

Assessment of the Behavioural Effects of Cartoon Viewing among Parents of Under-Five Children

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ABSTRACT

Background of the Study: Cartoons are the most popular entertainment for the Children. Mostly children begin watching cartoons on television at the early age of six months, and by the age of two or three children become enthusiastic viewers.

Objectives: The main objective of the study is to assess the behavioral effects of cartoon viewing among the parents of under-five children.

Methodology: Descriptive study design was used to conduct the study in selected tertiary care hospital. As per the inclusion criteria 50 samples were selected by using non probability purposive sampling technique. Self structured questionnaire was used to collect data and the behavioral effects of cartoon viewing among the parents of under-five children.

Results: The study findings revealed that, among 50 samples 32% of the Children had mild effects on behaviour, 66% had moderate effects on behaviour and 2% of the Children had sever effects on behaviour. The mean and standard deviation score of the study was 54.72+0.8571. There was a significant association between the behavioral effects of cartoon viewing and the age of the Children ($\chi^2 = 7.6364$, $P < 0.05$).

Conclusion: The study concluded that, 32% of the children had mild effects on behaviour, 66% had moderate effects on behavior and 2% of the children had sever effects on behaviour.

Keywords: Cartoons, behavioral effects, under five children, parents.

BACKGROUND

Children between 3-6years are those whose flesh and bones are still being formed. Their brain is still building synaptic connections. So, making changes is difficult once the structure of building is completed. Thus the care of this age group is very crucial which can change the future of the child if not taken care of. (Deepika Rajawat, 2017)

Television is the most powerful and influential medium of communication around the globe and plays a vital role in the process of learning of young children from a very early age. The non-stop broadcasting of cartoons by TV channels make children much interested in cartoons at a very early age. As early as 2-3 years, they are already great fans of many cartoon characters. (Ghilzai, et al., 2017)

Practically cartoons have become almost a necessity for most children, without which parents find it very difficult to manage their kids. Factors that sculpture children's way of thinking are found mostly in the environment where they grow up. These include daily events, memorable experiences, peek feelings, visual entertainment and many others. (Mr. Kiransinh Rajput, 2017), (Tarek Soliman, 2015)

Studies have proven that an average child with a facility of TV and a satellite connection at his home watches approximately 18,000 hours/years of

television from kindergarten to high school graduation. **(Stevie Hossler, 2004)**

Most latch-key children find the only way they can entertain themselves is Television. There is no one to monitor them.

Cartoons are mostly based on fantasy stories aimed at creating an imaginative world in the viewers mind. Their main target is children and teenagers. Children younger than 5years are unable to differentiate reality from fantasy. **(Ghilzai, et al., 2017)**

The children who watch too much cartoon on television are more likely to have mental, emotional, visual and behavioral problems. Due to extensive and enormity of channels in media, it has become very easier for children to watch their own favorite cartoon channel. And at the same time parents too feel relaxed that they can provide their children with their favorite channels. **(P.Shanthipriya, 2017)**

NEED FOR THE STUDY

The **American Academy of Pediatrics** recommends that parents and caregivers develop a family media plan that takes into account the health, education and entertainment needs of each child as well as the whole family and also recommends that screen time for children between 2-5 years should limit screen use to 1hour per day of high quality programs. Parents should covie media with children to help them understand what they are seeing and apply it to the world around them.

Children who used screens for long periods on a daily basis were found to have lower structure integrity between the connections found in white matter the part of the brain that support language and literacy skills. **(Researchers at the Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Centre, November-2019)**

A study by **American Academy of Pediatrics (October, 2011)** entitled the immediate impact of different types of television on young children's executive function concluded that parents should be aware that watching similar television

shows may immediately impair young children's executive function.

Average screen time usage among preschoolers aged 2-6 in rural Western India amounted to 2.7 hours with average television screen time of 1.6 hours. Most children started screen use by the age of 3. Households with three devices and smart phone usage by mothers increased the odds of screen time by 60% and two folds, respectively. **(Prof. Somashekhar M Nimbalkar, 2019)**

A typical child began watching television at 4years of age in 1970 and consumed 3 to 4 hours/day; the typical child today begins watching at 4 months of age and is engaged with media for up to 8 hours/day. **(Dimitri A. Christakis, 2011)**

It is commonly accepted belief that the violence depicted in television programs, particularly cartoons, has a negative impact on young children's behavior. However young children may be less inclined to emulate violent actions seen on television than currently thought.

