

ADAPTING STRATEGIES FOR PARENTAL MONITORING : EFFECTS OF VIEWING SUPERHERO PROGRAMS ON AGGRESSIVENESS AMONG PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

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ABSTRACT

This is a conceptual paper of a future study based on the review of literature related to effect of viewing prosocial aggression behavior media exposure (e.g., superheroes programs) on preschool children behavior. This behavior is of interest because it can be considered a type of prosocial behavior when non aggressive behaviors are used to defend a victim, whereas other types of defending behaviors may utilize aggressive means. Though an adequate amount of scientific research on prosocial violent media has been carried out, few studies have explored the social circumstances of the issue, particularly in the context of prosocial aggression in media. The authors examine how exposure to prosocial violent media correlates with aggression. Hence, the purpose of this paper is to provide new information about adaption strategy for parental monitoring. The findings show that prosocial aggression and exposure to violent media plays a significant role with aggressiveness. Hoped that such recommendation adaption strategies for parental monitoring will assist parent's community, policy-makers or academician in generating and engendering affective alteration strategies for creating new norms in social psychology context.

Keywords: *Prosocial aggression, Media violent, Prosocial violent behavior, Media effect*

INTRODUCTION

Decades of research on media effects has produced significant interest over recent year and consistently shown that media can influence attitudes and behavior. An expansive literature on viewing rationally aggressive behavior in the media, or actions intended to damage the social power and relationships of others, has been related to increased relationally aggressive behavior (Coyne, 2016). Additionally, much research has found that media content matters when examining viewer outcomes. For example, several studies have found that exposure to media violence is related to subsequent aggressive behavior (e.g., Bushman & Anderson, 2001), while exposure to media characterization of prosocial behavior is related to prosocial behavior (Coyne et al., 2018).

However, associations with defensive behavior, as a unique form of prosocial behavior, is likely to be more complex. To our knowledge, research has not yet examined the impact of media or identification with media characters on defending behavior. However, media (and superheroes in particular) represent powerful models for defending behavior. Given the high amount of aggression used by superheroes, these characters are especially likely to demonstrate

aggressive defending behavior. This is content that is physically aggressive or violent, but where the intent is to help or defend others in need. These studies, collectively, have helped toward an understanding of how violent media exposure contributes to prosocial violent. Yet, quite a bit of media content combines both aggressive and prosocial content, referred to as prosocial violent content in this paper.

Although international studies have highlighted generally on violent media effects on a large scale. Thus, there is an urgent need to investigate the effect of prosocial violent media exposure who play an important role in influencing preschool children behavior. This paper seeks to address this gap by reviewing the literature on prosocial violent media exposure in order to suggest strategies for adapting to the particular needs of parent community to further strengthen community-based actions in relation to the new norms.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Effect of Viewing Prosocial Violent Media and Relationship with Aggressive Behavior.

Traditionally, aggression is defined as behavior that is intended to hurt others, while prosocial behavior is defined as behavior intended to help others. Thus, prosocial violence is a mix between these definitions, which is behavior intended to help one person by hurting another (e.g., Romeo killing another character to avenge his friend in Romeo and Juliet, superhero violence) (Hailey, Laura & Sarah, 2019).

Superhero movies and television programs have become increasingly popular worldwide (Worldwide Grosses 2020) and are especially attractive to young preschool children (Brown et al. 2009). Objectively, several television superhero series targeted specifically at preschool children. Superhero programs are popular with preschool children for example include Ultimate Spider-Man, Young Justice. and Green Lantern, and in particular preschool-aged boys, even though they are not targeted towards a preschool audience (Brown et al. 2009). Superhero programs contain high amounts of aggression and prosocial behavior and have been shown to be related to increased aggression (Rosenkoetter et al. 2009) and heightened weapon play (Coyne et al. 2014) in preschool children. For example, engaging to extreme level of aggression involving gender with content analyses of popular superhero cartoons have shown that male and female superheroes engage in high levels of physical aggression, while female superheroes also engage in high levels of relational and verbal aggression (Luther and Legg 2010).

