

STUDY OF OVERT AGGRESSION & MORAL JUDGEMENT IN RELATION TO AGE AMONG CARTOON & NON- CARTOON WATCHER STUDENTS.

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Abstract

Have you ever met any child who do not like cartoons? Most favorite past-time for children of any age is no doubt Cartoon channels. This study aims to explore the impact of violence presented in cartoons on children behaviour. It is seen that children not only imitate their favourite cartoon characters but even force their parents to buy the merchandise products of their favourite cartoon characters.

The study aims at examining the viewing pattern of children with an eye on the influence of the cartoons as exhibited in their imitation of what they watch. A total of 120 children from grade 4th and 7th were selected as sample from Ahmedabad, Gujrat. Data were collected with the help of the standardized tool "Moral Judgement Test" and Overt Aggression Test. The study concluded cognitive maturity is closely related to mature moral judgement. Definite shifts in moral judgement was found with increase in chronological age. This study also suggested that there was a correlation between exposure to cartoons and perceived behaviour and aggression.

Keywords: Cartoons, Overt Aggression, Moral Judgement, Cartoon Watchers, Primary School, Middle School.

INTRODUCTION

Television spread widely in the world after the first half of 20th century. According to the (American Academy of Pediatrics 2001) there are many studies in the field of communication and media where they are examining the influence of media violence on children. In the last few years there have been many researchers who has proved that television content influences children.

Children whose innocence and purity which are unmarred by the corrupt thoughts and practices are said to be the closet reflection of the omnipotent creator of the world. They resemble wet clay, enthusiastic and ever ready to be shaped in the manner the potter wants to mould them.

Cartoons and animated movies started its journey more than 80years back in around 1920's. It still remains the most preferred source of entertainment activity for the children of all ages. Cartoons are playing a vital role in the changing behaviour of the growing children. Cartoons are just not a source of entertainment, but children become so involved with the characters that they behave like the heroes of these cartoons.

Ben Ten and Doreamon are the most favourite cartoons of the school going children. Since August 2002, it has been watched in more than 80 million homes in the United States of America and in 145 countries through the world" (Hassan and Daniyal, 2013). Violence showed in the cartoons is spoiling the minds of school going children; they always use guns, swords and rods during playing games. It is noticed that cartoon content is full of violence than serials, plays and comedies" (Potter and Warren, 1998). "As the result, children are more exposed to violence showed in the cartoon program than any other television program broadcasted during prime time i.e. 8pm to 11pm" (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan and Signorelli, 1994)

BACKGROUND

False Sense of Reality:

One might say its ridiculous, cartoons are harmless it just entertains. But as Cartoon characters jump, dive fall from height without being hurt, Children because of their age and lack of understanding perceive it as the reality.

Cartoons are Make Believe:

The people in the stories are make believe. They are actors and the story are not true. Children sometimes fail to realize actions and act shown are not real and should not be imitated.

As George Gerbner (1986) states that "when one is exposed to too much of television one begins to see it as our reality".

Cartoons Create Heroes: -

The ever-present pop-*ladoo*-in-mouth-and-beat-bad-guys-scene which repeats over and over.

Television is a Powerful Teacher: -

As a theorist, John Locke says, "A child's mind is like a blank slate."

For example,

- Shin Chan, who is shown as a 5-year-old is disrespectful to his mother, not listening to his parents or to his teachers
- Doraemon: Nobita a demanding, spoilt child who always throws tantrums and the fact that there is no Doraemon in real life.
- Roll No.21: making fun of school principal by portraying him as Kaansa.
- Pitch and language of these cartoon characters

Today's cartoon teaches all the negative things and shows the bad sides rather than showing children something positive. Children usually consider cartoon characters as their role models but 'Imagine your child's Role Model to be Doraemon/Nobita or Shin Chan?

