Aggression and Violence Affected due to Movies in People

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ABSTRACT: It is commonly known that people tend to adopt the behaviors to which we are exposed more frequently. If an individual is exposed to an aggressive environment, it is likely for them to adapt aggressiveness in their day-to-day behavior. This is also implacable to the things you watch, if you watch films or web series that are violent in nature it may have an impact on your mind. When we watch films in our leisure time films usually contain some violent scenes. These violent scenes directly influence one's emotional and cognitive development.

The body begins to release stress and fear-related hormones like adrenaline and cortisol when someone watches a violent scene in a movie. This led to an increase in aggressive behavior and emotional distress. On top of that violent movies lead to a decrease in the empathy level in one's behavior. This article will describe how violent movies impact the minds of viewers negatively and what tips can we follow to overcome if it affects us.

KEYWORDS-aggression, violence, movies, people, scenes

I.INTRODUCTION

Violent films have been found to have a negative effect on the mental health, leading to:

Increase aggressive behaviour

Research has shown that violent movies have and negative impact on individuals' minds irrespective of their age. It psychologically impacts if they are adults or children. This effect is more pronounced in adolescents and children as they are in a stage of building up their morals and values. So, violent movies negatively impact their brain to accumulate violence in their behavior.[1,2,3]

Increase anxiety level

If someone watches aggressive scenes or clips, they tend to release specific hormones which enhances the fear and stress in one's body and increase the stress level. It also can make people feel more anxious and fearful of the world around them and ultimately hinders the daily life activities. This is more harmful for children as they will be unable to distinguish between the real and fictional world.

Desensitization to violence

One of the most widely discussed psychological impacts of watching violent films is Desensitization. Repeated exposure to violent clips can lead to less emotional activity. They start responding normally to the day-to-day violent news and incidents. This fades the line between real-world problems. People start thinking in a more aggressive way and think it's very normal to behave aggressively.

Decrease in concentration

Violence rather be in real life or in movies creates restlessness in one's life and this restlessness hinders the concentration of an individual. The hormones released during violent film watching impact the brain and restrain one's to concentrating properly. These negative consequences prevent individuals from performing tasks properly.

Decrease in self-esteem

If an individual is unable to concentrate on work, their anxiety level is up so, it is most likely for them that they do not perform well in their field in the long run which ultimately decreases their self-esteem and self-confidence. This has an adverse effect on the person's general development, which is bad in the long run.

Imitation

The Copycat Effect refers to the tendency for people to try to replicate movie scenes more frequently. Due to this copycat effect, they self-harm themselves and even the surroundings.

Nightmares and PTSD

When you watch thriller and violent scenes, you may have nightmares and also have a deep post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). These are so negative for children They may develop a trauma which deeply impact their childhood experience and, they may have trust issue in people and unable to distinguish real and fiction world.

The psychological impact varies on the number of factors like age, gender, experience, personality etc. Limiting yourself is the one and only tip to overcome its impact. Parents and primary caregiver must should keep an eye on the contents their child watches and how they react after watching certain stuffs. Parental control for children and self-control for adults is important for overcoming this. One should always watch stuffs which helps them to comfort themselves. Watching films in thriller and violent genre may disturb you a lot. If anyone watches violent films or clips so, parents, educators and caregiver must teach them the difference between the real world and the fictional world.

II.DISCUSSION

One of the most studied—and most controversial—topics in media psychology is the impact of violent media on consumers, especially children. Violence in is movies, on television, in video games, and on the internet. It's also included in content aimed at kids, tweens, and teens, and therefore, it's no surprise that psychologists, parents, and media consumers, in general, are concerned about the impact it has on people.

As a result, ever since the advent of television decades ago, psychologists have investigated the possibility of a link between the consumption of violent media and increases in real-life aggression.

This article will explore the research on this topic including arguments for and against an association. In addition, this article will examine newer research that has found a relationship between exposure to violent content, especially via news media, and mental health issues, such as depression and anxiety.

Does Consuming Violent Content Lead to Increased Aggression?

