

THE INFLUENCE OF VIOLENCE TELEVISION PROGRAMS ON THE AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR OF CHILDREN IN PRIVATE NURSERY AND PRIMRY SCHOOLS JN OYO WEST LOCAL GOVERNMENT, OYO STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract: The major focus of this study is to investigate the influence of violence television programs on the aggressive behaviour of children in Private Nursery and Primary schools in Oyo West Local Government area of Oyo State. The study assessed what kinds of programs that contains violence and how it affects the respondent and influence their lifestyle and behaviour particularly Nursery and Primary School children. The respond that formed the sample size were 100 in numbers randomly selected from five selected Private Nursery and Primary Schools understudy. The questionnaire was designed to measure the rate of influence of television violence as well as socio-emotional and academic adjustment of student understudy. This was done in order to determine the nature and the extent of the effect of TV violence on children in Private Nursery and Primary schools. In the findings of this study, it was found that children initiate violence they observed on TV and the effect of TV violence on them is profound. The following recommendations were made among others in the study as: that' school administrators, government, parents, educational psychologists, teachers and even religious organization should organize symposiums, seminars and conferences for the students regularly to create awareness on the influence of violent films on our children; teachers should try to reduce the viewing time of the students by mapping out and giving them assignments regularly; the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) should set up guidelines that will limit the amount of television violence aired to the audience, which the youths constitute a great number; and programmes and producers of video films should produce special interest TV/Programmes for the children to cater for their special needs and interests, as it will help them to to develop their talents.

Keywords: Violence television programs, Aggressive behavior, Social Adjustment, Emotional Adjustment, and Academic Adjustment.

1. INTRODUCTION

The intense influence of television on the lives of people since its invention has over the years become not only un-debatable, but equally stunning. Onwuegbu, (2001) sees television as an electronic cum audio-visual device through which viewers watch recorded and live programmes on air. The influence of television on the lives of people stems not only from the three

roles it plays - as a medium of information, education and entertainment. Also many groups have taken solace in television and its programmes as means of relaxation, recreation, withdrawal, goal setting and socialization (Ezeukwu, 2013). Aggressive behavior is reactionary and impulsive behavior that often results in breaking household rules or the law; aggressive behavior is violent and unpredictable.

Osuji (2009) defined violence as an act accompanied by attack or force inflicting injury or pains on another person. Enyi (2003) described violence as the act of showing in motion pictures and movies the acts accompanied with attacks and injuries.

Violence on the streets as well as the tendency of youths (including students) to act violently, after viewing violence has become an increasingly disturbing issue among many concerned groups. The combination of sound and vision has made television exert tremendous influence in shaping the lives of children in Nursery and Primary schools. It is informing, educating, entertaining and persuasive. As a result of this, it is a powerful force in determining the behavioral patterns of children. Despite the importance of television, its harmful effects cannot be overemphasized as it shapes the children's socio-economic and academic aspects of life. Children watch violent movies/films on television screen without considering if its advantages outweigh the harmful effects on their lives and the society at large (Bushman & Cantor, 2003).

In this case, television is easily manipulated by movie makers to show movies that dominate the realm of children's reasoning thus consciously or unconsciously impacting on their behavioral patterns. With its adaptability to modern technology, television is a veritable tool for integration by providing the viewers' access to a variety of information which helps them to know and understand each other but when wrongly manipulated it influences the behavioral patterns of the children. The issue of learners' adjustment at school has long been a concern of educationalists and psychologists. From the psychological point of view, adjustment is important because it plays a role in the optimal development of children. The educationists view adjustment of learners at school as determining the children's school performance as well as their likelihood of continuing at school rather than dropping out.

Reynolds, Weissberg and Kaspro (1992) pointed out that early school adjustment determines later school adjustment and social competence in children. This implies that adjustment has a significant influence on children's attitudes towards school and school progress. This further implies that the behavioral patterns adjustment of children could lead to poor performances in school work, and other class activities. This is a situation where the adjustment is a negative one. Nowadays, children copy role models from television screens in the form of clothing, hairstyle, language and attitudes. The result is that greater number of children in Private Nursery and Primary school in Oyo West Local Government area of Oyo State tend to show aggressive behaviour in the form of social vices such as angry tantrums; hitting, kicking, or biting; hot-headed outbursts that destroy property; cool-headed bullying; verbal attacks; attempts to control others through threats or violence. The increase of violent movies, in the market tends to increase the rate of violence being carried out by children in Nursery and Primary schools. Considering the ever increasing cases of stealing and fighting by children leads to the fact that heavy exposure to televised violence influences the viewer's social behaviour. In recent times, researchers have repeatedly been pointing to the fact that the increase in violence especially among students in schools is attributable to viewing televised violence.