Imaginative sciences like throwing a grand piano on someone's head, gunshots, explosives in someone's hand or mouth and the loud explosion that follows send subliminal or direct messages depicting violence that flow into children's minds.

Children who consistently spend more than 4 hours/day watching TV are more likely to be overweight. The above facts depict uncontrolled and unmonitored cartoon viewing has more harmful effects than benefits. So we as researchers assessed the behavioral effects of cartoon viewing among primary caregivers of children aged 1-5 years.

Vinod S. Kovravi (2018) analyzed the effects of cartoon channels on the behavior of school going children using survey method among 100 students of the age group of 7-12 years from different private and public schools using convenient random sampling technique. Study concluded that after watching cartoon 78% children have psychological effects, 70% children's behavior changed and 70%

children prefer cartoons over picnic and outdoor games.

Shaliesh Rai (2016) studied the effect of cartoon programmes on behavioral, habitual and communicative changes among 200 children (5-15years of age) using observational cross sectional study. They found significant positive and negative behavioral changes and children tend to imitate on screen character's behavior. 33% of children showed an increase in violent behavior. 39% of children watch both (violent & nonviolent) type of cartoon programs. 64% of children neglect things told by parents while watching cartoon programs, 45% of children throw things/becomes violent when parents either switch off T.V/ask him to do some other work, 61% of children try to copy stunts after they have started watching cartoon programs. 81% of children have shown increased interest towards creative subjects and 73% of children have become sensitive towards others since they have started watching cartoon programs.

Shazia Akbar Ghilza, et al., (2015) analyzed impact of cartoon programs on children's language and behavior by administering open-ended interviews to mothers and siblings of younger children. The results revealed that 76.5% children had language acquisition, 52.9% displayed aggressive, violent and antisocial behavior with siblings and peers. They also imitate cartoons and fantasize too much in their real life.

Khaled Habib (2015) published a scientific research paper on cartoons effect in changing children mental response and behavior. This article specific that most parents prefer to leave their children in front of TV in order to finish their work or to have a rest , till the age of 12 a child would have watched about 18,000 hours of cartoon occupies the major portion of the children attention and time more than any activity the child performs.

Dr. Zahid Yousaf, et al., (2015) analyzed the effect of cartoon network on the behavior of school going children

among 100 males and females school-going children ranging from the age 7-12 using survey method by filling a questionnaire. The study concluded that 32% children watch TV more than 4 hours on a daily basis, 78% children have psychological effects after watching cartoons, 60% children behavior changed and 59% children prefer cartoons over picnic and outdoor games.

Qian Zhang (2019) analyzed the effects of cartoon violence on aggressive thoughts and aggressive behaviors among 3000 Chinese children using experimental method the study concluded that brief exposure to a violent cartoon triggered higher aggressive thoughts and aggressive behaviors than a nonviolent cartoon.

Richmond Acheampong (2017) examined the effects of cartoons on the behaviors of children among 400 children aged 6-15years studying in a municipality school using questionnaire. It was found that parents do not monitor the cartoon watch and majority of them (43.5%) spent 3-4hours watching cartoons.

Jaya Bharathi S (2020) analyzed the effects of television cartoons on children using survey method. 50 parents of children from a private school and government schools in perambur were selected. The results showed that 37% of children belong to age group of 4 to 6 years, 68% of parents who answered are the parents with boy children, 57% of children most often try to imitate their favorite cartoon and about 43% of children are provoked by the violent content provided in the cartoons.

Shaheen Perween, et al .,(2020) analyzed the impact of cartoons on toddler's language acquisition using empirical investigation in Aligarh city of Uttar Pradesh using multistage sampling technique. The study concluded that cartoons on one hand Contribute in a positive way to the process of language acquisition but at the same time they also have some negative impacts. Children who are excessively exposed to the cartoons sometimes become lethargic , violent etc.

depending upon the nature of cartoons they are exposed to.

Adity Sharma, et al., (2020) analyzed the effect of cartoon programs on language and behavior of children using interview method. The children of the age group of 3 -10 years and their parents (father/ mother) we're selected. Data was collected using open and closed ended questionnaire. It was observed that around 98% of children watch the cartoons regularly out of which 64% of children were heavy viewers of television as they watched television from 2-5 hours daily. The decision regarding duration and type of cartoon program to be viewed was taken collectively by children, parents and their sibling. It was also found that that around 74% of children feel that cartoons help them to learn new things like, shape, colour, alphabets, numbers, rhymes, poems.