Due to the growing popularity of violent media and mounting evidence that exposure to violent media influences aggressive behavior, research on the effects of exposure to media violence, relational aggression, and prosocial behavior have been studied extensively, guided primarily by the General Aggression Model, GAM (Bushman & Anderson, 2002) and General Learning Model, GLM (Buckley & Anderson, 2006), with both theories suggesting that exposure to media content shapes attitudes and behaviors of viewers. For example, existing research has shown a relation between exposure to physical and relational aggression in media and increased aggressive behavior (Coyne, 2016).

According to the GAM, exposure to violent content in media is linked with increased aggressive thoughts and behavior via priming and rehearsal of aggressive scripts and desensitization to violence (Bushman & Anderson, 2002). Meanwhile, The GLM informs existing research on exposure to prosocial content in media and prosocial behavior by way of priming and rehearsing scripts for prosocial behavior (Buckley & Anderson, 2006). Thus, research suggests that exposure to prosocial behavior in the media is related to increased levels

of prosocial behavior (e.g., Greitemeyer & Osswald, 2010) and lower levels of aggressive behaviors (Coyne et al., 2018).

Exposure to prosocial content in the media was related to increased prosocial behavior with strangers and family members. The current study supports previous research that shows exposure to prosocial content in the media is related to increased prosocial behavior in adolescence (Padilla-Walker, Coyne, Collier, & Nielson, 2015). On the other hand, viewing prosocial violent content was related to increased aggressive behaviors. In regard to prosocial violence, some researchers suggest that viewing prosocial violent media is effective in teaching preschool children about defending and helping others in bullying situations (Johansson & Hannula, 2012), while others connect prosocial violent content with increased physical and relationally aggressive behaviors (Coyne et al., 2017).

Despite the aggressive style of defending common with superheroes, researchers have proposed that superheroes may be an effective way to teach young preschool children the importance of defending others when they witness bullying (Johansson and Hannula 2012) and have suggested professors use superheroes when teaching young adults about ethical behavior (Gerde and Foster 2008). It is now generally agreed, as outlined by those researcher exposures to media violent will moderate the aggression behavior.

Accordingly, similarity in proposing the way behavior exposure in media, the findings suggest that in terms of behavioral correlates prosocial violent content is more similar to violent content than prosocial content. It is possible that when violent and prosocial media content co-occur, the violence is portrayed and create a significant relationship with aggression in ways that increase the likelihood of repetition (e.g., morally justified), or perhaps the more realistic and graphically presenting the aggressive content in prosocial violent media than the prosocial content, thus produce more probably to be affected and reinforced by the viewer (Barlett & Rodeheffer, 2009).

In fact, motive to create a prosocial behavior influencing by reason to act and strategy to adapt because there is a correlation between the moral reasoning and strategies of preschool children's favourite superheroes and their own moral reasoning, including their views towards aggressive defending (Johansson and Hannula 2012).

Though superheroes represent a force for good, their methods are highly aggressive. Indeed, Mares and Woodard (2005) found that exposure to prosocial aggression (where aggression is enacted to help others) tended to have the strongest effects on aggressive behavior. preschool children may learn from superheroes that aggressive behavior is justified and acceptable when there is cause. Media effects research has shown that identifying with an aggressive or prosocial character leads to greater replication of the behavior (Konijn et al. 2007).

Research has confirmed that superhero engagement is related to physical aggression in elementary-age preschool children (grades 1–4; Rosenkoetter et al. 2009). According to the GLM, it is possible that preschool children will create and then strengthen cognitive scripts on how to defend others when they are in need in a context of prosocial behavior. When preschool children witness others being bullied, these defending scripts may be activated to justify the good moral reasoning, increasing the likelihood that preschool children may intervene to help victims. Additionally, early exposure to superheroes has a significant effect with negative consequences because the development of defending behavior over time as preschool children rehearse and strengthen these scripts.