Anaekwe, (2002) argues that poor academic performance experienced among children can be attributable to over indulgence by children who spend long hours watching violence programmes on television, which at the end tilt them negatively in terms of emotional disposition. Television is emotionally and psychologically harmful to children and youths. Television seems to be most significant in leisure activity. The National Television violence study (NTSV) conducted from 1994 to 1997, reported that watching so much violence on television causes children and young adults to think that the world is a mean and dangerous place (American Psychological Association, 2006). According to the dictionary of psychology 'emotion' is referred to as any short term evaluation, affective, intentional, psychological state including happiness, sadness, disgust and other inner feelings. While adjustment' is referred to as adaptation (in psychology) especially behavioural adaptation to a particular environment or circumstances. Social influence – Refers to the process whereby a person's attitude, opinions, belief or behaviour are altered or controlled by some form of social communication. It includes conformity, compliance, obedience persuasion and the influence of social norms. These attributes make the children adjust to whatever that comes out from watching the violence television programs, and their social behaviour changes because they model the actors on the scene. Wilson, (2008) offers that children engage in emotional sharing with well liked characters that in turn may account for the valuing or enjoyment of television violence, or at the least, toleration.

According to Potter (2008) people identify with characters who have similarities to them but who also have qualities that they would like to possess. From a social learning-cognitive theoretical perspective, children may focus on television characters who are like 'them' to guide their behavior or help them form scripts of acceptable behaviours and possible outcomes (Signorielli, 2006). Emotions can facilitate or impede children's academic engagement, work ethic, commitment, and ultimate school success. Because relationships and emotional processes affect how and what we learn, schools and families must effectively address these aspects of the educational process for the benefit of all students (Elias et al., 1997). This emotional empathy toward on-screen characters has been described by some researchers as the result of the sanitized and glamorized pattern that television violence follows (Kunkel & Zwarun, 2006; Potter, 2008).

Peters and Blumberg (2002) took a critical look at research examining the effects of cartoon violence on children's moral understanding and behavior, asking if its effects truly are as detrimental as they have been perceived. They explain that given the fantasy-based content and unrealistic character actions, cartoons create a 'gray world' as far as violence is concerned. Cartoon violence, they suggest, may provide young viewers with a faulty impression of the impact of violence and aggression in real-life situations. That is, children as an audience are desensitized, experiencing a false sense of reality in which consequences of violence are limited, levels of harm are unrealistically low, and kids aggress against kids their own age (Wilson, Colvin, & Smith, 2002). Slaby, Roedell, Arezzo and Hendrix (1995) explain that when violence is portrayed as commonplace, acceptable, and justifiable, the viewing of violence can undermine the viewer's feelings of concern, empathy, or sympathy toward victims of real-life violence.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (2009) explains that children younger than eight cannot uniformly discriminate between real life and the fantasy or entertainment reality offered by TV. As a result, Kids quickly learn that violence is an acceptable solution to resolving even complex problems, particularly if the aggressor is the hero. Televised-violence triggers socio-emotional adjustments in individuals. Prolonged exposure to television violence tends to shape a person's perception or real life situation as well as his/her social life. He may start avoiding others in form of withdrawal or may become maladjusted. When a person is very angry, or very much afraid as a result of exposure to televised violence, we usually recognize his/her emotion by the way he/she behaves. The next thing is to determine which patterns of behaviour distinguish one emotion from the other or how accurate are we in telling one emotion from another. Ezeukwu (2013) posited that Nursery and Primary school children who are heavy viewers of televised violence programs will suffer, leading them to poor academic performance. They have divided attention and their ideas are distorted; often taken out of context facts regarding levels of viewing televised violence by students who are intense moderate and low viewers are misleading and can be detrimental to educational efforts.

However, some researchers do not believe that there is a conclusive body of evidence to justify this view. This study therefore, aims at x-raying the influence of violence television programs on the aggressive behaviour of children in Private Nursery and Primary schools in Oyo West Local Government, Oyo State.

2. METHODOLOGY

This study was carried out with the use of descriptive research of survey type. Three research questions and hypotheses were generated to guide the conduct of this study and tested at 0.05 alpha level of significance. The population of this study consists of all the children of the sampled five Private Nursery and Primary schools in Oyo West Local Government, Oyo, Oyo State. A sample of 100 children (Pupils) were randomly selected from the total population, and Simple random sampling technique was used to select 100 children from each of the five Nursery and Primary Schools under study, which comprises of 42 males and 58 females. The choice of children as the population is due to the fact that they are the ones that are easily influenced by heavy exposure to violence television programs. Research's self designed questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection which was validated by experts in the field of study and tested for reliability. The reliability of the instrument was carried out using a trial-test with thirty respondents (15 boys and 15 girls) outside the area of study. The data collected with the aid of the questionnaire was collated and analyzed using Cronbach Alpha. A correlation coefficient of 79 (r) was obtained. This shows that the instrument is reliable for the study. The instrument was administered to the respondents in their various schools by the researcher and some trained research assistance to carry out this assignment. Research hypotheses were analyzed using Paired-Samples t-test.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Hypothesis 1: Televised-violence does not significantly influence social adjustment of students **Table 1:** Pair-sample t-test of the influence of televised violence on the social adjustments of students.