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Children do not perceive what they see on television in the same way that adults do and understand. Although not all what they view influence them negatively, some of the media contents offer powerful tools for learning and entertainment which build them up mentally and socially. Due to their age, they think what they see as reality. The present study seeks to investigate to what extent do the cartoons influence and lead to aggression and lack of moral judgement in school going children.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study and compare Overt Aggression level between Cartoon watcher and non-Cartoon watcher students with regard to various levels of Overt Aggression such as Extremely Aggressive, high aggression, Above average aggression, average/moderate aggression, below average aggression, low aggression and no aggression
2. To study and compare Overt Aggression level between primary and middle school students with regard to various levels of Overt Aggression such as Extremely Aggressive, high aggression, Above average aggression, average/moderate aggression, below average aggression, low aggression and no aggression
3. To study interaction effect between cartoon program and age of students with regard to various levels of Overt Aggression such as Extremely Aggressive, high aggression, Above average aggression, average/moderate aggression, below average aggression, low aggression and no aggression.
4. To study and compare Moral Judgement ability between Cartoon watcher and non-Cartoon watcher students with regard to various dimensions of Moral Judgement ability such as very high ability of moral judgement, high ability of moral judgement, average ability of moral judgement, low ability of moral judgement, very low ability of moral judgement.
5. To study and compare Moral Judgement ability between Primary and Middle School students with regard to various dimensions of Moral Judgement ability such as very high ability of moral judgement, high ability of moral judgement, average ability of moral judgement, low ability of moral judgement, very low ability of moral judgement.
6. To study interaction effect between cartoon program and age of students with regard to various dimensions of Moral Judgement ability such as very high ability of moral judgement, high ability of moral judgement, average ability of moral judgement, low ability of moral judgement, very low ability of moral judgement.

CRITERIA – CARTOON PROGRAM AND AGE

Criteria of Cartoon Watchers

Children watching 2 or more than 2 of the below mentioned cartoons of Hungama, POGO and Cartoon Network daily.

Criteria of Non-Cartoon Watchers

Children watching less than 2 cartoons or no cartoons at all.

Criteria of Students Age

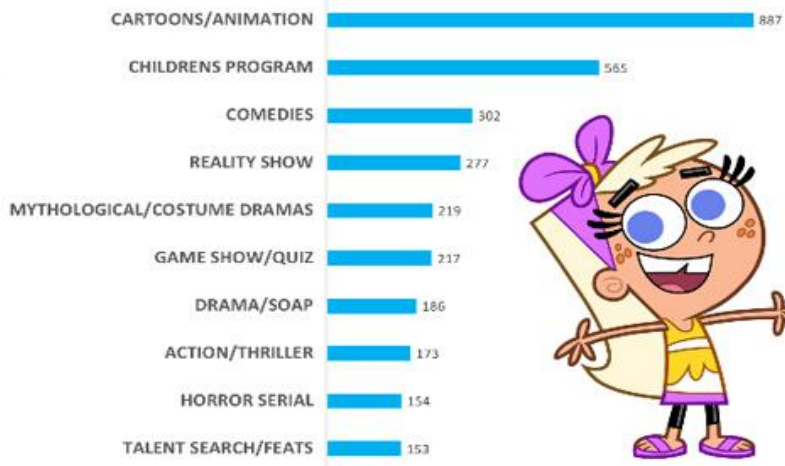
6-9 Years (Students between 1st to 4th Grade)

10-12 Years (Students between 5th to 7th Grade)



ANIMATION AND
KIDS
PROGRAMMES

PREFERRED EVEN
ON HINDI GECS



HSM / Imp'000s/ Wk 1'18 - Wk 3 2'18

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METHODOLOGY

Sample Size

The sample was selected by random method of sampling. The sample was categorized as under:

Cartoon Programs	6-9 Years (1-4 th Grade)	10-12 Years (5-7 th Grade)	Total
Cartoon Watcher	30	30	60
Non-Cartoon Watcher	30	30	60
Total	60	60	120

Variables

Variables for present research study was as under:

Sr No	Variables	Variable Level	No. of Variables	Name of Variables
1.	Cartoon Program (Category)	Independent Variables	2	Cartoon Watcher Non-Cartoon Watcher
2.	Age	Independent Variables	2	8-10 years 11-13 years
3.	Scores of Overt Aggression	Dependant Variables	7	Extremely Aggressive High Aggression Above Average Aggression Average Aggression Below Average Aggression Low Aggression No aggression
4.	Scores of Moral Judgement	Dependant Variables	6	Ability of Moral Judgement: Very High High Average Low Very Low

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Tools for Data Collection:

The following tools have been used to collect the data:

1. Moral Judgement Test (MJT-SV)

This test is constructed & standardized by Meera Verma & Durganand Sinha. The Test consists of 50 items into 6 Dimension/Parts Like: Discrimination, Incomplete Sentence, Analogies, Best Moral Answer, Moral Reasoning. It is meant for children of both sexes from 6 to 12 years. The split-half reliability of the test for the three age groups 6-7 years, 8-9 years and 10-11 years is 0.82, 0.81 and 0.86 respectively.