In summary, to identify a relationship between violent media exposure and aggression is likely a complicated one, and given that violent media exposure is not the only causal factor for aggression. It appears, though, that there are many ways by which violent media exposure could contribute to aggression but exposure to violent media has been confirmed as a causal risk factor for long-term harmful outcomes in terms of aggressive behavior, aggressive cognition, decreased empathy, and increment to violence (Coyne, 2016).

METHODOLOGY

Content analysis of published articles was undertaken in order to identify specific media effect and adaptation strategy regarding prosocial violent media exposure. The relationships between prosocial violent media exposure and aggression were clarified, based on analyses of selected publications.

First, relevant articles were selected from the databases of Science Direct, Scopus, Sage Publications and Google Scholar. This search was based on keywords including prosocial aggression, prosocial violent, media exposure, violent media and externalizing behavior. This process yielded a total of 63 articles. However, only 9 were used after the screening process during the second stage. Of the usable 5 articles, 8% were found to be related to prosocial violent media exposure. The articles selected covered most regions, mainly from Asia and Europe. These selected articles were analysed.

Following this introduction, the paper focuses on the effect or prosocial aggression through media exposure aspects toward aggression. The relationships were categorized to produce a summary regarding prosocial aggression for protecting the preschool children development behavior and minimizing the levels of violence among preschool children.

DISCUSSION

Due to the significant impacts of technological developments have changed the entertainment options that are available to people. Accordingly, an increasing number of individuals have chosen to watching a superhero media as a leisure-time activity especially preschool child. Consideration of theoretical perspectives on this relationship, there is a crucial need for effective adaptation strategies for parental monitoring.

A total of five articles were considered as the principal references in elaboration of the adaption strategies (see Table 1) while the remaining articles provided supporting information.

Table 1: Articles selected in formulating the basis of adaptation strategies for parental monitoring

Title of article	Authors	Adaptation Strategies Suggested
Persistent Effects of Violent Media Content.	Lindo, J. M., Swensen, I. D., & Waddell, G. R. (2020).	Parents, teachers, and policy makers should careful interpretation of these affects requires one to consider how that initial exposure might affect individuals' future activities.
Parental media monitoring, prosocial violent media exposure, and adolescents' prosocial and aggressive behaviors	Hailey G. Holmgren, Laura M. Padilla-Walker, Laura A. Stockdale & Sarah M. Coyne, (2019) 09	Parents should use caution and encourage their preschool children to watch media that has limited aggressive and violent content.
Pow! Boom! Kablam! Effects of Viewing Superhero Programs on Aggressive, Prosocial, and Defending Behaviors	Sarah M. Coyne & Laura Stockdale & Jennifer Ruh Linder & David A. Nelson ¹ & Kevin M. Collier ³ & Lee W. Essig, (2017)	Parents may need to help their preschool children filter the messages arising from superhero media in order to minimize aggressive behavior outcomes and promote defending gestures on behalf of their most vulnerable peers.
A matter of style? Exploring the effects of parental mediation styles on early adolescence media violence exposure and aggression.	Fikkers, K. M., Piotrowski, J. T., & Valkenburg, P. M. (2017)	Parents communicate by using autonomy-supportive style (i.e., by providing a rationale for rules and listening to the child's perspective)

Criminogenic Thinking Mediates
the Relation Between Violent
Media Exposure and Aggression

Laura Wagar & Jon Mandracchia
(2016)

Parents should also be educated on the influences violent media can have on their preschool children's subsequent thought processes and aggression, as well as the importance of preventing their preschool children from engaging with these types of media.

Although several scholars have touched on this issue, there is still a paucity of research which focusing on adaption strategies for parental monitoring. To narrow this gap, this paper provides the most significant adaptation strategies which is Active Mediation Style (AMS). Their effectiveness may depend on the style in which parents communicate these plans of action with their children.

