

**EFFECTS OF VIOLENT FILMS AND VIDEO GAMES ON CHILDREN IN
SELECTED VILLAGES IN GIYANI MUNICIPALITY, LIMPOPO PROVINCE**

MASTER OF ARTS IN MEDIA STUDIES

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**EFFECTS OF VIOLENT FILMS AND VIDEO GAMES ON CHILDREN IN
SELECTED VILLAGES IN GIYANI MUNICIPALITY, LIMPOPO PROVINCE**

by

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- ABA : AUSTRALIAN BROADCASTING AUTHORITY
- BCCSA : THE BROADCASTING COMPLAINTS COMMISSION OF SOUTH AFRICA
- BSA : BROADCASTING SERVICE ACT
- DOC : DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS
- ECA : ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS ACT
- ESRB : ENTERTAINMENT SOFTWARE RATING BOARD
- FPB : FILM AND PUBLICATION BOARD
- IBA : INDEPENDENT BROADCASTING AUTHORITY
- ICASA : THE INDEPENDENT COMMUNICATIONS AUTHORITY OF SOUTH AFRICA
- IDSA : INTERACTIVE DIGITAL SOFTWARE ASSOCIATION
- MPAA : THE MOTION PICTURE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA
- OFLC : THE OFFICE OF LITERATURE AND FILM CLASSIFICATION
- PG : PARENTAL GUIDELINES
- PTA : PARENTAL TEACHER ASSOCIATION

SATRA : SOUTH AFRICAN TELECOMMUNICATIONS REGULATORY
AUTHORITY

TV : TELEVISION

DEDICATION

In memory of my late sister, Khanyisa Khavisa Zitha. I dedicate this dissertation to her.

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DECLARATION

I declare that *Effects of Violent Films and Video Games on Children in selected villages in Giyani Municipality, Limpopo Province*, is my own work and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references and that this work has not been submitted before for any degree at any other institution.

.....

Nkosinathi Zitha (Ms)

23/05/2014

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to outline the effects of violent films and video games on children in Giyani. The study used both qualitative and quantitative methods. Data collection was done using three methods, namely: structured questionnaires, interviews and observations. Participants for this study were sixty (60) children from four selected villages, namely Ndhambhi, Mageva , Bambeni and nwamarhanga. Twenty (20) parents from the same villages were also selected. Films and video games remain the source of entertainment for media consumers although they have effects. Such effects may be seen through long and short time exposures. There are positive and negative effects of media violence exposure. The effectiveness of effects on children may be determined by several factors such as: cognitive development of one's mind, time spent consuming violent films and video games, age and interpretation attached to messages portrayed by the media.

The findings reveal that children's perceptions of the reality may be affected by media violence. Furthermore, parents do not always monitor what their children consume on daily basis. Repeated exposure of violence on children might result in aggressiveness and the syndrome world effects. Children should be taught about the importance of age restrictions and television guidelines.

CHAPTER ONE

PROBLEM IN PERSPECTIVE

1.1 INTRODUCTION

A Study conducted by the National Television Violence in the United State showed that almost 10 000 hours of broadcasting programming from 1995 through 1997 found that 61% of the programming contained interpersonal violence, much of it in an entertaining manner (National Television Violence Study, 1998). The highest percentage of violence was found in children's shows. Children younger than 8 years cannot distinguish between fantasy and reality. Therefore they are uniquely vulnerable to learning and adopting the circumstances, attitudes, and behaviours depicted by media entertainment (National Television Violence Study, 1998).

Children are known to learn cognitive and social skills from watching people and how they behave. As such, it is logical to assume that violent behaviour in the media can be learnt and applied by the children watching it. Furthermore, children who are exposed to violent behaviour on film and television behave more aggressively immediately (Huesmann & Taylor, 2006:394). Children who do not consume violent material just act normally (Bushman & Huesmann, 2006:56).

The paediatrics study state that it is not violence itself that can make the difference between learning about violence to be violent, but the context in which it is depicted (Paediatrics Study, 2001:1224). Watching violence in movies and in television is potentially harmful to children. It can also leave children fearful or make them less sensitive to real violence and its consequences. Children under the age of seven

may imitate cartoon violence because they may not be able to tell the difference between reality and fantasy (National Television Violence Study, 1998).

Children who like to watch violent television programmes are more likely to behave aggressively at a later stage and as a result they are more likely to be convicted of violent crimes, such as child abuse and murder (Huesmann, 1998:56). This is because children have always been interested in arousing, and often even violent stories and fairy tales. With the occurrence of mass- media, film and television in particular the quantity of aggressive content daily consumed by this group has dramatically changed (Groebel, 1999).

The above statement proves exactly why films and video games have effects on children. They are unable to differentiate between fantasy and reality, so to them violence is a way of solving problems as seen in television and video games. They tend to be more aggressive and mean after being exposed to too much media violence generally. Children again watch films which contain a lot of violent content, thus it becomes easy for them to be affected. On average, media content roughly contains ten acts of violence per hour in an average programming (Groebel, 1999).

When children see violence without remorse, criticism, or punishment they learn that doing bad things is normal but that is not true in the real world (Huesmann, 1998:56). Cable television and video equipment allow for unlimited access to unrated violent films. Video games provide graphic visual displays of violence created at the control of the player. This might happen because children who are exposed to media violence are affected at early age and continue with this until at a later stage when they start imitating what they see in the media (Huesmann, 1998:56).

Furthermore, children who are exposed to violent behaviour on film and television behave more aggressively immediately afterwards. The typical paradigm is that randomly children who are shown violent film are observed as they play with each other or with objects. Children are particularly vulnerable to television imagery. It is believed that many consider television images to be real, especially when the images are authoritatively presented by adults (as in commercials). Some children, particularly those who are considered emotionally disturbed, may be unable to distinguish between fantasy and reality when watching television shows (Larry & Brandon, 2009:112).

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Customarily, children's socialisation was dependant on three major social agents, family, school and television (Casas, 2001:84). Casas mentions that new screens have replaced television as the third leg in the socialisation tripod. Moreover, new screens are rising as the primary source from which children get their interpretation of the world. The return of violent screens has been highlighted as an issue of immediate concern (Casas, 2001:84).

According to Comstock and Paik (1991:57), it is estimated that children between the ages of ten and eleven years watch television approximately twenty eight hours a week. An advance in technology also brought an interactive form of visual entertainment. Music videos couple violent acts with repetitive lyrics. Cable television and video equipment allow for limitless access to unrated violent films. Video games provide graphic visual displays of violence created at the control of the player.

According to Christakis and Ebel (2004:62), since the advent of the digital era, the exposure of media violence and its effects on children have been a focus of public

concern. This is because the use of media such as television, video games and computers has become popular among children nowadays. The huge increase in interpersonal violence, especially among children in the past half century, has occurred at the same time as other dramatic changes in lifestyles produced by the great technological revolutions (Christakis & Ebel, 2004:650).

Children learn cognitive and social skills from watching people and how they behave. As such, it is reasonable to assume that violent behaviour in the media can be learnt and applied by the children watching it. Moreover, children who are exposed to violent behaviour on film and television behave more aggressively immediately (Huesmann & Taylor, 2006:394). Children who do not consume violent material just act normally (Bushman & Huesmann, 2006:56).

However there is a big difference between children who consume violent films and those who watch non-violent films. Children who are exposed to violent films are more physically aggressive and this can be seen through hitting other children, wrestling, etc. Verbal aggression includes screaming at others, threatening others and aggression on objects, such as intentional obliteration of toys (Farrington, 1997:237).

With regard to violence in the media, it is stated that the violence depicted in film, television, sound, print or live performances is not really the same violence in real life. Furthermore, violence offered in the media may reach large numbers of people, whereas real violence may not reach them (Oliver, 2000).

According to Larry and Brandon (2009:111) Children who lack close dependencies on their parents may have little chance or aspiration to model themselves after them or to internalise their standards of behaviour. In the absence of such internalised

controls, the child's aggression is likely to be uttered in an immediate, direct and socially acceptable fashion (Larry & Brandon, 2009:111).

There is indication that violent video games exposure increases aggressive thoughts, angry feelings, physiological arousal, and aggressive behaviours. One reason may be that exposure to violence in the practical world desensitises children to violence in the real world, making it appear less threatening and foreboding (Larry & Brandon, 2009: 112).

The short-term effect of media violence can be identified at any age viewer. Children are at the risk of experiencing the longer-term changes in the social cognitions that control behaviour overtime. Children have less well developed neurological and emotional systems and well less developed personalities that can easily be changed by repetitive exposure to violence (Robin & Mary, 2009:367). This research is therefore important because after outlining the effects of violent films and video games on children, parents will then be enlightened about the negative and positive outcomes of media violence. Furthermore the research discusses in detail how parents can control what their children watch.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

According to the National Television Violence Study (NTVS) by Kaiser Family Foundation in 2003, children's programmes are more violent (69%) than adult programmes (57%). NTVS (2003) reported that children who watch average 2 hours of cartoons a day may see around 10,000 violent incidents in a year and there are at least 500 pose a high risk for them to learning and imitating violence and aggressive behaviour. There are violence and aggression features in the commercial television programming which are designed specifically for children (National Television

Violence Study, 1998). Comstock and Paik showed that 95% of children watch programmes that are not specifically produced for them (Comstock & Paik, 1994). Therefore, children become victims of media violence. The effects of media violence may be seen through long and short term media effects. This study wants to test if the same problem exists in Giyani.

Violent media exposure on children is the main focus of this study, particularly films and video games. Childhood aggression is most often a product of a number of interacting factors such as genetic, psychological and learning. In fact, it seems most likely that severe antisocial aggressive behaviour occurs only when there is a convergence of several of these factors (Farrington, 1997:185).

Violent films and video games can present aggressive scripts that children store in memory. Repeated exposure to these scripts can enlarge the retention and lead to changes in attitudes. Children learn from what they observe in the same way they learn cognitive and social skills from their parents and friends (Larry, 2009:111). Children exposed to violent films and video games react in two ways, which are habituation and desensitisation. Jeanne asserts that children of all ages, races, classes, and family background are influenced by violent content in pretty much the same way (Jeanne, 2008:38).

Jeanne further states that habituation occurs when children get used to seeing and hearing violent that it does not trouble them anymore. While desensitisation occurs when children take so much in media violence that they become unresponsive to all the violence. In other words watching and listening to violent content can permanently change the way children feel about and react to actual violence (Jeanne, 2008:38).

It is common in most societies that children who are exposed to violent films and video games become bullies and thus, act violently towards others. That is why children who watch violent films and play violent video games need strong supervision from parents, teachers and the society as whole because they tend to be dangerous. Because of easy access to the internet, children can obtain any game they wish without their parents knowing about it. If children observe aggression and see that the aggressive behaviour, such as an adult slapping or punching someone during an argument, is approved or rewarded, they are likely to react violently in similar incidents (Larry & Brandon, 2011:179).

It seems as if the effects of violent video games are more effective when equated to those of films. Koop (1982) as cited in Dill and Dill (1998:413) argues that although the violence observed on television and in movies is reinforced vicariously (the violent behaviour of the actor is rewarded), video game violence is directly rewarded. That is, the person playing the game behaves aggressively and is rewarded (with points, sound effects, access to new levels of the game) for doing so. This direct participation in the violence may serve to increase aggressive behaviour.

Report by the Centre for Media and Public Affairs reported that in one eighteen hour day in 1992, observing ten channels of all kinds of programmes, 1,846 different scenes of violence were noted, which translated more than ten violent scenes per hour, per channel, all day. A follow-up study conducted in 1994 found that forty one percent increases in violent scenes to two thousand and three which translated to almost fifteen scenes of violent per hour. Television and other media are full of horror movies that glamorise bloodshed and violence and this includes popular music computer and video games which are similarly afflicted (Report for Parents and Policy Makers, 1999).

In addition, the antisocial behaviour present in violent video games generally does not generate accurate consequences for the aggressor. In violent video games, aggression is often the most goal, and killing opponents means winning the game and reaping the benefits. While in real life, murder is crime, in a violent video game, murder is the most reinforced behaviour (Gill & Gill, 1998: 412).

Video games tend to emphasise negative stereotypes, especially the stereotype of women being stranded victims. When playing a video game, the player acts as a game character, not as an observer, as it is true with the other types of media violence (Tan & Calvert, 1994). If children observe aggression and see that the aggressive behaviour, such as an adult slapping or punching someone during an argument, is approved or rewarded, they are likely to respond violently during a similar incident (Larry & Brandon, 2009:95).

Television violence has a long term effect that makes lifelong aggressive behaviour more likely for children who watch a lot of it while growing up. Exposure to media violence raises aggression in every child. Violent films and video games that have the most harmful effect on children are not always the ones that adults believe are the most violent. Children are likely to imitate scenes where perpetrators are rewarded for violence (Dorothy & Jerome, 2001:948).

Children learn to act aggressively by direct experience. They test their environment to find out which behaviour is considered desirable and which is not. For instance, video games are given preference by children since they provide excellent enjoyment and pleasure to children. Video games also contribute to skill development unlike film and music which are regarded as passive entertainment. Video games require almost complete attention since failure may lead to lost goals.

This means that the player is focused on any potential violence that is shown (Britain, 2008:168).

Video games that require the player to shoot a gun and react reflexively with the shooting response teach children to associate killing with pleasure. The increase in murder and assault around the world are due to largely violent mass media (Glen, 2011:92).

Films on the other hand do not show the world the way it is, but rather offer a highly misleading picture of it (Arthur, 2007:90). Violent films present countless violence while most of the children never saw anyone killed in real life. Hence, the mass media is often blamed for outbursts of violence. Films are less detrimental because they do not require a large amount of attention from the viewer. Programmes may be running at the background while the viewer is completing other tasks (Anderson & Carnagey, 2004:18).

For child development, among the most noteworthy has been the introduction of mass visual media into everyday lives of children. It is therefore not surprising that speculation about the role of media violence in motivating violent behaviour has been prevalent ever since motion pictures depicting violent acts first were distributed (Huesmann & Miller, 1994:156). Patti (2008:48) concurs that media arousal is non-specific; it can be provoked by violent programmes. When it comes to violent programmes, arousal is mostly likely to be produced when the violence is combined with lot of action, loud music and rapid programme pace. He further states that arousal induced by the media does not fade away immediately after viewing the situation. The physical arousal energises post-exposure behaviour, which is not steered but intensified (Patti, 2008:48).

1.4 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1.4.1 Aim of the study

The aim of the study is to investigate the effects of violent films and video games on children, in Giyani municipality.

1.4.2 Objectives of the study in Giyani

The objectives of this study are as follows:

- To explore the effects of media violence on children generally.
- To outline the effects of violent films and video games on children.
- To draw out information from children and parents from Giyani with regard to anti-social behaviour by children.

1.5 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This research is based on Giyani and some of its surrounding villages. Four villages were selected in order to have different perspectives on how violent films and video games affect children.

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Television and video games remain the most entertaining tools in the country, more especially to children, but it becomes a daily problem when children are exposed to dangerous forms of violence in the media. There is countless chance that exposure to media violence can cause fear in viewers which often result in aggressive behaviour. The significance of this study is to explore how media violence affects children, more especially on aggressive behaviour. Aggressive behaviour is also linked to several outcomes such as peer rejection and juvenile criminal behaviour (Schwartz & Matzkin, 1999:114).

The study also aims to alert parents about the dangers of not monitoring the programmes their children consume on daily basis. Violent games and acts desensitise children to cruelty and may make them more likely to commit violent acts in real life. Furthermore, children tend to become bored with a violent game that is played over and over. What firstly excited them becomes boring and as such the manufacturers produce even more action packed with and violent sequel (Schwartz & Matzkin, 1999:117). Bandura (2010:18) argues that violent games and acts desensitise children to cruelty and may make them more likely to commit violent acts in real life.

This study demonstrated how children perceive violent games. After playing violent games children then think problems can be solved quickly with the little personal investment. Furthermore, children think the best way to solve a problem is to eliminate the cause of such problem. They further think it is acceptable to engage themselves in the video games rule and imitating thereafter without questioning the rules.

Furthermore an alarming number of children and juvenile seem to experience pleasure in their media and encounters with violent entertainment, and express greedy demands for more of the violent content (Schwartz & Matzkin, 1999:117). Moreover; children tend to become bored with a violent game that is played over and over. What excited them first no longer does and therefore the manufacturer produces games with even more action and more violence.

The study also outlined the positive effects of playing video games, because video games do not only have negative effects like violent films. Violent video games have various positive and negative effects on the development of children. Children who

spend lot of time playing these games may develop eye-hand co-ordination. The negative effects of video games are largely influenced by the content of the games (Anderson & Bushman, 2001:84).

Anderson, Berkowits and Donnerstein (2003) indicate that violent video games are even more likely to influence aggressive behaviour than other media because games are highly engaging and interactive. Reducing the amount of time children play violent games reduces the amount of aggressive behaviour they display in school or other social contexts.

Children who play violent games see the world as a more hostile place, argue with teachers more frequently, are more likely to be involved in physical fights and do not perform well at school. Children play video games mostly for recreation and entertainment. Children devoting more time playing these games have negative effects on family relationships, as there is conflict between parents and children. It also hinders the social skills, communication skills and interpersonal skills of children which in turn result in poor verbal cognitive performance (Krish, 1998:348).

1.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

The researcher first got permission from parents and teachers at the respective schools in Giyani to give children questionnaires. Strict confidentiality was assured and maintained regarding the information that was obtained during the research process. Participants were also informed of their right to withdraw anytime during the research process if they do not feel like continuing.

1.8 DEFINITION OF TERMS

This research project uses more often use the following terms:

- 1.8.1 Aggression:** refers to a delivery of an aversive stimulus from person to another, with the intent to harm with an expectation of causing such harm, when the other person is motivated to escape or avoid the stimulus (Geen, 2001: 3).
- 1.8.2 Arousal:** a unitary force that energises or intensifies behaviour. The media can be used to increase or reduce arousal sate. This means arousal media production may lead to agitation and restlessness, which is expressed when children are playing and interacting with others (Oliver, 2000:53).
- 1.8.3 Violence:** refers to any action which intrudes painfully or harmfully into the physical, psychological or social well-being of persons or groups (Geen, 2001:9).
- 1.8.4 Desensitisation:** refers to the attenuation or elimination of cognitive, emotional and, ultimately behavioural responses to stimulus. This process can be directly and purposefully manipulated (Rule & Fugerson, 2009: 86).
- 1.8.5 Media violence:** According to Huesmann (1998), media violence refers to visually portrayed physically aggressive acts by one person against another.
- 1.8.6 Habituation:** refers to the process which occurs when people get used to seeing and hearing violence that it does not bother them anymore (Jeanne, 2011:38).
- 1.8.7 Time displacement effect:** It refers to the role of mass media (including video games) in displacing other activities in which the child might otherwise

engage, which could change the risk of certain kinds of behaviour (Huesmann, 1998).

1.8.8 Priming: This describes the process through which spreading activation in the brain's neural network from the locus representing an external observation stimulus excites another brain node representing cognition, emotional behaviour (Huesmann, 1998).

1.8.9 Selective exposure: It deals with why and how individuals orient their attention to specific communication stimuli. People are believed to select mediated content based on their psychological needs as well as situational influences (Zillman & Byrant, 1985).

1.9 ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

The main purpose of this study is to outline the effects of violent films and video games on children in Giyani.

1.9.1 Chapter one: Problem in perspective

This chapter identified the problem and the background of the study. The aim and objectives as well as the significance were laid out.

1.9.2 Chapter two: Literature review regarding effects of violent films and video games

A detailed literature of violent films and video games and its effects on children is given. The literature will give a full description of violence. The history of both violent films and video games, the historical perspective of violence in four countries will be compared. Long and short term effects of violence will be given. The chapter will again outline the relation between age development in children and aggression, through which violent exposure may lead to aggression, and other issues.

1.9.3 Chapter three: Institutions of control and regulation

The discussion focuses on the regulation of violent films and video games. Programme ratings, watershed period and parental control are laid out.

1.9.4 Chapter four: Research methodology

The research design and methodology are discussed in this chapter. The researcher employed interviews, questionnaires and observation to gather data needed for the study.

1.9.5 Chapter five: Data analysis and interpretation

The data collected will be analysed and interpreted through the chosen approaches. Pie charts will be used to show data collected through questionnaires.

1.9.6 Chapter six: Findings, recommendations and conclusion

Here the overview of the study is presented. Conclusion and recommendations are also given. Findings will be drawn from the analysis and interpretations of views given by participants.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW REGARDING THE EFFECTS OF VIOLENT FILMS AND VIDEO GAMES

2.1 INTRODUCTION

According to Joseph (2011:157) children who are exposed to violent films and video games struggle to sleep. Let us say two children are observed as they are sleeping. The one who was exposed to violent movies will be restless and tossing around more than the one who was not watching violent films. There are different effects that change how children think or feel about things around them, more especially things they see from the media (Joseph, 2011:157).

Exposure of young children to terrifying scenes that are beyond their capacity to understand may result in long-term emotional disturbances. Films and video games may contribute children's restlessness, fears about daily dangers and their proneness to aggression. Those parents who are heavy viewers, who lack other interest, and who do not apply efforts to establish rules about films and video games viewing, may provide a home atmosphere that puts their children at a risk of a greater dysphonic tendency (Grimes, Anderson & Bergen, 2008:108).

Along with modelling their parents' own emotionality, reacting to power assertive discipline, children's aggressive and emotional styles seem to reflect the heavy dose of frightening and arousing content that makes film and video games fare. Exposure of urban school children to violent films and video games is not a rare event but many children are exposed to multiple violent acts. This exposure to violent films and

video games may provide continuous threat to the safety of children and may influence child rearing practices (Joseph, 2011:158).

Children in highly violent areas, for example may be taught to watch films and video games lying prone to avoid being hit by stray bullets through the windows. The walk from home to school may become an arena of fear and distress for parents and children. Mothers in violent communities may desist from bringing their children to playground, denying them the chance to play with other children and explore the environment (Purugganan et al., 2000:951).

Depiction of violence in the media has been found in everything from cartoons to prime time programmes, commercials news broadcasts, feature films and video games. Not all media violence is equal; some of this violence prompts more outcry than others. Indirect aggression is behaviour that is committed outside the existence of the other party, such as gossiping or stealing. Direct aggression is directed at a person in such a way of shoving, hurling insults or hitting (Gunter, 1987:56).

Violence in children's programmes has been a particular target. Programmes that children view are not only held to contain violence but, as has been argued over the years, to contain even more violence than adults' programmes. Doob and McDonald (1979:76) state that 83.3 of children's programming contain some form of violence and estimates have been given that the average young person will have viewed an estimated two hundred thousand acts of violence by the time he/she reaches age of 18. Another aspect of media violence that causes concern is the relative representation of the age, race, and social class of the perpetrator (Doob & McDonald, 1979:76).

Although there are culprits and victims represented in every age, race and class, the argument here is that there are more lower classes characters presented as culprits and victims. Characters that resort to violence do so in a variety of legal or illegal reasons. Legal reasons for violence range from self-defence, protecting family or loved ones, sanctioned law enforcement, power, and financial gain. Illegal motivations include unsanctioned law enforcement, law, power financial gain or corruption. Interestingly enough, legal reasons are shown much more frequently than violence committed for illegal motives (Doob & McDonald, 1979:76).

Media portrayals of violent scenes of both support and punish consequences for aggressive behaviour. The aggressive bad guys are usually punished, and the aggressive good guys usually have a legal right to use force. Effects may occur on different time scales, short- term message exposure: exposure to a single message, or instance exposure to a single films and video games programme can have the effect on a person while the programme lasts. Afterwards the person forgets about it. A media user may even decide to take action based on what he sees in a movie or reading an article (Joseph, 2011:157).

These effects are seen repeatedly on children because of their less developmental skills, and they tend to react by aggressive behaviour. Heavy films and video games viewing nurture attitudes and beliefs in children that are more consistent with the world of films and video games programmes and television than with the real world. Heavy viewing and playing of video games is related with that has been named a mean syndrome world. That is children who watch violent films and play video games are likely to believe that the world is a nastier place than those who do not (Oliver, 2005:21).

Gunter (1987) as mentioned in Boyle (2005:43) asserts that the obvious relationship between exposure to violent films and video games as well as fear of crime can actually be elucidated by the neighbourhood they live in. Those who live in high crime areas are more likely to stay at home and watch films. They also believe that they have a greater chance of being attacked than those who live in low crime areas.

Boyle (2005) further contends that boys enjoyed a horror film as much in the presence of distressed girls as when they viewed with fearless girls, and girls enjoyed the film least when viewing with the distressed boys. In other words viewing violence is part of the way in which children experience power, gender and sexuality.

One key concern about films and video games centres on the suitability of programmes of children. Children are regarded as lacking psychological maturity to cope with certain type of programming and should therefore be protected from exposure to unbecoming content as far as possible. Criticism of films and video games violence have centred on the observation that there is too much of it, that people are generally concerned about how much there is and that violence on the small screen can promote aggressive behaviour or cultivate unnecessary worries to viewers. In this content we refer to children (Gunter & Harrison, 1998:286).

In addition, for children viewing violent films and video games can be a way of working through and managing real world fears. Arguments about the amount of violence on screen and video games often become mixed up with those about the alleged effects of films and video games violence. Violent incidents which have certain qualities may be regarded by viewers as particularly offensive or distressing.

Specific portrayals on violent films and video games may strike a chord with some children who might be inclined to copy them. The effects of films and video games

violence may be powerfully mediated by a variety of attributes relating to the form of behaviour it takes, the setting in which it occurs, the motive underlying it and the consequences following from it, and the nature of the perpetrator and victim (Gunter & Harrison, 1998:287).

2.2 DEFINITION OF VIOLENCE

When discussing the effects of violent films and video games on children, one should know that we are not referring to physical violence only. There are many forms of violence other than that which involves only physical injury and harm. There is emotional and physical violence, verbal violence, institutional and symbolic violence (Gunter & Harrison, 1998:32).

Hodge and Tripp (1986) point out that violence can be understood as a multi- faced concept which does not only represent a single set of events. Violence may differ in terms of harshness, justification, consequences, and the intents of the culprit. Physical violence may be the most perceived form of violence on films and video games, a more complete measuring procedure also might include other expressions of violence such as verbal violence and violent images (Hodge & Trip, 1986). Gunter and Harrison (1998:32) regard that:

Violence in films and video games cannot be taken simply at face value. How violent actions are perceived is related to social norms, personal values and the particular form and content of the violence itself.

The perceived realism of the situation in which violence in video games and films and television is depicted tends to be significantly correlated with how violent the behaviour is rated by viewers (Gunter & Harrison, 1998:31). Humour can also dilute

the degree to which violent behaviour is upsetting to viewers. Many people may not even see much of the violence when it is presented in a humorous way. Most viewers, for example do not regard cartoons as being violent (Gunter, 1990:32).

It is presumed that more frequent viewers will be more strongly influenced by films and video games messages than will less frequent viewers purely as a function of greater volume of exposure to them. Violent scenes may not appear as important characteristics of content and viewers may fail to mention violence in discussions about films containing violent actions shortly after viewing unless specially asked about such content. Perceptions of films and video games and television violence differ significantly with a number of other characteristics' of films and video games portrayals (Gunter & Harrison, 1985:88).

The kinds of fictional characters who impose violence, how the violence is imposed, and how much harm is done to those on the receiving end all emerged as important mediators of viewers' opinions about films and video games and violence. The types of characters who are involved in violence in films and video games are related to the way children respond to that violence (Gunter & Harrison, 1998:36).