Sarah Sopekan, et al .,(2020) analyzed the parent's perception of influence of violent cartoons on primary school pupils social behaviors using descriptive survey research design among parents of 150 middle basic pupils in the University of Lagos. Of the 100 parents, 18 (18%) of them were males and 82 (82%) females. Analysis of the data revealed that 55% of the parents perceived that violent cartoons do not make their children drive their toy cars and ride their bicycles in risky manner. Close to fifty percent (48%) of the parents perceived that their children behave violently as a result of what they watch in the cartoon.

OBJECTIVES

- To assess the behavioral effects of cartoon viewing among parents of under-five children.
- To associates the behavioral effects of cartoon viewing with the selected demographic variables among parents of under-five children.

CONCEPTIONAL FRAMEWORK

The modified Pender's Health Promotion model is adapted to this study

this model seeks to increase the individual's level of wellbeing. The model focuses on modifying factors, cognitive factors and likelihood of participation in health promotion behavior.

This model is used to predict likelihood of person engaging in health promoting behaviors. The cognitive factors reflect on individual's being, additional modifying factors influencing the way a person perceived the benefits and barriers of health action ,which influence the person's likelihood of action.

As the investigator aimed at assessing the behavioral effects of cartoon viewing among the mothers of under five children, the Pender's Health Promotion model was found suitable to assess the behavioral effects of cartoon viewing among the mothers of under five children.

Modifying factors:

The modifying factors include age of the child, gender of the child, father's occupation, mother's occupation, area of living, number of siblings, number of hours the child spent on watching tv and child's favorite cartoon programme.

Cognitive factor:

It includes the behavioral effects of cartoon viewing.

Likelihood of Action

The likelihood of action of this study is the outcome of the forces of modifying factors and cognitive factor result in the health outcome in terms of satisfied and a healthy life or unsatisfied and unhealthy life.

On this model, the investigator interacts with the subject to assess the behavioral effects of cartoon viewing among the mothers of under-five children. The outcome of this could be no effect on behavior, mild effect on behavior, moderate effect on behavior and severe effect on behavior. Those with no effect on behavior and mild effect on behavior enhance the

likelihood of action and this promoted optimum healthy life.

On the other hand, those who have moderate effect on behavior and severe

effect on behavior results in poor likelihood which added to unhealthy life.

