



The Effect of Television Watching Habits on the Behaviours of Primary School Children in Assiut City, Egypt

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Abstract:

Television gives children a distorted image of the world; it makes it harder for children to distinguish reality from fantasy. This study was conducted to identify the effect of television watching habits on the behaviours of primary school children in Assiut city, Egypt, using a descriptive cross-sectional research design and quota sample technique to recruit (382) parents of children. A structured interview questionnaire was used to collect data related to the socio-demographic characteristics, television watching habits, tendency for violence. The Parent Report Form of the Child Behaviour Checklist (CBCL) was also used. As regards television viewing habits, the children were classified into three groups: the first did not watch television on a daily base or watched it less than 2 hours daily; the second group watched it from 2-4 hours daily and the third group watched it more than 4 hours daily. The mean age of the pupils was (9.1) years. Television viewing time had a positive correlation with externalizing subscales which combine the delinquent behaviour and aggressive behaviour of children. In contrast, a negative correlation was found in relation to children activities, social, school achievement, total level of competence and anxiety/depression. The mean score for the total competence for both boys and girls was explicitly lower among group III than group I. On the other hand, the mean score for somatic complaints, anxiety/depression, social problems, thought problems, attention problems, delinquent behaviour and aggressive behaviour was higher among group III than groups II & I. 64.3%, 60.0% & 100.0%, respectively, of the studied children who watched television more than 4 hours daily had mild, moderate and sever tendency for violence. A significant relation was found between tendency for violence and television viewing time as well as contents which are mainly violent and horror. The main recommendation is that parents should be advised and encouraged through an educational program to restrict the television viewing time of their children to less than two hours daily and exclude violent and horror materials

Keywords:

Effect of television watching, television watching habits, children behaviours, violence, primary school, child behaviour checklist.

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