Children can make distinctions between different forms of violence on films and video games as well. While young ones may not have the maturity of adults, they readily learn to distinguish broad programme genres and the conventions to which they adhere in the kinds of portrayals they contain. While violence may be intentional, it is important to know what characters' intentions were. If a character commits violence accidentally, children interpret it differently from if the character is portrayed carefully planning the act. Motive is closely related to intention. A film and

a video game character's motive are filtered through the viewers and players' moral context of behaviour (Gunter, 1987:37).

According to Gerbner (1972:44) a person who commits and who suffers violence of what kind is central and revealing fact of life in the world of films and video games. Children must grasp before they can follow, let alone interpret, the play who gets and gives what, how and why defines the social structure of the world of films and video games drama. The distribution of roles related to violence, with their different risks and fates performs the symbolic functions of violence, and it conveys its basic message about people.

The extent to which violence is employed differs more markedly for male and female films and video games characters than it does for law enforcers and villain (Gunter & Harrison, 1998:139). In general men are likely to use violence than women. The latter are much likely characterised as romantic, and emotional and dependant than men, whenever there is trouble, either of a personal or professional nature. Once again, the importance of gender as a classifying variable for violence on films and video games stems partly from the suggestion that children judgements about violence may differ according to the involvement of men and women (Gunter & Harrison, 1998:139).

Women are traditionally considered as being the gentle sex and violence is not an attribute normally associated with them (Gunter & Harrison, 1998:139). Involvement in criminal activity is less prevalent among women than men in fictional films and video games, and also in real life. From the perspective of viewers attitude towards and perception of films and video games violence, audience research has indicated that the kinds of films and video game characters who are involved in violence,

either as aggressors or victims, can make a difference to the way violent portrayals are evaluate (Gunter & Harrison, 1998).

2.3 HISTORY OF FILMS

The economic and social transformation that underlies the development of the mass press in the late nineteenth century also formed the context for the emergence of film as a mass medium. Far more people today are reached by a moving picture than by the daily press. Film emerged in the 1880's as the end of experiments and inventions that took place through the nineteenth century in the united states, France, Germany and Britain. Techniques of projecting moving images had existed as early as the seventeenth century in such forms as popular "magic – lantern" shows, involving the use of a candle or lamp, lens and glass slides which pictures to simulate movement (Gorman & McLean, 2009:41).

The crucial new development was the projection of photographed moving images. Advances in the application of electricity, the development of photography and celluloid film, and the invention of the motion picture camera and new techniques of projection laid the foundation for the technology of film. Development of the technology of moving pictures occurred despite the absence of clear and generally accepted ideas on the purpose for which these inventions might be used (Gorman & McLean, 2009:28).

That film became above all a form of popular entertainment was the work not of the scientist or inventors but of small entrepreneurs who saw its profit- making potential. For ten years after 1885 films were rarely more than a minute in length, the idea of building a whole evening's entertainment around the new medium was scarily feasible. Instead, films were normally screened during intervals and vaudeville or

music-hall programmes, as sideshows and at fairgrounds, or as features in travelling shows (Gorman & McLean, 2009:41).

The request of these early films laid mainly in the novelty moving pictures. The content was simple, consisting of factual footage scenes related to public events. Throughout the world, film was mainly an urban phenomenon, and audiences were drawn overwhelming from the urban working class. Film provided these people with an affordable and easily understood escape from the reality of their harsh lives (Gorman & McLean, 2009:41).

Even language was no barrier to enjoyment during the era of silent film, an observation that has particular significance for the rise of cinema in the United States. Between 1890 and 1914 eighteen million immigrants entered the United States, most of them from Southern and Eastern Europe. Important changes in the exhibition accompanied the increasing sophistication of film production. The trend towards permanent theatre for film exhibition arose from pressures from two opposite parts of social order. The working class, including the immigrant population in the United States, cinema attendance for as little as five cents offered a more affordable form of entertainment than a music hall (Gorman & McLean, 2009:41).

By 1920 other principles of the film industry had also been established. Audiences had come to expect films to be organised into separate genres-categories or film style- such as comedy, melodrama, and western. Public interest in the film themselves came to be closely associated with fascination with the lives of film stars (Gorman & McLean, 2009:41).

2.4 HISTORY OF VIDEO GAMES

Video games first emerged in the 1970s but during the 1990's violent games truly became of age (Gentile & Anderson, 2003:6). Starting in the late 1980s video game producers experimented with what the public would accept in video games. Gradually it became clear that games sold better if they contained more violence. In the mid 1980s, children averaged about four hours a week playing video games, including time spent playing at home and in arcades (Harris & Williams, 1985:52). A related aspect to children's involvement in violent video games concerns the lack of parental or societal oversight (Gentile & Anderson, 2003:138).

Only one in five parents have kept children from getting a game because of its rating (Gentile, Lynch, Linder & Walsh & 2004:32). Parents also are not heavily involved in the amount of time children play video games. Furthermore, many violent video games have demo versions on the internet that can be downloaded by anyone. Specifically, children who consume violent media include aggressive concepts and behaviours into their typical behaviour repertoire, and thus become more aggressive overtime.

2.5 VIOLENT FILMS

Children spend an excessive amount of time with the media-more time in fact than they spend in any leisure time activity except sleeping. By the time today's children reach age seventy, they will have spent seven years of their lives watching only films and video games. Children are more willing to believe information they receive in the media because they have less critical thinking skills and experience. By the time today's children graduate from high school, they will have witnessed two hundred thousand mu murders, rapes and assaults on films and video games alone. Films

and video games violence is frequently glamorised, seventy one percent contain no remorse, criticism or penalty for violence (Future of Children, 2008: 9).

Movie violence can affect subsequent displays of aggression by modelling and glorifying violence, triggering aggressive impulses in some people, and decreasing feelings of empathy for victims. Contents analyses of prime-time films and video games indicate that perpetrators of gun violence typically are depicted as using guns to protect themselves, which gives the impression that guns are important for self-protection (Garbanino et al., 2002:89).

2.6 VIOLENT VIDEO GAMES

Another form of popular media entertainment for children is violent video games. The combination of technological advances and a growing demand for intensity and arousal has substantially altered video game content. The latest generation of games is much more violent and accurate in its depictions of violence than its predecessors were, with many lifelike images of blood, guts, and gore. Data indicate that children and adolescents prefer violent video games to all others (Irwin & Gross, 1995:64). Some scholars suggest that violent video games, because of their interactive and participatory nature, are even worse for children and teenagers than violent films and video games programmes (Garbanino et al., 2002:89).

Violence in video games also causes an increase in aggression. Children are increasingly spending large amount of time playing video games, most of which contains violence. Irwin and Gross (1995:63) assess physical aggression as hitting, shoving, pinching, and kicking between boys who had just played either a violent video or a non-violent video game. Those that were playing violent video games will be more physically aggressive towards their peers.

It is the violence in video games, not the excitement of playing them that evokes, and produces the increase in aggression. Identification with video games characters may not be stronger than identification with films and video games or movie characters, in part because players choose a character and play that character's role in the video game scenario (Irwin & Gross, 1995:64).

2.7 VIOLENCE IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

This section outlines the historical perspective of violence in Australian, Canadian, Netherlands and South African films and video games.

2.7.1 Violence in Australian films and video games

In Australia, much emphasis has been placed on comparing violence on Australian films and video games with that of other countries the only type of violence portrayed between family members was verbal abuse, while the physical occurs only between family members and outsiders and almost exclusively between males (Harris & Williams, 1985:1952).

The intensity of violence was measured in terms of the rate at which violent episodes occurred in programmes. There was an overall rate of four violent episodes per programmes and 5.4 per broadcast hour. When nonfiction programmes were excluded, however, the average rate per hour increased to 7.4% compared with other countries for which the data were available any time, these results placed Australian films and video games within the mid-range (Harris & Williams, 1985:52).

Violence on Australian films and video games was most likely to be perpetrated by males. Most victims of violence and most of those characters that were killed on screen were male (Harris & Williams, 1985:52). This pattern of gender involvement in films and video games violence closely mirrored that observed in other countries.

Much of the violence contained in programmes on mainstream Australian films and video games was found at that time occurred in fictional output, with very little being found in nonfiction programming (Harris & Williams, 1985:52).

2.7.2 Violence in Canadian films and video games

In recent years the United States government has been feeling pressure to bring violence in films and video games and videogames under control not only from its own citizenry but also from those foreign countries, especially where the latter are importers of substantial amounts of American productions. This point applies with particular acuity in the case of United States closest neighbour, Canada where so many American programmes are being broadcast. Editorial and programme mix determined not only the amount but in some cases the nature of violence in the media (Harris & Williams, 1985:52).

Incidents involving conflict, 50% depicted violence, with an average of 13.5% violent incidents per film (Harris & Williams, 1985:52). Non-Canadian films contained about twice as many violent incidents as those produced in Canada. These incidents occurred mostly in action films, including crime drama. The American media were found to place greater emphasis on homicide and other physical violence than the Canadian, while the latter showed more of other types of conflict and property damage (Harris & Williams, 1985:52).

In all, 109 programmes were used, covering eighty one hours of films and video games output. Twenty two percent of these programmes were found in Canada, seventy six percent were from the United States. Conflict, aggression and violence were considered to differ in degree and to form a hierarchy (Harris & Williams, 1985:52). Each programme segment was first coded as containing no conflict or

some degree of conflict. Conflict was designated as argument, as non-aggressive or conflict. Different levels of aggression were found in different programme categories, Game shows 10.2 % and non- animated children's shows depicted 12.2 %. Aggression, especially verbal abuse, was often portrayed as humorous, and there was little evidence of consequences (Harris & Williams, 1985:52).

2.7.3 Violence in films and video games in the Netherlands

Gerbner (1972) reports less violence on Dutch films and video games on the whole it had been reported earlier for American films and video games. Using the Gerbner model of analysis, the violence index for Dutch crime programmes during the prime-time, however, is comparable with that of prime time programmes in the United States. Females were more vulnerable than males in the line with the findings from the United States. Unmarried men were more likely to commit violence, while married men were more likely to be killed.

Foreign programmes are reported to contain more violent incidents per hour than locally produced programmes, reaching a high of twenty three per hour in the Philippines and a low of 3.2% in Indonesia (Harris & Williams, 1985:52). While foreign programmes had more violent incidents, little or no blood was generally shown. In these programmes the villains were drawn from upper and lower classes and violence usually related to social institutional conflicts. Local productions featured fewer violent incidents, but these tended to be bloodier (Harris & Williams, 1985:52).

2.7.4 Violence in South African films and video games

Violent video games are the most recent medium to be blamed for contributing to the ills of the society. Much of what we know about the effects of electronic media comes from studies which watch traditional films and video games, but this knowledge is

now challenged by the influence of video games and internet pornography which can be downloaded easier.

Centerwal (1992) notes that South Africans have lived in a fully modern state for decades with no exception. They had no films and video games until 1975. Tension between Afrikaner and English-speaking communities concerning programming content stalled the introduction of films and video games for years. In fact for twenty five years approximately two million white South Africans were excluded from exposure to films and video games. The medium was introduced in the United States twenty five years earlier. In order to test whether exposure to violent films and video games is a cause of violence Centerwal (1992) compared homicide rates in South Africa, Canada and the United States.

Other possible explanations include changes in age distribution, urbanisation, alcohol consumption, capital punishment and the availability of firearms. Cheap fiction in South Africa has also been accused of being bad for the reassess morals. When the Lumiere brothers held the first cinema screening in South Africa in 1895, the first silent films were unregulated and accused of corrupting viewers and changing them into raging criminals roaming the streets, ready to commit copycat style violence. However the Hollywood film industry, in South Africa, lost a court case in 1951 in which it claimed to be protected under the freedom of expression.

2.8 EFFECTS OF WATCHING VIOLENT FILMS AND PLAYING VIDEO GAMES

Different effects of watching and playing violent video games are discussed below.

2.8.1 Aggressor effect

This describes children who watch a lot of violent entertainment tend to be meaner, more aggressive and more violent. This simply happens because a child fails to

resist influence after watching violent films, and playing violent films (Donnerstein, Slaby & Eron, 1994:21).

2.8.2 Victim effect

The victim effect describes how children and adults who watch a lot of violent entertainment tend to see the world as a scarier place. They become more scared of the world and develop self-protective behaviours. This includes carrying guns to school and it increases the chances of shot out amongst children (Donnerstein et al., 1994:21).

2.8.3 Bystander effect

This effect describes how children who watch a lot of violent entertainment tend to habituate to steadily increasing amounts of violence, thereby becoming desensitised, more callous and less sympathetic both in films and video games and in the real world (Donnerstein et al., 1994:22).

2.8.4 Appetite effect

The appetite effect describes how children who watch violent media tend to want to see more violent events. The more one watches the more one wants to see. This is very dangerous to children because when they watch events which do not contain violent content, players, or pictures they feel like they are wasting time, they always want to watch more violence. Though being exposed to extreme violence has negative effects in their lives (Donnerstein et al., 1994:23).

2.8.5 Aggression

Violent video games as opposed to non-violent video games increase accessibility to aggressive thoughts, as measured by reaction time speed to aggressive words (Anderson & Dill, 2000:187). According to Calvert and Tan (1994:56), players of violent video games listed more aggressive thoughts than simple viewers of the

game. With regard to the long term-effect of playing violent video games on aggressive cognition, it has been anticipated that uninterrupted exposure to violent games makes aggressive thoughts more constantly accessible to players. After continuing exposure to violent, aggressive thoughts can be fully internalised into players' mind (Calvert & Tan, 1994:56).

Using social norms to define aggression, Mees (1990) as mentioned by Gunter and Harrison (1998:33) found three models that underlie the conceptions of motivation for aggressive acts.

- Thoughtlessness-the aggressor should have taken possible dangers into consideration but did not.
- Selfishness-the aggressor knows that the action will cause harm, but accepts this and places his own interests above those of others.
- Hatred wickedness is accepted and intended by the aggressor.

Verbal aggression

Exposure to media violence is often measured as a predictor of verbal aggression. It seems likely that those who are verbally aggressive might be attracted to and enjoy violent shows. That is because violent programming, both realistic violence and comedic violence, tends to present physical and verbal aggressive aggression. Verbally aggressive individuals may be attracted to it because violent films and video games may provide some form of validation for aggression (Potter & Warren, 1998:67).

2.8.6 Fear

In addition to aggression, viewing violent films and playing violent games also can increase fear and anxiety (Ledingham, Ledingham & Richardson, 2003:90). Cantor states that violent films and video games that contain portrayals of monsters, scary animals and violence can deter the psychological development of children. Such consumptions can lead to distress and sleep disorders, enduring emotional disturbance, or even symptoms similar to post-traumatic stress in vulnerable individuals. Parents are either unaware or underestimate the degree of fear children experience, and that children often experience fright reactions to programmes that most parents would not expect to be scary (Cantor, 1996:92).

Cantor and Hoffner (1985:23) explain that the results of their several studies show that younger children are more likely to be frightened by something that looks scary but is actually harmless. Children are frightened of generous monsters than something threatening beautiful yet evil. Therefore appearance is an important factor when determining what will frighten pre-schoolers. The second factor to consider is that children cannot differentiate between reality and fantasy, therefore unrealistic character can frighten them (Cantor & Nathason, 1996:65).

By latter elementary school years, children become more sensitive to media stories about things that are dangerous but may not look scary, and those that are realistic as opposed to fantasy. Children in this age group become more sensitive to threats conveyed by the news events they understand actually happened and could well happen to them. Cantor and Nathason (1996:65) concur by stating that:

Children crave fantasy violence to prove to themselves that they can be strong enough to overcome their fears. Their need for extreme fantasy violence, raw, loud, and

angry is a function of the intensity of violence observed from both and the media

Children are valued not for anything intrinsic within them but primarily for how they may grow up and become adults and assume stature and presence in the real world, they are idealised as innocent, vulnerable and passive, situated in subordinate roles outside of adult space.

Cantor (2003:32) points out those younger children are also affected by news as they respond more strongly to real threats that are conveyed visually. Older children are more frightened by stories of kidnapping, murder, and molestation, especially if the victim is a child. Cantor further states that explaining to children that the characters are not in real danger will only be effective among the older primary school children. Stadler (2004:83) states that telling fearful children that these fictitious creatures are not real will not reduce their fears. It is often more disturbing for young children to see good guys become bad as they cannot make the connection between the two characters.

The desire to consume media is influenced by a host of social and psychological factors, such as sensation-seeking and neuroticism. These factors are said to be motivators for media exposure and have also been used to explain problem behaviours (Zilman & Weaver, 1997). Sensation seeking predicts both exposure to violent media and aggressive behaviour (Zuckerman, 1994:102).

2.8.7 Bullying

Bullying is aggressive behaviour carried out repeatedly and over time, with one or more children targeting someone perceived as less powerful. Bullying is common experience for many children. Children who are bullied tend to be insecure and cautious, have low self-esteem and lack of social skills, all of which makes them

easy targets (Browden & Greenberg, 2010:210). As children approach their teen years, they are likely to seek more independence in decision-making. Children may often challenge the rules and limits set by parents, finding many faults in their parents and other family members (Dietz & Strausberger, 1991:254).

Johnson as cited in William (1986:54) states that children may be affected by films and video games in two possible ways. "Violent content has not changed appreciably in the past decade despite increasing public awareness and concern" (Dietz & Strausberger, 1991:254). The use of guns and violence amongst children is justified as being acceptable for solving complex problems.

Infants as young as fourteen months have displayed significant and deferred imitation of televised models (Hoffer, 2005:44). Bandura argue that the most efficient way to teach children desired behaviour is to display the behaviour and have the children to model it.

2.8.8 Mean world syndrome (World view)

Children that are exposed to violent films and video games tend to see the world as a scary and violent place. That is why children go as far as carrying guns and dangerous weapons to school and other places because they want to feel protected. Median violence generally poses a threat to public health in as much as it leads to an increase in real world violence and aggression (Bandura, 2009:204).

Films starring younger and/or older children characteristically begin with a disruption, a physical journey or emotional violence that propels the child forward on a journey. Journeys are indeed a further characteristic feature of films either starring children or aimed at children audiences (Andrews, 2000:18).

The effects of media violent programme become greater when a child is angered because that is when they are likely to imitate. Viewers learn the behaviours they observe, and whether they actually express them depends on whether the behaviours had been rewarded or punished. This view, proposed especially by Bandura (2009:90), is based on social learning theory. If those who act aggressively in the film suffer negative consequences, their aggressive behaviour should not be imitated: if they have positive consequences, it should be imitated. According to this procedure, violent programmes should cause more aggression if the starring was rewarded, and should cause less or no aggression if the starring was punished (Bandura, 2009:204).

2.8.9 Behavioural Scripts

Stadler (2004:24) points out that according to Hueszman (2001:237), children observe role models and memorise scripts so that they can act out the role later in a similar situation. Therefore children learn and behave through observation. Stadler (2004:24) further asserts that a script shows how people behave in a particular situation. According to Huesmann (1998:54), children encode scripts in memory. A script reflects our knowledge of the typical sequence of events in a particular situation (Macbeth, 1996:125).

In everyday language, a script is like a stereotype reflecting set expectations about a sequence of events, such as those involved in going to a restaurant. Each script contains objects encountered during the event, social roles of participants and rules describing the steps to be expected during the social sequence. Scripts guide our information processing and facilitate our social behaviour. We attempt to fit incoming information into the appropriate script. Dubow and Miller (1996:125) explain that,

scripts for behaviour are formed during childhood and it is likely that exposure to ongoing violent films and video games violence influences the development of aggressive scripts.

According to Bushman and Huesmann (2001:237), a number of factors determine whether a script is retrieved. If the situation is identical to the one observed in a film or video game and the violence is realistic, the script will be retrieved. Similarly, if children identify with role models and the character receives positive reinforcement or has desirable characteristics, the scripts will be retrieved. Long-term exposure to violence provides children with a greater opportunity to establish aggressive scripts in their memory. Short term exposure to violent portrayals triggers already acquired scripts and activates aggression-related thoughts and feelings (Dubow & Miller, 1996:125).

According to Dubow and Miller (1996:125), long term exposure to violent films and video games can lead to the maintenance of aggressive scripts. As aggressive scripts can also be reinforced by long term exposure, this in turn leads to the child developing general strategies for aggressive behaviour besides those already in the memory (Dubow & Miller, 1996:125).

2.8.10 Sensation-seeking

Sensation-seeking is theoretically and empirically related to individuals need for stimulation. It is reasonable to suggest that high sensation children may attempt to fulfil their need for stimulation by utilising a variety of mediated and non-mediated sources (Sebastian & Veruschka, 2008:7). Donehow, Finn and Christ (1988) found that high sensation seekers have lower arousal levels and require more exciting stories to attract their attention. Sensation-seeking is positively related to the uses

and gratification constructs of passing time and escapism as motives for films and video games viewing. Conway and Rubin (1991:439) found that sensation seeking predicts media exposure because violent media may offer stimulation and visual excitement that is necessary for high sensation seekers (Conway & Rubin, 1991:439).

2.8.11 Desensitisation

Desensitisation to violence and the subsequent aggression may also occur as a result of decreased empathy (Funk, 2005: 389). Children with low trait hostility who play more violent games are more likely to get into physical fights than children with high trait personality who played less video game. Video games play is interactive, whereas films and video games viewing is physically passive. Furthermore children exposed to media violence can be emotionally desensitised towards violence in real life, which decrease the likelihood to act on behalf of the victims. Children are therefore likely to view it as an effective means of conflict resolution and to assume that it is acceptable behaviour (Sebastian & Veruschka, 2008:7). Children who are exposed to media violence have a tendency for aggressive behaviour later in life than children who are not exposed (Huesmann & Miller, 1994).

2.8.12 Sleep distortion and withdrawal

Exposure to violence can cause intrusive thoughts about the traumatic event and sleep disturbances (Future of children, 2008). Therefore, it is not surprising that the children and youth exposed to gun violence commonly experienced difficulty concentrating in the classroom, declines in an academic performance, and lower educational and career aspirations (Future of children, 2008). Other outcomes associated with exposure to violence trauma include increased delinquency, risky

sexual behaviours, and substance abuse. Exposure to gun violence can cause children and youth to withdraw from the very people who may be best equipped to help them-friends and family (Garbanino & Berdard, 2001).

2.9 SHORT-TERM EFFECTS

2.9.1 Priming

Priming is the process through which spreading activation in the brain's neural network from the locus representing an external observed stimulus excites another brain node representing aggressive behaviours (Berkowitz, 1993:64). These excited nodes then are more likely to influence behaviour. A provocation that follows a priming effect stimulus is more likely to stimulate aggression as a result of the priming. While this effect is short-lived, the primed script, or belief may have been acquired long ago and may have been acquired in a completely different context. The emotional response stimulated by the observed violence is misattributed as being due to the provocation (Huesmann & Taylor, 2006:402).

Social comparison theory suggests that children evaluate themselves by comparing themselves to others Huesmann (1998). The aggressive child is generally not accepted because others do not like to be around aggressive peers. Huesmann (1998) has suggested that, to counter this threat to self-worth, aggressive children seek out aggressive media. Observing others behaving aggressively, makes the aggressive child feel happier and more justified.

Huesman (1998) further states that viewing media violence makes children feel happier because it convinces them that they are not alone in being aggressive. The ultimate consequence of such a turn, toward more exposure to violent media, is

more observational of aggressive scripts, and beliefs and more desensitisation to violence.

Huesman (2006) argue that external stimulus can be inherently linked to a cognitive for example the sight of a gun can be linked to aggression, or the stimulus can be something inherently neutral like a particular ethnic group (African culture) that has become linked in the past to certain belief or behaviour. The primed concept makes behaviour linked to them more likely. When media primes aggressive concept, aggression is more likely.

2.9.2 Excitation

To the extent that mass media representation arouse the observer, aggressive behaviour may also become more likely in the short run (Huesmann & Taylor, 2006:403). Subsequent stimulus that arouses an emotion (provocation) may be perceived as more severe that it is become some of the emotional responses stimulated by the media representation is misattributed as due to the provocation transfer. Alternatively, the increase in general arousal stimulated by the media presentation may simply reach such a peak that inhibition of inappropriate responses is dimming and dominant learned processes are displayed in solving problems (Matthews, 2009:14).

2.9.3 Imitation

Children have the tendency to imitate whomever they observe. Observation of specific social behaviour around them increases the likelihood of children behaving exactly that way (Huesmann & Taylor, 2006:403). As children observe violent behaviour, they are prone to imitate it. According to Mathew (2009:14), children have

always been entertained with stories that contained violence and other anti-social behaviour. Over many years, multitudes of books, comics, radio shows, movies, films and video games programmes and computer games have in their turn been criticised as unsuitable or even harmful to children.

Through the years, almost all boys and girls have copied the actions and attitudes of their favourite functional character in games with their friends at school and in their homes. It is possible that children who do not have friends and spend their time mostly watching violent films and playing violent games may be more negatively affected by their bottled-up hostility.

This usually has not had any negative effects on them but there have always been a few incidents where particularly aggressive children have upset or deliberately hurt others while acting out their version of what they had seen. Mathews further states that it is probably no surprise that children feel more assertive just after they have seen a violent story (Matthews, 2009:15).

2.10 LONG-TERM EFFECTS

2.10.1 Numbing

Once a child is desensitised to violent films and video games, it is only a matter of time before he is desensitised to real life violence. He may no longer react to seeing another child in pain or suffering. If a classmate is being beaten up, he will watch without any sympathy or concern. In real life parents believe that their children are either strong or bold when they do not act up to horrible scenes, but this goes back to too much violent exposure because the child is now used to violence he/she no longer acts (Deborah & Christopher, 2009:216).

2.10.2 Intimidation

Many children react to violent films and video games by overreacting on films and television, he/she may fear that it is real that it could happen to him in real life. The child will become more anxious and upset and feel that the world is an unsafe place and the people in it are mean and ruthless. Children believe that whatever is seen on the media depicts reality that is why they react fast to it and tend to think that the whole world is dangerous and violent as seen (Cantor & Nathason, 1996:65).

2.10.3 Activation

Studies by Caprara, Cinnani, Dimperio, Passerini, Renzi and Travaglia (1985) revealed that with activation, the media triggers a previously learned behaviour. After seeing cartoon characters beating each other with on the head with rubber hammers, children might imitate this behaviour if they have rubber hammers available at the time. Several days after, if the child goes into a toy store and they see some rubber toy. If their memory reminds them that they learned this action, the presence of the hammers makes it now possible for them to perform this behaviour (Caprara et al., 1985:131).

Thus their later violent behaviour was triggered violent behaviour was triggered by the cued memory of a violent action learned from the media. In a typical hour of films and video games programming, children's shows featured more than twice as many violence incidence than other types of programming. Children aged seven and younger are particularly vulnerable to the effects.

2.10.4 More lasting observational learning of cognitions of behaviours

According to Huesmann and Taylor (2006), observation learning behaviour does not only take part only in the short term after behaviour observed, but also in the long term. The social scripts acquired through observation of family, peers, community and mass media become more complex, distracted and automatic in their invocation. During this period children's social cognitive schemas about the world around them are so elaborated.

As children mature further, normative beliefs about which social behaviour is appropriate become crystallised and begin to act as filter limit inappropriate social behaviours. Social normative beliefs are influenced in part by children's observation of the behaviour of those around them including behaviour observed in the mass media (Huesmann & Taylor, 2003:48).