Studies have consistently shown that media violence has an impact on real-life aggression.[1] These studies use a diverse set of methods and participants, leading many experts on the impact of media violence to agree that aggression increases as a result of media violence consumption.

However, that doesn't mean exposure to media violence drives consumers to murder or other particularly violent acts. These studies explore different kinds of aggression, making the association the research has established between violent media and aggression more nuanced than it initially appears.[4,5,6]

Evidence for a Link Between Violent Content and Aggression

Many experiments in labs have provided evidence that demonstrates that short-term exposure to violent media increases aggression in children, teenagers, and young adults. However, aggression doesn't always mean physical aggression.[1] It can also mean verbal aggression, such as yelling insults, as well as thinking aggressive thoughts or having aggressive emotions.

There Varying Degrees of Aggression

Moreover, even physical aggression exists on a continuum from a light shove to something far more dangerous. As a result, people may become more aggressive immediately following exposure to media violence but that aggression manifests itself in a variety of different ways, a majority of which wouldn't be considered particularly dangerous.

Consuming Violent Media During Childhood May Result in Adult Aggression

More disturbing are the few longitudinal studies that have followed people over decades and have shown that frequent exposure to media violence in childhood results in adult aggression even if people no longer consume violent media as adults.

For example, one study found that frequent exposure to violent television at age 8 predicted aggressive behavior at ages 19 and 30 for male, but not female, participants.[2] This effect held even after controlling for variables like social class, IQ, and initial aggressiveness.

Similarly, another study that surveyed 329 participants between the ages of 6 and 9 found that 15 years later the exposure of both males and females to television violence in childhood predicted increased aggression in adulthood.[3] In particular, the 25% of study participants who viewed the most media violence in childhood were the most likely to be much more aggressive in adulthood.

These individuals exhibited a range of behaviors including:

- Shoving their spouses
- Beating people up
- Committing crimes

This was especially true if they identified with aggressive characters and felt that television violence was realistic when they were children.

These findings suggest that frequent early exposure to television violence can have a powerful impact on individuals over time and well into their adult lives.

Why Is This Topic So Controversial?

So if there's so much research evidence for a link between media violence and real-world aggression, why is the debate over this topic ongoing? Part of the issue is one of definition.

Studies often define violence and aggression in very different ways and they use different measures to test the association, making it hard to replicate the results.[4] Moreover, many researchers edit together media for lab experiments, creating a situation where participants must watch and react to media that bears minimal resemblance to anything they'd actually consume via TV, movies, or the internet.[5]

As a result, even when these experiments find media violence causes aggression, the extent to which it can be generalized to the population as a whole is limited.

Of course, it would be naïve to think that consuming media violence has no impact on people, but it appears it may not be the most powerful influence. The effect of media violence is likely to vary based on other factors including personality traits, developmental stage, social and environmental influences, and the context in which the violence is presented.

It's also important to recognize that not all aggression is negative or socially unacceptable. One study[6] found that a relationship between exposure to television violence and an increase in positive aggression, or aggression that isn't intended to cause harm, in the form of participation in extreme or contact sports.

Does Consuming Violent Media Lead to Mental Health Issues?

While psychologists have been studying the association between the consumption of violent media and increased aggression for well over 50 years, more recently, some have turned their attention to the impact of media violence on mental health concerns.

Consumption of Violent Media May Lead to Anxiety

Studies have demonstrated that there's a correlation between exposure to media violence and increased anxiety and the belief that the world is a scary place.[7] For instance, an experimental investigation[7] found that late adolescents who were exposed to a violent movie clip were more anxious than those who watched a nonviolent clip.

These findings suggest that the regular consumption of violent media could lead to anxiety in the long-term.
Constant Exposure to Violent Media Via Technology May Lead to Poorer Mental Health[7,8,9]

Today, the violence shown on the news media may especially impact people's mental health. New technology means that violent events, including terrorist attacks, school shootings, and natural disasters, can be filmed and reported on immediately, and media consumers all over the world will be exposed to these events almost instantly via social media or news alerts on their smartphones and other devices.