The success of this strategies has been proven by (Hailey et al., 2019) that being said, AMS was the only parental monitoring behavior associated with higher levels of prosocial behavior via increased prosocial content. These associations are well supported by the Self-Determination Theory (SDT, Ryan & Deci, 2000) proposes that socialization is more likely to be successful when parents transmit values and regulations in a style that supports the independency of the child. Similarly, Pinquart (2017), noted that the effective parenting style such as authoritarian communication has the most favourable outcomes.

The General aggression theory (GAM), suggests that media content influences behavior, yet past research suggests that parents can play an important role in the content of the media their children are exposed to (input routes) and how this content is internalized and processed (scripts and schemes related to aggression and prosocial behavior). Effective style of parenting is important to create a positive effect on preschool children behavior because results indicate that in families where actively discussing violent media content with children, might actually lead to lower levels of exposure to negative content.

Although restriction style seems to be necessary for decreasing negative effects and behavioral outcomes (Meeus et al., 2018). According to Lindo, J. M., Swensen, I. D., & Waddell, G. R., (2020), effective parenting style is important to educate preschool children to understand the effect of violent media on behavior. This immaturity in higher-order cognitive processes may make preschool children at particular risk for increased aggression after exposure to violence in the media, especially superhero violence, and the results from this study support these concerns.

In order to be affective, any adaptation plan must be in line with the community's needs, abilities and interests. Thus, such plans must include the community, which will empower them by enabling them to posit their own ideas. To further strengthen this adaptive action, courses that offender both reactive and proactive knowledge can be offered to specifically group of parenting, as both will assist them in taking precautions against the effect of violent media in the short and long term. This study would suggest that media (specifically engagement with superheroes) influence preschool children behavior toward aggressiveness.

Notably, the current study is a concept paper and may not be developmentally enough time to capture the long-term effects of engagement with complicated characters and different type such as superheroes on the development of aggressive and prosocial behaviors in preschool children. Although this study is important in helping understand the possible adaption strategies and the effect violent media exposure on preschool children behavior.

Another limitation is that this study examined only one of many known influences on aggressiveness (i.e., violent media exposure), to the exclusion of many other known associated factors. As such, the extent to which violent media exposure contributes to aggressiveness in the context of these other factors cannot be known based on these data.

Children in early childhood may be particularly at risk for the negative effects of media violence exposure when the superhero medium is emphasized. It appears to be difficult for young children to disengage aggression and prosocial behavior when they are combined, as is common in the superhero genre of media.

CONCLUSION

Parents cited aggression and defending in superhero media as reasons they supported or discouraged this type of media for their preschool children. In fact, parents specifically cited these prosocial behaviors as reasons for allowing their children to engage with superhero media. The combination of high levels of aggression and parental approval of such aggression may explain the unique effects of superhero media above and beyond other forms of media aggression. Superhero engagement was also associated with increased relational aggression over time. Some parents reported encouraging engagement with superheroes because they defend others and stand for good and justice. Others reported limiting preschool children's superhero exposure because of the mixed messages regarding physical aggression and violence and defending behaviors.

It would seem that parents are struggling to understand the potential effects of superhero engagement on their young preschool children's aggressive and defending behaviors. One study on prosocial violent superhero media in young children discussed the possibility of parents not knowing how to handle prosocial violent content (Coyne et al., 2017).

A number of significant studies have identified several prosocial aggression 'symptoms. These symptoms are expected to worsen in the future, and have been identified as affecting the society and negatively impacting young children for this cross-over effect as they are still attempting to learn the rules of social behavior.

Although the situation is expected to worsen, however, a number of efforts can be made at the individual level to decrease and delay the impacts, and these centre on strengthening parental adaptive ability.

It is suggested that social adaptation should be intensified by focusing on main adaptation strategy which is active parental monitoring (AMS). These adaptation strategies can be a basis for policy makers, researcher and parenting communities to produce a better adaptation strategy that are in line with the community's needs, abilities and interests.

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