2.11 THE EFFECTS OF FILMS AND VIDEO GAMES ON CHILDREN WHO ARE ALREADY AGGRESSIVE

Zambrack (1986) found that both children who were high on aggression and children who were low on aggression before the introduction of films and video games became more aggressive after films and video games were introduced. In disparity, Jopheson (1987:59) contends that exposing more aggressive group of boys to violent films and video games resulted in higher levels of subsequent aggression than exposing them to a non-violent show. Exposure to violent films and video games does appear to increase aggression, but being aggressive also seems to increase preferences for violent films and video games generally (Huesmann, 1986).

Potts, Huston and Wright (1986:90) had pairs of preschool boys watch films and play video games that had either high or low levels of violent content. The boys then

played with the toys that had either aggressive connotations (including a Bobo doll, boxing robots, and Star Wars figures) or pro-social connotations (including a foam basketball and hoop and ambulance and paramedic figures). Rates of aggressive and pro-social play during the play session were tabulated.

Their results indicated that the level of violent content in films and video games had a weak relative to the effect type of toy presented. That is, much more aggressive acts were observed when toys with aggressive connotations were present than when toys of pro-social connotations were presented. The authors concluded that the demand qualities of the immediate environment can be made sufficiently strong to override the effects of a brief exposure to different types of films and video games content. The findings indicate that the effects of films and video games content and form depend on the environmental circumstances surrounding a child (Potts et al., 1986:90).

2.12 REASONS WHY VIOLENT VIDEO GAMES HAVE GREATER EFFECTS THAN VIOLENT FILM

2.12.1 Identification with an aggressor increases imitation of the aggressor

Children will imitate aggressive actions more readily if they identify with an aggressive character in some way. On films and video games, it is hard to predict with which characters, if any person will identify. One might identify most closely with the victim, in which case the viewer would be less likely to be aggressive after watching. In many violent video games, however, one is required to take the point of view of one particular character. This is more common in first-person shooter games, in which the players see what their character would see as if they were inside the game. Thus, the player is forced to identify with a violent character (Anderson & Gentile, 2008:134).

2.12.2 Active participation increases learning

According to Gentile and Walsh (2002) when one becomes actively involved in something, one learns more than if he only watches it. Computer technology in the classroom has been considered to be educationally beneficial because of this reason. Educational video games are said to be partly helpful because they require active participation. With regard to violent entertainment, viewers of violent content on films and video games are passive observers of the aggressive acts. In contrast, violent video games by their nature need active participation in the violent acts (Anderson & Gentile, 2008:134).

2.12.2.1 Practising an entire behavioural sequence is more effective than practicing only one part.

If one wanted to learn to kill someone, one would realise that there are many steps involved. At a minimum, one needs to decide who to kill, get a weapon, load the weapon, stalk the victim, aim at the person and pull the trigger. It is very uncommon for films and video games movies to show all these steps. However, video games always need players to practice each of these steps repeatedly. This helps teach the necessary steps to commit a successful act of aggression (Anderson & Gentile, 2008:134).

2.12.3 Violence is continuous

Effects on viewers are greater if the violence is unbroken and uninterrupted. Yet, in both films and video games programmes and movies, violent content is rarely sustained for more than a few minutes before changing pace, scenes, or going to commercial. In disparity, the violence in video games is often continuous. Players must constantly be alert for hostile enemies, and must constantly choose act to out aggressive behaviours. These behaviours expose players to a continual stream of

violent scenes filled by streams of pain and suffering in a context that is not compatible with feelings of empathy (Anderson & Gentile, 2008:134).

2.12.4 Repetition increases learning

Children rarely watch the same films and video games programme or movie over and over again, that is why it is easy to forget about the aggressive acts seen there. However, in a violent video game, players often spend a great deal of time doing the same aggressive actions. Furthermore, the games are usually played repeatedly, thus giving a great deal of practice repeating the violent game actions. From these children will then develop a habit to act out what was displayed in the games (Anderson & Gentile, 2008:134).

2.12.5 Rewards increase imitation

There are three stages involved in this category. First, rewarding aggressive behaviour in a video game increases the frequency of behaving aggressively in that game. Second, rewarding aggressive behaviour in a video game teaches more positive attitudes towards the use of force as a means of solving conflicts. Films and video games programmes rarely provide a reward structure for the viewer, and it would be rarer to have those rewards dependent on violent acts. In disparity, video games often reward players for participating. Third, the reward patterns involved in the video game increase the player's motivation to continue with the game. Interestingly, all three of these processes help educational games be more successful though the games may be addictive (Anderson & Gentile, 2008:134).

2.13 CAUSES OF AGRESSION IN CHILDREN

Aggression in children can be caused by different factors. This section will discuss them in details.

2.13.1 Family environment

Parent's aggression can influence children's aggression and delinquency (Huesmann, 1998). Authoritarian parents are more likely to have children who imitate these coercive approaches to solving problems (Sears, Maccoby, & Levin 1997). Huesmann (1998) explains that a family environment with high levels of aggression provides a chance for children to develop scripts for aggressive behaviour.

In addition, the child might internalise norms and attitudes (aggression works) and lay the ground work for violent displays for violent films and video games (Huesmann, 1988). Dubow and Miller (1996) point out that the family films and video games also play a significant role in the effects of viewing violence might have, more so if the films and video games are focus of family recreation.

Media effects research has been influenced primarily by behavioural psychology that aims to establish how audience behaviour is influenced by the content of media messages. The research focused on violent portrayals in films and video games. Gunter(1985:14) contend that the effects of media might manifest in terms of attitudinal change in response to persuasive messages, the learning of behavioural patterns that might later be reproduced under appropriate conditions, and direct emotional or behavioural reactions to specific media portrayals (Gunter, 1985:14).

According to Meyrowitz (1990) children used to learn through their parents about the world. Parents decided what and when to tell children.

The media instead presents the same information directly to children of different ages, without going through adult filters. This was further confirmed as follows:

The media destroyed the system that segregated adult from child knowledge and separated information into year by year slices for children of different ages. Media takes children across the globe before parents give them permission to cross the street (Meyrowitz, 1990:76).

Children do not necessarily understand what they see in violent films and video games, but they are exposed to many aspects of the adult world that parents might have decided to tell them about at a later stage (Meyrowitz, 1990:76).

2.14. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE AGE AND DEVELOPMENT LEVEL OF CHILDREN WHEN WATCHING VIOLENT FILMS AND PLAYING VIDEO GAMES

Josephson (1995:32) states that fundamental school age (ages six to eleven) is considered an important period for understanding the effects of films and video games on aggression. At this stage, children develop the attention period and cognitive ability to follow continuous plots. However, they are also investigating increasingly less mental effort overall in their viewing and it is mental effort that determines whether children will process films and video games information deeply or merely react to it in an unfocused, insincere way.

Stadler (2004:6) points out that the development level of a child is a crucial component in the comparison of media effects. Young children who do not fully understand much of what they see are more likely to be affected by obvious features like outstanding instances of screen violence with remarkable special effects (Stadler, 2004:6). Van Evra (1990:76) supports this statement by saying that children, as innocent viewers, may miss out the important hints about the motive and consequences of the programmes and consequently imitate the actions they see.

He further states that:

Children's cognitive and semiotic systems develop at least up till the age of twelve, so that they not only prefer different kinds of programmes from adults, they also respond differently, but from the age of nine they are capable of their own kind of understanding of most mainstream films and video games (Van Evra,1990:76).

The activity of children in response to films and video games does not stop with watching programmes, but continues with all sorts of other acts of meaning-making (Hodge & Tripp, 1986:213). Likewise, the production of children's literature and children's toys and eventually of children's films and video games has invoked all sorts of assumptions about what it means to be a child.

The perception of violent films and video games can differ according to the kind of violence, the context in which it occurred, the nature of the perpetrator and the victim, the consequences which follow from it, the type of weapons employed, and the reason why it occurred. These are matters which need to be borne in mind by those who attempt to develop procedures for measuring the amount of violence on films and video games (Hodge & Tripp, 1986:213).

Child development literature has shown that socialisation proceeds with, if not consent, then at least participation of the socialised. Before the onset of language, children are making their requirements known and resisting the attempts to shape behaviour in particular directions. Clearly, the aggressively motivated may have their aggressive tendencies reinforced by the media and may learn effective expressions of aggression on the media. The most important socialisation will occur when multiple sources are in agreement as to goals and behaviour. Children start out

differently with different consequences for who they become and how they become and how they behave (Hodge & Tripp, 1986:213).

Films and video games in American society may be related to the diffusion of culture and to alternations in social structure, both of which affect the behaviour of virtually all persons in the society regardless of how much films and video games they watch. Children embody both our greatest hope and our deepest fear about the future. For at the same time we can imagine children to be innocent, vulnerable, and precious, there also exists an alternate and troublesome view of children embodying all that is corrupt and disordered about our social world, a vision that is so powerful that children can be seen not just as the symptom of social disorder but even as the source of much larger economic political and social concerns (Hodge & Tripp, 1986:215).

2.15 WAYS THROUGH WHICH THE EXPOSURE TO VIOLENT FILMS AND VIDEO GAMES MAY LEAD TO GREATER AGGRESSION

2.15.1 Construction, elaboration and priming of aggressive thoughts networks.

Berkowitz (1993:410) proposes that when children are repeatedly exposed to aggression, they create in their minds more detailed and interconnected aggressive thoughts networks. Exposure to aggression can trigger related feelings and can bring to mind knowledge of aggression-related skills, memories and behaviours.

Children who are exposed to great media violence generally tend to have decreased empathy toward others. This may be specially displayed when a child that is exposed to media violence neither acts harshly towards others nor sympathise with other children when they are hurt or being abused. These children are too used to

violence in such a way that they interpret violent acts as being normal (Berkowitz, 1993:410).

Violent films and video games which do not show the consequences of violent acts are more harmful than those which reveal the consequences. Violent films which have happy endings has less aggression effects on children, than those film which have sad ending media violence and its effect on aggression (Berkowitz ,1993:410).

2.15.2 Weakening inhibitions and justified aggression.

One significant reason why exposure to films and video games and more violence increases aggression is that increased exposure to violent films and video games weakens inhibitions against engaging in aggressive behaviour (Geen, 1990). Weakening inhibition may work through changing and individuals mind perception of what is normal and acceptable behaviour. Media violence that is seen as justified has a greater effect than media violence seen as unjustified (Berkowitz & Geen, 2009:365).

The idea is that children shown justified violence are more likely to imitate it. If the violence in the film or the programme is perceived as justified, the message may be that one can act aggressively only if aggression is justified. In contrast, when the violence in the film is not justified, the message may be that one can act aggressively even when it is unjustified (Berkowitz & Geen, 2009:367).

Berkowitz, Cochran and Embree (1981) support the above statement by saying if violence against the bad guy in a film or video game is represented as justified, the children's, inhibitions against expressing their own anger towards someone, particularly if that person had previously annoyed them in some way, would be lowered. Another way of considering the push factor for violence is in terms of

whether it has fundamentally good or evil goals. Gerson (1968, 151) found that the effect of bad consequences for the victim of violence in a film portrayal was to reduce the level of aggressiveness in angered children compared to a film portrayal with more pleasant ending.

2.16 THE ROLE OF THE HERO

Bandura and Walters (1983) as cited in (Gunter & Harrison, 1998:249) states that heroes exert profound influences on individuals and even upon entire civilisations. For children, heroes, with their accompanying myths and legends, represent material which feeds their dreams and imaginations. Playing out these hero themes is one of their own ways in which children come to understand their society and their own role within the society. Heroes are the source of many qualities which children select and incorporate into their pretend play. Prestige is one particular quality that attracts children into a hero model. Power is another important quality that renders a hero an attractive role model. Children may play at being super heroes in order to understand their own place in the hierarchy of power (Gunter & Harrison, 1998:249).

Children may be attracted to super heroes because they are characters who demonstrate control over a hostile environment. Children may wish to acquire this quality to them. Children believe that power can be seen through aggressiveness in a player. Pretend play represents a natural aspect of a child's psychological development. It involves in form as the child progress through successive stages of psychological developments, with children engaging in different role models as they pass from stage of cognitive and emotional maturity to the next (Bandura & Walters, 1983).

While films and video games do not cause children to engage in pretend play, because this is something they do quite naturally, it may nevertheless provide some influence over the way such behaviour is manifested. If the dominant themes associated with heroes in today's media are different from those of the pre- films and video games era, this means that the nature of films and video games of children play has changed as well. In the past, children admired people who possessed the truth, honour and bravery because parents and teachers saw to it that information about those who had done admirable deeds was passed on to them (Gunter & Harrison,1998:249).

However, children nowadays no longer admire those people because films and video games came with a different content. The lines between the good and evil had become blurred, both the hero and the villain were more omnipotent, and the weapons they wielded were more destructive.

2.17 THE ROLE OF EMPATHY

In the process of watching and playing video games children only sympathise for their role models. When children witness a violent event which causes an actor or player on screen to appear to suffer pain, they may put themselves in that actors' position and imagine what it would be like to suffer that pain themselves. Alternatively, they may wish they could do something to prevent the suffering (Gunter & Harrison, 1998:249).

Children's emotional reaction to scenes of violence may be invoked through the anticipation of the pain that might be caused by a particular action, however, even before the blow is struck. Such an emotional reaction may be just as powerful as

when the violent action is carried through and the victim is actually harmed (Gunter & Harrison ,1998:249).

Furthermore, observations made about the varying strength of effects of different violent forms across different fictional contexts, found that the consequences of violence had a much stronger effect on children's perceptions of portrayals in contemporary setting than in furistic setting (Smith & Donnerstein, 1998:88).The degree to which viewers might feel empathy for the individual on the receiving end of violence, however, can depend upon what they know about this individual whether they know him or not (Smith & Donnerstein, 1998:88).

A victim of violence may be shown to suffer pain, with his or her face contorted by agony, but whether or not viewers feel concerned about this may depend on the circumstances surrounding the incident and whether the victim is regarded as deserving misfortune or not (Zillman & Cantor, 1986:98).

Psychological research has indicated that witnessing a disliked person receiving a reward might be regarded as annoying while seeing that same person have bad luck consequences may be regarded as satisfying to the audience, especially if members of the audience have come to dislike that individual (Zillman & Cantor, 1986:98). In contrast, witnessing a well-liked character fall on hard times is likely to upset children by invoking feelings of empathy. How children will respond to the victims of violence who display clear pain and suffering will depend on whether that individual is liked and seen to deserve their fate (Zillman & Cantor, 1986:98).

2.18 FILMS AND VIDEO GAMES AS FANTASY

Fantasy provides a child with experience which is free from the real life controls so that, in attempting to find solutions to a problem, he/she can try out various modes of

action without risking the injury which might be unsure if he experimented overtly (Huesmann, 1998:75).

Fantasy also provides an outlet for impulse which is not allowed free expression in real life. Young children take an especially great interest in stories depicting violence and in sudden death (reflecting perhaps the inhibition of aggressive impulse in their daily life) while adolescents are more interested in themes of romantic love (Huesmann, 1998:75). Huesmann (1998) states that fantasy may make possible the testing of solutions to the problems without the restrictions of doing so in real life. For some it may merely result in postponing those problems or pretending they do not exist. Fantasy may also lead a child into withdrawal from the real world, encourage the confusion of real situations with fantasy, and thereby cause him more trouble than he should have in learning the rules of the real world. Build up aggression, rather than draining it off, so that socially acceptable adjustment becomes more difficult (Huesmann, 1998:75).

2.19 THE MEDIA CAN TURN THE GOOD TOWARDS THE BAD

The developing personality is like slow hardening clay. Environmental experience, including media violence, shapes the clay. Changes are relatively easy to make at first, when the clay is soft, but later on changes become more and more difficult. Longitudinal studies suggest that aggression-related knowledge structures begin to harden around age eight or nine, and become more perseverant with increasing age (Anderson, 2000:12).

The concept of media effects, in general and media violence and aggression specifically depend on some mind theory that provides the linkage between the content as cause and the following behaviour as effect. In behavioural paradigm, a

stimulus is a change in the environment that elicits a response, a response is any behaviour under the governance of stimuli, and reinforcement is any change in the environment subsequent to a response that raises the probability of that response. Media effects found the perfect partner in cognitive (Anderson, 2000:12).

Media content does not determine the use children will make of them. That is, the simple fact that violent media content exists does not in itself have any important meaning. Viewers must do something with that content. Anderson (2000:12) further mentions that:

Media content works through interpretation, and interpretation begin in physiology, moves through cognitive process, but in the end it relies on the social processes for its consequences.

Films and video games are accused of giving children access to the hidden, and sometimes negative, aspects of adult's life and causes the disappearance of childhood itself (Anderson, 2000:12). Children at certain ages are seen to be unable to accomplish the logical sequencing of visual images, to recall the essential features of narrative, or to correctly differentiate between positive and negative characters- which of course implies that adults response to such a thing are taken as a norm (Anderson, 1981:201).

According to Hawkins (1997:23), children's judgements of violent films and video games depend on both their knowledge of the constructed nature of the medium, and on their own knowledge or social expectations about the world in general. Hawkins continues to say such judgements depend both on children's general cognitive development and on their experience of the medium. Children typically have the capacity to be active and powerful decoders of films and video games, and

programmes watched by them are potentially rich in meaning and cultural value, though not all the programmes and ways of viewing are of equal benefit for all children.

Films and video games take children across the globe before parents give them the permission to cross the street. Children do not necessarily understand everything they see in films and video games, but they are exposed to many aspects of the adult world that parents might have decided to tell them about. There is common agreement among social scientists that violence in films and video games increases the likelihood of real life aggression among some children (Meyrowitz, 1990:32).

According to Groebel, (1999:19) exposure to violent films and video games could influence children's development in two areas, emotional functioning and socialisation, particularly among boys, and manifest itself in antisocial behaviour.

Groebel (1999:14) points out that several studies, have concluded that media violence in general does have an impact on children in four specific ways

- It can cause some children to act violently and aggressively towards others.
- It can make them fearful and lead them to believe that the world is a mean and violent place.
- It can desensitise them toward the use of violence in the real world.
- And it can teach them that violence is an acceptable way to deal with violent behaviours.

2.19.1 Violent Media Exposure as a Predictor of Risk Taking

From the perspective of problem behaviour theory, social deviance is represented by a collection of problem behaviours that constitutes a pattern. Among those patterns

are deviance, underage drinking, and physical aggression (Jessor & Jessor, 1984:21). Three system of psychological influence are said to influence problem behaviours: the personality system, the perceived environment system, and the behaviour system. Combined together, these systems work together to create adolescent proneness (Jessor & Jessor, 1984:21).

The theory further contends that because proneness to engage in problem behaviour is seen as a system level property, it is theoretically meaningful to speak of personality proneness, environmental proneness and behavioural proneness. One such kind of proneness, environmental proneness refers to supports, influences, and models that have a meaning for children but may differ from person to person. For example, if a child sees smoking modelled, this behaviour may come to mean independence, or it may carry the meaning of unhealthy behaviour. Similarly, problem behaviours such as vandalism and absence may mean, for children that they are disprove conventional forms and affirming their independence (Jessor & Jessor, 1987:43).

Popular video games played by children contain violence, and these violent games have been linked to a host of aggression related cognitive, emotional and behavioural outcomes. These outcomes include more positive attitudes towards violence, increased use of aggressive words or solutions to hypothetical problems, quicker recognition and facial anger, increased feelings of anger and revenge motives, decreased sensitivity to scenes and images for real violence and changes in brain function associated with lower executive control and heightened emotion. Children's aggressive behaviour is not the only outcome affected by violent media violent. Children's fears and anxieties can be influenced by media exposure as well (Future of Children, 2008).

2.19.2 Too Much Technology, Not Enough Intelligence

Media can be a great source of information when needed. It can also be a tremendous resource for teaching children. It can provide a wholesome source of family entertainment. Films and video games do not always harm children; on the contrary it can expand their world and play a significant role in the education process. Technology must not take the place of intelligence. In line with this assertion Eron et al., (1972:107) argue that:

Children have become more dependent on video games and the conveniences they provide. The internet just like films and video games offers children lot of violent films and games without the knowledge of parents.

Eron et al. (1972:107) have suggested that there is a period between the ages of 6 and 10 in which children are particularly sensitive to the effects of violent films and films and video games because viewing time is at the maximum and aggressive behaviour is still increasing but still children regard films and video games as quite realistic. They argue that this age is thus a particularly important one to target intervention.

2.19.3 Misleading the Player of Violent Video Games

According to DeGaetano and Bander (1996) violent video games send the following false messages to children:

- Problems can be resolved quickly and with little personal investment.

- The best way to solve a problem is to eliminate the source of the problem.
- It is acceptable for one self to immerse in the video games rule driven reality without questioning the rules.
- Use instinctual rather than thoughtful, responsible behaviour to react to problems.
- Personal imagination is not an important problem solving skills.

These false messages are strengthened because of the distinguished feature of video gaming, namely interactivity. As the computer industry become more sophisticated in its productions, so do the games promise a more realistic version of events? Gaming texts therefore promote the idea of full sensory embodied experience. Children as young as pre scholars can show violent behaviour. Parents and other adults who witness the behaviour may be concerned; however, they often hope that the young child will grow out of it. Violent behaviour in a child at any age always needs to be taken seriously. It should be quickly dismissed as just a phase they are going through (DeGaetano & Bander, 1996:78).

Playing video games differs from watching films in that the former activity involves much more active involvement. Cooper and Mackie (1986:19) assigned 84 children from grade four and five to pairs. One member of the pair played either a violent or non-violent game or did maze puzzles for eight minutes while other children watched. The pairs of children were subsequently observed in free play to determine how long they played with violent or non-violent toys (Cooper & Mackie, 1986:19)

Finally, the children were asked to push a button to show how much a hypothetical child should be punished for doing a bad thing and rewarded for doing a good thing. They found that girls, but not boys, who have been exposed to violent videogame played more with the aggressive toys and changed activities more than often than

those who had been exposed to the nonviolent videogame or the mazes. There was no difference between the groups on the amount of punishment or reward given to the hypothetical child (Cooper & Mackie, 1986:19).

2.19.4 Gun Violence

Children exposed to gun violence may experience negative short –and long term psychological effects, including anger, withdrawal, posttraumatic stress and desensitisation to violence .All of these outcomes can feed into continuing cycle of violence. Certain children may be at higher risk for negative outcomes if they are exposed to gun violence. Groups at risk include children injured in gun violence, those who witness violence acts at close proximity, those exposed to high levels of violence in their communities or schools, and those exposed to violent media (Dubow, Huesmann & Greenwood, 2006:84).

The emergence of the mass visual media as a fundamental element of most children’s socialisation experiences has been one of the most dramatic changes in child rearing that has occurred in the past 100 years. Children no longer “see ‘only those in their own family, community, and culture. They are exposed at a very young age to the looks, behaviours, and beliefs of a wide variety of others behaving in a wide variety of manners. certainly, these mass media exposures contribute to a child’s socialisation just as exposure to family, peers, and community contribute (Dubow et al., 2006:84).

Extensive viewing of films and video games violence by children causes greater aggrieves. Sometimes, watching a single violent programme can increase aggressiveness. Children who view shows, in which violence is very realistic, frequency repeated or unpunished, are more likely to imitate what they see. Children

with emotional, behavioural, learning or impulse control problems may be more easily influenced by television violence. The impact of television violence may be immediately evident in the child's behaviour or may surface years later. Young people can even be affected when the family atmosphere shows no tendency toward violence (Dubow et al., 2006:84).

2.20 THE IMPORTANCE OF DISPLAY

Attention to the violent display determines whether the child will store and display the memory. Material is more likely to be attending to media displays that contain high amount of action, laden with special visual and sound effects (Rule & Ferguson, 1986).

Huston and Wright (1996) point out that other aspects besides violent content attracts a child's attentions to violent films and video games. These other aspects include action, sound and visual effects. Potts et al. (1986:65) have found that animated and live programmes that contain rapid actions and low levels of aggression attract preschool boy's attention just as much as programmes with rapid action and high levels of aggression.

These findings contradict the argument, often made by executives in the media industry, that a certain level of violence is necessary to hold children's attention. In the same study, although violent content led the pre-schoolers to be aggressive, high action programmes with low levels of aggression did not lead to more aggression. Therefore, not only does rapid action result in increased attention, but also does not appear to lead to increased aggression. Children's and women's voices, lively music, animation, and humorous sequences also attract and maintain children's attention to the programme (Huston & Wright, 1996).

2.21 THE LAW OF JUSTICE

Traditionally, society approves of some forms of violence under certain circumstances, and disapproves of others. Certain forms of legitimised violence are approved of. For example, violence used by police officers to uphold the law, that used by the armed forces to protect the nation against an enemy, and that used by private individuals in self defence against an attacker (Gunter, 1985).

Under all these circumstances, however, the employment of a violent response must not far outweigh the magnitude of the behaviour of the intimidator or the attacker. Where the force used to repel an attacker is much greater than that justified by initial provocation; it will not be found so acceptable. Based on the above mentioned statement children assume because the society accepts some kind of violent, they also should act out what they saw in video games and violent films, regardless of the results (Gunter, 1985).

The consequences of violence can significantly affect the viewer's emotional reactions to portrayals. Greater depicted pain and suffering on the part of victims has been found the cause of viewer's greater concern. Children's judgement about video games and violent films are influenced by the kind of characters who are featured as the perpetrator and victims of the violence (Gunter, 1985).

2.22 GENDER STEREOTYPING

The regularity of the gender of characters is just one indicator of the gender stereotyping of video games. When it comes to the qualities of the game characters, it is even more noticeable. Female and male characters are portrayed in stereotypical ways. Female characters are frequently sexy, with either very thin or very voluptuous bodies. Male characters are commonly hyper masculinised. Female

characters are usually victims and male characters are the heroes who usually rescue female characters (Gunter & Harrison, 1998:98).

The concern is that the portrayals of females in games will not affect the self-image of young girls but also boy's expectation of an attitude towards females (Gunter & Harrison, 1998:98). Critics of video games claim that watching violent film is less detrimental due to the children not physically playing out the violence. They further say:

Everything that children see or hear in the media early on in their lives affects them in some way. Risky behaviour by children can include violence against others, lack of remorse for consequences.

The type of faulty thinking creates stressors in children which can lead to the onset of many different symptoms. Children who view media violence are more likely to have increased feelings of hostility, decreased emotional response to the portrayal violence and injury that lead to violence through imitation. If children begin to think that violence is normal these thoughts are often said to be hard to change later on in life (Anderson, 2000).

When children with an aggressive personality play a violent game (especially one in which they experience frustration), this arouses feelings of anger within them, accompanied by biological arousal such as increased heart rate and aggressive possibility involving revenge. The particular content of the game can influence the aggressive thoughts and behaviour that are shown. Aggressive children have cognitions (thoughts) that encourage violent reactions, such as thinking that there is more violent than there really is, and the best way to solve problems is to use

aggression. Levels of aggression are significantly higher after playing violent games than after playing non-violent ones (Anderson, 2000).

Klein and Maxson (1989) as cited in Oliver (2000:45) noted that many of the children that he counselled were seemingly addicted to violent video games. Quite a lot of children had skipped classes and spent their lunch or alternately stole money to get their video games fix.

2.23 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF PRETEND PLAY

Fantasy play is generally acknowledged by child development expert to be the beneficial and even essential healthy psychological growth. Pretend play can enhance child's creativity, ability to think in a more flexible way, and social skills when dealing with other people, whether peers or adults. They contend that children's tendency to engage in imaginative play has been shown to correlate passively with their ability to make friends and to control any hostile impulses they might have towards others. Fantasy play experiences in which children imagine they are characters from fairy tale may lead to more complex forms of play, more complex modes of thinking, and to greater ability to see other points of view than their own (Harris & Williams, 1985:52).