Moreover, this exposure is likely to be intense and repeated due to the need to fill a 24-hour news cycle. Studies have shown that this kind of exposure, especially to acts of terrorism, has the potential to lead to depression, anxiety, stress reactions, substance use, and even post-traumatic stress (PTSD).[8]

Plus, those who take in more images of a disaster tend to be more likely to experience negative mental health consequences. For example, in a study[9] conducted shortly after the attacks of September 11, 2001, people who

viewed more television news reports about what happened in the seven days after the event had more symptoms of PTSD than those who had viewed less television news coverage.

How to Cope With the Impact of Media Violence

Violence will continue to be depicted in the media and, for most adults, there's nothing wrong with watching a violent horror or action movie or playing a violent video game, as long as it doesn't impair your mental health or daily functioning.

However, if you feel you're being negatively impacted by the violence depicted in the media, especially after a disaster that's getting constant coverage on the news, the first solution is to stop engaging with devices that could lead to further exposure.

This means turning off the TV, and for anyone who frequently looks at the news on their computers or mobile devices, adjusting any settings that could lead you to see more images of a violent event.

How You Can Help Your Child

For parents concerned about children's exposure to violent media, the solution isn't to attempt to prevent children from consuming violence altogether, although limiting their exposure is valuable.

Instead, parents should co-view violent media with their children and then talk about what they see. This helps children become discerning media consumers who can think critically about the content they read, watch, and play.

Similarly, when a disturbing event like a school shooting happens it's valuable to discuss it with children so they can express their emotions and parents can put the incident in the context of its overall likelihood.[10]

When to Seek Therapy

If a parent notices their child seems depressed or anxious after frequent exposure to media violence or an adult notices their mental health is suffering due to regular consumption of violent media, it may be valuable to seek the help of a mental health professional.

III.RESULTS

Screen violence has been defined as "depictions of characters (or players) trying to physically harm other characters (or players)". It is as old as the origin of screen media itself, with very violent scenes included in the first multi-reel film "The Story of the Kelly Gang", screened in Melbourne in 1906. Evidence suggests that watching violent TV programmes and engaging with violent video games are associated with aggressive behaviour in children, teenagers, and young adults, both in the short and long term. Although the association between screen violence and aggressive behaviour appears to be modest, this suggests that other factors also play a part in the development of aggression.

Screen violence is globally widespread and has become easily accessible and available on demand in the last decade, courtesy of technology (such as cable TV, tablets, smart phones, and social media platforms). Not even poverty, probably except for extreme poverty, seems to protect many people from being exposed to screen violence because even the simplest TV can be found in modest homes and can be the only source of entertainment in remote areas. Social media platforms (such as YouTube, TikTok, Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, and Instagram) are extremely popular among adults and children. With an estimated 6.8 billion people worldwide owning a smartphone, nearly 87% of the world's population, immediate access to violent content has increased exponentially.

Exposure to violent content can decrease empathy and cause increased aggressive thoughts, anger, and aggressive behaviour. A meta-analysis of 24 studies from Canada, the USA, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, and Singapore concluded that engaging with violent video games was related to aggression. This study confirms earlier findings from another meta-analysis of 130 research reports, comprising 130,000 participants. Time spent watching screen violence has also been directly associated with increased bullying and cyberbullying in both boys and girls. In addition, aggressive behaviour during childhood appears to be an important predictor of violent behaviour in older adolescents and young adults.

In the 1970s, the TV industry in the USA put pressure on the US Government to exclude prominent researchers in psychology and aggressive behaviour from a committee—that was set to study the effects of TV violence on behaviour and mental health. This resembles one of the strategies traditionally used by the tobacco companies to oppose unfriendly health policies: to distort science. Certainly, there is a large amount of money at stake. The global revenue value in TV & video segment, video games, and broadband internet services combined is expected to grow to about US$1300 billion in 2011, by far more than the global tobacco market value.

