

Impact of Violent Television Serials on Anxiety Level in School Going Children

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ABSTRACT

In the present world, there are more than plenty reasons for anxiety. The 21st century witnesses anxiety level of the general masses akin to those of asylum patients of the last few centuries. The present study was conducted to assess anxiety level in school children who watch violent serials and to assess the anxiety level in school children who do not watch violent serials. Sample of 40 children was taken, who took the test- in those 20 children who watch violent serials and 20 who do not. The sample was collected irrespective of their gender. Results indicated that those children, who frequently watched violent television shows, were more anxious regarding academic related tasks as compared to those who did not watch such shows.

Keywords: *Anxiety, Violence, T.V. Serials, School Going Children*

In the present world, there are more than plenty reasons for anxiety. The 21st century witnesses anxiety level of the general masses akin to those of asylum patients of the last few centuries. To add on to the list of worries, the media mode used for entertainment ensures viewership at any cost- be it violence depiction or crime enactment. This research used the Academic Anxiety Scale for Children (Hindi version) by Doctors Singh and Gupta (1986) to assess the anxiety level in school students from 5th to 8th grades; 40 students were selected out of which 20 were the viewers of violent serials and 20 students who did not. The hypothesis is confirmed. Emotional and societal pressure is increasing day by day particularly at school stage. Conflict, anxiety and frustrations are occurring in all the domains of life. Apart of the usual achievement related crisis a child faces, the oncoming of media advancement also poses another problem. While in the last few decades, students of a wide range laid back with cartoons as entertainment or video games; today, however, the parents find themselves in a crisis never faced before.

Previously, parents had to never worry about what the child chooses to watch. The child naturally chooses animated creatures of vivid colours. Today, the parent has to ensure that the

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child watches appropriate channels for his age as the hoard of high TRP's has led to a blind line of serials which although bring their due audience, but fail to notice their impact on today's youth. *Jacklyn et al. (2012)* explored whether or not violence in the media causes signs of anxiety in youngsters ages 6-12. By reviewing case studies, they found that there was some proof to support this premise as well as proof that did not.

Scary TV has a relatively small influence on children's internalizing emotions overall, and this link was not significantly moderated by whether the televised material was truthful (e.g., news) or fictitious or contained violence. *Pearce et al. (2015)*. Diffusive relations between early childhood, violent television exposure and damaging socio-emotional and academic consequences, empirically support the view that access to early childhood violent TV represents a threat to populace health and should be discouraged by adult caregivers. *Fitzpatrick et al. (2012)*.

For children and preteens, total mass media consumption envisage ill being while for preteens specific technology uses, including video gaming and electric communication, predict ill-being. For youths, nearly every type of technical activity predicted poor health. *Rosen et al. (2014)*. Divergent differences between Canadian and U.S. students, with Canadian pupils reporting significantly higher level of anxiety, particularly of violent crime. The impact of media on fear was varying between the two groups, but media tended to exert a wider range of influence on the American students' fear of violence. *Kohm et al. (2011)*

Results revealed that juxtaposition of the story had a significant impact on older children's answers but not those of younger children. In particular, older children were more probable to be frightened by and identify themselves personally susceptible to a story about local as contrasting to a nonlocal violent. *Smithe et al.(2011)*. Bi-variate examination of high violence-exposed children showed approximately 39% of both girls and boys with clinically high scores in at least one trauma symptom group. The results support the need to classify and to provide amenities for children exposed to violence. *Singer, et al. (2014)*.

Cheung, et al. (2016) the amount of TV viewing on a weekday, applied relatively strong cultivation effects on the teen-age viewer's mean world value, in relations of materialism and trivialization of ethical value. The cultivation effect is attributable to the abundance of violence and consumerism on profitable television in Hong Kong. Hence it can be safely said that there indeed is an association between anxiety and the content a child is subjected to through the media, especially violent serials.

Objectives

1. To assess anxiety level in school children who watch violent serials.
2. To assess the anxiety level in school children who do not watch violent serials.

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Hypothesis

It was hypothesized that the anxiety level will be higher among those students who regularly watch violent television.

METHODOLOGY

Design

It is a field experiment research in which control is used to the maximum to maintain neutrality of the environment. The contents of violent television serials (crime serials namely “*Crime Patrol*” and “*Savdhan India*”) were taken as Independent variable whereas anxiety level was the Dependent variable. Amounting to four or more hours per day and the contents of specific serials were taken as control. Children from standards 5th to 8th (9-13 years) belonging to middle class families were selected.

Sample

The researcher approached 60 families and explained the purpose of the study; 25 families gave their consent to conduct the test on their wards. There were 40 subjects who took the test- in those 20 children who watch violent serials and 20 who do not. The sample was collected irrespective of their gender. Also, in each section; 5 students were taken from the Madhuban Public School (Jodhpur) whilst the other 5 were randomly collected.

Tool

The researcher employed the Academic Anxiety Scale for Children (AASC) (Hindi Version). The scale is devised by *Singh and Gupta (Patna)*. There are 20 questions in the test; each has one mark for yes response and zero for no. For question no. 4, 6, 16 and 18; the scoring scheme is opposite, i.e., zero for yes response and one for no response. The maximum marks is 20. Percentile norms are given for the set of score; these percentiles then indicate if the child is very anxious, average or very less anxious. The test-retest reliability was 0.60 and the split-half reliability was 0.65.

RESULT

The researcher calculated scores of all the 40 subjects and dividend them into two categories- those students who watch violent serials& those who don't. Then, mean values for each column, followed by the standard deviation were calculated; After calculating these values, t test was applied.

The values obtained are tabulated below:

Table depicting Mean and S.D. values

Group	Mean	S.D.	't'	Significance Level
Students who watch	14.35	1.49	9.29	$p<.01$
Students who don't	9.05	2.06		

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The values of t test were calculated for significance of difference between the two means. With respect to the values obtained, it can be inferred that the numbers are of significance. Questions pertaining to situations of faculty, class and principal interactions; performance in exams, class presentations, etc. represents higher score for the subjects who watch the violent serials. In other words, those who frequently watched violent television shows were more anxious regarding academic related tasks as compared to those who did not watch such shows.

DISCUSSION

This research is in line with *Fitzpatrick, et al. (2012)* who stated Diffusive relationships between early infantile, violent television experience and damaging socio-emotional and academic consequences, empirically support the opinion that access to early childhood violent TV represents a threat to populace health and should be discouraged by adult caregivers. The previous studies regarding Scary television by *Pearce, et al. (2015)* stated it has a comparatively small influence on children's internalizing emotions and for children and preteens, total television consumption envisage ill being while for preteens precise technology uses, including video gaming and electric communication, predict ill-being by *Rosen, et al. (2014)*; stand with present research findings. Also, bi-variate examination of high violence-exposed children showed approximately 39% of both girls and boys with clinically high scores in at least one trauma symptom group. The results support the need to classify and to provide amenities for children exposed to violence by *Singer et al. (2014)*; support our premise. Furthermore, mature children were more likely to be scared by and perceive themselves personally susceptible to a story about local as opposed to a nonlocal violent, according to *Smithe et al. (2011)* which stand true to the researcher's hypothesis.

CONCLUSION

The research was a typical analysis of the effects of violent tele on young minds- that choice of such programs increases anxiety level in children as opposed to frequenting cartoons or anything else. Using t test, the comparison of these groups was significant. This is evidence of our initial assumptions that while such shows bring awareness to the masses, bring distress to children. Though this study was conducted on a very small sample if the number is increased, it will further strengthen the findings.

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Conflict of Interests

The author declared no conflict of interests.

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