2.24 POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF PLAYING VIDEO GAMES

The national institute on media and family outlined lined the following effects of playing video games.

2.24.1 Positive effects

- Games provide an introduction to information technology.
- Games can give practice in following directions.

- Some games provide practice in problem solving and logic.
- Games can provide practice in use of fine work and spatial skills
- Games can provide an opportunity for an adult and child to play together.

2.24.2 Negative effects

- Practising violent acts may contribute to more aggressive behaviour than positive viewing of violence.
- Games are often based on plots of aggression, competition and stereotyping.
- More often games do not present opportunities for independent creativity.

2.25 THE ROLE OF ENTERTAINMENT SOFTWARE RATING BOARD (ESRB)

According to Bushman and Anderson (2002:214) the Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB) is a self-regulatory body established in 1994 by the interactive digital software association (IDSA). The major video games manufactures created this board after concerned groups applied pressure over the content of video games. Similar to the movie industry's rating system, all major game companies submit their new products for rating to specially trained rates at the ESRB.

The ESRB looks at the number of factors when rating the games. In particular, it considers the amount of violence, sex, controversial language and substance use found in a game. Based on its developed guidelines, the ESRB then gives an age recommendation and content descriptor to each game submitted. Therefore children should look for the following before playing a video game (ESRB Raring Guide, 2012).

2.25.1 Early childhood (EC): This means the content should be suitable for children over three years and older and contain no objectionable material.

2.25.2 Everyone (E): Content is suitable for persons aged 6 and older. The game may only contain minimal violence and some comic mischief.

2.25.3 Teen (T): Content suitable for persons aged 13 and older. Content is more violent than (E) rating and contains mild or strong language and or suggestive themes.

2.25.4 Mature (M): Content is suitable for persons ages 17 and older. Content definitely has more mature sexual themes, intense violence and stronger language.

2.25.5 Adults only (M): Content suitable only for adults and may contain explicit sex and violence, Adult only products are not intended for persons under the age of eighteen.

2.25.6 Rating pending (RP): Game has been submitted to the ESRB and is awaiting a final rating.

2.26 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study explored the theories that have a bearing on the topic. These are Social learning theory, Cultivation theory, Uses and gratification theory and Film theory.

2.26.1 Social learning theory

Bandura (2009:90), states that children learn aggressive behaviour by observing the aggressive behaviour of their heroes and in particular the consequences of this behaviour. This learning of aggression mostly occurs when the child identifies with the hero and when the aggressive behaviour of the hero is rewarded. Since children like to identify themselves with heroes, they then display same actions when playing with their friends because of the effects in media violence. Children think violence is an effective way of solving problems because in violent video games violent acts are

rewarded. Moreover, children use the same violence seen in violent films as a tool to stand on their own and attack their peers (Bandura, 2009:90).

In essence, this theory seeks to describe the social learning process towards the acquisition of new behaviour as displayed by the media. Most role models are copied from soaps, video games, and drama and television presenters. The media are readily accessible and attractive sources of these models. These presentations give symbolic modelling of almost every conceivable form of behaviour (Pfukwa, 2001:15). Through the process of television viewing children acquire attitudes and new styles of conduct as they imitate and emulate what they admire to be fantastic and impressionable especially from films to television. This modelled behaviour is common among children as portrayed by their dress code, language use, choice of music and dance.

Most young people are fond of television characters and would like to imitate their behaviour as portrayed on television without considering the factious implications of the content. The imitator believes that imitating the televised behaviour can produce a desired and highly esteemed behaviour. Thus positive reinforcement increases chances that the individual can use the reproduced behaviour again as a means of responding to any such situation (Fourie, 2001:301).

This can be misleading and dangerous especially in situations where children spend most of their time by themselves away from parents and guardians. Thus, the theory is capable of accounting for at least some direct and indirect addition to long term and short term influences on children who are exposed to violent media content.

2.26.2 Cultivation theory

Cultivation Theory, put simply, states that the more a person is exposed to a message provided by the media, the more likely that person is to believe the message is real.

Gerbner (1972) argues that, to the extent that television dominates children's sources of entertainment and information, continued cumulative exposure to its messages is likely to reiterate, cultivate beliefs and perspectives it portrays. The importance of media cultivation is underlined by the fact that there are many critical discrepancies between how the world is and how it is portrayed on films and video games. Cultivation Theory is often applied to people's awareness of reality. For example, a person who watches a lot of crime shows on television eventually believe that there is a lot of violent crime in the city in which he lives. The theory also states that viewers who watch more television are more influenced than those who watch less and that "the cumulative effect of television is to create a synthetic world that heavy viewers come to believe".

Pfukwa (2001:18) contends that programmes displayed on screens do not always respect reality but usually are based on stereotypes. Cultivation is a gradual process and accumulative in nature. When viewers watch something on television they do not imitate or divert from their original behaviour there and here. Instead, they continue to admire, conform and imitate the fashions seen with passage of time until they uphold those values more intentionally.

The cultivation theory influences behaviours of all age groups from the young to the old and should be upheld as a crucial facilitator of behaviour pattern. Children are bound to fall victims since their lives hang around imitation. This has resulted in a

number of children unconsciously living lives stereotyped around distorted images (Pfukwa, 2001:18).

Because of this, children act out what they see on television and video games assuming that it is what happens in real life because they are influenced by media content. Children choose this because mostly when they are playing video games and players are children they then feel like the games were made for them though there are violence scenes in the play. After watching violent films and playing video games children then think violence is the only way to get rid of their obstructions, while in the real world it is totally not like that.

As emphasised by the cultivation theory too much exposure to any kind of television stores scripts in one's mind, children therefore fail to interpret messages given to them by the media in a good manner but see things differently from how they are in the real world.

This theory is related to the study because children act out what they see on television and video games and assume that it is reality, through influences of media content. Therefore children fail to interpret messages given to them by the media in a good manner but see things differently from how they are in the real world. Children may go as far as carrying dangerous weapons to protect themselves because they believe that the world is violent as the media portray it.

2.26.3 Uses and Gratification theory

According to Fourie (2007:236), the uses and gratifications theory, proceeds from the needs of users and the possible gratifications that they derive from the media use. Gentile and Walsh (2002:170) state that in uses and gratification theory, users come to media with certain needs and they fulfil them by using the media. In the area

of aggression, one might speculate that children that view and interact with the media containing aggressive content because they are in search of interesting stories or because they are bored and looking for stimulation. Children also look to media role models who can serve as guides for their own actions. Children with low self-esteem such as bullies and victims may fill their mystery and power, in part by playing violent video games.

Children have less developed sense. That is why to them violent acts are solutions to problem at most times. Potential role models depicted in violent films and video games increase aggressive possibilities in children. Cognitive development determines how aggressive a child can be after exposure to violent films and video games. For example girls are less likely to imitate aggression than boys do (Gentile & Walsh, 2002:174).

This theory focuses on psychological factors, individual structures of interest, needs, attitudes and values that play a part in shaping selections from the media. This justifies the choice of a variety of televised content which children prefer to watch. Their interest at this stage tends to revolve around independence and they develop a preference for music videos, and horror movies which deal with these topics, although usually in negative ways (Fourie, 2007:236).

Media content is again used to explore challenge, adjust or confirm personal identity. People, particularly children use media content to compare themselves and their situations and values with those of others. Because people compare themselves with others, children, therefore, compare themselves with people they see on violent films and video games then they start to act aggressively and violently after.

2.26.4 Film theory

The theory is concerned with the question of the link between the film image and reality; it involves the investigation of raw materials used in communicating images, in other words, the reality from which the fragmentary images are drawn. Accordingly, an image does not possess a complete reality; it is rather a reaction of the fragments lifted from reality. Therefore, meaning in a film can be interpreted from varying ideological viewpoints depending on the ways in which the images implicitly or explicitly represent reality. Since film is not what appears on screen, but a result of series of decisions and human interactions, film reading therefore requires interpretation of what lies beyond and behind the text (de Beer, 1998:187).

Thus, reality as portrayed in the media has been interpreted differently by different people as they are influenced by differing ideological stand points. Essentially the process of meaning construction is subjective and linked to individual perception. This explains why different people view television content from divergent viewpoints with some encouraging children to view a specific programme while others prevent them.

CHAPTER THREE

INSTITUTIONS OF REGULATION AND CONTROL IN RELATION TO FILMS AND VIDEO GAMES

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Before a child even steps foot into grade school, chances are he or she has been exposed to images from films, video games, cartoons, the internet and television that may not be suitable for the development of young minds(Ashton et al., 2005:14). Protecting youngster from the world's negative influences is part of the parents' responsibility. Parents can monitor their child's entertainment behaviour by using parental advisement. Parental advisement simply provides the child with positive and dully directives referencing the child's entertainment preferences. Parents do so by setting clear and steady boundaries and limits on the child's entertainment behaviour. Parents must understand that we are in a technological multitude age, but technology does not have to surpass humanity (Ashton et al., 2005:14).

Media surround children and young people in the modern household (Nathason, Eveland , Park & Paul, 2002). At times, parents seem engaged in a constant battle with their children as they seek to balance the educational and social advantages of media use and negative effects of some content or mediated content might have on children's attitude, behaviour or safety. However parents assume the media affect other people's children other than their own they try to regulate their children's media use, hoping to maximize the advantages of today's rich environment for their children and to minimize the disadvantages (Nathason, Eveland , Park & Paul, 2002).

Strategies of monitoring include rule-making and restrictions, both positive and negative, such as explaining, discussing, disagreeing and criticizing forms of mediation. Nathanson (1999:231) further states that:

Mediation is widely seen to capture the parental management of the relation between children and the media; usefully it extends the parental role beyond simple restrictions to encompass also controversial and interpretative strategies as well as parental monitoring activities.

However, it is noted that some use of mediation more narrowly refer to parental discussion without also including rule-making or co-viewing (Austin et al., 1990). As the media and communication environment becomes increasingly challenging for the government to regulate, these private activities of parents are becoming more valued within public policy frameworks, especially those concerned with protecting children from media related harm (Livingstone & Bobber, 2004:76).

This is broadly consistent with the theorisation of parental mediation in terms of the family system. Parental mediation strategies represent ways in which the family reproduces its values in the face of external meaning systems (Active mediation provided by parents or other has been shown to be related to positive outcomes among other children, including scepticism towards television news, lower levels of aggression and a better understanding of televised plots (Desmond, Singer, Singer & Calimore, 1985).

Active mediation consists of talking about the media content while the child is engaging with watching the medium, hence it includes both positive instructional and negative critical forms of mediation. Restrictive mediation involves setting rules that hamper the use of the medium, including restrictions on time spent, location of or content and restricting exposure to violent or sexual content, without necessarily

discussing the meaning or effects of such content. Co- using implies that the parent remains present while the child is engaged with the medium, thus sharing in the experience but without commenting on the content or its effects (Desmond et al., 1985).

In general, parental restrictive mediation has been with positive outcomes as well (Desmond et al., 1985). However, restrictive mediation establishes a very different kind of behaviour than active mediation and there is some suggestion that very high levels of mediation of restrictive mediation may be detrimental to children (Nathason, 1999).

Children between eight and twelve years of age want their parents to talk to them about difficult issues, one of which is violence .Violence in today's world in the media, in our neighbourhoods and even in our schools can make our children feel frightened, unsafe and insecure. Children are hearing about and often must cope with tough issues such as violence at increasingly earlier ages, often before they are ready to understand all aspects of complicated situations (Ronald, 2013:41).

Talking with kids propose that parents should take advantage of the ratings system that provides them with information about the content of a television programme or movie Children's viewing decision are often made in the absence of parent, unreliable evidence suggest that children are aware of advisories and ratings (Talking with Kids About Tough Issues, 2003).

Parents and other caring adults have opportunity to talk with their children about issues of media violence first, before everyone else does. Children feel better when they talk about their feelings it lifts the burden of having to face their fears alone and offers an emotional release. If parents want their children to avoid violence model

they should model right behaviour for them as well. Regular family meetings can provide an acceptable place for children to share their opinions about media violence (Ronald, 2013:42).

By failing to take action parents give up their parental rights and accountabilities to others who do not necessarily have their children's best at heart. Because children are bombarded extensively with a variety of media images, many which portray Americans in a very negative way, it is important to talk with children about these images and language as soon as children can talk with their parents about what they are hearing and seeing (Ashton et al., 2005:43).

3.2 PARENTAL CONTROL

Media literacy and parental strategies help parents to control the effects of media violence on children.

3.2.1 PARENTAL STRATEGIES AND EDUCATION

Media illiterate children are more affected by media violence than those that are media literate. This depends on the age, cognitive development and the understanding of media content. Media literacy among the young therefore differs among individuals, groups and nations. Children's understanding of films and video games and their consciousness of language, the difference between reality and the persuasive role of advertising develops both as a function of their increasing knowledge of the world and a result of their broader cognitive and social development. When the children grow older, they also learn to cope with potentially unwanted or upsetting emotional responses and to make critical judgements about such area as television violence, by employing forms of media literacy (Buckingham, 2006).

Many researchers, paediatricians and other professionals have urged parents:

- To monitor their children's use of computer, television viewing, and video game playing.
- To use the ratings and other information.
- To look for games that require strategies and problem solving, not just violent activity,
- To limit the amount of time they spend with each and
- To encourage participation in other activities.

Parents need to be aware of which television shows their children are viewing and what messages are being conveyed to make sure the material is understandable and appropriate for their age (Gentile & Walsh, 2002).

They should discuss media content with their children in the context of their own views, preferences and values. They should be also aware of video games their children are playing and the level of violence involved. Young children need to be protected from graphic sex and violence that might frighten or confuse them (Gentile & Walsh, 2002).

Whether on television, video games or the internet, parents are generally advised to limit the amount of time their children spend on them and to encourage other activities. According to Van evra (1990:223), parents should discourage their children from having televisions, computers and video games in their rooms, which makes monitoring and supervision more difficult and increase isolation and loneliness. Parents need to model healthy media practices themselves including selective viewing, limited amount of time, and engagement in many other activities including reading (Van evra, 1990:223). Ashton et al (2005) further mention that

parents must not underestimate their children's intelligence and their capacity to understand because even a three year old can tell when he hears a bad word.

In addition to media literacy programmes aimed at children and guidance including ratings and technological aids provided to parents, other initiatives are demonstrated creative ways to use television, and new technologies to guard against possible negative effects of media and to increase the positive contributions the media can make to children's development (Van Evra, 1990:76).

3.3 COVIEWING WITH PARENTS

The viewing context, especially whether children watch alone or with friends or parents, greatly affects television's impact. Direct parental communication and discussion help to shape children's perception of families, which then are used to assess the realism to the television world (Austin, Roberts, & Nass, 1990:234). Parents co-viewing also can provide children with a role model for appropriate television viewing behaviour (Anderson & Collins, 1988). Co-viewing with adult can enhance children's understanding of television content if the parents offer comments about it during and after viewing a programme, and they can reinforce content children learn during educational (Wright et al., 1990).

One of the important features of viewing the context lies in its role as a source of alternate information. If parents watch television with their children; they can provide other views to supplement, alter and modify information that their children are receiving from television. Adult intervention and discussion about television can enhance its impact because such comments and discussions in which parents can offer alternative and perhaps competing information. They may, still provide alternative information even if they are not co-viewing (Van Evra, 1990:76).

Parental mediation during viewing can sometimes have an adverse effect on children's experience (Desmond et al., 1985). For example, if calling attention to the screen is a characteristic mediation activity, but a parents does so during a violent scene with a look at that comment, the child's attention is heightened, and the parents in that institution is heightening the salience the salience of the scene. Which the child may be viewing out of context, and the meaning and significance of the action may be or may not be understood by the children (Desmond et al., 1985:56).

Over sixty percent of children over eight years said there were no rules for viewing. According to diaries by parents, ninety five of children over seven years viewed television without parents, and eighty percent of the time parents were doing something else while their two to seven years old children were watching television. The fact that parents are unable to limit their children's viewing may be due to failure of expert warnings to really resonate with parents, too little time of parents to monitor their children, or the pervasive influence of the media (Desmond et al., 1985: 59).

3.4 MEDIA USE

Children are growing up in a media flooded environment, American children between the age of two and 18 spends 5 hours and forty eight minutes with electronic media. Television still dominates children's media landscape, accounting for three hours and 25 minutes of watching videotaped or live programming. Children in single parent's homes watch more television, more films and more to the radio each day than children in two parent's homes (Gentile et al., 2004).

Children in minority families watch more television, more films and play more video games. Children in income families watch more films and play video games and use the internet less than children in high income families. Effects related to the amount

of media are also present for other media than television. Increased amount of video game playing is correlated with poor grades (Gentile et al., 2004).

3.4.1 Ways through which parents determine the harmfulness of video games to their children

Parents should play the video game or have someone else to demonstrate it for them and then ask themselves these following questions.

- Does the game involve some characters trying to harm others?
- Does this happen frequently, more than once or twice in 30 minutes?
- Is the harm rewarded in any way?
- Is the harm portrayed as humorous?
- Are nonviolent solutions or less fun than the violent ones?
- Are realistic consequences of violent absent from the game?

Gentile and Walsh (2002:152) point out that if two or more answers are yes, parents should think very carefully about the lessons being taught before allowing your child to access the games.

3.5 TEACHING THE RIGHT LESSONS ABOUT MEDIA VIOLENCE

Parents need to teach their children that real world violence is very different than it appears in the media world. Real world violence is not desirable. Instead it is very harmful and serious. Thus there are three lessons:

First violence hurts people; it has sombre consequences for both the victim and the perpetrator. Real life violence is not sanitized like it is typically shown in the media.

Second violence is not a good way to solve problems. Real world violence is not a glamorous, successful tool for getting what you want as it is portrayed in the media.

If a person behaves in a violent way, once he calms down he will feel very bad. Third

violence in the media is not real. Characters in fiction are made up to look and act scary. If parents can instill these lessons in their children they will not have to be fearful and most of the negative effects when their children are exposed to violent portrayals. The children will be able to handle these exposures in a way that helps them avoid negative effects (Potter, 2003:196).

3.5.1 Model Good Behaviour

Majority of people believe that the best resolution to the problem of violence is having parents teach their children to be nonviolent. Children whose parents use the harshest disciplinary method were more likely to fight with other children. These children had picked up from parents the message that hitting was acceptable. Similarly if parents allow their children to watch violence either in films or video games they will turn to be violent (Potter, 2003:197).

Another method of reducing children exposure to violent programming would be to allow cable and satellite subscribers to choose exactly which stations they want coming into their house. This method of subscribing would let concerned parents decide whether they think a particular channel or channels are too explicit for their children. Currently, cable television and satellite providers bundle channels, making it difficult for parents to sign up for stations that provide educational without also getting stations that air violent content (Regulation of Television Violence, 2007).

The parents' television council, a nonpartisan organisation that works to reduce the amount to sex violence and vulgarity on television, supported the FCC's push for a la carte programming. The rapid development in technology also poses problems for regulators. With more video online and viewing options on demand and videos on the web, children are increasingly watching television shows both where and when

they want. Given these trends, enforcing violence free programming during certain hours of the day would not cover all viewers (Regulation of Television Violence, 2007).

In documenting how families use the media, both individual and family level variables are important. Fifty percent of families with the children have the television on during dinner (Robert et al., 1999). Presumably this affects family interactions, in that this would be a time when family members would usually talk to one another. Furthermore, rules about media can be predicted by the number of parents in the household (Dorr, 1986:87).

Parents and policymakers have been interested in having media ratings in order to provide information to caregivers. Movies have been rated since 1968, video games since 1994, and television shows since 1997. Unfortunately, each ratings system is different from others, and has voiced criticisms about how difficult they are to understand and to use. Regardless of the possible failings of the various rating systems, they do provide some information for parents. Yet, many parents do not use consistently, perhaps of how confusing they may seem (National institute on media violence and the family, 1996).

According to the Kaiser family foundation, in 1998 only thirty two of ten to seventeen years olds said their parents' use the television rating system .While ninety percent of teenagers said their parents never check the video game ratings before allowing them to rent or buy computer or video games. Parental co-viewing and mediation of media messages have the potential to be beneficial (Walsh, 2000).

3.5.2 Consistency

Parental consistency can be defined as the similarity with which a child is treated by one or both parents in various situations. With respect to media habits, parental inconsistency could be displayed in one of a least four manners. Parents could be inconsistent across time; they could require children to ask permission before going to see a movie sometimes but not others. Parents could be inconsistent between different children in the family, for example, they could put restrictions on the amount of time one child may play video games but not limit another child (Gentile & Walsh, 2002:161).

They further state that parents could be inconsistent among themselves, in such a way that both parents may not agree on the rules for children's media use. Parents might model behaviours that are consistent with their stated beliefs or that do not promote consistency, they may have the television on, even when no one is watching it (Gentile & Walsh, 2002:161).

3.6 MEDIA KNOWLEDGE

How much parents know the media, ratings system and media effects may play an important role in how families use media. Parents as a group tend to ignore the amount of time children watch television, how much violence they see and how it affects their children. While the massive majority of parents understand the movie rating system, far fewer understand the television rating ratings, the video game rating, or the internet rating system (Strausberger & Donnerstein, 1999:134).

The fact that the rating system for movies, television and video games are different to contribute to parents lack of understanding and lack of use .Parent's media knowledge may be important for numerous reasons. Providing information about

television shows and recommendations to parents increases parent- child discussions about television programmes. It has been suggested that increasing parent's media literacy may be an effective way to influence children's critical viewing skills (Walsh & Gentile, 2002).

The television ratings give parents information about the age appropriates and content and television programmes. Understanding the television programme ratings are helpful to understanding what type of show you are viewing. These ratings appear on the left hand corner of a television screen at the beginning of each programme and intercity intermittently throughout the shows, usually after commercials (Walsh & Gentile, 2002). Lack of technological expertise may hamper implementation of mediation by parents (Facer et al., 2003:6).

3.7 PARENTAL GUIDELINES TO HELP PARENTS UNDERSTAND TELEVISION AND VIDEO GAMES RATINGS

In addition to methods such as television time limit and using DVDS, parents can always use blocking technologies to enforce their decision. Blocking technologies serve filters your television; blocking unwanted content from being viewed on your television screen. It is simple to activate these controls on television. The tools differ somewhat depending on whether you have broadcast television, analogue cable or satellite cable service. The good news is almost everyone has some level of easy control and their disposal to automatically control the television content allowed in their home (Television Tools for Parents, 2012).

3.7.1 The Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA)

The Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) and its universal affiliate, the Motion picture Association (MPA) advocates the American motion picture, home

video and television industries. This is done nationally through the MPPA and internationally through the MPA (MPAA :2004). These associations embody the world of theatrical film and serve as an advocate for major producer and distributors of entertainment programming for television and home video, cable and television (MPPA, 2004). The chairman and presidents of the seven major producers and distributors of motion picture and television programmes in the United States serve on the Board of the MPAA. These members include Walt Disney Company, Sony Pictures Entertainment Inc., Paramount Pictures Corporations, Twentieth Century Fox Film Corp., Universal Studios Inc. and Warner Bros (MPAA : 2004).

3.7.2 All children

This programme is considered to be appropriate for all children. Whether or alive action, the themes and features in this programmes are specifically designed for a very young audience, including children from ages 2-6. This programme is not expected to terrify younger children (Television Tools for Parents, 2012).

3.7.3 Directed to older children (TVY7)

This programme is intended for children age seven and above. It may be suitable for children who have developmental skills to differentiate between fantasy and reality. Themes and features in this programme may include slight fantasy violence or comedic violence, or may terrify children under the age of seven. For that reason parents may wish to consider the appropriateness of such programme for their very young child (Television Tools for Parents: 2012).

3.7.4 Directed to older children- fantasy violence (TVY7FV)

Fantasy violence is more forceful in these programmes or more combative than in other programmes.

3.7.5 General audience (TVG)

Most parents would find this programme to be fit for all ages. Although the rating does not indicate a programme designed specifically for children. Most parents may let younger children watch this programme unsupervised. It contains little or no violence, no strong language and little or no sexual dialogue situations (Television Parental Guidelines,2004).

3.7.6 Parental guidance suggested (TVPG)

This programme comprises material that parents may find unsuitable for younger children. Many parents may want to watch it with their children. The theme itself may call for parental guidance or the programme contains one or more of the following: Moderate violence (V), some sexual situations(S), Uncommon coarse language (L), Or more suggestive dialogue (D) (Television Parental Guidelines,2004).

3.7.7 Parents strongly cautioned (TV14)

This programme contains some material that many parents would find unfitting for children under the age of fourteen. Parents are strongly advised to exercise greater care in monitoring this programme and are alerted against letting children under the age of fourteen watches unattended. The programme contains one or more of the following: intense violence (V), intense sexual situations(S), strong coarse language (L), Or intensive suggestive dialogue (D), (Television Parental Guidelines, 2004).

3.7.8 Mature audience only (TVMA)

This programme is precisely designed to be viewed by adults and therefore may be unsuitable for children under the age of seventeen. This programme contains one of the following: Graphic violence (V), explicit sex(S), or simple indecent language (L), (Television Parental Guidelines, 2004).

The television programme rating provides a good starting point for parents who want to monitor what their children watch. However, the ratings are not the only way parents can monitor and control their children. The Parental tool Guideline states that:

- Fifty seven percent of parents do not allow televisions in their children's bedrooms.
- Seventy percent of parents only allow television viewing in rooms where they can easily see and hear what is being watched.
- Sixty seven percent of parents place specific time limits on the amount of their children watch.
- Sixty two percent of parents only allow television viewing during certain hours of the day.
- Fifty seven percent monitor what their children by sitting and watch with them.

3.8 PARENTAL CONTROL STRATEGIES

This section outlines strategies that parents can use to curb the use of media violence by their children.

3.8.1 The v-chip

The Telecommunications Act of 1996 confirmed that, within two years of its passage, televisions will be manufactured with a V-chip. The V-chip permit parents to block television programmes that they feel are offensive or problematic by working in union with a television rating system. That is, television programmes (except news and sports) would receive ratings, and then parents could use these ratings to decide which programmes they wanted to block out. It is clear, then, that the usefulness of the V-chip depends in large part on the utility of a television rating system. The v chip

is a standard feature in all TVs 13 and larger, built after January 2000 (Cantor & Nathanson, 1998).

3.8.2 Analogue cable

In addition to parental controls such as the v- chip, standard cable customers with a set- top box may also block unwanted channels. If parents have a set top box, they will set parental controls in their cable settings menu. Naturally, they must set a pin, select the ratings, channels and times they want blocked and turn the parental controls on (Television Tools for Parents, 2012).

3.8.3 Digital cable

If parents have digital cable, they need to set and activate their televisions v chip. Under menu options they can block and restrict content by channel, television ratings, MPPA, movie ratings, time and individuals programmes. Some options even allow parets to control how long children can watch (Television Tools for Parents, 2012).

3.8.4 Satellite

Satellite companies also let parents block by channels, MPPA movie ratings and time. On the settings menu, they typically select profiles and then decide whether they want to block by MMPA ratings. Film and publications act creates a film and publication board council and appeal tribunal. The main purpose of the board is to regulate the distribution of publications and the screening and distribution of films. Films and video games should be submitted for classification before they can be screened. In case of films and video games, therefore, the act creates a form of prior censorship (Brand, 2011:45).

In the 1996 act, publications were not subject to prior censorship. But classification took place after receipt of a complaint. The publisher of a publication which contains certain types of sexual or violent conduct has to submit the publication for classification before it may be distributed. The board may forbid distribution of the publication, or may assign a classification the manner in which the publication may be distributed. It may also opt to use age restriction (Brand, 2011:45).