Despite the negative impact of screen violence on behaviour, little has been done to reduce screen violence, particularly in children and adolescents. Watersheds on TV content and ratings for TV programmes and movies are some of the most common policies implemented to regulate screen media in many countries, including those in Latin America. Yet many PG-13-rated programmes are full of violence. Moreover, these policies do little or nothing to address screen violence available on the internet, including social media platforms and video games. In some countries, policies and recommendations focus primarily on parental responsibility, which is of little help if no adult is present. For example, according to the National Television Council in Chile, 52% of children aged 6–12 years watch audio-visual content without adult supervision. This suggests that parental control might not be enough to tackle this highly complex problem that could require interventions at multiple levels. It is likely that screen violence will be more difficult to deal with than other trade issues, such as tobacco and alcohol, because screen content can reach continents within seconds, with virtually no barriers or time to filter content.

More research is needed to better understand the impact of screen violence on mental health. For instance, a topic that has been little explored is the possible effect of violence displayed in social media platforms on aggressive behaviour. This information would be very valuable given the exponential growth of popularity of these internet platforms, which have little regulation. Further research is also required to investigate whether there is an association between chronic exposure to screen violence and addiction, crime, suicide, or mass shooting.[10,11,12]
In the latest State of the Union, on February 7, Joseph Biden Jr (president of the USA) addressed the need to do more for children's mental health and to regulate social media companies and their impact on children. "We must finally hold social media companies accountable for the experiment they are running on our children for profit," Biden said. Policymakers and governments should put screen violence in their agenda to tackle this real threat to mental health, re-assess the growing scientific evidence, implement stricter policies, and educate children and adolescents so that they know how to discriminate and process the content of visual media. As many things in life, screen media has wonderful positive aspects, but can also have serious consequences on health if not used and regulated properly. Ethical considerations should help set limits of what is reasonably permissive for screen content, particularly for children and adolescents. Further action is urgently needed to regulate violent content in screen media.

One study shows that people do become more aggressive after watching violence in movies, however, it depends on what personality you have. It is interesting to see how it depends on how people react to the violent scenes they watch. These scenes can affect our decisions are made due to emotion and how we think. People in the study were affected in different ways and some were more aggressive than others after watching these types of scenes.

Movie makers are not going to change the what they put in their movies and violence is always going to be a part of it. It's intent of being entertainment is not always going to be beneficial to society. These violent scenes can cause aggression to some and this may lead to violence. Finding people with aggressive behavior at a young age is

something that people can do to prevent violence in movies from affecting their behavior and aggression.[16,17,18,19]

IV.CONCLUSION

Why are audiences attracted to bloodshed, gore and violence? A recent study from researchers at the University of Augsburg, Germany and the University of Wisconsin-Madison found that people are more likely to watch movies with gory scenes of violence if they felt there was meaning in confronting violent aspects of real life.

Anne Bartsch, University of Augsburg, Germany and Louise Mares, University of Wisconsin-Madison, will present their findings at the 63rd Annual Conference of the International Communication Association.

Their study examined whether these serious, contemplative, and truth-seeking motivations for exposure to violent portrayals are more than just an intellectual pleasure.[13,14,15]

They invited a large binational sample from Germany and the US (total of 482 participants), ranging in age from 18-82, and with varying levels of education.

Participants viewed film trailers featuring different levels of gore and meaningfulness, and rated their likelihood of watching the full movie.

They also indicated their perceptions of the film (how gory, meaningful, thought-provoking, suspenseful, etc.).

Earlier studies have suggested that audiences are not necessarily attracted to violence per se, but seem to be drawn to violent content because they anticipate other benefits, such as thrill and suspense.[19]

These findings suggest that such hedonistic pleasures are only part of the story about why we willingly expose ourselves to scenes of bloodshed and aggression.

Some types of violent portrayals seem to attract audiences because they promise to satisfy truth-seeking motivations by offering meaningful insights into some aspect of the human condition.

"Perhaps depictions of violence that are perceived as meaningful, moving and thought-provoking can foster empathy with victims, admiration for acts of courage and moral beauty in the face of violence, or self-reflection with regard to violent impulses," said Bartsch. "Examining the prevalence of such prosocial responses and the conditions under which they occur offers a theoretically intriguing and socially valuable direction for further work."[20]

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