ESSAY: Do violent Video Games cause Behavior Problem on Teenagers?

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Introduction

Over the past three decades, the emergence of video games has created a lot of interest, especially among the teenagers. In this regard, more young people spend much of their time on video games. Approximately 66 percent of teenagers play the video games, which consist of violent content. However, studies have indicated playing violent video games promote adverse effects on the lives of adolescents (Greitemeyer & Mügge, 2014). In fact, violence portrayed in video games leads to aggression and vicious behaviors. Studies conducted among the pediatricians and parents illustrates that video games featuring violent content can contribute to antisocial behaviors. Moreover, the American Psychological Association (APA) has also noted that violent video games are linked to lower prosocial behavior, intensified aggressive affect, hostile cognitions, and aggressive behaviors. Similarly, it is associated to aggression sensitivity (Ferguson, 2015).

Many parts of the world, including the United States have recorded rising cases of violent conducts among adolescents and children. Therefore, teachers, parents, and other stakeholders must prudently handle this troubling and complex matter (Greitemeyer & Mügge, 2014). The problem often begins with children in the preschool. Some of these behaviors include fighting, physical aggression, and anger tantrums. Other teenagers may also exhibit vandalism, deliberate damage of property, fire setting, brutality towards animals, and weapon use as well as thoughts of intending to harm/kill others. Exposure to violent video games is one of the major risk factors of aggressive behaviors among the teenagers (King, Gradisar, Drummond, Lovato, Wessel, Micic & Delfabbro, 2013).

A study by Ferguson, (2015) indicated that when children are playing or watching violent video games, they are spending time in a brutal and violent environment. For instance, videos games such as Black Ops are more popular with the teenagers but may impart antisocial behaviors in their lives (Ferguson, 2015). Precisely, more than 916 million hours have been spent in the video game. Additionally, nearly 82,000 individuals perish each minute in this video game. Therefore, when teenagers are playing such games, they are

failing to think about the destruction they are initiating. Consequently, their behaviors shift entirely towards violence. Some scholars have defended the use of these games arguing that they tend to relieve stress (DeLisi, Vaughn, Gentile, Anderson & Shook, 2013). However, such arguments are rejected on the fact that children participating in those games develop a feeling that mirror the real life. Besides, some of them would consider the main characters as their heroes or role model hence want to be like them (King, Gradisar, Drummond, Lovato, Wessel, Micic & Delfabbro, 2013).

According to Gentile, Li, Khoo, Prot & Anderson, (2014) violent video games promote the decline of empathy and prosocial behaviors among the teenagers. Moreover, it tends to lower the sensitivity to violence. They also encourage the mass shooting of peers and teachers in school. In 2012, Adam Lanza a student at Sandy Hook Elementary School was involved in violent behaviors where he shot six teachers and twenty children. The school was located in Connecticut (Gentile, Li, Khoo, Prot & Anderson, 2014). Reports indicated that the teenager was preoccupied with violent video games.

In an experiment conducted by King, Gradisar, Drummond, Lovato, Wessel, Micic & Delfabbro, (2013), teenage boys were randomly allocated to play either nonviolent or violent video games and later allowed to detonate loud noise to a perceived opponent via headphones. The findings demonstrated that boys who participated in violent games were robustly linked to vicious characters. In this regard, these teenagers carefully chose loud levels of noise that triggered permanent hearing injury to their peers (King, Gradisar, Drummond, Lovato, Wessel, Micic & Delfabbro, 2013). Other pieces of research noted that children who engage in shooting video competitions have a greater tendency to take up a gun and begin firing in schools and other social events.

Utilizing a lot of time playing violent video games can incite adolescents to behave in a violent way. The assassination of a considerable number of opponents in a video game can guide youths to act in a hostile manner when confronted with the real world (Gentile, Li, Khoo, Prot & Anderson, 2014). Brutal massacres in the video games are likely to teach the

sub-consciousness of the adolescent to act viciously. Another study conducted by

Greitemeyer & Mügge, (2014) indicated that when two categories of adolescent were

requested to participate in the video games. One group spent more time as compared to other.

The findings founded those teenagers who spent more time in the fierce video games tended

to behave cruelly (Greitemeyer & Mügge, 2014).

Empirical evidence has also highlighted those teenagers who play video games that

are more ferocious have a habit of thinking of violence as entertainment as they tend to

associate hostility with amusement. Furthermore, by participating in violent video games,

young people are pleased when they have succeeded which they subconsciously apply in the

real world (DeLisi, Vaughn, Gentile, Anderson & Shook, 2013). In most cases, when such

video games are played for a long time, the limit between fun and violence in the game and

vehemence in the real world is crossed. A massive quantity of blood, dead bodies, and

weapons displayed in the video games trigger insensitivity to hostility among the teenagers.