3.9 REGULATION STATUTORY BODIES

This section explains how regulatory bodies control the content put to broadcast by their licence holders.

3.9.1 Media Code of Conduct

The Broadcasting Complaints Commission of South Africa (BCCSA), was established by the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) in 1993 to adjudicate and mediate complaints against a broadcaster who has signed its code of conduct. Section 2 of the independent broadcasting authority act No 153 Of 1993(the Act) enjoins the Independent Broadcasting Authority (the authority) to ensure that broadcasting licenses adhere to the Code of Conduct acceptable to the authority (BCCSA, 2003).

In terms of the section 56(1) of the act, all broadcasting licenses shall adhere to the Code of Conduct for broadcasting services as set out in Schedule. The Provision of that provision sub-section does not, however, apply to any broadcasting licensee. Freedom of expression lies at the foundation of a democratic South Africa and is one of the basic prerequisites for the country and the development in liberty of every person. Freedom of expression is a condition indispensable to the attainment of all other freedoms. However, in this case film and video games publishers should not

abuse freedom of expression by not adhering to terms and conditions acceptable to authority (BCCSA, 2003).

3.9.2 Application of the code

All licences are required to ensure that all broadcasts comply with this code and are further required to satisfy the authority that they have adequate procedures to fulfil this requirement. All licences should ensure that relevant employees and programme-makers including those who form the commission programmes understand the Codes contents and significance. All licences should also have in place procedures for ensuring that programmes makers can seek guidance on the codes licences organisation at a senior level. Under the act, the authority has the power to impose sanctions, including fines, on licensees who do not comply with these codes of conduct (BCCSA, 2003).

3.9.3 Violence

Licensees shall not broadcast any material which when judged within the content: contains gratuitous violence in any form such as violence which does not play an integral role in developing the plot, character or theme of the material as whole. Though with regard to films and video games which contains violence publishers should submit before distribution for classification (BCCSA, 2003).

3.9.4 Children

Broadcasters should keep in mind that children embrace a wide range of maturity and sophistication and in interpreting this Code it is legitimate for licences to distinguish, if appropriate, those approaching adulthood from a much younger, pre-teenage audience.

Broadcasters shall not broadcast material inappropriate for children at times when large numbers of children are expected to be audiences. Broadcasters shall exercise particular caution. In children's programming depicted by real life characters, violence shall, whether physical, verbal or emotional, only be depicted when it is essential to the development of a character and plot. Animated programming for children, while accepted as a stylised form of storytelling which can contain non-realistic violence, shall not have violence as its central theme, and shall not invite dangerous imitation. Programming shall with all due care deal with themes which could threaten their sense of security, when depicting issues such as domestic conflict, death, crime or the use of drugs (BCCSA, 2003).

Programming for children should not contain realistic scenes of violence which creates the impression that violence is the preferred method to resolve conflict between individuals. Programmes for children shall with due care deal with themes which could invite children to imitate acts which they see on screen or hear about, such as the use of plastic bags toys, use of matches, the use of dangerous household products. Violence which lessens the effect of violent acts should not be contained in scenes. Realistic depictions of violence shall portray, in human terms, the consequences of that violence to its victims and perpetrator. Frightening excessive special effects not required in the story line should not be shown (BCCSA, 2003).

3.9.5 Watershed period

In order to control the amount of violence that children are exposed to, the BCCSA make use of the watershed period. Watershed period is referred to as a period between 21h00 and 05h00. Programming on television which contains violent scenes, explicit sex conduct or offensive language intended for adult audience shall

not be broadcast before the watershed period. On the basis that there is a likelihood of younger children forming part of the audience during the watershed period. Licenses should adhere to the provisions enabling parents to make informed decisions as to the suitability of the programme to family members (BCCSA, 2003).

Programmes broadcast during the watershed will not be good for younger children. Licensees should then provide enough information, in terms of regular scheduling advice, to assist parents to make appropriate viewing choices. Broadcasters must be take note about the sensitivity of programmes which start during the watershed and which run beyond it may be viewed by children. Strong and excessive language should not be used when the large amount of children are expected to be part of the audience (BCCSA, 2003).

3.10 CENSORHIP IN FILMS AND VIDEO GAMES

This section discusses how the government use censorship to control violence in films and video games.

3.10.1 Films

Film is a particularly foremost medium for censorship. Due to its visual nature, film can depicts scenes that print media can only describe, and therefore has a strong effect to human imagination. Government and other organisations have been concerned about the negative social effects of film since the beginning. They have been particularly alarmed by its enormous popularity and its ability to influence large number of people specially children. Film in many countries is subject not to only outright cuts and banning, but also to restrictions based on age .It has been constantly believed, from the birth of cinema that films have the ability to negatively

influence people to the point where they start to behave aggressively (Hutchinson, 1999:185).

3.10.2 Video games

In recent years, the cinema has lost popularity to television and video games. The above mentioned mediums are also visual. They are seen as having the same influence as the cinema and have therefore been subject to censorship. Video games differ from films in that they are viewed privately. As such, it is not simple to place age restrictions on videos. Two solutions were implemented in different parts of the world. The first has been the age restrictions in videos, since this will act as a guide to parents as well as having some preventative effect (Botha, 1997:298).

The second has been to classify videos more strictly than films; in order to compensate for any underage viewing that might be occur (Hutchinson, 1999:185). Television is similar to video in that it is privately viewed, but different because it is also privately accessed. The typical strategy was to impose much stricter censorship controls on television than on film (Bertrand, 1978:181).

3.11 FILM AND PUBLICATION REVIEW BOARD

Primary objects of the publications control Act of 1974, together with the publications act of 1996: the objects of this act are establish a film and publication Board and film and publication review board to regulate in the main by means of classification, age restrictions and consumer advice the distribution of certain publications and exhibition and distribution of films, with due regard to the fundamental rights in chapter three of the constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1993.

3.11.1 Films and Publication Registration

Both ISPS and Internet Cafés are required to register with the Film and Publication Board (FPB) in terms of 27a (1)(a) of the Film Publications act. This is to assist the FPB in its attempt to provide South Africans with an opportunity to make decision about the kind of films and other content they want to see. Probably the most important issue for the FPB is the fight against child pornography and the exposure to violence. Licence holders need to take their responsibilities very seriously and ensure that they take active steps or report bad content.

3.11.2 XX classification for films

A film shall be categorised as xx if it comprises a scene or scenes, replicated or real, judged in the context of the whole film, of any of the following: A child who is depicted as being, under the age of 16 years, participating in, engaging in or assisting others to engage in sexual conduct or a lewd exhibition of genitals, an explicit prolonged physically violent acts concurrent with explicit prolonged sexual conduct, explicit sexual bestiality or the explicit infliction of extreme violence which is predominantly present in the film and which is likely to create a substantial risk of imminent ensuing violence (Fourie, 2001:582).

3.11.3 X18 classification for films

A film shall be classified as x18 if it contains a scene or scenes, simulated or real, judged within the context of the whole film, of explicit prolonged sexual conduct which, in the case of sexual intercourse, includes an explicit visual presentation of genitals in a state of arousal or stimulation.

3.11.4 Age restrictions for films

An age restriction shall only be imposed if the classification committee is of the opinion that, judged as a whole, it is necessary to protect children in the relevant age group against harmful or disturbing material in the film.

3.11.5 Art and science exemption for films

An XX or X18 classification shall not be applicable to a bona fide technical, professional, educational, scientific, documentary, dramatic or artistic film or any part of a film which, judged within the context of the film, is of such a nature.

3.12 THE ROLE OF DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION

The department of communication set policies for broadcasters to ensure that their content is suitable for their viewers.

3.12.1 Legislative Framework in South Africa

The primary Act of Parliamentary regulating the electronic communications industry in South Africa is the Electronic communications Act 36 of 2005 (ECA).

The Department of Communications (DOC) is responsible for setting electronic communications policy and representing South Africa in international for such as the international telecommunications union. The setting of policy with regard to electronic communications is a competency held by the South African government through the Department of Communications. In terms of chapter two of the ECA, the Minister of Communications.

Broadcasting falls under the jurisdiction of the state's department of communications (DOC). This government department is the public service arm of the minister of communications. It is a policy making body for the post, telecommunications and

broadcasting services in South Africa. The functions of the doc include the administration of legislation for its portfolio organisations the settings of broad government policy for the above portfolios, attending to legislative responsibilities, the appointment of boards of directors and chairpersons, the approval of budgets, business plans, tariff and licence fees, recommending budgets to parliament, approving joint ventures, mergers and partnerships, monitoring of counter trade compliance and to act as a lead for international liaison.

3.13 THE INDEPENDENT COMMUNICATIONS AUTHORITY OF SOUTH AFRICA (ICASA)

The Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) is the regulator of telecommunications and the broadcasting sectors. It was established in July 2000 in terms of the independent communications authority of South Africa act 13 of 2000. It took over the functions of two previous regulators, the South African Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (SATRA) and the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA). The two bodies were merged into ICASA to facilitate the convergence of technologies. ICASA derives its mandate from four statutes (ICASA, 2012). These are the ICASA act of 2000, the independent broadcasting act of 1993, the broadcasting act of 1999 and the telecommunications authority act 103 of 1996.

Fourie (2007:424), states that prior to the establishment of the independent communications authority of South Africa, broadcasting in South Africa was regulated by the independent broadcasting authority. The IBA was established in terms of the Independent Broadcasting authority act 153 of 1993.

The amendment act tries to address the discrepancy of the country and growing public concerns about the present dominance of English. Finally, the broadcasting amendment act brought into effect a new code of conduct for broadcasters and required the SABC to review its editorial, language and journalistic policies.

Firstly, children have to be taught about exploitation, pornography, hate literature and excessive violence so that they know how to react when they see this material. Secondly, the computer can be placed in a visible area of the home where it would be easier to monitor the time and content of the internet connection. In an interview with children, the overall reaction was that it is the parents' responsibility to monitor and regulate the use of the internet.

Parents may be cautious of the following signs that may help them determine whether access to the internet should be denied: when a child becomes uneasy or defensive when a parent walks into a room or lingers in the room, since this could be a sign that the child is seeing or doing something forbidden, when a child plays internet games obsessively that is if they are playing twenty four hours a day and when playing internet games takes time away from other activities (Clements, 1995).

Thirdly, because of the easy access to the internet, children can get any game they want without their parents knowing about it. In this regard parents can make use of parental control features to block access to violent games or access to more violent aspects of a game. However, the biggest problem with these control features is that children can use them to lock parents out, so they do not know what the children are playing (Clement, 1995).

Fourthly, and most important, children should be taught media literacy skills. In this regard parents can help children distinguish between fantasy and reality, teach

children that real life violence has consequences, help children understand how they are being targeted by internet games manufacturers and ask them how they feel after playing a violent game (Clements, 1995).

Programming on television which contains scenes of violence, sexually explicit conduct and or offensive language intended for adult audiences shall not be broadcast before the watershed period. On the basis that there is a likelihood of older children forming part of the audience during the watershed period, licensees should adhere to the provision (audience advisories) enabling parents to make an informed decision as to the suitability of their family members. Broadcasters must be particularly sensitive to the likelihood that programmes which start during the watershed period and which run beyond it may be then viewed by children (ICASA, 2012).

3.14 THE AUSTRALIAN TELEVISION AND REGULATION AND CLASSIFICATION AUTHORITIES

The roles of the Australian television and regulation authorities are discussed below.

3.14.1 The Australian Broadcasting Authority

The ABA was established by the Broadcasting Service Act (BSA) 1992, and began operating on 5 October 1992. The Act defines the roles of the ABA, gives a range of powers and functions and set out objectives (ABA, 2003). The ABA plans the availability of segments on the broadcasting service bands, including television and radio for analogue and digital broadcasting. Its functions include the allocation, renewal, suspension and cancellation of broadcasting licences and the collection of fees payable for those licences. The ABA investigates complaints about inappropriate content on broadcasting services and the internet. Australian content is

regulated by ABA standards (commercial television), guidelines (pay television) and industry codes of practice (ABA, 2003).

3.14.2 The office of literature and film classification

The Office of Film and Literature Classification (OFLC) is the Australian Government agency that administers the national classification system for all 103 films, computer games and publications submitted, that are exhibited sold or hired in Australian (OFLC, 2004). Classification guidelines for films form the basis of the classification criteria that are set out in the codes of practice for television stations. The classification symbols for films are also used by the television stations. One of the ABA's functions is to develop standards for children's programmes and to monitor that licences comply with these standards (ABA, 2003).

3.14.3 Broadcasting Services Act (BSA)

The social objectives include respect for community standards of taste and decency, protection of children from harmful material, accuracy and fairness in the presentation of news and refraining from speech that creates or fuels hatred within the community (Film Publication Act, 1996). The quality of children's programming on commercial television has been a major issue since the commencement of television in Australia. The issue was addressed by the former Australian Broadcasting Tribunal in its 1997 Self-regulatory inquiry. The regulatory action for children's television came into effect in response to a lack of quality age – specific children's programmes and the need to protect children's interest (Film Publication Act, 1996).

3.15 PARENTAL GUIDELINE'S FINDINGS

In order to control what children watch on television the media industry unveiled a system called Television parental guidelines (TV PG). According to Cantor there are

several arguments against the original TV Parental Guidelines. The TV Parental guidelines system that came into operation on July 1997 were similar as the system that was based on the Motion Picture Association of the America's (MPAA) rating system for movies. The (MPAA) ratings include the G, PG, PG-13 and R symbols meanwhile the original TV Parental Guidelines included TV-G (general audience), TV-PG (parental guidance suggested), TV-14 (parents strongly cautioned), and TV-MA (mature audiences only).

Cantor (2003) asserts that the only difference between this two ratings is that TV Parental Guidelines included a separate two level rating system for children's programs; TV-Y (all children) and TV-Y7 (directed to older children)" (Cantor, 2003).The MPAA and TV Parental Guidelines systems are age-based systems, as they do not permit viewing based on the age of viewers.

Neither of the two provides an explanation on what type of content is offered in a particular movie or television programme. Both systems do not give reasons why a particular programme may be unsuitable for viewers of a certain age. Cantor (2003) points out that there are problem related with the TV Parental Guidelines. Firstly, parents did not want a system that was unspecific. Many national surveys were conducted to assess parents' preferences regarding the television rating system. Majority of the surveys that were conducted, overwhelming support for a content-based rating system as opposed to an age based system (such as the TV Parental Guidelines) was found" (Cantor, 2003).

Cantor et al. (1996) refer to one study where a random national sample of almost 700 local-unit members of the National Parent Teacher Association (PTA) were polled. The survey was conducted before the original TV Parental Guidelines came into effect therefore “parents were asked to report their preferences before having had experienced any one particular television rating system.”

The findings revealed that 80% of parents preferred a content-based system compared an age-based system. Only 20% preferred an age-based system to a content-based system (Cantor, 2003). Parents wanted a system that alerted them about content of a programme and not one that made recommendations for them. “This makes sense, for parents certainly know their children the best of anyone, and they may be differentially concerned with different kinds of television content depending on the particular child in question” (Cantor, Stutman & Duran 1996).

The second problem was that the TV Parental Guidelines did not fully warn parents about content such as violence, sex, and bad language. “These speculations are based on the fact that the rating system that the TV Parental Guidelines were based on was the MPAA rating system which has been shown to be ineffective in clearly communicating what kind of content coincides with particular movie ratings” (Cantor, 2003).

Therefore the TV Parental Guidelines were not effective, as they did not indicate the type of content to be expected in a certain programme. The National Television Violence Study conducted by Cantor et al. (1996) found that where a programme was directed at the general audience (TVPG), the TV-PG provided no indication that violence was present in that particular programme. This meant that programmes

rated TV-PG were equally likely to contain violence as programs rated TV-14. Another way of saying this is that a parent who wants to shield his or her child from televised violence is no better off selecting programs rated TV-PG than selecting programs rated TV-14” (Cantor, 2003).

The third problem related with the initial TV Parental Guidelines is that" a child who sees a program rated TV-14 will be more interested in seeing the program simply because of its restrictive rating than a program that is rated TV-G“.Cantor et al. (1997) conducted an experiment with children in Milwaukee who ranged in age from five to fifteen. All of the children in the experiment received booklets contained the titles of fictional movies and descriptions of their major story lines. All of the children read the same titles and descriptions, however, one group of them was rated PG, another group was told it was rated PG-13, another group was told it rated R and finally the fifth group did not receive any information about the programme’s rating (Cantor,2003).

The children were asked to read the titles and descriptions (the younger children, who may be difficultly reading, had adult research assistants read the titles and descriptions to them) and then rate how much they wanted to see each movie on a scale from one, meaning they would hate to see it to five, meaning they would love to see it (Cantor, 2003).

The study discovered that the older children aged ten to fifteen years were most interested in the movie when they thought it was rated either PG-13 or R. however, interest was lowest when older children believed the movie was rated G. in addition, it was found that aggressive younger children and younger children who were heavy viewers of television were also most interested in the movie when it was associated

with a more restrictive movie rating. Clearly, then, the age-based MPAA ratings made restricted movies more interesting to children, while movies deemed appropriate for children (e.g. movies rated G) became less interesting (Cantor, 2003). To determine whether any rating system would have the same result on children, the study compared what effect a content-based rating system would have on children's interest in movies (Cantor, 2003).

Cantor (2003) asserts that the study found that the content indicators had no effect on children's interest in viewing the movie. They found that younger children displayed caution when they thought the movie contained violence. Cantor (2003) states it does not appear that every rating system will necessarily attract children to restrict or objectionable content. However, it does seem that the age based MPAA ratings entice children to the content parents want to protect them from. By extension, it should be expected that the TV parental guidelines, because they are so similar to the MPAA ratings, will also attract children to restricted content (Cantor, 2003).

Cantor (2003) emphasize that the age based MPAA system makes children curious as it forbids children of a certain age from seeing the movie, instead of indicating what the content consists of. Therefore, according to Cantor the three problems related to the original TV parental guidelines were that they did not reflect the kind of television rating system that parents wanted, they were not likely to (and, in the case of violent content, they did not) clearly communicate the kind of content that programmes contain and they were likely to attract children to problematic content rather than repel them.

Given these problems, it is likely that parents are still wondering what it is that they can do to protect their children from television they consider to be harmful (Cantor, 2003). As the TV parental guidelines received criticism they were revised. The letters V, S, L, D and FV were added, indicating the presence of violence, sex, language, suggestive dialogue and fantasy violence. These guidelines came into effect in October of 1997 (Cantor, 2003).

Cantor (2003) asserts out that the revised system is confusing and that programmes that have different kinds of content appearing at different levels of intensity will not receive a rating that reflects the diversity of its content. Hence, a parent who wants to protect his or her child from programmes with any kind of violence, regardless of how frequently or intensely it occurs will find revised TV parental guidelines misleading.

Cantor (2003) concludes: in practice, however, it seems that effectively using the currently existing television rating system is a considerable challenge. Optimistically, with the continued development of technology, more methods will emerge that will help parents gain the control that they desire over the over the television content that enters their homes (Cantor, 2003).

3.16 IMPLICATIONS OF THE NEW RATING SYSTEMS

The rating system helps parents to control how their children consume films and video games by checking age restriction on programmes.

3.16.1 Effects on children's interest in films and video must be taken into consideration

Ratings and advisories are not for parents only. Ratings and advisories that are available to children have the capability to their interest in programmes. In some

cases, the labels will have their intended effects of discouraging viewing, in others; they will serve as an attraction for a larger child audience (Hamilton, 1996:209).

3.16.2 Different forms of ratings and advisories have different effects

Some advisories are more attractive than others. Parental discretion advised served as a magnet for boys and especially older boys, but viewer discretion advised did not. The MPPA rating of PG13 attracted viewers but the younger girls, and R attracted the older boys. Some label may be more judicious than others. Parental discretion advised, while appearing offensive to an adult, and may be received as a challenge to a young child. On the other hand, some advisories have their intended effects on some users. Viewer discretion advised was used sensibly by girls, especially younger girls. Both types of advisories were used by children who had earlier been upset by television, to avoid programming that they had reason to be cautious of (Hamilton, 1996:209).

3.16.3 The evidence for the forbidden fruit theory was stronger than that for the information based rationale

Parents should explain to their children how media violence consumption brings negative effects instead of changing television programmes without an explanation. Children may watch forbidden programmes without the knowledge of their parents simply because no explanation was offered (Hamilton, 1996: 209).

3.16.4 With MPPA ratings and (TV Parental Guidelines) an individual cannot tell what is in the show from the rating

These ratings are summary judgments of shows content in terms of language, violence, or sex among other things. When a parent sees a PG rating for a film or video games, he or she does not know if that rating was assigned because of language, violence or a combination. Moreover, the levels PG and PG-13 both

contain a variety of combinations of potentially objectionable content that different parents might feel are differentially offensive (Cantor et. al., 1996).

3.16.5 Content based labels are recommended because they are less prone to the eye of the beholder

What is TV-14 to the producer of one programme might be TV-PG OR TV-MA to another. But producers and viewers should be less likely to disagree on whether or not a murder or a rape for example, occurred in the programme. Parents rate the content based system as more significant than the age based MPPA ratings (Cantor et., 1996).

3.16.6 Films and video games ratings should be designed to meet parents need and desires

The sole purpose of the ratings system is to help parents shield their children from content they do not wish them to be expose to. There is no point in having a rating system which does not serve the purpose which it was intended to. It would be a problem if the nation ends up with a system that makes parents jobs even harder than now (Hamilton, 1996:209).

3.17 APPLICATION FOR CLASSIFICATION OF GAMES

An application for classification of game shall be made on a form and submitted to the board with the prescribed fee. Where video games contain violence it should also be submitted for classification. Where game does not contain violence it should be submitted in full description, together with a copy of any advertisement that is proposed to be used to advertise and promote the game, a statement to the effect does not contain any contentious material. The applicant shall in time and place to be mutually agreed upon by the applicant and the board, demonstrate the game to the classification committee of the Board (Film Publication Regulation, 2014).

Where a game has been classified, or exempted under the act, the person who applied for the classification shall provide a copy thereof to the Board, free of charge, in the format in which it will be distributed, to be kept by the board. An applicant for the classification of a game shall furnish to the satisfaction Board, confirmation for his or her right to distribute that game in public. In the absence of the confirmation contemplated in sub regulation, the Board may refuse to classify the game and may revoke any certificate of classification which may have been issued with respect to the game (Film Publication Regulation, 2014).

3.18 THE ROLE OF THE INTERNET

The new legislation covers the legislation and distribution of media in South Africa. However, there are considerable difficulties in applying this legislation to the internet. This is an international medium, allowing virtually anonymous access of the material all over the world. Internet issues have become to the fore in South Africa, at the time of writing of scandals involving children who have been downloading violent stuff from the internet. The major question arising from child media violence is that of government control over internet access (Fourie, 2001:585).

The South African government has proposed legislation aimed at service providers, the companies that manage the process whereby computer users connect to the internet. This legislation forces service providers to monitor the internet usage of their clients to see if they were visiting violence websites and pornography. Whilst it is unlikely that anyone will publicly endorse free access to children media violence and pornography, there is likely to be concern over the rights of privacy and fears that the government could use this legislation to intrude on citizens privacy in other areas (Fourie, 2001:585).

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

To explore the effects of violent films and video games, the study used both qualitative and quantitative methods. Research methodology may be understood as all those methods or techniques that are used for conducting research (Kothari, 2004:7). Research methods or techniques refer to the behaviour that is used in performing research operations such as making observations, recording data and processing data (Kothari, 2004:7). Therefore, this chapter aims to explain the research design and methodology that were used in the gathering of data so to find answers for the research problems. The chapter also states how the data will be analysed and interpreted.

4.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is a plan or blueprint of how one intends conducting research (Babbie & Mounton, 2010:74). The research uses both qualitative and quantitative designs. The aim of qualitative research is to understand and interpret meaning and intentions that underlie every human act. Burns and Groove (2003:223) state that designing a study helps the researcher to plan and implement the study in a way that will help them to obtain the intended results, thus increasing the chances of obtaining information that could be associated with real situation.

Qualitative design encompasses behaviours and attitudes that people have towards others and some objects. It was therefore easy for the researcher to understand the

behaviours and attitudes of children after watching violent films and playing video games. According to Leedy and Omrod (2001), qualitative research helps the researcher to understand, interpret meaning and intentions that lie behind every human act.

Qualitative research is best used as a means of generating ideas, of brainstorming solutions and developing hypotheses that one eventually decide to test quantitatively.

Quantitative data can be transposed into numbers, in a formal, objective and systematic process to information and describe variables and their relationship. It also provides an accurate account of characteristics of particular individuals, situations or groups.

4.3 POPULATION AND SAMPLING PROCEDURES

This section discusses the population and sampling procedures used in this study.

4.3.1 Population

Population refers to the aggregate or totality of all subjects, object or all the members that conforms to a set of specifications (Pollit & Hungler, 1999:37). Sampling can be defined as a process of selecting people who participated in a research's study (Leedy & Omrod, 2005:205). Participants of this study were selected from the following four villages, namely: Ndhambhi, Mageva, Bambeni and Nwamarhanga in Giyani. The total number of participants was 80.

4.3.2 Sampling

The researcher used both probability and non-probability sampling. According to Leedy and Omrod (2005), in probability sampling the researcher can specify in

advance that each segment of the population can be represented in the sample. The advantage of probability sampling is that it enables us to indicate the probability with which samples' results deviate in differing degrees from the corresponding population values (Leedy & Omrod, 2005:205).

The study used purposive sampling to select thirty children that filled in questionnaires and thirty children that were observed. The children that were observed are not necessarily those who filled in the questionnaires. Purposive sampling is a sampling procedure where individuals are chosen for a particular purpose (Leedy & Omrod, 2005:205). Children between the ages of five and fourteen were selected. Twenty parents were interviewed. The researcher used the accidental technique to select parents because not all of them were willing to be interviewed. The research considered children of different age groups because film and video games affect children differently.

In non-probability sampling, the researcher has no way of guaranteeing that each element of the population was presented in a sample. Furthermore, some members of the population have little or no chance of being sampled (Paul & Jeanne 2010:212). Questionnaires were used in order to reveal the effects violent films and playing video games. Three women and two men were interviewed in each of the selected villages. The accidental sampling technique which falls under non-probability sampling procedure was used in selecting interview participants.

4.4 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

The study used three methods to collect data namely, interviews, questionnaires and observation.

4.4.1 Interviews (unstructured interviews).

Unstructured Interviews are a method of interviews where questions can be changed or adapted to meet the respondent's intelligence, understanding or belief. Unlike a structured interview they do not offer a limited, pre-set range of answers for a respondent to choose, but instead advocate listening to how each individual person responds to the question (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011:139).

The study used unstructured interviews. The reason for choosing this research tool is to find out, if and how parents monitor television and game consumption by their children. Furthermore, the researcher may be able to make follow up questions where necessary. A total of twenty interviewees (eight men and twelve women) were selected from four villages, namely: Ndhambhi, Mageva, Bambeni and Nwamarhanga, with two men and three women chosen from each village. Interviewees were sitting face-to-face with the researcher during the interviews. Face-to-face interviews have the distinct advantage of enabling the researcher to establish rapport with potential participants and therefore gain their cooperation (Paul & Jeanne, 2010:188).

