

20.14: TV Violence

Learning Objectives

- Does Television Viewing Encourage Aggression in Children?



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Overview

How much television is too much for children? Television advocates espouse the educational benefits that children may reap from instructive programming. However, many researchers say that excess television watching may contribute to aggressive behavior in children. Young boys, in particular may be susceptible to this effect. What are the effects, if any, on children's behavior when television is used as a babysitter?

In a survey of University of Houston-Downtown students, parents reported their children's age, characteristic behavior, and television viewing habits. Convenience sampling was used to gather 30 subjects ($N = 30$).

Questions to Answer

Is there a relationship between hours of television watched and child's obedience? Will a child be more or less aggressive if he/she watches a lot of television?

Design Issues

This survey offered a very limited sample ($N = 30$), which was further hindered by reporting participants' filling out an individual survey for each individual child. This contributes to some lack of true variability in responses because participants tended to report similar behavior for each child. This may magnify errors associated with self-reported data. The sample would provide greater reliability if each participant reported on only one child's behavior.

The survey has broad questions which do not provide much context for reported behaviors. In some instances aggression may be positively rated, but this survey treats all aggression as a negative characteristic. In addition, the instrument itself measures largely nominal data, making in depth analysis difficult.

Descriptions of Variables

Table 20.14.1: Description of Variables

Variable	Description
TV hours	Total number of TV hours watched per day

Obedience	How obedient the child is 1 = very obedient, 5 = not obedient
Attitude	Attitude while playing with other children 1 = non-aggressive, 5 = very aggressive

Data Files

TV.xls

Links

TV Guide - Mighty Morphin' Power Rangers v. Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles

References

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