvantages

Statement			
1	Includes exhibited programs	4	Could lead them to make problems
2	In conflict with the beliefs and behavior	5	Could lead to deviant behavior
3	Could watch an unsuitable programs		

Example: Statements 3-5 are from the following transcription: “If the kid for example watch other things that considered unsuitable for him, the...he will starts also to make problems within the family. The kid for example rather than ... to behave in... he deviates from early stage of life. Meanings from the significant statements were formulated for both the advantages and the disadvantages. These were come after several reading for the significant statements in order to get the meaning of the advantages and the disadvantages for all the family members. These formulated meanings are presented in the tables 7 and 8.

Table 7: Formulated Meanings of Significant Statements: Advantages

Statement	
<b>Student</b>	
1	It considered the best device comparing to another multimedia sources
2	It could gives more than one option for any event
3	Existence of Arabic channels considered encouraged
4	It helps to enhance the English language
5	It gives a big imagination on how to see the nature and how is the cooperation between the creatures
<b>Wife</b>	
1	It considered as a device for learning the English language
2	Available of Arabic channels
3	It helps to taking up the killer emptiness
4	It could lead to feel as in the homeland
5	It could lead to watch outside the house throughout the Astro, and expanded the knowledge

**Kid**

- 1 Children could benefit from televising cartoon in Arabic language as well as in English language
- 2 It helps children to appreciate the time concept
- 3 It could develop their ability in trail and teach them how to be fluent
- 4 It is important for the developing of the child cognitive ability
- 5 It considered as a device for discharging the child energy

Table 8: Formulated Meanings of Significant Statements: Disadvantages

	Statement
<b>Student</b>	
1	It is time consuming. You are supposing to read the last news...but you find yourself losing four to five hours.
2	Sometimes it televises what it consider harm for the audience. It could harm the citizen generally.
3	Sometimes the Astro televise what considered very sensitive and unethically programs
4	Sometimes the Astro televise what could attack a certain minority or a certain majority
<b>Wife</b>	
1	Consuming the time that could lead to ignore the home duties
2	It could be harm device in terms of televising unethical programs
3	Sometimes it brings certain problems to the family in terms of trying to conduct what she watch
4	Some programs lead to limited thinking in un useful things
<b>Kid</b>	
1	It consider harm when the kid watch an adults programs.
2	The Astro televise programs or movies to some context considered in conflict with our beliefs and behavior.
3	The kid tries to repeat what they watched in the Astro that could lead to serious problems.
4	It could make the kid to start a deviation from early stage in life.

The formulated meaning of the advantages and the disadvantages was rearranged into clusters of themes. These clusters of themes emerged from the description of the respondent. These clusters were referred back to the original descriptions in order to validate them. Each description was examined to see if there is any similarity between the original description and the clusters. The clusters of themes are presented in the table 9.

Table 9: Clusters of Common Themes

	Advantages
<b>1.</b>	Multimedia device <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. It is suitable for all family members in terms of the appropriate programs</li> <li>b. The family members could benefit from the Astro separately or all together</li> </ul>
<b>2.</b>	Variety of programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The student could get benefits from certain programs that could helps him in his study</li> <li>b. The family members could fill their emptiness time and get some knowledge</li> </ul>
<b>3.</b>	Consequences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The Astro advantages for the users could results in the improvement of the English language, be in touch with the world, fill the emptiness time, developing the child cognitive abilities, and discharge the child energy</li> </ul>
	Disadvantages
<b>1.</b>	Multimedia device <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. It has some negatives for all the family members in terms of time consuming and some un useful channels</li> <li>b. The family members could harm from the Astro in terms of televising very sensitive programs; some of these programs are in conflict with the beliefs and reality</li> </ul>

2. Variety of programs
  - a. The student could harm in terms of cannot control himself, and put his study away
  - b. The family members could harm by the Astro in terms of bring the problem home
3. Consequences
  - a. The Astro disadvantages for the users could results in the time consuming, ignoring home duties, limited her thinking, and could lead to kid's deviation

An exhaustive description of the phenomenon of using the Astro by the students and their families was produced from analysis of the significant statements. The description of the advantages statements is representing the core materials of the advantages exhaustive description. The exhaustive description of the advantages is presented in table 3.10.

Table 10: Exhaustive Description of Advantages of Using the Astro

The advantages of using the Astro by the student and his family from the perspective of the student are perceived as more than multimedia device. It makes some feeling of safety for the family. It helps the student to be in touch with the wide world. The most important thing for both the student and his family was the enhancement of the English language. Therefore, improve the English language; feeling of being in the homeland, filling the emptiness and the continuous of following the favorite programs are the direct results of using the Astro.

The description of the disadvantages statements was representing the core materials of the disadvantages exhaustive description. The exhaustive description of the disadvantages is presented in table 11.

Table 11: Exhaustive Description of Disadvantages of Using the Astro

Existence of the Astro has some disadvantages for the student and his family. These disadvantages were from the student perspective. Watching the Astro for a long time considered harmful for all the family members. It could make some sense of damage for the audience. Some programs are televising while ignoring the feelings of those who are watching these programs. It could televise programs that considered in conflict with the family beliefs and behaviors, the wife could ignore the house duties, high coasts, bring some problems to the family, and televising what could lead to deviate the kids are the direct results of using the Astro.

## DISCUSSION

Viewing of the phenomenological analysis of the structure of the advantages of using the Astro by a certain foreign married students and their families is stated in the table 3.10. From the perspective of the students themselves, they found that the Astro is more than a multimedia device. It is important for them in the same time for their families in terms of enhancing the ability in the English language. They mention that the Astro could used to fill their families emptiness. They found that the Astro is considered as an active tool for increasing the information. This is consistent with Adams (1999) who indicates that using the TV considered beneficial for getting information. In the other hand, the subjects of this study considered that their children are benefit a lot from the Astro in terms of improving their language and discharging their energy. They thought that the most important thing for them is filling their wives' emptiness. Beside, arrange the students' time could lead them to get some advantages either in their studying field or in general information. These points of views are consistent with Ellis (2000) who argues that scheduling and arranging the

audiences time consider the key mechanism for reproduce themselves a fresh, and keeping them in the safe side.

For the disadvantages, using the Astro for the students themselves and for their families is stated in the table 3.11. They are seeing the Astro is not totally useful. The most usefulness point of using the Astro is wasting the time. The considered the Astro as a time consuming, and could lead to make them a way from their studies. Watching the channels could make their wives ignoring some of their home duties. On the other hand, they mention to the strategies of televising some programs that considered in conflict with their beliefs and behaviors. This point of view could not applicable for all of them. The most important issue is some programs make their children some problem within the family, and could lead them to show deviated behavior. This is consistent with Brozo, Walter, and Placker (2002) who found that there is a relationship between the media's coverage of violent crime and people's perceptions.

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