The interview proceedings were recorded and put on a transcript later for analysis. The reason for using unstructured interview is that it is easy to obtain greater insight into and knowledge of the topic being investigated and allows the respondent the freedom to respond in his or her own words. Unstructured interviews are more flexible and more likely to yield information that the researcher had not planned to ask. Participants in a qualitative interview may feel as if they are simply engaging in a friendly chat with the researcher, who is typically someone they have come to know and trust. Their primary disadvantage is that the researcher gets different

information from different people and may not be able to make comparisons among the interviews (Leedy & Omrod, 2001).

Advantages of unstructured interviews are an extremely useful method for developing an understanding of an as-of-yet not fully understood or appreciated culture, experience, or setting. Unstructured interviews allow researchers to focus on the respondents' talk on a particular topic of interest, and may allow researchers the opportunity to test out his or her preliminary understanding, while still allowing for ample opportunity for new ways of seeing and understanding to develop. Unstructured interviews can be an important preliminary step towards the development of more structured interview guides or surveys. The interviewer has a clear plan in mind regarding the focus and goal of the interview (Leedy & Omrod, 2001).

4.4.2 Questionnaires

A questionnaire is an instrument used by researchers to gather information (Sarantakos, 2007:244). In this study self-administered questionnaires were used to gain a clear understanding on the effects of both violent films and video games on children. The researcher designed questions which allowed respondents to answer with a yes or no response, but at some stages were expected to support or give full explanations regarding the given questions. The questionnaire was divided into three sections. The first section was on personal information of the participants, the second section was on the effects of violent films and video games and the third one was on parental information.

Questionnaires were distributed to children only. The method tool helped the researcher to reveal if parents monitor the use of television and video games by their

children. It is obvious that parents observe their children's lifestyle on a daily basis. Questionnaires are said to be the most efficient ways of collecting data. Because they typically contain fixed response about various features and they can be analysed quickly.

Participants responded to questions with the assurance that their response was anonymous, thus they may be more truthful than they would be in a personal interview, especially when addressing sensitive and controversial issues. Disadvantage of questionnaires is that, majority of people who receive questionnaires do not return them and the people who not return them are not necessarily representative of the originally selected sample. Misinterpretation of questions may also give rise to wrong answers (Paul & Jeanne, 2010:189).

Where the researcher is not present, it is always difficult to know whether or not a respondent has understood a question properly. Questionnaires are standardised so it is not possible to explain any points in the questions that participants might misinterpret. This could be partially solved by piloting the questions on a small group of students or at least friends and colleagues. It is advisable to do this anyway. Open-ended questions can generate large amounts of data that can take a long time to process and analyse.

4.4.3 Observation method

Observation is a way of gathering data by watching behaviour, events, or noting physical characteristics in their natural setting. Observations can be overt (everyone knows that they are being observed) or covert (no one knows they are being observed). Observation can also be direct and indirect (Taylor & Steel, 1996:78). This study used indirect observation because it allowed the researcher to watch the

results of interactions and behaviour of the children after watching violent films and playing violent video games. The researcher observed eight boys and eight girls in each of the selected villages. This group of children were not necessarily the same group interviewed in the first instance. In the process of observation, the researcher used video tapes to capture their actions while they play.

Observation allows the researcher to watch people behaviours and interactions directly, or watch for the results of behaviours or interactions. Observation method has an advantage because in a case where respondents are unwilling to give you answers you can easily get your answer by just observing. The disadvantages of observation method are that people usually perform better when they know they are being observed. Observation may also be expensive and time consuming compared to the other data collection methods. Observation does not increase the researchers understanding on why people behave as they do (Taylor & Steele, 1996:84).

4.5 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The study employed both qualitative and quantitative approaches to analyse and interpret the collected data. Pie charts were used to present some data collected through questionnaires. To analyse data collected through interviews the study used interpretative analysis. Responses were listed chronologically in order to help the researcher interpret data in a simple way. Respondents were encouraged to elaborate on their answers after responding to the given YES or NO options. IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was also used to analyse data collected through questionnaires. Presentation of the results of these data is done in the next chapter.

4.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter has given an overview of how the research is going to be conducted. It has demonstrated the research method, research design, sampling population and sampling technique, which are probability and data collection methods which are questionnaires and unstructured interviews and the data analysis method that are going to be used in order to collect data and find solutions for the research problem. All the methods chosen in the research are aimed at achieving one goal which is to outline the effects of violent films and video games on children.

CHAPTER FIVE

ASSESSMENT OF DATA REGARDING VIOLENT FILMS AND VIDEO GAMES

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with the analysis and interpretation of the data which the researcher collected using three different methods. The researcher used questionnaires, interviews and observation methods. Questionnaires were given to thirty (30) children, fifteen (15) girls and fifteen (15) boys. The questionnaires were well understood by all the participants because they were translated in Xitsonga.

The questionnaire was divided into three sections. Section A deals with the demographics of the participants. Section B assesses the effects of violent films and video games. Section C deals with parental mediation. Data collected through interviewing were recorded and later transcribed for analysis. The number of children observed was over thirty (30) because the observation was done in different days.

5.2 PRESENTATION OF INTERVIEW RESULTS WITH PARENTS

The interviews were conducted with parents to find out how they monitor their children. Twenty (20) parents were interviewed on three (3) different days. Parents were selected from these four villages, namely: Nd hambhi, Mageva, Bambeni and Nwamarhanga. Answers and percentages of the participants are presented in the table below:

5.2.1 Hours children spend daily watching television

	Answers	Percentages
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A	➤ Parents say their children spend 2-4 hours daily watching and playing video games.	8(40%)
B	➤ Parents say their children spend between 4 to 6 hours watching and playing more especially on weekends. Some parents indicate that their children watch television from the moment they come back from school until late in the evening.	12(60 %)

5.2.2 Films and video games children prefer to watch and play

A	➤ Parents say their children like watching wrestling and playing hit man games specially boys.	3(15%)
B	➤ Some parents indicate that their children go for everything that suits them including cartoons.	7(35%)
C	➤ Parents also say their children play violent video games because there are reinforcements in them.	10(50%)

5.2.3 Do you as a parent check the age restriction of either a films or video game your children consume?

A	➤ Parents say they do check but sometimes. They further say they are too busy and unable to monitor what their children consume, yet they try.	13(65%)
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B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Parents say they do check, though their children are honest not to play other games in the absence of their parents. ➤ They further say they know how technological competent their children are, to the extent that they pretend to be good when parents are home. 	7(35%)
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5.2.4 What do you do when you find your children watching violent films or playing violent video games?

A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Parents say they just change to channels more suitable to their age, mostly cartoons. ➤ They continue to say they tell children how bad violence exposure will be to them. ➤ They watch or play with them while commenting on the violent scenes, telling them that such behaviours are not accepted. ➤ Some parents say they just ground their children for not watching and playing when they are not around. ➤ Parents also say they know that children may imitate actions seen on television, so they just tell them that what is portrayed in the media is not real. ➤ If they happen to find them, they just change the channel and if it is a video game, they destroy it. 	3(15%)
B	➤ Parents say they just let their children to continue,	

	because they believe there is nothing that can be harmful to them.	17(85%)
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5.2.5 If your children go beyond what is meant for them, what do you do?

A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Parents say they hit their children where it hurt most; they punish them by not giving pocket money. ➤ Grounding them by not watching television for a week. 	14(70%)
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Switching off the video game and explain the consequences of consuming violent media content. 	6(30%)

5.2.6 After your children watched violent films and video games, do you see any behavioural changes, explain?

A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Children start to fantasies about things that they saw on television and computer. ➤ Children also become hesitant to have the lights switched off at night for fear that the creatures they saw would come and hurt them. ➤ They become mean and fearful ➤ Yes, when a fight breaks over some conflict they tend to copy wrestlers and other actors. ➤ Yes, they play violently with others which I do not like as a parent. 	18(90%)
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Yes, they get scared very easily and at times feel as if their vulnerable to any treat even when they are playing with friends. ➤ They usually act strange and are scared most times. 	
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ No, maybe it is because they have been watching scenes containing violent acts for a long time. 	2(10%)

5.2.7 Have you been around, as a parent, when your children are watching films or playing a video game, how do they react when their favourite character loses?

A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ They become angry and start throwing objects around. Breaking everything in their way. ➤ They become mean. ➤ They become angry for almost the whole day, and refuse eating. ➤ They groan inside, but you can see that they are not satisfied with it, even if he/ she are afraid to talk. ➤ They get so angry and feel as if they would fight for them. 	100%
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5.2.8 These are long and short term effects of watching violent films and video games. Choose the ones that are visible in your children. Intimidation, Activation, Aggression, Desensitisation, Numbing, Imitation and Excitation.

A	➤ Intimidation, aggression, imitation and desensitisation.	15(75%)
B	➤ Activation and numbing.	5(25%)

5.2.9 Do these effects affect the progress of your children at school?

A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Sometimes. ➤ No, they know how costly it is should they fail. They save themselves by keeping up the grades. 	8(40%)
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Yes although when asked they deny ➤ Yes their performance is low, because they never have time to do homework but they stay glued to their computers and television all day. 	12(60%)

5.2.10 What kind of toys do your children normally use when playing with their friends?

A	➤ Toy cars and guns.	15(75%)
B	➤ Swords and soccer balls.	5(25%)

5.2.11 Violent films and video games also stimulate physical aggression on children, mostly towards their peers. How do you control this as a parent?

A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ I treat them the way they treat others, if they do well, I exceedingly do good to them. ➤ When they use violence to others, I also give them the taste of their medicine so that they know it is unacceptable behavior. 	9(45%).
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ My children do not fight with each other or their friends, at least not in a physical way. ➤ Tell your child you how you expect them to behave and show that other people do not like to be hit or even bullied. ➤ Talk to children and alert them of the differences of the movies and games, so that they relate the difference. ➤ Parents say they taught children to use their words instead of their hands. ➤ Parents should talk their children out of using violence to solve problems, instead of fighting they can just talk and involve an elderly person. 	11(55%).

5.2.12 Due to the advancement of technology, children are able to access violent films and video games on television without the knowledge of their parents. Do you think the effects of violent films and video games on children will be reduced as time goes on? Explain.

A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ No matter how much we try, we can never guard our children 24/7. At the end of the day there will be time where they spend it on their own and play video games. ➤ No, because as they are hanging as friends you will never predict what they are talking about or what kind of films they watch out there. ➤ No, it will not be reduced because technology is rapidly advancing and there are many gadgets that may expose them to violent films and video games. 	11(55%)
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Yes, if we as parents spend quality time with our children and start observing such behaviours and try to condemn them. ➤ Yes, if we limit the access to aggressive stories and games to our children and always be consistent. ➤ Wherever possible parents should avoid angry outbursts 	9(45%)

	<p>and the use of violence when solving problems.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Parents should make sure that children stick to programmes and games meant for them. ➤ Moving the computer into the family room, so that a parent may supervise which sites their children visit. ➤ Parents should also use blocking technologies that will control what programmes should be accessed by their child. 	
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Follow up question for question 12

5.2.13 Do you think the effects may be reduced if parents can limit unsupervised time?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The effects of violent films and video games can be reduced only if parents stop neglecting their primary roles in their families. ➤ This is the only way parents can understand how best their children character is developing. ➤ Parents should learn to know and acknowledge the fact that upbringing of their children matters a lot and has a great impact in the kind of character and responsibility of their children. 	
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SECTION A

5.3 DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS OF THE PARTICIPANTS

5.3.1 The chart presented below in figure 1 shows that number of male participants are 16(53,3%) and female participants are 14 (46,7%). The chart below represents analysis of the participants.

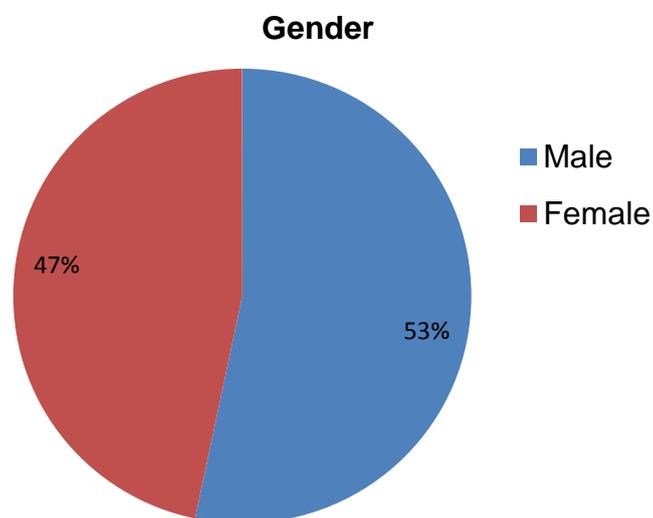


Figure 1: Gender

5.3.2 Distribution of participants in relation to age

The participants between the ages of 5 – 8 years are 9(30%). Those between the ages of 9 – 12 years are (43,3%). Participants between the ages of 13 – 14 years are 8(26,7%). Analysis of participants is presented below:

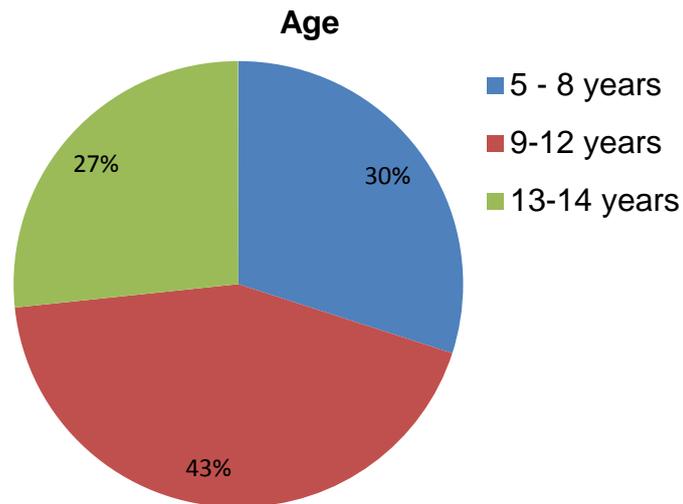


Figure 2: Age.

5.3.3 Distribution of participants in relation to residential address

The participants in this study were selected from four different areas, namely: Ndhambi and Mageva. Bambeni and Nwamarhanga. The number of participants and areas are as follows: Ndhambi 9(30%) and Mageva 5(16%). Those from Bambeni are 9(30%), and Nwamarhanga participants are 7(23%). The total number of participants is thirty (30). The analysis of this is presented in figure on the next page:

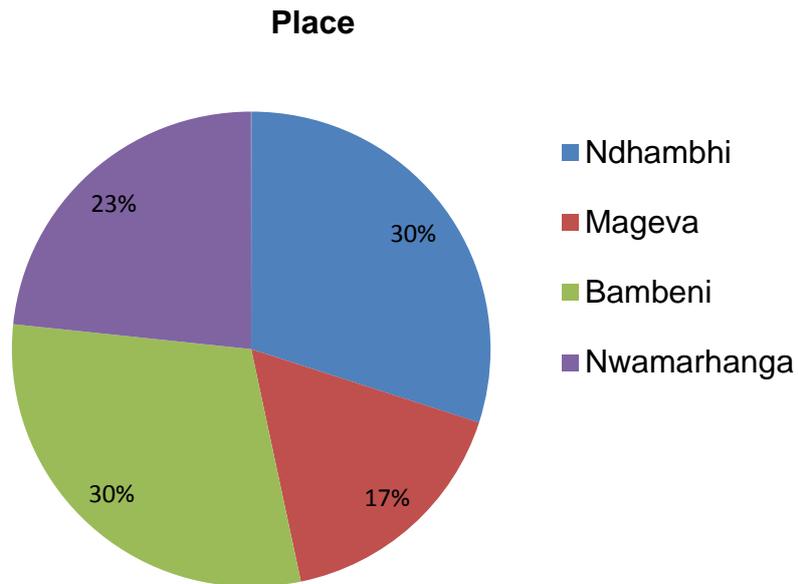


Figure 3: Place of Residents

5.3.4 Distribution of participants in relation to grades

Participants from grade R to 3(foundation phase) are 11(36,67%), those from grade 4 to 6 intermediate phase are also 11(36,7%) and from grade 7 to 9 senior phase participants are 8(26,7%). Figure 4 on the next page presents the analysis:

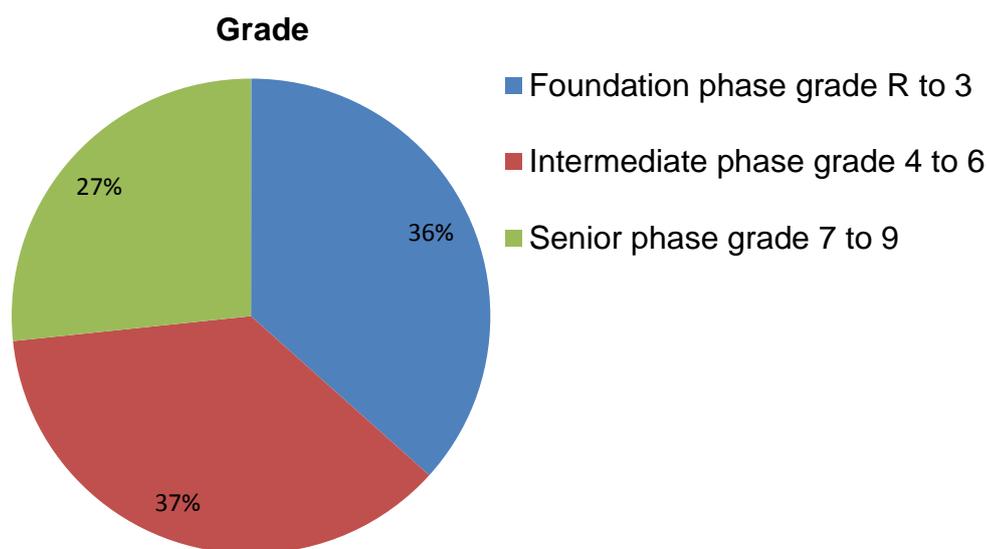


Figure 4: Grades

5.3.5 Distribution of participants in relation to whom they live with

Participants who live with both parents were 11(36, 7%), who live with single parents are 6(20%). Those who indicated that they live with guardians are 7(23%), and those who live with others are 6(20). The detailed analysis of the participants is presented on the next page:

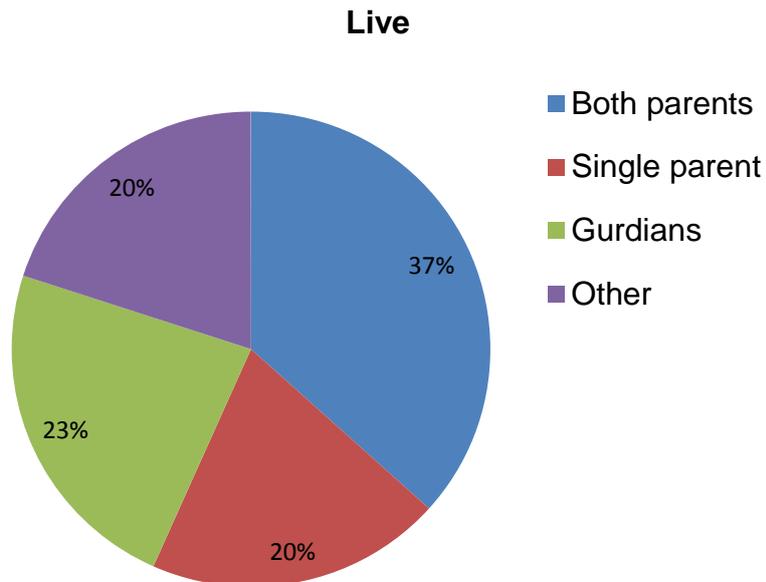


Figure 5: Persons Living with

SECTION B

5.4 PARTICIPANTS' ANSWERS REGARDING VIOLENT FILMS AND VIDEO GAMES

This section shows answers regarding violent films and video games, pie charts are used to demonstrate how children are affected by violence.

5.4.1 Favourite between violent films and video games

When asked which one they prefer between violent films and video games. The number of participants who like both are 14(47,7%). The number of participants who like violent films are 8(26, 7%) and those who like video games are also 4(26, 7%).

The detailed analysis of participants is presented on the next page:

Violent films and video games

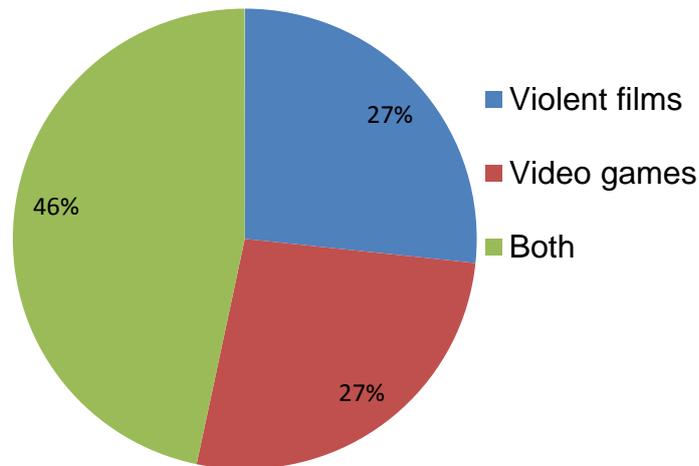


Figure 6: Films and Video Games

5.4.2 Reasons for watching violent films and playing video games

The participants were asked why do they watch violent films and play video games. Five participants (16, 7%) do it because other children do it. Those who do it for fun are 12(40%). Participants who do it to gain skills to protect themselves against bullies are also 12(40%). One participant (3.3%) says he does it for other reasons. The analysis of participants is presented on the next page:

Reasons for playing and watching video games

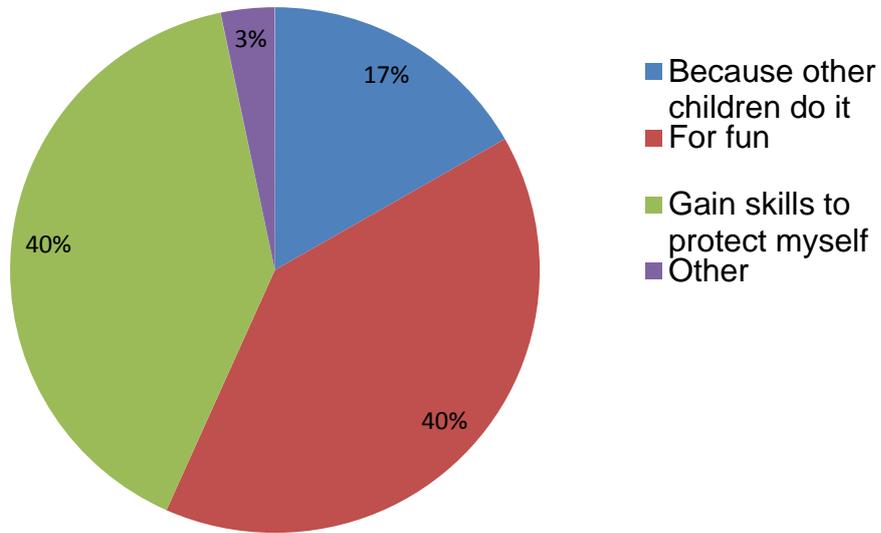


Figure 7: Reasons for Playing and Watching Video Games

5.4.3 Preference between violent films and video games or both

Participants were asked whether they prefer violent video games, non-violent video game or both. Eighteen participants (60%) prefer violent video games. Those who prefer non-violent are 3(10%) and those who prefer both are 9(30%). Full analysis is presented below:

Violent and non-violent video games

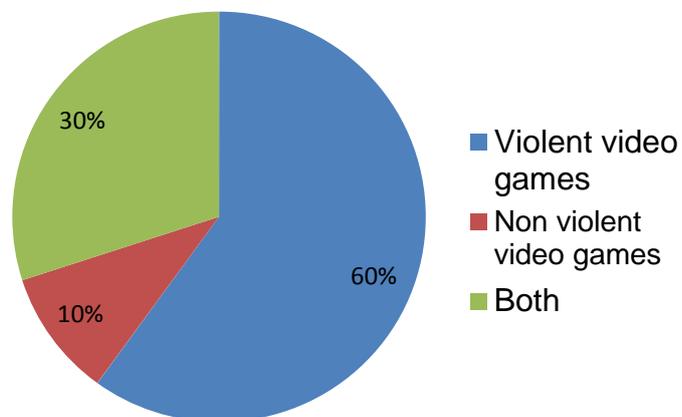


Figure 8: Violent and Nonviolent video games

5.4.4 Time spent daily watching violent films and playing video games

Participants were asked how much time they spend daily while watching violent films and playing video games. Participants who say spend 0 – 2 hours are 6(20%). Those who spend 2 – 4 hours are 14(46.7%) and the other participants 10(33,3%) spend 4- 8 hours. The analysis of the participants is presented in figure 9 below:

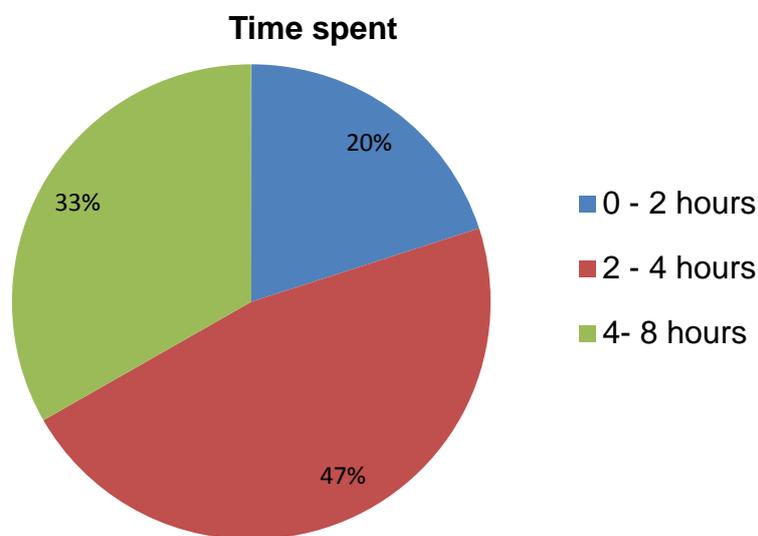


Figure 9: Time spent

5.4.5 World view after exposure to violent films and video games

Participants were asked whether they view the world as a scary or peaceful place after being exposed to film and video games violence. The number of participants who view the world as a scary place are 18(60%). Those who view it as a peaceful place are 12(40%). The chart on the next page represents the full analysis of participants view.