2. Overt Aggression Test (OAT-VG)

This test is constructed & standardized by Preeti Vohra and R. K. Gupta. The overt aggression test is a test which comprises of two tests—

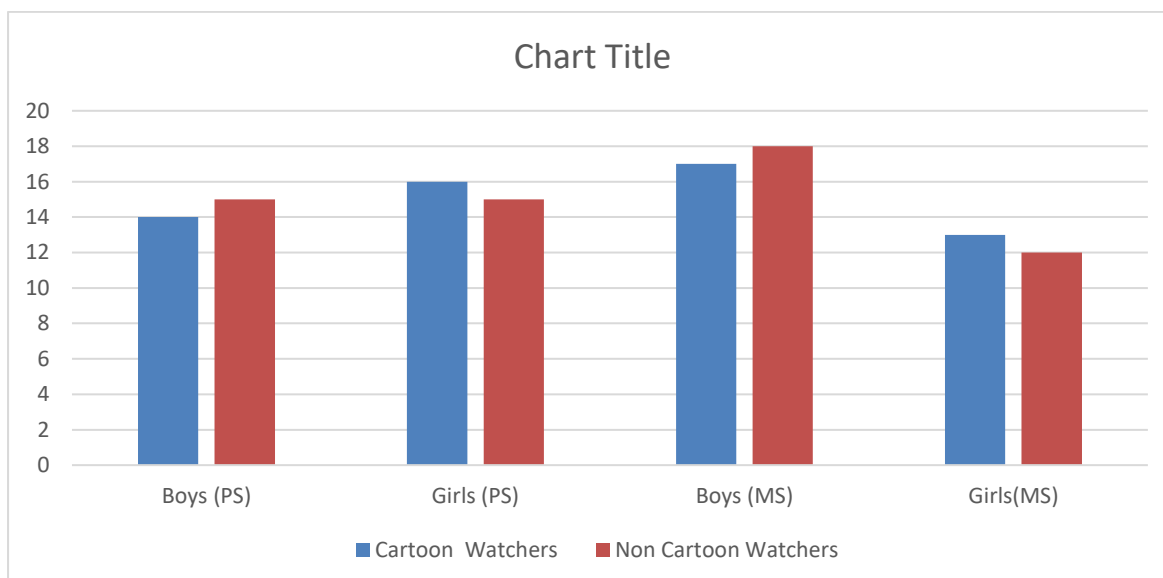
- **Self-Assessment** Test for overt aggression is to be filled by the child 40 items.
- **A Behaviour Checklist** consisting of the opinion of the teacher and parents in relation to the Child's Behaviour 8 items.

It was administered on students of class IV to VI age range 8 to 11 years.

RESULTS & FINDINGS

Cartoon Watchers and Non-Cartoon Watchers

	Primary School	Middle School
Cartoon Watchers (Boys)	14	17
Cartoon Watchers (Girls)	16	13
Non-Cartoon Watchers (Boys)	15	18
Non-Cartoon Watchers (Girls)	15	12



Index:

PS: Primary School (1st to 4th Grade)

MS: Middle School (5th to 7th Grade)

Frequency distribution of respondents according to their Level of Overt Aggression

Cartoon Watchers

Grade	Extremely Aggressive	High Aggression	Above Average Aggression	Average/Moderate Aggression	Below Average Aggression	Low Aggression	No Aggression
1-4 th	1	2	6	12	5	2	2
5-7 th	2	4	8	11	4	1	0

Non -Cartoon Watchers

Grade	Extremely Aggressive	High Aggression	Above Average Aggression	Average/Moderate Aggression	Below Average Aggression	Low Aggression	No Aggression
1-4 th	0	1	6	10	8	2	3
5-7 th	1	4	5	12	6	1	1

A close perusal of Table reveals that maximum subjects in both the category i.e. Cartoon Watchers and Non-Cartoon Watchers for both the grades fall under 'average' category. But there were more of extremely aggressive in case of Cartoon watcher as compared to non-cartoon watcher.

**Frequency distribution of respondents according to their Moral Judgment Ability-
Cartoon Watchers**

Grade	Very High Ability	High Ability	Average Ability	Low Ability	Very Low Ability	Total
1-4 th Grade	3	5	11	7	4	30
5-7 th Grade	4	6	14	4	2	30

Non-Cartoon Watchers

Grade	Very High Ability	High Ability	Average Ability	Low Ability	Very Low Ability	Total
1-4 th Grade	5	9	11	4	1	30
5-7 th Grade	7	8	9	5	1	30

A close perusal of Table reveals that maximum subjects in both the category i.e. Cartoon Watchers and Non-Cartoon Watchers for both the grades had average ability of Moral Judgement. Whereas it was also found that non-cartoon watcher students in both primary and middle school had high and very high ability of Moral Judgement as compared to cartoon watcher students.

