

Influence of Aggressive Media and Its Effect on Student Behaviour

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Abstract

This study aimed to find the influence of aggressive media and its effect on student's behaviour. The study consists 127 students (92 male & 35 female) with problematic discipline from three secondary schools in Kulai District, Johor. The instrument used in the study was a set of questionnaires divided into two parts. Part A is used to look at the background of respondents, whereas section B is used to answer all four research questions. Questionnaire items were measured using a five-step scale. The data obtained were processed using the SPSS 17.0 version to evaluate the percentage of frequency, mean, t-test and correlation test. A pilot study was conducted by the researcher to measure the reliability of the questions in the questionnaire. The findings reported moderate impact of aggressive media on student's behaviours. Findings for the effects of students' aggressive behaviour are also moderate. This study has important implications on the role of the media in re-evaluating broadcast programs in order to minimize aggressive elements that may cause students to act aggressively.

Key words: Aggression, Media, Students behaviour

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Introduction

Media is the medium used to convey information. However in recent times the media has been abused for channeling many bad things and should not be made public. Stories like violent acts, murders, wars, pornographic elements are widely circulated today and are difficult to control. These stories are featured in various media such as internet, television, magazines, books, articles, interactive media and video games. Today most of the media that people are attracted to watch is media that has elements of violence regardless of age and gender. As a result, the aggressive and immoral culture is being spread and adapted to the audience of adults, adolescents and children (Mallick and McCandless, 1996).

It is found that exposure to violent media to teens is one of the reasons why adolescent behaviour tends to be aggressive. In recent years researchers have found that delinquent behaviour found in television and video has been a catalyst for increasing aggressive behaviour among students (Pennal and Brown, 1999), it is also reported that violent elements in media also increase the stimuli and cause one to lose his control while in the real world (Anderson and Bushman, 2001). Simultaneously, Pennell and Browne (1999) reports that students are the most involved in aggressive behaviour as a result of repeated exposure to the media

Eron (1982), in his study of the violent elements in the media and its effect on students' aggressive behavior has stated that aggressive students are more likely to be influenced by violent scenes in the media than normal students. This is because students have an aggressive attitude toward them and when they watch an aggressive story in the media, their aggressive behavior is easily triggered verbally and non-verbal. Eron's (1982) study also found that aggressive students who frequently watch aggressive media are more likely to act aggressively because they are influenced by the models they watch.

This situation causes adolescents, especially high school students, often to have trouble developing their identity as they are exposed to bad situations (Redzuan, 2001). Adolescents are immature in life and are still in the process of forming their personalities. Therefore, they are susceptible to aggressive elements because they are the most populous and most used media either to seek positive or negative information (Redzuan, 2001).

Based on some of the findings of the above study, it can be concluded that the aggressive elements in the media and its impact on students' aggressive behaviour are a serious problem currently occurring. These issues need to be addressed immediately so that violent acts in the media do not have a negative effect on current and future students.

Background Problem

Mass media is a source of criminal activity among teenagers. There is no denying that facilities like the Internet, email, television, and radio make it easy for us to communicate, get information, and entertain. However, there are many negative effects of this facility if it is being misused. For example, abusing the Internet for falsifying important data, viewing pornographic images, and so on can lead them to commit crimes such as rape, murder, distribution of illicit pills, and drugs.

According to Orestes (2002), aggressive elements in the media are major issues that threaten the harmony of one family life. Study also infers that the media is spreading misunderstandings of sex, pornography, pornography, violence, extreme violence and wild life. Further it is also found that the impact of irresponsible media influence on Asian adolescents' morale was declining, with 20% of teenagers engaging in adultery, 24% engaging in pornography and pornography, 21% premarital sex and 35% juvenile cases. All of these things will put teenagers at a disadvantage and involve severe disciplinary problems in schools. Aggressive stories in the media have also caused the problem of imitating chronic behaviours among students (Dunand, Berkowitz, and Leyens, 1984).

The impact of aggressive behaviour among students in Malaysia is still poor. However, a study conducted by Rahim and Pawanteh (2001), found that behavioural problems among students with aggressive effects of watching aggressive media have long been prevalent in Malaysia. His research found that teenagers were the most likely to use the media at 21.3 to 22 hours a week and were particularly interested in violent, sensual, thrilling, anxious, war, murder, mystical and extreme sports. The effects of prolonged exposure to the media will result in students becoming the most active group to mimic and perform violent scenes seen in the media (Rahim and Pawanteh, 2001)

Researchers have provided some definitions of aggressive behaviour. In general, aggressive behaviour can be defined as an act committed with the intent to injure another person, the individual or the surrounding object. This aggressive behaviour must be accompanied by the intention to harm others and any act of aggression but not accompanied by the intent to harm others or the object around it is considered non-aggressive behaviour (Baron, Bryne, and Suls, 1991).