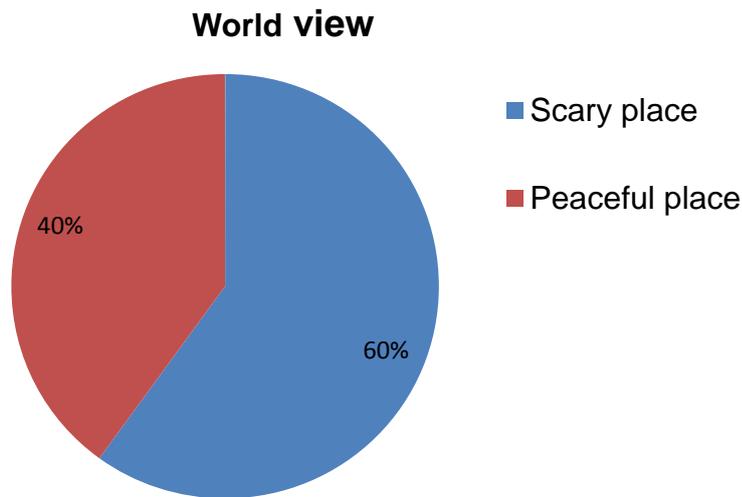


Figure 10: World View

5.4.6 Effects seen through behavioural changes

Participants were given three behavioural changes that are seen after exposure to media violence. They were instructed to choose only two strong effects. Participants strongly affected by activation and numbing are 10 (33.3%). Participants affected by activation and intimidation are 14 (46.7%). Those affected by numbing and intimidation are 6 (20%). Full analysis of participant's behavioural changes is presented on the next page:

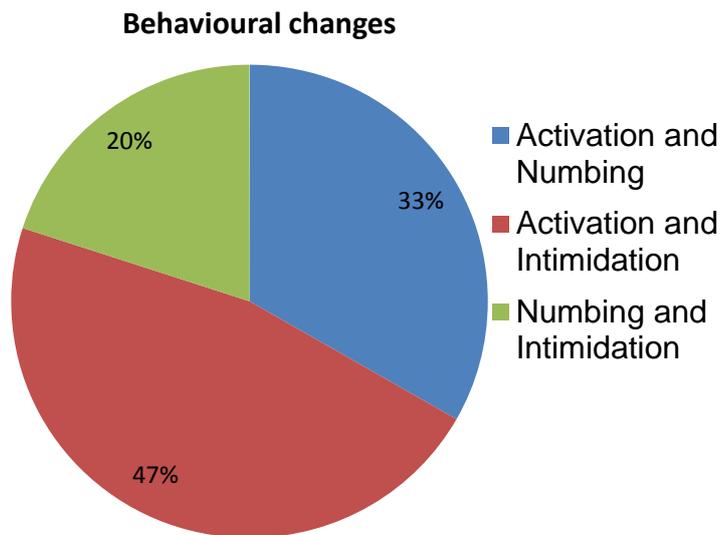


Figure 11: Behavioural Changes

5.4.7 People they usually play with

When asked whom they usually play video games or watch violent films with, 8 (26.7%) of the participants play alone. Participants who play with friends are 18 (60%). Those who play with parents are 4(13,3). The chart on the next page represents the analysis of participants

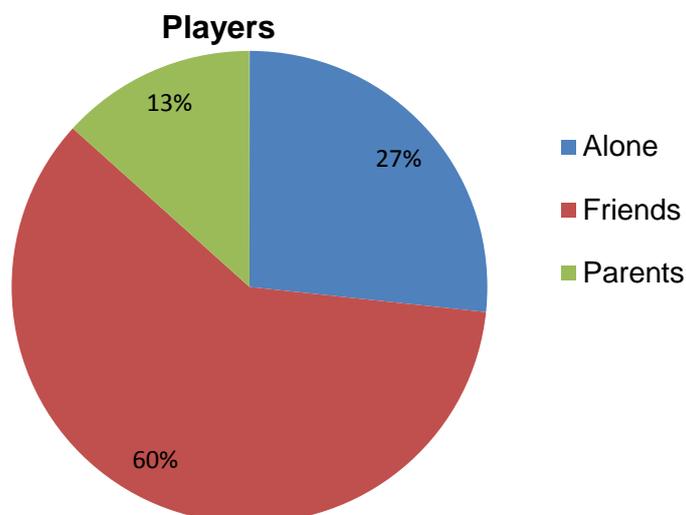


Figure 12: Players

5.4.8 Feeling when role models lose

Participants were asked how they feel when their favourite player or character loses. Participants who feel angry after are 14 (46.6%). Those who feel like fighting back though it is not possible are (40%). The remaining 4(13.3%) say they understand that one person has to lose. The analysis is presented in Figure 13 in the chart below:

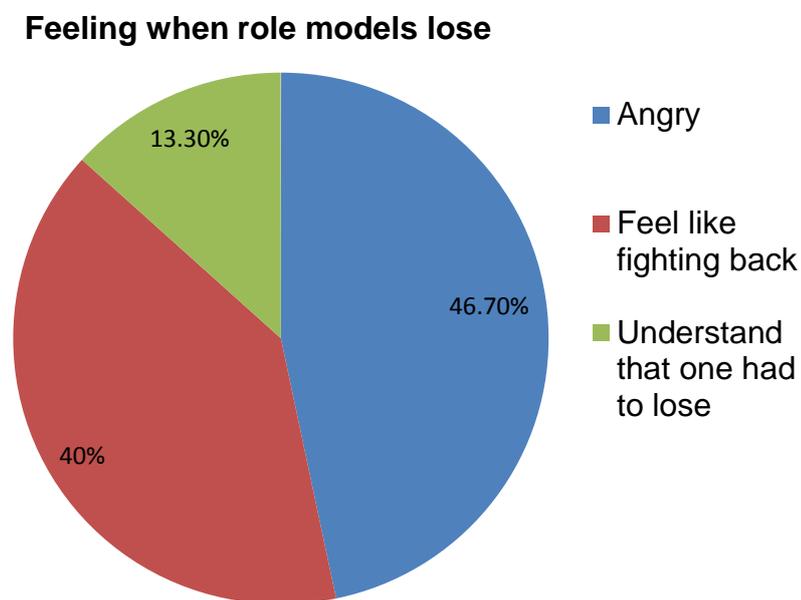


Figure 13: Feeling when Role Model Loses

5.4.9 Toys or objects children use to play

Participants were asked what kind of toys or objects do they play with. Participants who play with toy guns are 11(36%). Those who play with toy cars were 3(10%). Seven (23.3%) participants play with sticks and those who play with other toys are 9(30%). Figure 14 on the next page represents the analysis.

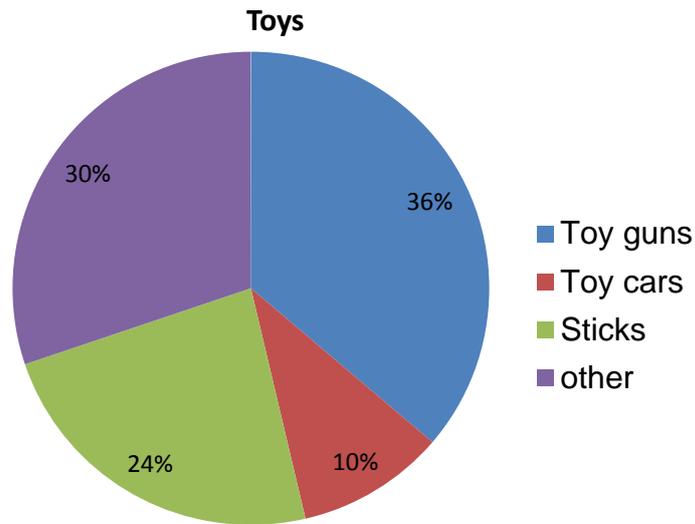


Figure 14: Toys

5.4.10 Imitation of actions after watching violent films and playing video games

Participants were asked if they imitate actions after watching violent films and video games. Participants who strongly agree are 13(43.3%), 10(33.3%) agree. Neutral participants are 3(10%). Those who strongly disagree are 2(6.7%) and 2(6.7%) disagree. Analysis is presented on the next page:

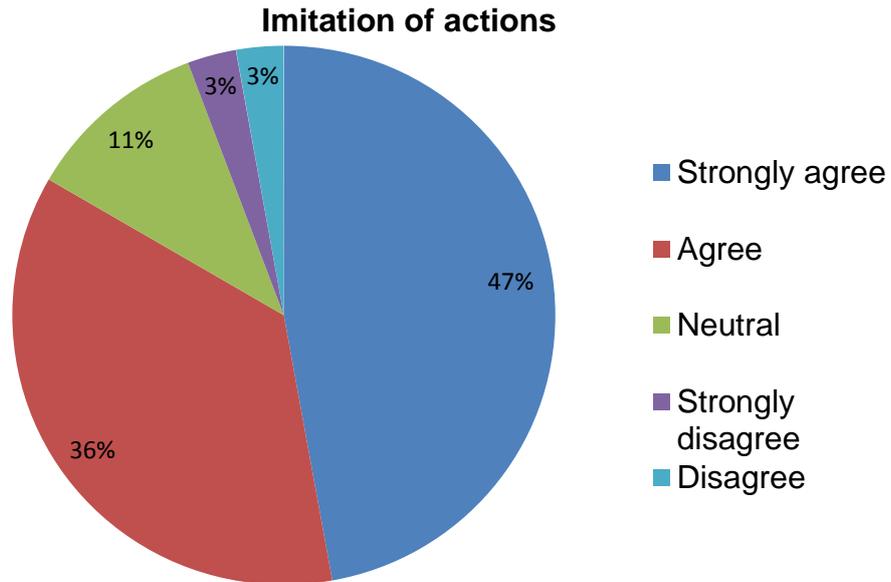


Figure 15: Imitation of Action

5.4.11 Struggle to sleep after exposure to violent films and video games

Participants were asked whether they struggle to sleep after being exposed to violent films and video games. Eleven (36.7%) of the participants strongly agree, 7 (23,3%) agree. Neutral participants are 8 (26.7), 2(6.7%) participants strongly disagree and 2 (6.7%) agree. Full Analysis is presented on the next page:

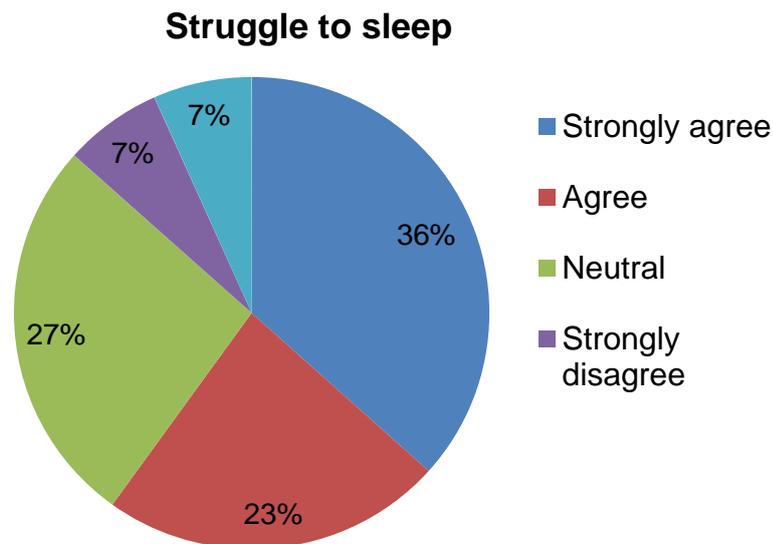


Figure 16: Struggle to Sleep

5.4.12 Ways of resolving conflict after being exposed to violent films and video games

Participants were asked if they take violence as the only way of resolving conflict after being exposed to violent films and video games. Six participants (20%) strongly agree and 4 (13%) agree. Neutral participants are 5 (17%), strongly disagree participants are also 5 (17%) and 10 (33%) disagree. Analysis is presented in figure 17 on the next page:

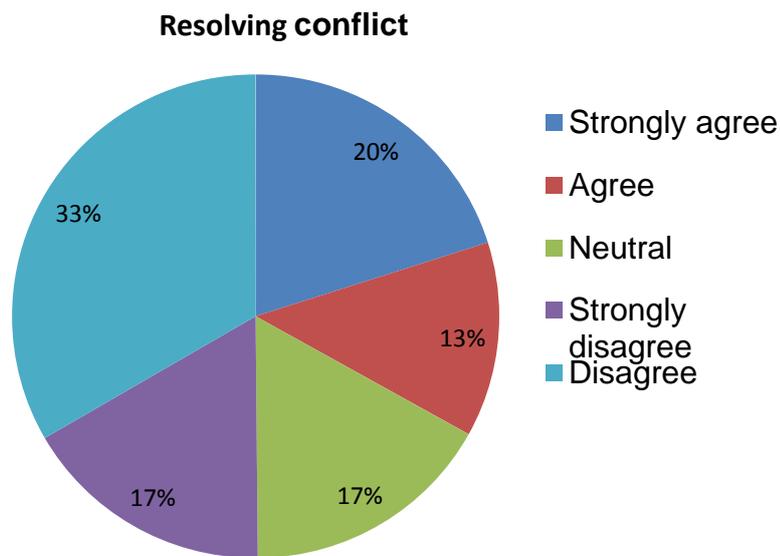


Figure 17: Resolving Conflict

5.4.13 Being callous and less sympathetic after exposure to violent films and video games

When asked if they become more callous and sympathetic after being exposed to violent films and video games, nine (30%) strongly agree. Participants who agree are 1(3.3%), 5(16.7) are neutral. Those who strongly disagree are 11(36.7%) and 4(13.3%) disagree. Full analysis of the participants is presented on the next page:

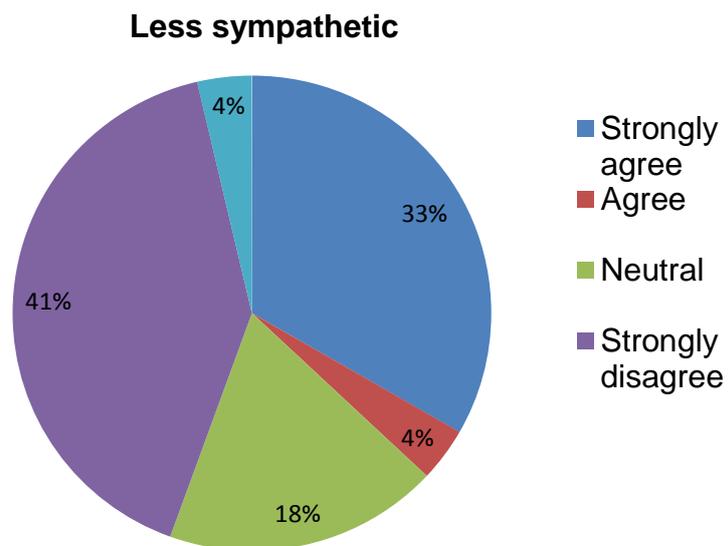


Figure 18: Less Sympathetic

5.4.14 Desire to continue watching or playing more after single exposure

Participants were asked if they have the desire to continue watching or playing more violent video games. The participants who strongly agree are 22 (73.3%), .4 (13.3%) agree and 2 (6.7%) are neutral. The number of participants who strongly disagree and disagree is 1 (3.3). The chart on the next page presents analysis of participants:

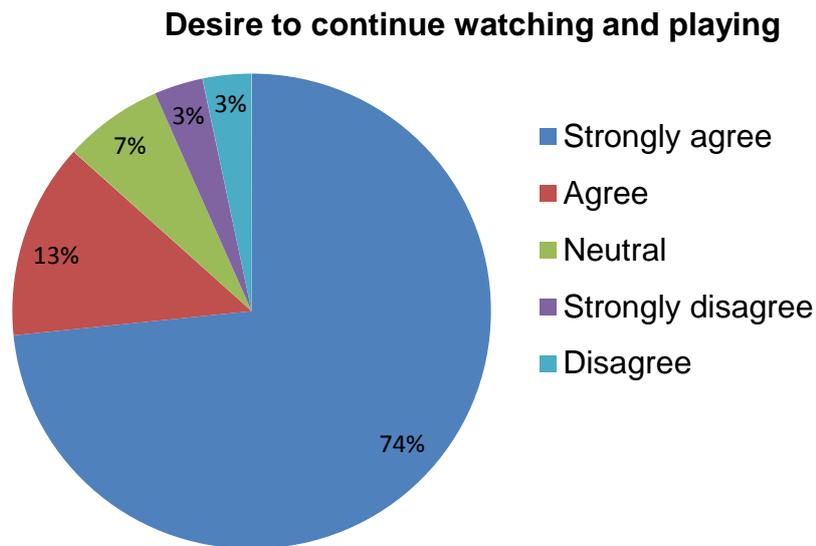


Figure 19: Desire to continue watching and playing

5.4.15 Being aggressive after exposure to violent films and video games

Participants were asked if they become more aggressive if they are provoked after playing and watching violent films and video games. Participants who strongly agree are 9 (30%) those who agree are 8 (26.6%). Neutral participants are 5 (16%), strongly disagree participants are 5 (16.7%) and those who disagree are 2 (6.7%). Analysis is presented on the next page:

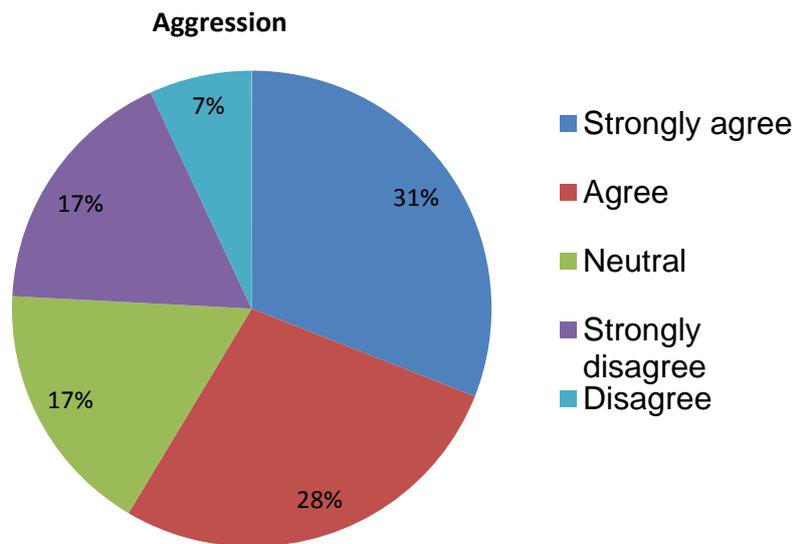


Figure 20: Aggression

5.4.16 Players' knowledge

When asked if playing video games increase their knowledge generally, 13(43.3%) strongly agree. Five participants (16.7%) agree, 6 (20%) are neutral. those who strongly disagree are 6 (20%). The detailed analysis of participants is presented in figure 21 on the next page:

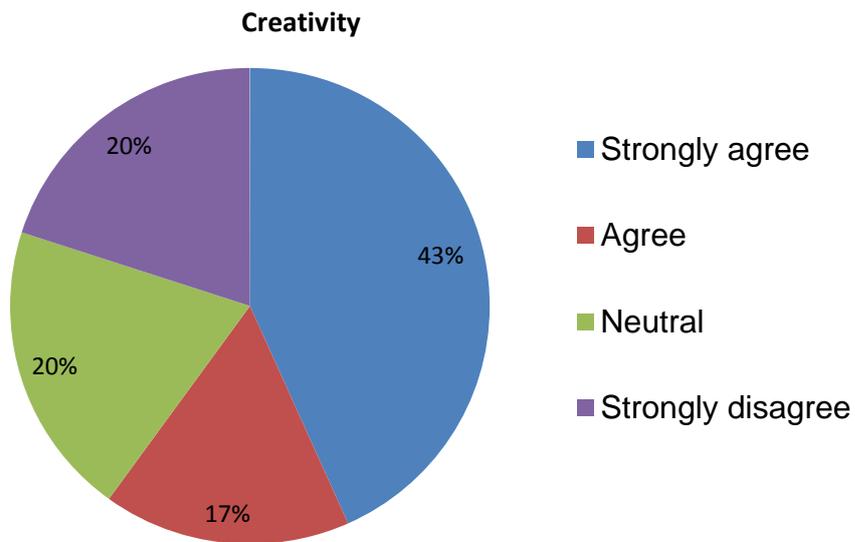


Figure 21: Creativity

5.4.17 Identification with players

Participants were asked if they identify themselves with players after playing and watching video games. Participants who strongly agree are 19(63.3%); 6(20%) agree and neutral participants are 3(10%). Disagree participants are 2 (6.7%). Detailed analysis is presented on the next page:

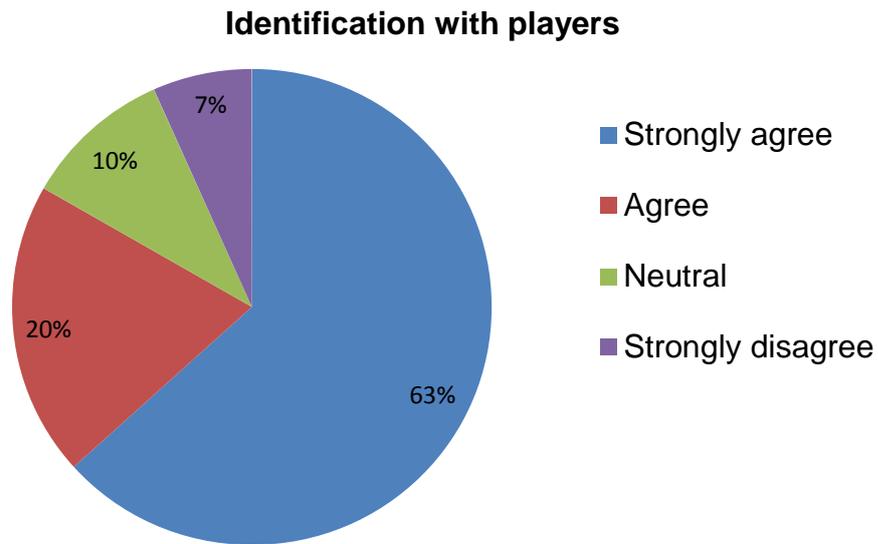


Figure 22: Identification with players

5.4.18 Influence on school progress

Participants were asked if watching violent films and playing video games does not influence their progress at school. Four (13.3%) strongly agree. Those who agree are 3 (10%), neutral participants are 4 (13.3%). 10(33.3%) participants strongly disagree and 8 (26.7%) disagree. Analysis is presented on the next page:

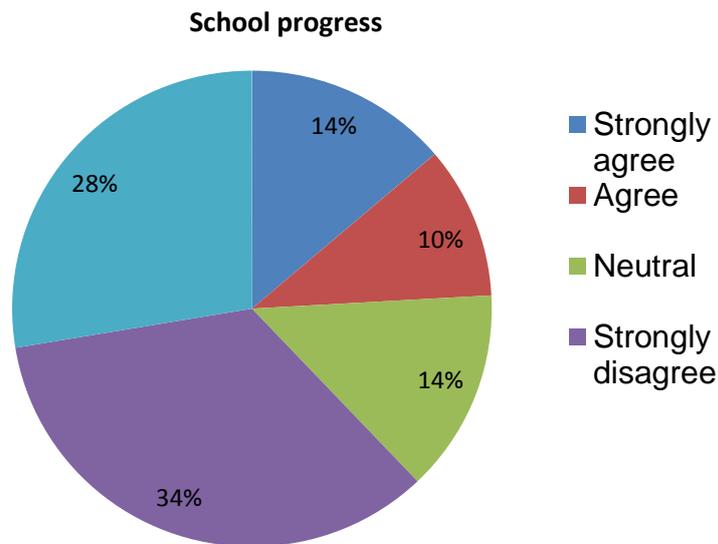


Figure 23: School progress

SECTION C

5.5 PARENTAL INFORMATION

5.5.1 Age restriction

Participants were asked whether they check age restrictions on films and video games. Eight (26.7%) participants check only when parents are around. Six (20%) check but sometimes and 16(53.3) % say No. The chart on the next page presents the analysis of participants.

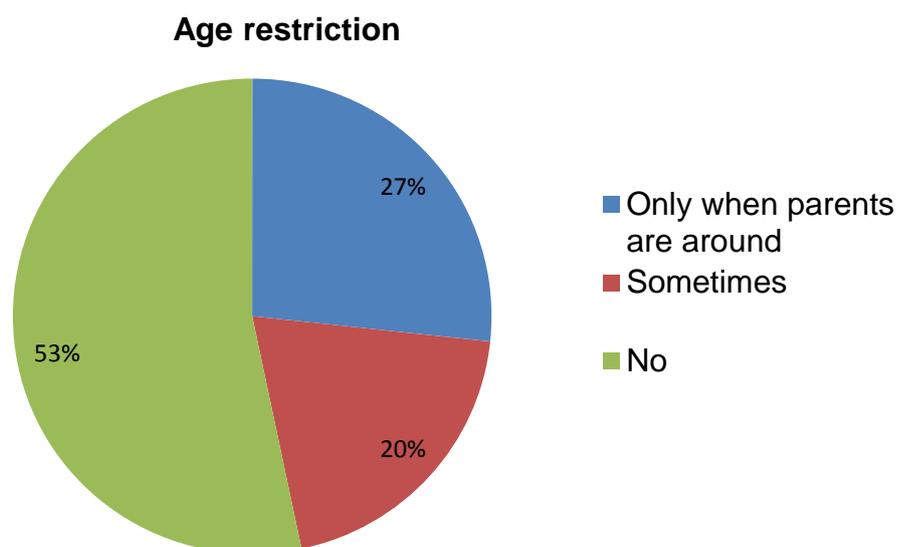


Figure 24: Age restriction

5.5.2 Parents monitoring what their children watch and play

Participants were asked if their parents monitor what they watch and video games they play. Three (12%) participants say they do but once in a while. Ten (37%) participants say sometimes and those who never do are 13 (51%). Detailed analysis is presented on the next page:

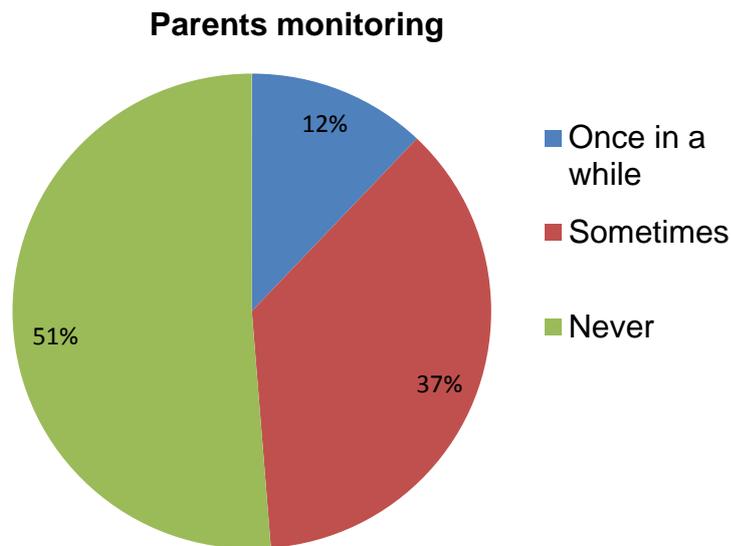


Figure 25: Parents monitoring

5.5.3 Checking films and video games ratings

Participants were asked why they do not check the age ratings before watching a film or playing a video game. Ten (33.3%) say it is useless. Four (13. %) say they do not see a difference between what is meant for them and what is not. Three (10%) specify the reasons for not doing do. Analysis of participants is presented in Figure 26 on the next page:

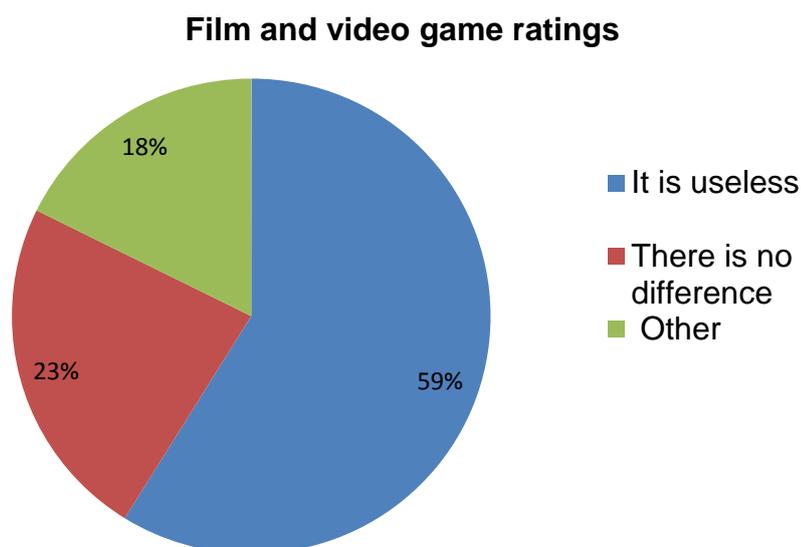


Figure 26: Film and video game ratings

5.5.4 Parent's reaction when children are exposed to media violence

Participants were asked what their parents do, if they found them playing or watching violent material. Eight (26.7%) say their parents switch off immediately, 3(10%) say parents let them to continue. Those who say their parents change to programmes which do not contain violent acts are 8 (26.7%) and 10 (33.3%) say their parents do nothing. The full analysis is presented in Figure 27 on the next page:

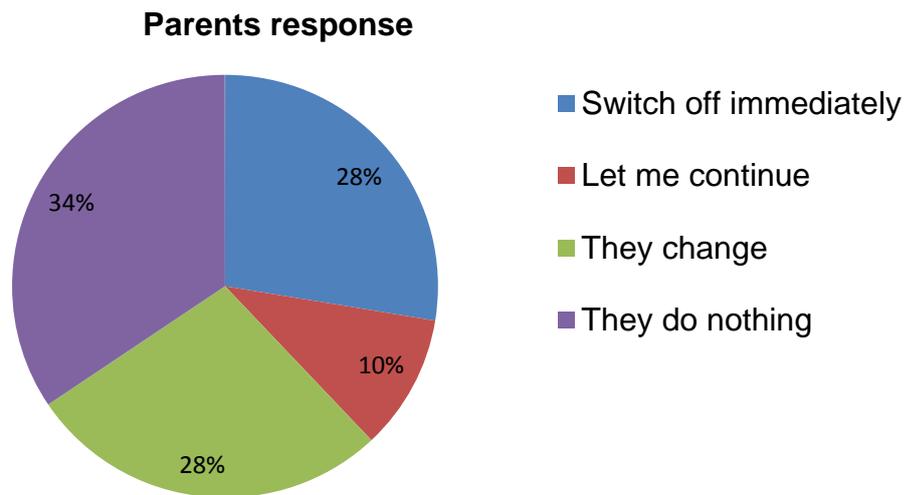


Figure 27: Parents response

5.5.5 Switching back to violent films and video games

Participants were asked if they change to violent films and video games after their parents had changed and left. Twenty three (64%) of the participants say yes and fourteen (36%) say sometimes. Full analysis is presented on the next page:

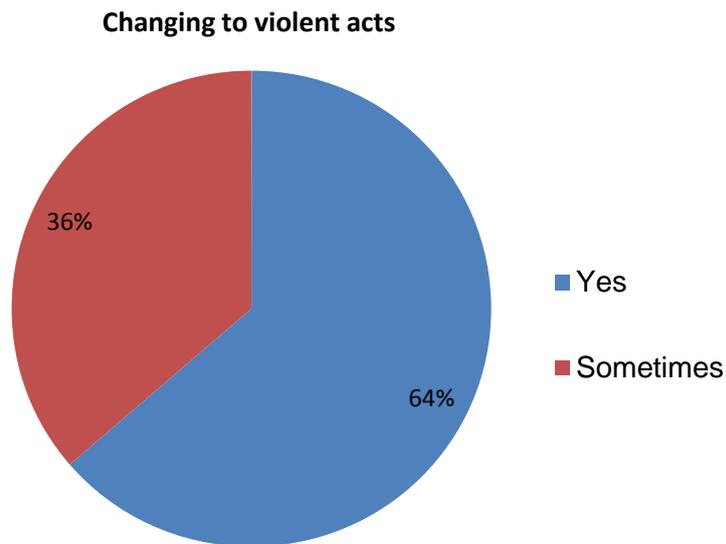


Figure 28: Changing violent acts

5.6 OBSERVATION

The observations were conducted on three different days. The children who were observed were over 30 because it was not easy to count. The researcher went to the playground where children were playing and observed them without their knowledge. The researcher went to 2 different playgrounds in two villages and the other children were observed according to how they play with others at home. Most children among those who were observed displayed imitation as a great influence in their lives. About 16 children also showed great influence of physical aggression because they were not afraid fight back violently with their friends while playing.