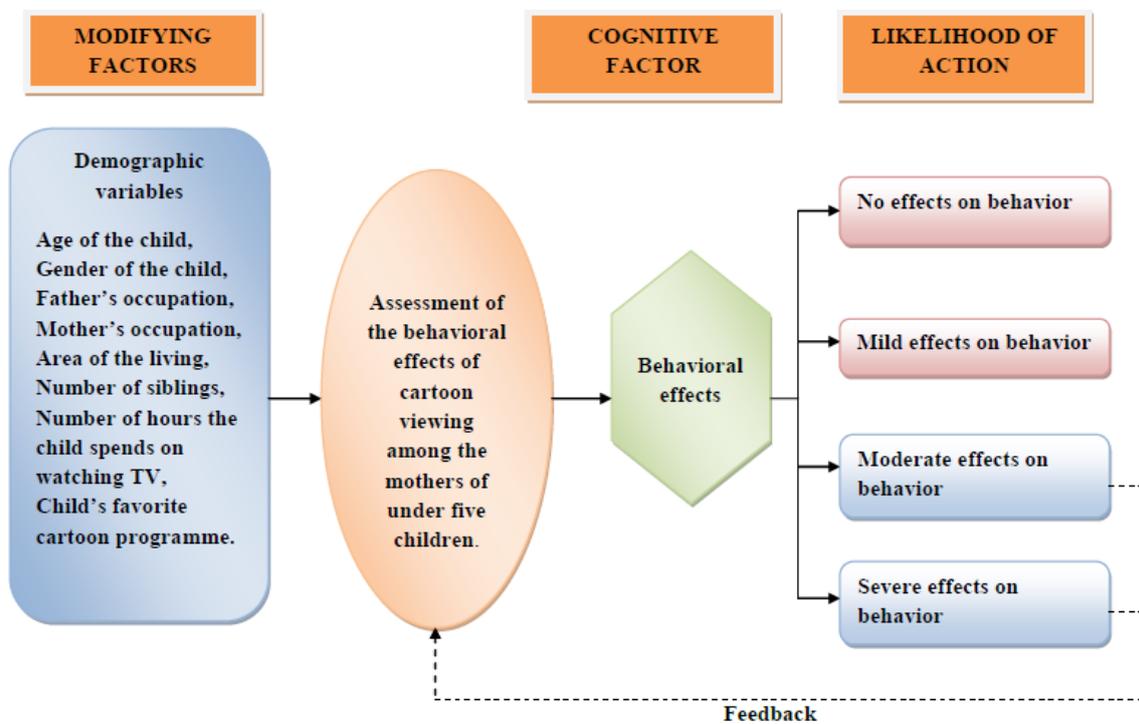


FIGURE 1.1 MODIFIED PENDER'S HEALTH PROMOTION MODEL (1987)

Descriptive study design used to assess the behavioral effects of cartoon viewing among parents of under-five children. Purposive sampling technique was used in this study. sample size was 50.

INSTRUMENTS AND TOOLS FOR DATA COLLECTION:

In this study, questionnaire was designed to collect the baseline data. This tool consists of two sections.

Section A:

Demographic variables: It consists of baseline data of the children aged 1-5 years like name, age, father occupation, mothers occupation, area of living (urban/ rural), number of siblings, no of hours watching TV, favorite cartoon programme.

Section B:

Self structured questionnaire to assess the behavioural effects.

Scoring key:

The self structured Standard Questionnaire is a five point Likert scale with 20 negative questions that ranges from 1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4= Agree, 5=Strongly Agree.

Score Interpretation:

SCORE	INTERPRETATION
0-25	No effect on behaviour
26-50	Mild effects on behaviour
51-75	Moderate effects on behaviour
76-100	Severe effects on behaviour

The collected data was analyzed by using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics.

Descriptive statistics:

Frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation was used to analyze the effects of cartoon viewing among the parents of under-five children.

Inferential statistics:

Chi square test was used to find the association between the cartoon viewing

and its behavioural effects among selected demographic variables.

Assessment of the behavioral effects of cartoon viewing among the parents of under-five children, n=50

S.NO	Behavioural effects of cartoon viewing	Frequency	Percentage	Mean+Standard deviation
1.	No effects on behaviour	-	-	54.7±0.8571
2.	Mild effects on behaviour	16	32%	
3.	Moderate effects on behaviour	33	66%	
4.	Severe effects on behaviour	1	2%	

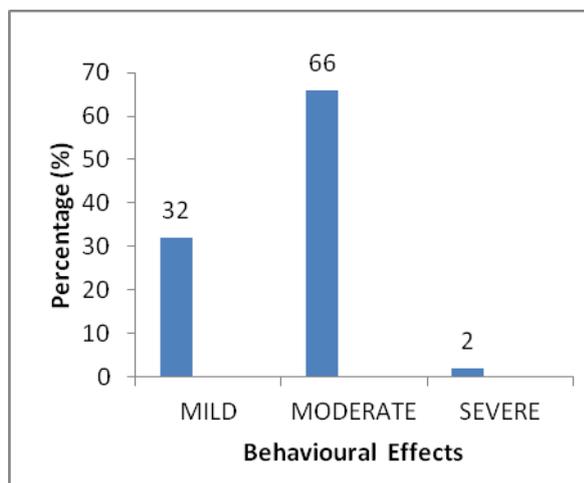


Figure:1 The bar diagram shows the, percentage distribution of behavioral effects of cartoon viewing among the parents of under-five children.

Among 50 children, most of them (66%) have moderate effects on behaviour, 32% of them have mild effects on behaviour and 2% have severe effects on behaviour.

An association found between the behavioral effects of cartoon viewing and the Age of the Children ($\chi^2 = 7.6364$, $p < 0.05$)

CONCLUSION

The children who watch cartoons show high level of language acquisition and cognitive development but they show some aggressive and violent behavior with their siblings and friends, also exhibit antisocial behavior as they tend to stay for long period. cartoons content affects them in acquiring other moral and social values as well. For promote healthy practices of using social media the parents should pay more attention on the behavioral, social and emotional development of their children.

RECOMMENDATION:

A similar study can be done on larger number of children to generalize the research findings.

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Conflict of Interest: None

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