Aggressive behaviour among aggressive students in high school is a problem that should be addressed by everyone involved with educational institutions and schools. The issue of aggressive behaviour needs to be addressed as closely as possible so that it is not an issue that can have a negative impact on students' academic and personal development. This problem also needs to be carefully addressed so that the role of the school as the centre of knowledge and student identity is not compromised by its image and credibility.

Statement of Problem

The influence of the media and its effect on aggressive behaviour among high school students is a problem that should be taken seriously today. Aggressive behaviour problems among students have many negative effects on schools and society. This is because the media is the cause of a student's tendency to resort to aggressive behaviour and actions because the media is a familiar tool in today's teenage life. Media that has a violent element that attracts aggressive students should be considered by all parties to curb this problem so as not to harm the young generation.

The effects of watching a variety of aggressive programs in the media have created problems with the increasing tendency for acts of violence and other negative behaviours among adolescents (Baron, Bryne, and Suls, 1991). According to him, the media at this time has great potential for changing the attitudes and behaviour of the people especially the relatively young people who are still vulnerable. Researchers' research shows that exposure to electronic and print media such as television, the internet, movies, magazines, newspapers and books can influence the aggressive behaviour of adolescents (Bushman and Heusman, 2001).

Media is very important in the teaching and learning process in schools. Likewise, the media plays an important role in students' access to vast sources of information such as the internet. But if it is misused it can have a negative effect on the student's academic achievement. Watching the media reduces students' time to concentrate on their lessons and if left uncontrolled they lose focus on their lessons and do not want to learn. Therefore, parents also play an important role in controlling their children from being influenced by the media, especially the negative and aggressive media.

In this study researchers will explore various aspects of aggressive media such as, types of media that influence aggressive behaviour, the effects of media aggression on student behaviour, causes of students' interest in watching violent media, attitudes parents on the influence of student behaviour on violent media viewing, and significant differences in academic achievement between boys and girls.

Research objective

1. To identify whether there are significant differences between the characteristics of media programs, the causes of aggressive media viewing, the effects of viewing media based on gender.
2. To identify whether there is a relationship between the characteristics of media programs, the effects of aggressive media watching and parents' attitudes toward academic achievement.

Research questions

1. Is there a significant difference between the characteristics of a media program, the causes of watching aggressive media, the effects of aggressive media by gender?
2. Is there a link between the characteristics of media programs, the effects of aggressive media watching and parents' attitudes toward academic achievement?

Hypotheses

1. Ho1: There is no difference between media program characteristics and gender.
2. Ho2: There is no significant difference between the sources of aggressive and gender based media watching.
3. Ho3: There is no significant difference between the effects of aggressive media and gender.
4. Ho4: There is no relationship between media program characteristics to academic achievement.
5. Ho5: There is no relationship between the effects of aggressive media on academic achievement.
6. Ho6: There is no relationship between parents' attitudes toward academic achievement.

Research Design

The design of this study is descriptive. Quantitative methods were used in this study. According to Konting (1998), research design is a specific technique and method for obtaining information needed to solve problems. This study aimed to identify the influence of aggressive media and its effect on student behaviour. A set of questionnaires were provided to collect information and data. Data were obtained using questionnaires distributed to selected respondents representing the population of secondary school students in Kulai District. According to Tuckman (1978), the use of survey methods using questionnaires made it easier for researchers to obtain cooperation from respondents. Researchers use questionnaire instruments because they are easy to administer, easy to collect and analyze.

Population

The population of this study is among the students in question form two selected from three of the secondary schools in the area Kulai.

Sample Study

According to Webster (1985), the sample was a subset of respondents selected from the larger population for the purpose of the study; sample is a subset of the population selected for study (Portney and Walkin, 1993). The use of sample size according to Konting (1998) should be encouraged to exceed 30 units as normal distribution

is usually met when sample size exceeds 30 units and the increase in sample size is more representative of population and reduces sampling error. This study involved problematic Level 2 students.

According to Yahaya, Hashim, Ramli, Boon and Hamdan (2007), sample size is important because it represents the strength of the results of the study. The respondents in this study were also divided into two main genders: male and female. Number tired instruction form two students in question until the three secondary schools in the area Kulai are a total of 127 people. Of these, 92 were male students and the remaining 35 were female students.

