
**Aim / Purpose of Study:**
To see whether television has any effect on children's behaviour.

**Sampling Method:**
Opportunity sampling: whoever was present in the school at the time of experiment (3-8 year olds)

**Independent Variable:**
Effects of television (not manipulated since it is a quasi-experiment)

**Hypothesis:**
Children show signs of aggression/anti-social behaviour after being introduced to television.

**Null hypothesis:**
Children do not show signs of aggression/anti-social behaviour after being introduced to television.

**Research Method:**
- Natural experiment (no control over variables) unlike Bandura, real-life setting
- Non-experimental in the sense that it is a covert observation

**Potential Confounding Variables:**
- Authoritative figure (teachers) present at the playground could have minimized the freedom to which the participants would have behaved (preventing them from acting aggressive in case there were consequences to their negative behaviour)

**Extraneous Variables:**
- Could have been that not enough time was allotted for the television to seriously influence the behaviour of its viewers (children)
- Did not say whether the children knew/were told in advance that experimenters will be present on the playground that day

**Blind Technique**
- Single blind technique: children did not know that they were being observed

**Cultural influences**
- Different culture: remote and small community has high parental control-prevents children from acting/imitating aggressive behavior from television

**Strengths/limitations:**
- High inter-rater reliability: the observations were made by more than one psychologists and everything was recorded so that any disagreements among the experimenters about the observational data collected could be resolved using the video footage, (avoids subjective interpretation/researcher bias)
- Demand characteristics are low, considering that the participants are too young to realize that they are part of a study. However, this could otherwise be proven wrong if one of the school staff had mentioned about the study to the children.
- Low cross-cultural validity: experiment completed in an isolated island from different forms of media, a close community. Thus, it is difficult to generalize the study for all cultures that have been rather influenced by urbanization and modernization.
- The programs available in St.Helena were not the mainland programs watched by children in places like Europe. So, the differences in the shows watched, since the mainland programs may have been more violent than the ones available in St.Helena, causes the study to lower its validity.
- Replicability: low, for it will give different results in other urban and modern societies (shown in Zabrack and Kimball 1986), and the results might not be the same now, for the community is no longer very isolated.
- Ecological validity: was not completed in a lab but rather in a natural setting.
- Quasi experiment: difficult to identify what aspects of IV caused participants to behave the way they acted (DV)

**Experimental Design:**
Independent measures

**Methodology:**
- Children from 2 schools in 1994 were filmed on the school playground (approx. 256 minutes of video footage was taken)
- Then, television was introduced in 1995
- The 2 schools were again filmed (approx. 344 minutes of video footage) and the children’s viewing diaries (what shows they watched) were analyzed
- 26 playground behaviors were observed (ex. hitting and kicking, and pro-social behaviours such as turn-taking)

**Results of the Study (2000):**
- 2 showed decreases in anti-social behaviour amongst boys
- 5 showed increases in pro-social behaviour in boys and girls
- 2 showed decreases in pro-social behaviour in boys
- Boys displayed less hitting and pushing after TV was introduced
- Boys less willing to help or show affection
- Boys showed more anti-social behaviour than girls
- Both boys and girls showed significant increases in pro-social behaviour overall

**Analysis of Conclusions:**
- The children at St. Helena were exposed to exactly the same level of violence as kids in UK see through television, yet no significant differences were found in the very behaviours most often associated with TV viewing, such as kicking, pushing and hitting.

**Gender Influence:**
- Girls tend to be more aggressive verbally while boys tend to be more aggressive physically. This could have altered the data.

**Controls**
- Recording was conducted on a day that did not have poor weather nor lots of missing students (absent)
- Same 2 schools were used both times (for before the T.V. and after the T.V.) to minimize differences within the participant group
Ethics and Controversies of Research / Criticisms:
- Deception; but was necessary
- Even though there was confidentiality to some extent in the sense that no personal references were made to the participants, in a small group/community like St.Helena, people will know locally of those involved in the study
- Confidentiality issue: video footage taken without consent from parents/no consent for the entire study

Furthering our understanding of the issue studied:
- Is aggressive behaviour in western children really encouraged by television or lack of parental control?
- St. Helena is known to encourage high parental control/supervision and seems to have been able to control its children’s behaviour

Compare/Contrast studies:
Canadian Study by Williams et al (1981) and Kimball/Zabrack (1986) found contradictory results. Children in a town which had received TV for the first time showed significant increases in physical and verbal aggression. It is difficult to say why these two studies show different results, it could be due to different cultures that influence how the TV content is viewed and imitated.

Precepts of a social theory or school of thought:
- Social learning theory: the learning of social behaviours through the observing and replicating of behaviours seen in others. It refers mainly to the learning of social/moral behaviours after observing/imitating a model.
- This study shows that social learning theory is an oversimplified description of human behavior; the children in this study, unlike in Bandura and the bobodoll, did not follow/imitate aggressive models from television.
- So, if children of western society are acting aggressive, is that because of the media(television) or lack of parental control? Maybe it’s just we keep blaming the children’s behavior on situational factors(media influence) instead of dispositional factors(our lack of supervision).

Enhancing our understanding of Jonestown through this study:
- Jonestown was built in Guyana, South America, so it was not isolated like St.Helena. However, the people within the temple were isolated from the outside world. This way, they were not influenced by the actions/views of people outside of their group (a control Jim Jones has on the people of the temple).
- More people join people’s temple because of the popularity it has received through media; people see others join people’s temple and follow/imitate their behaviour (social learning theory).
- The people within the temple are a close community and are watched constantly by someone else; if they went against Jim Jones’s wishes, they would be accused for their actions in front of everyone during the occasional meetings in the temple. Knowing these consequences, one wouldn’t dare act against Jim Jones. St.Helena is a closed community with high parental control. The children are watched constantly by their parents and neighbours; Since the children know that there are consequences to behaving aggressive/violent to others, they restrict themselves from acting against their parents/adults in an aggressive way like the people in the temple.