Variable	N	X	SD	DF	t	Sig.	Dec.
Violence television programs		26.88	3.90	99	5.37	0.00	S
	100						
Social Adjustment		25.99	4.20				

*S = Significant

The analysis presented in Table 1 also reveals that the computed t-value was 5.37 with associated probability of 0.00. The value was tested for significance by comparing the probability value of 0.00 with 0.05 level of significance. Since the probability of 0.00 was less than 0.05 set by the researcher, hypothesis 1 was rejected. It means that violence television programs significantly influence social adjustment of student.

Hypothesis 2: The influence of violence television programs on the emotional adjustment of students.

Table 2: Pair-sample t-test of the influence of violence television programs on the emotional adjustments of students.

Variable	N	X	SD	DF	t	Sig.	Dec.
Violence television programs		26.88	3.90	99	3.14	0.02	S
	100						
Emotional Adjustment		26.44	3.72				

*S = Significant

The analysis presented in Table 2 also shows that the computed t-value was 3.14 with associated probability of 0.02. The value was tested for significance by comparing the probability value of 0.02 with 0.05 level of significance. Since the probability of 0.02 was less than 0.05 set by the researcher, hypothesis 2 was rejected. It means that Violence television programs significantly influence emotional adjustment of students.

Hypothesis 3: The influence of violence television programs on the academic adjustment students is not significant.

Table 3: Pair-sample t-test of the influence of violence television programs on the academic adjustments of students.

Variable	N	X	SD	DF	t	Sig.	Dec.
Violence television programs		26.88	3.90	99	3.14	0.02	NS
	100						
Academic adjustment		26.99	3.45				

*NS = Not Significant

The analysis presented in Table 3 also reveals that the computed t-value was 3.14 with associated probability of 0.02. The value was tested for significance by comparing the probability value of 0.02 with 0.05 level of significance. Since the probability of 0.02 was less than 0.05 set by the researcher, hypothesis 3 was rejected. It means that the influence of violence television programs on the academic adjustment of students is significant.

4. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The analysis on hypothesis one revealed that violence television programs does not significantly influence social adjustment of students. The indication is that children develop their viewing pattern out of an internal locus stand to succeed emotionally and academically. This study was corroborated by the work of Reynolds, Weissberg and Kaspro (1992) who pointed out that early school adjustment determines later school adjustment and social competence in children.

Hypothesis two analyses showed that violence television programs does not significantly influence emotional adjustment of students. This indicates that the respondents believe that they will succeed in their school work because they really desired to succeed and they work towards it rather than waiting to be influenced by any factor. This was supported by Slaby, Roedell, Arezzo and Hendrix (1995) who explained that when violence is portrayed as commonplace, acceptable, and justifiable, the viewing of violence can undermine the viewer's feelings of concern, empathy, or sympathy toward victims of real-life violence.

Finally, the Analysis on hypothesis three showed that the influence of violence television programs on academic adjustment of students is not significant. This means that students' academic adjustment cannot be affected through watching violence television programs. This is in line with the submission of Anaekwe, (2002) who argues that poor academic performance experienced among children can be attributable to over indulgence by children who spend long hours watching violence programmes on television. Ezeukwu (2013) posited that Nursery and Primary school children who are heavy viewers of televised violence programs will their by, leading them to poor academic performance.

5. CONCLUSION

The results of the study led to the following conclusions;

1. Children's attitudes, beliefs and behaviour can be influenced by what they view on television especially violence, and emotions and impulses are aroused in the child who is a viewer. This simply means that TV as part and parcel of the total environment that we as society and adults provide for children is a powerful medium. There is no longer doubt that it is capable of influencing young viewers physically, psychologically, emotionally, academically and socially.
2. In this study, it is noted that youths react positively to violent movies/films/programmes thereby, emulating the actors. Going by the findings of this study, televised violence on youths would not be heavy if parents, administrators, lecturers, educational psychologist take up the responsibility of monitoring the viewing habits of the youths.
3. It was also discovered that students who are heavy viewers spend their study time on television viewing and thus perform badly academically. Television violence therefore has negative influence on the youths who are heavily exposed

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made which is in line with Ezeukwu (2013):

1. That school administrators, government, parents, educational psychologists, teachers and even religious organization should organize symposiums, seminars and conferences for the students regularly to create awareness on the influence of violent films on the students.
2. Teachers should try to reduce the viewing time of the students by mapping out and giving them assignments regularly.
3. The National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) should set up guidelines that will limit the amount of television violence aired to the audience, which the youths constitute a great number.

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