Most scholars have noted that video games particularly the violent ones, train the young

people to be ferocious in nature. Likewise, they can be antisocial, violent and lazy (King,

Gradisar, Drummond, Lovato, Wessel, Micic & Delfabbro, 2013).

Video games are also dangerous to the youth or teenagers owing to their addictiveness

when used uncontrollably. In most cases, the players are obliged to repeat similar actions

frequently to advance in the next mission, level or to fulfill a particular project (Gentile, Li,

Khoo, Prot & Anderson, 2014). Nevertheless, the conclusion of the purpose or a level

requires an enormous amount of patience and time. In most cases, it needs days of

uninterrupted practice for a young person to complete all the phases of a video game

(Ferguson, 2015). Therefore, the social life of the teenager is limited, and all that it takes for

him is to maim or kill as many adversaries as possible to be successful. Experts have pointed

out that teens spend an unlimited amount of hours in gaming aiming to uplift their

proficiency in this field. The competition in the current generation between the young people

is more about the capability, which they can demonstrate in emerging video games. On the contrary, most of them have lost focus on academic competition but instead focused on gaming rivalries. Young people formulate social groups to access the violent video games at a certain period of the day. Moreover, they fight with each other aiming to triumph the game's championship (King, Gradisar, Drummond, Lovato, Wessel, Micic & Delfabbro, 2013).

More importantly, utilizing a large proportion of their free time on video games is not only detrimental to their social behaviors but also increases the risk to obesity. DeLisi, Vaughn, Gentile, Anderson & Shook, (2013) highlighted that most young people are likely to consume a large chunk of food in the process of playing video games as compared to when they are resting or studying. The inequity of calorie consumption while playing video games, sitting down without physical exercise and eating predisposes them to many health-linked challenges. Youngsters are restricted to visit the gym or nearby training field for physical activity. For this reason, they become at risk of an overweight problem, which subsequently exposes them to the heart attack in the future (DeLisi, Vaughn, Gentile, Anderson & Shook, 2013).

Based on neuroscientist's perspectives, engaging in violent video games facilitates changes in behaviors among children. The youngsters playing the video games acquire a behavior to be self-centered, more violent, reduced attention span, and demonstrate instant gratification (Gentile, Li, Khoo, Prot & Anderson, 2014). Parents whose children play the games for an extended period have attested to the fact that they have observed behavioral changes. Moreover, violent video games also affect the ability of the young people to communicate effectively. The games only help in the development of a fight part of the cognitive mind. However, the reasoning part of the brain remains immature (Greitemeyer & Mügge, 2014).

The challenge existing in the country can be addressed by restricting the gameplay of specific videos that encourage promotes aggressive conducts among the teenagers. In so doing, it will ensure that the individuals are freed from constant stress. If the teenagers had a

challenging day rather than being vicious, he/she should eliminate his frustrations on a computer-generated enemy in the video games rather than causing injury (Ferguson, 2015). Violent games offer precisely that type of escape providing teens and ground where they can play with imaginations of conflict, aggression, danger, and establishing a sense of mastery that can act as a cure or at a minimum a significant pause from the daily worries.

Furthermore, video games rating and restrictions concerning age must be severely applied. More importantly, rating creates awareness to the purchaser of the video in order to help him/her understand the type of game and its contents such as sexual actions, drugs, and violence. The guardians or parents must work together with children to identify the rating to comprehend if it is suitable for the kid can play it (Gentile, Li, Khoo, Prot & Anderson, 2014). They would also know whether it is age-appropriate. The stores must also avoid selling the violent video games having a rating over 18 for children. In a variety of cases, the sellers do not confirm whether the video games are suitable to a person of a particular age (King, Gradisar, Drummond, Lovato, Wessel, Micic & Delfabbro, 2013). Significantly, the sellers should also demand identification cards before the purchase of the violent video games.

Conclusion

Video games cause a wide range of adverse effects to young people playing them. For instance, the continuous exposure to violent behaviors gradually promotes aggressive behaviors, antisocial skills, and addiction. The youngsters tend to replicate the virtual behaviors on the real-life situations (DeLisi, Vaughn, Gentile, Anderson & Shook, 2013). Furthermore, it is a source of poor health among the kids. For these reasons, the government must institute various mechanisms to curb the rising cases of violence among the youths (Greitemeyer & Mügge, 2014). For instance, all violent games must be rated to guarantee that they are age-appropriate. Similarly, parents have a special part in dealing with this challenge because they must accompany their children in stores while purchasing video games. Finally,

shopkeepers must also apply judgment while vending rated games to unauthorized teenagers across the country.

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