Sampling Method

The sample for the present study is based on the method used by Krejcie and Morgan (1970) by applying the following formula:

$$S = \frac{X^2 NP (1-P)}{d^2 (NP) + X^2 P (1-P)} \text{ where}$$

S = sample size

X² = Table of Squared Values for 1 degree of freedom at level confidence required 0.05 (3.841)

N = population size

P = population ratio (estimated as 0.50 to give maximum sample size)

D = Degree of accuracy expressed as a ratio of 0.50

$$3.841 \times 150 \times 0.5 (1-0.5)$$

$$0.05^2 \times (150-1) + 3.841 \times 0.5 (1-0.5)$$

$$= 144$$

$$1.33$$

$$= 108.27 @ 108 \text{ sample people.}''$$

Instrument of Study

The instrument used in the study was a questionnaire. Instruments questionnaire is the most effective way to obtain information from respondents (Tuckman, 1978). In contrast, Cates (1980) argues that the use of questionnaire instruments is very effective when it is well-prepared and has consistent and reliable items. Questionnaire instruments are easy to administer, easy to distribute to respondents and easy to obtain accurate data. The construction of this questionnaire was conducted based on several assumptions proposed by Wolf (1988);

1. Respondents are easy to read and understand the questionnaire items.
2. Respondents have sufficient knowledge or experienteto answer the items in the questionnaire.
3. Respondents answered the questionnaire willingly and sincerely.

The instructions and questions given in the questionnaire were standard and similar to all the respondents surveyed. Respondents were able to respond better to standard question stimuli more effectively. This enhances the accuracy and validity of the respondents' response to the questions asked. In addition, the respondents were also easier and bolder in responding to the aspects studied (Koting, 1998). In this study researchers have used questionnaires based on a rating scale using a five point scale. The use of the five-point scale is for the following reasons:

- a) Questionnaires are easier to administer once they are well built.

- b) It's easier to get a lot of data.
- c) The information obtained from the respondents is easy to analyze.
- d) Questionnaires save time, energy and costs.
- e) Respondents are more likely and bold to respond to the aspect being studied.

The questionnaire consisted of two sections, A and B. Section A used a nominal scale in which the respondents had to mark (✓) the respondents in relation to their background. Part B, however, questions about the level of factors that influence respondents' career choice. The scale used to measure part B scoring for this study was using the 5-point scale method of 1,2,3,4 and 5.

The section B contains 37 question items that focus on aspects that researchers need to study based on the research questions that have been stated to answer the questions raised. Likert scale was used to get feedback on aspects.

A pilot study

The pilot study was a study conducted before the set of questionnaires used in the actual study. Preliminary studies can help researchers obtain preliminary guidance on any part of the study that may be inaccurate or unsuccessful. Pilot studies refer to small or experimental versions of studies conducted in preparation for larger or major studies (Polit, Beck, and Hungler, 2001). It can also help the researcher identify any deficiencies in the research instrument and subsequently correct the weaknesses. The correlation strength of each variable can be classified based on a range of 0.0 to 1.0 Azizi et al. (2007).

A pilot study was also conducted to determine the validity and reliability of the study instrument. A total of twelve kindergarten students from SMK Taman Universiti 2, Skudai have been selected as a pilot study sample. Data on analysis using SPSS 17.0 , found that the value of alpha Cronb ACH obtained reaches 0.76 . Therefore, the validity and reliability of the questionnaire items are strong.

Results

Table:1-t-test analysis to show significant differences some characteristics of aggressive media programs by gender

Gender	N	\bar{x}	MD	F	SD	t	df	Sig (2-Tailed)
Man	92	3.77	1.06	14.24	0.49	9.10	125	0.001
Girl	35	2.70			0.80			

From Table 1, the mean values of the aggressive male media programs were higher (Mean = 3.77, SD=0.49) than females (Mean = 2.70, SD= 0.80). Further the obtained t-value (9.10) was found that the significance value was 0.001 ($p = 0.001 < P = 0.05$). This indicates that the null hypothesis was successfully rejected, in other words, there was a significant difference in the characteristics of the aggressive media programs that were observed between boys and girls.

Table:2-t-test analysis to show significant differences among the causes of watching aggressive media by gender

Gender	N	\bar{x}	MD	F	SD	t	df	Sig (2-Tailed)
Man	92	3.77	1.06	2.59	0.61	7.61	125	0.001
Girl	35	2.70			0.78			

Based on Table 2, it is also unveiled that mean of male respondents (Mean = 3.77, SD 0.61) is more than female (mean= 2.70, SD= 078) and $t = 7.61$, $DF = 125$, two tailed $p = 0.001$). Based on the t-test found that the mean value was 0.11 ($p = 0.11 > P = 0.05$), this indicates that the null hypothesis was rejected, in other words there was no significant difference in the sources of aggressive media viewing between male and female students.