Ho1: There is no significant difference in Overt Aggression level of Cartoon Watcher students and Non-Cartoon Watcher students.

Comparison of Mean Scores of Cartoon Watchers and Non-Cartoon Watchers over their Level of Overt Aggression

Group	N	Category	Mean	SD	Z Score
Cartoon Watchers	60	Above Average Aggression	27.6	5.3	*1.47
Non-Cartoon Watchers	60	Above Average Aggression	24.1	4.1	

***Statistically Significant at .05 level of significance.**

It is inferred from above Table that the mean scores for cartoon watchers was slightly higher than the mean scores for non-Cartoon Watchers. Thus, the null hypothesis-no.1, which states "There is no significant difference in Overt Aggression level of Cartoon Watcher students and Non-Cartoon Watcher students.", was rejected.

Ho2: There is no significant difference in Moral Judgement ability of Cartoon Watcher students and Non-Cartoon Watcher students.

Table- showing the mean and SD on Moral Judgment test

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Category	Z score
Moral Judgement of Cartoon Watchers	60	32.8	7.9	Average Ability of Moral Judgment	*2.1
Moral Judgement of Non- Cartoon Watchers	60	25.8	5.5	Average Ability of Moral Judgment	*.53

***Statistically significant at .01 and .05 probability level**

It is clear from Table that mean score of respondents in the Cartoon Watchers group was higher than the mean scores of respondents in the Non-Cartoon Watchers.

Thus, the null hypothesis-no.2, which states "There is no significant difference in Moral Judgement ability of Cartoon Watcher students and Non-Cartoon Watcher students." was rejected.

Analysis of Data – Test of Association

The chi-square test of association was used to measure the strength of relationship between the Moral Judgement of the children and the frequency they watch the cartoons. The study showed that the result is significant at 5% confidence level because $p < 0.05$. Chi-square result is shown below.

	Value	Degree of Freedom	p-Value
Pearson Chi-Square	6.75	2	.03
Likelihood Ratio	6.93	2	.03

	Value	Degree of Freedom	p-Value
Pearson Chi-Square	6.22	1	.01

N of Valid Cases	120		
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The chi-square test of association was used to measure the strength of relationship between the Level of Overt Aggression of the children and the frequency they watch the cartoons. The study gave the significant result at $p < .05$, so we can conclude that the content present in the cartoons has strong association with the aggression level of the children.

	Value	Degree of Freedom	p-Value
Pearson Chi-Square	32.00	4	.00
Likelihood Ratio	27.19	4	.00
Linear -by- Linear Association	23.79	1	.00
N of valid cases	120		

CONCLUSION

- Overt Aggression level of Cartoon Watchers and Non-cartoon watchers was found to be different.
- Higher Aggression ability of subjects in the 7th grade, who are almost on the threshold of teenage, can be due to lack of supervision at home, lack of physical activity or any other reason.
- Overt aggression level of Non-Cartoon Watchers was more in case of higher grades, that means aggression is related to increase in age.
- In the present study, though little association was seen between moral judgement and level of aggression. Children who had high level of moral judgement, their attitude is also better. But very few children showed no or Low aggression level and high Moral Ability.

Just as the findings of the **Cultivation theory**

It suggests that exposure to television, over time, subtly "cultivates" viewers' perceptions of reality. **Gerbner** and Gross assert: "Television is a medium of the socialization of most people into standardized roles and behaviours. Its function is in a word, enculturation".

Finally, it was concluded from the research findings that:

- There is a definite shift in moral judgment occur with increase in chronological age, as older subjects were found higher in moral judgment.
- This study also suggests that there is a correlation between exposure to cartoons and perceived behaviour and aggression.

The results of this study imply that there should be awareness to educate the public, parents and children about the negative effect of cartoons.

It also makes suggestions on what could be done, by parents, and teachers to help further understand this subject. When looking at who is at risk when viewing Cartoons, there must be awareness that a simple kid's channel i.e. Cartoons can affect any child from any family.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- The present study is limited to children of school in Ahmedabad, Gujrat.
- Some parents do not really confide in other people, they believe that when they talk about their children, it creates wrong impressions about their families to other people.
- A much-detailed interview would have helped get a clearer picture
- A detailed interview about the children's interest in other activity would have helped get a clear link to moral judgement and aggression or with Cartoons.

'The world looks so beautiful when your fantasy becomes a reality. The point is what you are doing to make it real.'

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