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Many beliefs that people hold are shaped and based on other people they are surrounded by and how society views these specific issues. Different parts of socialization in people's lives determine the core values that are important in their lives and how they choose to protect these core values. One core value that is shaped by larger social forces in my life is Communication. Communication is a core value for all human beings and is a very important aspect of society and how everyone is able to live together. Communication is always changing with the language that is used and the different ways that people are able to reach each other. Throughout time, communication has evolved and become easier for people to connect but also has created negative side effects as well. The social forces that have helped shape this core value for me are the media and my peers. My communication has been changed and shaped greatly by both the media that I consume on a daily basis along with the people that I spend the most time with.

As of recently, the media has expanded in multiple ways. Not only has the amount of media platforms expanded, but the role that the media plays in an average person’s daily life has grown a lot. The first reason that technology has affected communication in society is that it has expanded the amount of people that are able to be reached by a single person. People now have constant access to the media and technology. This also means people are always able to communicate which makes it always changing and growing. In an article written by Mcquail, he evaluates the growth of the media in connection with the study of Sociology along with communication in society. Through his research he found that “the range of social issues associated with the study of mass communication has widened, with special attention given to questions of the social consequences of new information technology” (Mcqual, 93). By using a sociological standpoint, he had found that the growth of technology has had a large effect on mass communication in society. An example of this is, messages are now able to be spread to a larger audience. This has created that what is said now has a larger effect on society through technology. People are now able to communicate small messages to a large audience which has created more influence on society. This has affected the communication of an average person because now what is being said has a larger effect on everybody, not just people that you know personally.

The media has also had some negative effects on how people in society are able to communicate. It has been found that because communication has been used so much through technology, it has created a negative effect on how people, specifically the younger generation, are able to communicate in person and not through a phone. In an article written by George and Odgers, it has been found that technology and the media, specifically cell phones and social media, have had a negative effect on how young people are able to communicate in real life and not through a phone. In this article they write: "Many adults are asking how this constant connectivity is influencing adolescents' development. In this article, we examine seven commonly voiced fears about the influence of mobile technologies on adolescents' safety (e.g., cyberbullying and online solicitation), social development (e.g., peer relationships, parent-child relationships, and identity development), cognitive performance, and sleep” (George, 832). Through the findings in this article, it has been proven that the media has had a large effect on communication. Face to face communication is a very important aspect of a working society. In order for people to be able to work together in a society in a productive way, they must be able to communicate effectively. The growth in communication through the media has helped in many positive ways but has also negatively affected the young adults who are still developing their communication skills.

Another way that communication has been changed by the media is that people are able to control other people’s perspective of them. This has affected people of society who are young adults like me because there was a shift in the way people communicate at a vital age in our communication development. In an article by Agatha Bein, she writes: “The concept of social presence, which refers to the extent to which someone is perceived by others as a real person and to which someone recognizes that others perceive them as real, is crucial” (Bein, 160). This is a good example of how the media has affected the way people in society communicate. Now that the media has evolved to ways that are able to connect people with different types of communication, it has also helped the rise of being able to communicate false information. The media now gives people the ability to communicate a false image of themselves that they would not be able to though communicating in person face to face.

Along with the media, communication is also affected by the people you are surrounded by and how they communicate with each other face to face. Communication skills are learned from a very young age and are largely based on the people you grow up with and how they communicate. The main situations where communication learned by my peers has been most relevant is in conflicts and learning how to solve them. In an article written by Pamela Lane, she explains studies that have been done on having conflict mediation programs in school has improved on their communication skills. In this article she explains: “All students - both disputants or mediators - find within the process a place for talking about problems, learning more about the views of others and practicing better communication in a nonviolent, nonjudgmental atmosphere” (Lane, 17). In the studies explained in this article, having children communicate their problems with each other verbally helped them become able to solve their own problems and improve their communication skills for their future. Going to school is where many people, including myself, develop a majority of their communication skills. How children are spoken to by their teachers and classmates affect how they are able to communicate going forward after school age.

Communication has also evolved to being a mixture of in person and through technology which has had both positive and negative effects on people’s communication. As stated before, people’s surroundings in real life and interactions with other people contributes the most in how people learn to communicate with each other face to face. In an article written by Agatha Beins, she argues the effect and importance of in person communication among people. She emphasizes the importance in school but the argument carries over to real life as well. She explains in the article: "I argue that informal communication enables students to be thinking and feeling beings and thus is part of building a strong learning community” (Bein, 157). While I was attending school, a large part of my day was talking with the other students. In school, students experience both formal and informal communication. They learn how to formally communicate through having to speak with teachers and other students for group projects. They learn informal communication through talking with their friends during lunch and free time. This is the start of the socialization process for most people and will follow them communicating as adults and functioning in society.

Both social forces, my peers and the media, have affected my communication skills and the quality of how I communicate with people. The article by Agatha Beins points out the difference in both types of communication and how neither can be replicated by the other. She argues: “Moreover, what is possible (and what works) when people meet face to face cannot just be copied and pasted into a virtual environment, where the Internet, laptops and mobile devices, and a course management system mediate most or all interactions” (Beins, 158). This statement argues that face to face in person communication is more free while media communication is more regulated and thought through. I would argue, through experience, that face to face communication teaches more valuable communication skills and requires more skills and thought.

One final example of my communication being affected by the people around me is the importance of nonverbal communication. Nonverbal communication often communicates a larger message than what is being spoken out loud. This type of communication is one that cannot be replicated through the media, but is very important to the messages being communicated. Bein writes in her article while she was observing children in a classroom that: “During the small-group component of the introductions activity in the classroom, students’ voices fill the air with sound, and I see relationships starting to form through nonverbal cues like smiles and bodily postures that show people becoming more engaged with the conversation” (Bein, 160-161). This goes beyond just the classroom and works the same way with people in society. People displaying nonverbal cues communicate with others the mood that they are in and how open they are to communicating with others. I have noticed this in my own life where I feel more comfortable approaching and speaking to people who have a smile on their face and a more open body stance and posture.

All in all, communication is a large aspect of the socialization of society. As a society, we communicate constantly throughout the day without even being aware or putting in effort to do so. There are many social forces that come into play and affect communication but the two main ones that I have experienced in my life are the media and my peers. Having so many ways of communication has changed the way that we interact with each other and how we perceive each other as a society. While there have been both positive and negative effects, there is no question that the media and in person communication is vital to a working society.

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