Table:3-t-test analysis to show significant differences among the effects of aggressive media by gender

Gender	N	\bar{x}	MD	F	SD	t	df	Sig (2-Tailed)
Man	92	3.21	1.49	0.097	0.74	9.83	125	0.001
Girl	35	1.73			0.83			

Based on Table 3 found higher mean men (Mean= 3.21, SD = 0.74), ($t=9.83$, df 125 two tailed $p = 0.001$) than women (Mean = 1.73, SD = 0.83). Based on t-test it was found that the significance value was 0.76 ($p = 0.76 > P = 0.05$). This indicates that the null hypothesis was rejected, in other words, that there was no significant difference in the effects of watching aggressive media between male and female students.

Table:4-Correlation analysis of correlation tests showing relation significance among the characteristics of aggressive media programs against academic achievement

		Features of media programs	Achievements
Achievements	Pearson correlation	-0.056	1
	Significant (2-tailed)	0.534	
	N	125	125
Features of media programs	Pearson correlation	1	-0.056
	Significant (2-tailed)		0.534
	N	127	125

“Significant at the 0.05 level of significance”

Based on table 4 the study found that the value of r is -0.056. This indicates that the relationship between “academic achievement and the “characteristics of an aggressive-looking media program” is negative or inverse and that the strength of the relationship is weak. Mean value $P = 0.534 > 0.05$. The null hypothesis is accepted and shows that there is no significant relationship between achievement and characteristics of aggressive media programs.

Table:5-Correlation analysis of significant tests showing relation significance among the effects of aggressive media on achievement academic

		Media effects	Achievements
Achievements	Pearson correlation	-0.201	1
	Significant (2-tailed)	0.025	
	N	125	125
Media effects	Pearson correlation	1	-0.201
	Significant (2-tailed)		0.025
	N	127	125

“Significant at the 0.05 level of significance”

Based on the table 5 results of the study are found that the value of r is -0.201. This indicates that the relationship between "academic achievement and" aggressive media effects "is negative or inverse and that the relationship strength is weak. Mean value $P = 0.025 < 0.05$. The null hypothesis is rejected and shows that there is a significant relationship between achievement and the effects of aggressive media.

Table:6-Correlation analysis of significant tests showing relation significance of parental attitude towards academic achievement

		Parental attitude	Achievements
Achievements	Pearson correlation	-0.044	1
	Significant (2-tailed)	0.625	
	N	125	125
Parental attitude	Pearson correlation	1	-0.044
	Significant (2-tailed)		0.625
	N	127	125

“Significant at the 0.05 level of significance”

Based on table 6 the study found that the value of r is -0.044. This indicates that the relationship between "academic achievement and" parental attitude” is negative or inversely proportional and the relationship strength is very weak. Mean value $P = 0.625 > 0.05$. The null hypothesis is accepted and shows that there is no significant relationship between achievement and parental attitude.

Discussion Most students are more interested in watching shows that show a lot of action scenes and enjoy watching the media portraying violent acts. This statement is consistent with a statement by Jordan (1996) that states that most students regularly watch programs that contain conflict. According to Zillmann (1988), one of

the main reasons for interest in watching aggressive media is to see the characters in the show. Viewers are very quick to decide which characters they like and don't like. For a movie you like, it'll be fun. The acting character will be a favorite or a good model to follow.

The results showed that the item with the highest mean value was "The whole family watched with the new movie despite having an aggressive element" with a mean of 3.21 and a standard deviation of 1.56. This shows that parents don't really care about the media programs they watch together. This shows that parents do not control much in the family. The failure of parents in disciplining children is also seen as one of the contributing factors in deviant behaviour. The background of anti-social behaviour is the result of inadequate, inappropriate or disciplined control of children's behaviour (Jacobvitz and Bush, 1996). Most antisocial behaviours of adolescents also result from parental style and family management failures (Jacobvitz and Bush, 1996).

The findings of this study are in line with Bandura's Social Learning Theory which states that the age and gender of the model play a role in coping behaviour. Female students are found to be more interested in information-based programs because they are suited to the character of their gender with less aggressive behaviour and are afraid to watch aggressive stories directly. The male students, however, are more interested in media programs that reflect the reality of their existence because it is more in line with their more aggressive and bolder feminist character to watch violent scenes broadcast live through the media.

The results showed that overall, there was no significant relationship between program characteristics and students' academic achievement. This is because even though students watch the media aggressively; they are not so influenced by what they see as it can affect their learning. Students watch just for fun, get rid of boredom and reduce stress in them. This is in line with Barrie and Jill (1990), adolescents who are in a bad mood are more likely to watch aggressive programs to release their feelings. Teenagers who have no feelings or are in a good mood are less likely to watch aggressive media.

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