Young boys imitate mostly male role models or their favourite characters, girls imitated female characters. Young boys were seen imitating mostly wrestling players when playing with their friends. They did pretend plays where for example one would act as John Cena and the other Tripple H as well as a referee. When conflicts broke

out of nowhere they would use the same style that was shown in the television to fight back against whoever they are paying with.

Fantasy play of toy guns is also one strong factor that was visible in boys. They used guns to imitate action seen on films and video games. One player shot the other using either bubble water or toy bullets and the next player would pretend to be hurt or even dead. Thereafter, the victim would slowly wake up and run for their lives. Young girls used dolls mostly when they were playing, though some of them played with boys. The girls who were seen playing with boys were too sympathetic because they hated it when boys played harshly against others.

Bullying is another effect that was seen as the researcher observed the children. Boys believe that girls are always victims because that is how the media depicts it. Therefore, boys were seen bullying girls even those who were older than them because they think they are less powerful. They even bullied younger boys because they know they would not fight back. Many young girls displayed the effect of identification with the character, where they would act out exactly what their role model did. Many boys were also seemed to be desensitized because they were not afraid to just stand and watch others when they were playing violently.

Furthermore, children use violence to resolve conflict when they are repeatedly bully by fellow friends. Children would use swords and stones to fight back people or friend who bullied them while playing. They justify their argument by saying fighting an older person with hands is a waste of time because they know they would not win.

CHAPTER SIX

FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

6.1 INTRODUCTION

According to Christakis and Ebel (2004), since the advent of digital era, the exposure of media violence has been and its effects on children have been a focus of public concern. The use of television and video games has become popular for children nowadays. Furthermore, children spend too much time in front of video games and films. The above mentioned statement prompted the researcher to check whether children in Giyani are also affected by media violence.

The aim of this study was to investigate the effects of violent films and video games on children in Giyani area. The researcher was guided by the research question and objectives to arrive at the conclusion. Amongst the objectives, one was to draw information from children and parents from Giyani about the antisocial behaviour by their children and to outline the effects of violent films and video games on children.

The researcher used three different methods of data collection to answer the research questions and to arrive at the objectives of this study. Questionnaires, interviews and observations were used. The research methods were very helpful because they assisted the researcher to gather information that was analysed and yielded the findings. Thus this chapter discusses in detail the findings, outline the recommendations and give a conclusion to the whole study.

6.2 FINDINGS

The findings of this study are as follows:

Children spend too much time daily watching films and playing video games, especially on weekends. Children prefer playing violent video games and watching violent films if there are reinforcements of some kind. Young boys prefer watching wrestling and hit man games. Furthermore, parents are too busy to monitor what their children watch and play daily. It was also discovered that some parents sometimes monitor what their children watch and play, the parents know however that their children are technological competent to the extent that they pretend to be good when they, their parents are around. It was further discovered that male parents are less considerate as compared to female parents about what their children watch on television or games they play.

Inconsistent monitoring by parents was also established, children who live with both parents agree that it is one parent who has a problem when they are exposed to media violence while the other does not. Gender does not have an impact on how children are affected by media violence since the study revealed that girls and boys are affected the same by violence.

Age has impact when it comes to how a child may be affected by media violence content. Young children between the ages of 5-8 years have difficulty in differentiating fantasy and reality because of their less developed cognitive minds while older children between the ages of 9 to 14 years understand fantasy and reality better.

Parents do not have a problem when they find their children watching violent video games and films because they believe that the media cannot be harmful to them. However, those who regard violent media content to be harmful to children say they change to suitable channels and tell their children that what is portrayed by the media is not real and that violent behaviour is not accepted in real life. The study further revealed that even parents who recognise the risks of media violence on their children feel powerless to help prevent it, because if children do not see violent programmes at home their peers will discuss them in great detail.

Children fantasise a lot after being exposed to violent films and video games. They imitate the actions of their favourite characters and apply them in similar situations when playing with friends. After exposure to violent films and video games, children become more aggressive and desensitised. It is however, also discovered that they do not always take violence as the only way to resolve conflicts. They even become scared of the world thinking what the media portrayed would happen to them someday. Children become angry when their favourite character loses to the extent that they feel like helping them although it is not possible.

The study revealed that violent video films and video games have effects on children's performance at school because they have less time for their homework and studies. The study also discovered that no matter how parents try to monitor what their children watch and play, the effects of violent media content cannot be reduced because technology is growing rapidly and there are a lot of gadgets that children may use to access films and video games. Furthermore, parents are unable to monitor their children twenty four hours seven days a week. Children may have

access to whatever they like when their parents are guardians are not around nor see what they do with their friends. However, some parents believe that blocking technologies moving or computers to living rooms may be used to ease the effects.

Children prefer both violent films and video games. Children view the world as a scary place after being exposed to violent media content. However, children do not always become less sympathetic after being exposed to violent media content. The study further discovered that children like playing with toy guns, cars and swords. They like to watch and play more films and video games after a single play and that they also identify themselves with role models. Children struggle to sleep after being exposed to violent films and video games because they think the creatures they saw on the media may come and hurt them.

Playing video games increase children's knowledge generally because it helps them to be creative thinkers and enable them to solve problems fast. Children also do not check the age restrictions of programmes they watch or games they play. Some just watch what they feel like watching, although, others say they only check the age restriction if parents are nearby. They continue to say, it is useless to check the age restriction because there is no difference between programmes that are meant for them and those that have high restrictions. The study further discovered that young children do not even know what age restriction is. Those who know age restrictions find it difficult to understand the shortcuts displayed on the screen.

Lack of technological expertise may hinder implementation of parental mediation at home. Parents find it hard to understand television ratings and blocking technologies

that may be employed to reduce the effects of violence on their children. Children watch and play video games for fun, while others do it because they find skills to protect themselves against those who bully them. Young boys consider girls to be victims and less powerless as portrayed by the media because they are not afraid to fight older girls believing that they will win because girls portrayed in television are powerless. The effects of violent films and video games are the same in children. However games were most preferred because they are interactive and offer reinforcements unlike films.

Children play video games with friends mostly and all fail to interpret the messages because they are of the same age. The study further discovered that Intimidation, aggression, imitation and desensitisation have strong effects on children while activation and excitation are least effective. A person's development cognitively, emotionally and morally are interrelated. This explains how different children are affected by media violence content. Their perception of reality may be affected by violence. Children are mostly affected by the action of characters compared to the content of a particular film and video game. They may not understand the argument in a film but they are able interpret or understand the actions behind. Young children are frightened by the appearance of the character and sound while older children are frightened by injuries and horrible scenes.

Majority of parents think cartoons do not contain violence because the actors are animations. Only parents warn their children not to watch television if they find them consuming violent films and games. They tell their children that violence is

unacceptable. They further say that they punish their children if the latter are found to be using violent against other children

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings that emanated from this study prompted the researcher to recommend the following:

Children should be taught about the importance of checking age restrictions before playing games and watching films. This will reduce the harm because children would not see programmes not rated for them. Identification with violent characters should be discouraged by parents. Parents should monitor younger children as much as they can because they have the difficulty in distinguishing between fantasy and reality as compared to older children. Families should have planned television and video games consumption diet to reduce conflict over what can be watched and played. Parents should also encourage children to express their opinions by questioning television and video games content. This will reduce fear of aggressiveness as well as improving critical approach to the medium.

It is recommended that parents should know what their children watch and the video games they play. They should also make sure that children do not have computers or video games in their bedrooms in order to curb the effects. Parents should be aware of the content of the films and video games their children engage with by watching and playing them beforehand or by reading reviews and programme descriptions. They also should make sure that while violence and fantasy may to some degree be entertaining, they should alert their children that violence in the real world is not acceptable and that it is punishable. When violence occurs in films and

video games without punishment, parents should care to explain to children that such actions are unacceptable.

The government control strategies should be strict to films and video games producers, so that they may minimise violent content when writing films and video games scripts. The marketing of violent films and video games should be scrutinised. Producers and sellers should check the age restriction before they can sell films and games to children. Parents must always try to co-view programmes with their children, so that they may attach better interpretations to violent scenes that may be shown in the process.

Parents should limit or prohibit the exposure to violent media exposure to their children, although those who see no reason for constraints and less concerned may perceive this to be not important. Parents should make use of the blocking technologies like the v chip, or setting pin codes for channels that are bad to be consumed their children. The society should work as a whole to reduce the effects rather than assuming that each parent will monitor what their children is exposed to. It is further recommended that the government should finance the development and production of films and video games without influencing their content.

There should be media literacy at home and in schools to help parents and teachers to familiarise themselves with television rating and blocking technologies. Parents should interpret television and video games material and curb the effects that violence has on the behaviour and attitude of their children. Lastly, parents should also teach their children to ask permission to use the media.

6.4 CONCLUSION

The study concludes that violent films and video games have positive effects such as creativity, problem solving skills and concentration. They are entertaining but they have negative effects on children. Effects such as aggression, activation, intimidation and imitation are most evident in children. The study proved beyond reasonable doubt that children in Giyani are affected by media violence though the most visible effects are short term effects. The effectiveness of the effects is determined by the cognitive mind development of a child and the interpretation attached to each violent message or act portrayed by the media.

Social learning theory by Bandura (2009) is proved to be correct because children agree to copy what television characters do and apply in real life. Furthermore, from the discussion in literature review the researcher can conclude that age also has impact on how a child will be affected by violent media content. Parents may curb the effects of violent films and video games in children by applying measures such as: co- viewing, restrictive mediation and active mediation.

Furthermore, children do not always use violence as the only way to solve neither conflicts nor becoming less sympathetic after being exposed to violence. Children used violence to solve conflicts when they are repeatedly provoked and would not win if they do not use violence. The study further concludes that increasing general knowledge, improved skills towards solving problems and creative thinking are the only positive effects video games have on children. Violence in films and video games on children increase fear of becoming victims of aggression, with a resultant increase in self- protective behaviour and mistrust in others.

Both the South African television regulators ICASA and BCCSA use the watershed period in order to reduce effects of media violence on children. The watershed period allows programmes that contain violence to be shown after 21h00 because children would be asleep by then. Due to rapid increase in technology, it will be difficult or almost impossible for parents and the society as whole to reduce the effects of media violence on children

The study therefore concludes that lack of technological expertise by parent may also hinder the implementation of parental mediation. This type of intervention has been discovered to be central to the efforts of minimising or reducing the effects of violent films and video games on children in Giyani.

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ADDENDUM A: QUESTIONNAIRE: ENGLISH VERSION

EFFECTS OF VIOLENT FILMS AND VIDEO GAMES ON CHILDREN IN SELECTED VILLAGES IN GIYANI MUNICIPALITY, LIMPOPO PROVINCE

QUESTIONNAIRE

The aim of these questions is to explore the effects of violent films and video games on children. Therefore, children are requested to answer the questionnaire truthfully. Children will not be forced to answer the questionnaire or to continue if they no-longer feel comfortable. Only children who had been exposed to violent films and video games will be given this questionnaire.

PLEASE ANSWER WITH A CROSS (X) TO INDICATE YOUR ANSWER

SECTION A: PERSONAL INFORMATION

1. Gender

Male	1
Female	2

2. Age

5-8 years	1
9-12 years	2
13-14years	3

3. Place of residence

Ndhambhi	1
Mageva	2
Bambeni	3
Nwamarhanga	4

4. What grade are you in?

Foundation phase Grade R to 3	1
Intermediate phase grade 4 to 6	2
Senior phase grade 7 to 9	3

5. Who do you live with at home?

Both parents	1
Single parent	2
Guardians	3
Other	4

SECTION B: VIOLENT FILMS AND VIDEO GAMES

This section aims to outline the effects of both violent films and video games on children.

6. Between violent films and video games what do you prefer?

Violent films	1
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Video games	2
Both	3

7. Why do you prefer watching or playing violent films and video games?

Because other children do so.	1
Just for fun	2
Because the skills helps me to protect myself against bullies	3
Other specify	4

8. What kind of video games do you like to play?

Violent video games	1
Non- violent video games	2
Both	3

9. Indicate the duration of time you spend watching films or playing video games daily?

0-2 hours	1
2-4 hours	2
4-8 hours	3

10. How do you view the world after watching violent films and playing video games?

Scary place	1
Peaceful place	2

11. These are the behavioural changes that are seen when children are exposed to continuous television violence generally, choose **only** two strong effects?

Activation	1
Numbing	2
Intimidation	3

12. Whether watching violent films or playing video games, who do you usually, play with?

Alone	1
With friends	2
With parents	3
Others specify	4

13. In the process of watching television or playing video game, how do you feel when your favourite character loses?

Angry	1
Understand that one has to lose	2
Feel like I can fight back though it's impossible	3
Other specify	4

14. What kind of toys / objects do you normally use when playing with friends?

Toy guns	1
Toy cars	2
sticks	3
Others specify	4

	strongly agree 1	Agree 2	Neutral 3	Strongly Disagree 4	Disagree 5
15. Do you imitate actions seen in violent films and video games?					
16. Do you struggle to sleep after watching violent films and playing video games?					

<p>17. After being exposed to violent films and video games, do you conclude that violence is the only way to resolve problems?</p>					
<p>18. After playing violent films and video games do you become callous and less sympathetic?</p>					
<p>19. After watching a violent film and playing a video game do you have the desire to continue?</p>					
<p>20. Do you act aggressively when a friend provokes you, after consuming violent films and video games?</p>					
<p>21. Does playing video games increase your creativity generally?</p>					
<p>22. Do you identify yourself with players, after playing</p>					

a video game?					
23. Does exposure to violent films and video games affect your progress at school?					

SECTION C: PARENTAL INFORMATION

The aim of this section is to check if and how parents monitor their children`s television and games consumption.

24. When watching television or playing video games do you check the age restriction of those programmes?

Yes, but only when parents are around	1
Sometimes	2
No	3

25. If your answer in question 24 is 2, how often do parents monitor you when playing games or watching television.

Daily	1
Once in a while	2
Never	3

26. If your answer in question 24 is 3, state the reason for not doing so?

It is useless	1
There is no difference between what is meant for me and what is not.	2
Other specify	

27. What do your parents do, if they see you playing either a violent game or watching a violent film?

They switch off immediately	1
Let me continue	2
They change to programmes that do not contain violent acts	3
They do nothing	4

28. If your answer is 1 on the previous question, do you change back to what you were watching when your parents are not around?

Yes	1
Sometimes	2

ADDENDUM B: QUESTIONNAIRE: XITSONGA VERSION

MBUYELO WA TIFILIMI TA MADZOLONGA (VUKARHI) NA TIVHIDIYO GEMI

EKA VANA VA MASIPALA WA GIYANI EKA SWITANDI LESWI NGA

HLAWURIWA, EXIFUNDZHENI NKULU XA LIMPOPO

NONGONOKO WA SWIVUTISO

Xikongomelo xa swivutiso leswi l ku humesela e handle mbuyelo wa tifilimi ta madzolonga na tivhidiyogemi eka vana. Hikokwalaho, vana va komberiwa ku hlamula swivutiso leswi hi ntiyiso. Vana va nge sindzisiwi ku hlamula swivutiso, kumbe ku ya emahwleni loko va nga ha rini ku tsakela. Nongonoko wa swivutiso wu ta nyikiwa ntsena vana lava nga vona tifilimi ta madzolonga na tivhidiyogemi.

U KOMBERIWA KU TIRHISA (X) XIHAMBANO KU KOMBISA NHLAMULO YA WENA

XIYENGE XA A : VUXOKOXOKO BYA VUN`WINYI

1. Rimbewu

Xinuna	1
Xisati	2

2. Malembe

5 – 8 wa malembe	1
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9 – 12 wa malembe	2
13 - 14 wa malembe	3

3. Ndhawu leyi u tshamaka ka yona

Ndhambi	1
Mageva	2
Bambeni	3
N`wamarhanga	4

4. U Leka gireyidi yihi?

Ntangha R- to 3	1
Ntangha 4 to 6	2
Ntangha 7 to 9	3

5. U tshama na mani ekaya?

Vatswari ha vambirhi	1
Mutswari u`nwe	2
Vahlayisi	3
Van`wana	4

XIYENGE XA B: TIFILIMI TA MADZOLONGA NA TIVHIDIYO GEMI

Xikongomelo xa xiyenge lexi I ku longoloxa mbuyelo wa tifilimi ta madzolonga na ti vhidiyogemi eka vana.

6. Exikarhi ka tifilimi ta madzolonga na ti vhidiyogemi u tsakela yini?

Tifilimi ta madzolonga	1
Tivhidiyogemi ta madzolonga	2
Ha swimbirhi	3

7. Hikokwalaho ka yini u tsakela ku languta tifilimi ta madzolonga kumbe ku tlanga tivhidiyogemi ta madzolonga?

Hiikuva vana van`wani va endla na vona	1
Ku ti tsakisa ntsena	2
Hikuva ndzi kuma vuswikoti byo ti sirhelela eka lava va ndzi hluphaka	3
Swin`wana, kombisa kumbe seketela	4

8. Tivhidiyogemi leti u tsakelaka ku titlanga i ta njhani?

Ta madzolonga	1
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Ta kupfumala madzolonga	2
Ha swimbirhi	3

9. Kombisa nkarhi lowu u wu tirhisaku ku vona tifilimi na ku tlanga tivhidiyogemi siku na siku.

0-2 tiawara	1
2-4 tiawara	2
4-8 tiawara	3

10. Xana u yi vonisa ku yini misava endzhaku ka ku languta tifilimi ta madzolonga no tlanga tivhidiyogemi ?

Ndhawu yo chavisa	1
Ndhawu yor hula	2

11. Leswi l ku cinca ka matikhomele ya vana loko va tshamela ku vona madzolonga hi ku angarihela, hlawula ntsena mimbuyelo yi mbirhi leyi tikombaka ngopfu?

Ku pfuxeteka ka leswi u nga swivona nkarhi lowu nga hundza	1
Ku fa ntshirito kumbe mapfalo	2
Ku chava endzaku ka loko u vonile	3

12.Loko u vona tifilimi ta madzolonga kumbe loko u tlanga tivhidiyogemi , imani loyi u talaka ku tlanga na yena?

Ndzi ri ndzexe	1
Na vanghana	2
Vatswari	3
Van'wana kombisa	4

13.Loko u karhi u tlanga vhidiyogemi ,kumbe kuvona xigilamukhuva u titwa njhani Loko mutlangi loyi un'wi rhandzaka a hluleka?

Ndza khunguvanyeka	1
Ndzi twisisa kuri unw'ana u fanele ku hluleka	2
Ndzi twa onge ndzi nga lwa hambu leswi swi nga kotekeki	3
Swinw'ana,kombisa	4

14.I swo huhwisa swa njhani kumbe switirhisiwa swi hil eswi u ngatolovela ku tlanga hi swona na loko u ri na vanghana va wena?

Swibamu swo tlangisa	1
Swimovhana swo tlangisa	2
Timhandzi	3
Swinw'ana,kombisa	4

	Ndza pfumela swinene 1	Ndza pfum ela 2	Ndzi le xikarhi 3	Ndza ala swinene 4	Ndza ala 5
15. Xana wa encenyeta leswi u vaka u swivonile ka tifulimi ta madzolongana tivhidiyogemi?					
16. Xana wa tikeriwa loko u etlela endzhaku ka loko u languti le tivhidiyogemi na tifulimi ta modzolongana?					
17. Endzhaku ka loko u langutile tifulimi ta madzolongana tivhidiyogemi,xana u					

teka madzolonga yari ndlela ntsena yo lulamisa nkingha?					
18. Endzhaku ka ku languta tifilimi ta vukarhi na tivhidiyogemi u va u ri hava ntswela vusiwana ke?					
19. Endzhaku ka ku languta tifilimi ta ma - dzolonga no tlanga tivhidiyogemi u va u rina ku navela ku languta no tlanga u ya mahlweni xana?					

<p>20. Xana wa vani vurhena/ a kusukela ,endzhaku ka loko u ta va u langutileti filimi ta madzolonga no tlangativhidiyo gemi?</p>					
<p>21. Xana kulanguta ka wena tifilimi no tlanga tivhidiyogemi swakota ku engetela vutivi kumbe ntokoto wa wena hi ku arhangela?</p>					
<p>22. Xana wa tifananisa na vatlangi endzhaku ka ku tlanga tivhidiyogemi?</p>					

<p>23. Xana ku tlanga tivhidiyogemi na ku langua tifulimi ta madzolongwa swi tsandzekisa ku humelela ka wena kumbe mbuyelo wa wena exikolweni?</p>					
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XIYENGE XA C: VUXOKOXOKO BYA MUTSWARI

Xikongomelo nkulu xa xiphemu lexi I ku kambela loko vatswari va landzelerisa leswi vana vavonisaka swona mavona- kule no tlanga tivhidiyogemi ta madzolongwa.

24. Xana loko u vona xigila mukhuva kumbe loko u tlanga tivhidiyogemi wa languta mpimo wa malembe ya leswi u swivona ka kuri swi ku ringanilenaku a swi hundz I malembe ya wena kumbe a wu languti naa?

Ina, mara loko vatswari vari kona	1
Nkarhi wunw'ana	2
A ndzi languti	3

25. Loko nhlamulo ya wena eka xivutiso xa makume mbhirhi mbirhi (24) kuri mbhirhi(2),I ka ngani laha vatswari va ku langutisaka loko u vona tifilimi na loko u tlanga tivhidiyogemi?

Siku na siku	1
Nkarhi wunw'ani	2
A valangutisi	3

26. Loko nhlamulo ya wena eka xivutiso xa 24 kuri(3),nyika nhlamuselo ya wena leswaku hikokwalaho ka yini u nga endlangi swona?

A swi pfuni nchumu	1
A kuna ku hambana eka leswi swi nga swa mina na leswi swi nga riki swa mina	2
Swinw'ana, kombisa	3

27. Xana vatswari va wena va endla yini endzhaku ka loko u langutile tifilimi ta madzolonga no tlanga tivhidiyogemi?

Vatima hi xitshuketana	1
Va ni tshika ni ya emahlweni na ku vona	2
Va ncinca va yisa ka yi nw'ana minongonoko leyi pfumalaka madzolonga	3
A va endli nchumu	4

28. Loko nhlamulo ya wena eka xivutiso lexi nga hundza ku ri 1,wa ncinca leswi a va kuvekele ku ri u vona swona u ya ka leswi a wu vona swona loko va nga ri kona?

Ina	1
Nkarhi wunw'ani	2

ADDENDUM C: INTERVIEWS: CORE QUESTIONS

EFFECTS OF VIOLENT FILMS AND VIDEO GAMES ON CHILDREN IN SELECTED VILLAGES IN GIYANI MUNICIPALITY, LIMPOPO PROVINCE

INTERVIEWS CORE QUESTIONS

The aim of these questions is to find out, if ever and how parents monitor the utilisation of television and playing of video games by their children. Parents are therefore requested to answer these interview questions truthfully, in order to help the researcher discover the effects of violent films and video games on their children.

1. How much time do your children spend watching or playing video games daily?
2. What kind of films and/ or video games do your children like to play or watch?
3. Do you as a parent check the age restriction of either a film or video game your children consume?
4. What do you do when you find your children watching a violent film or playing a violent game?
5. If your children go beyond what is meant for them, what do you do?
6. After your child watched either a violent film or video games, do you see any behavioural changes, explain?
7. Have you ever been around when your child is playing a violent game, how do they react if they favourite character lose, explain?

8. These are long and short term effects of watching violent films and video games, choose the ones that are visible in your child. Intimidation, Activation, Aggression, Desensitisation, Numbing, Imitation, Excitation.
9. Do these effects affect the progress of your child at school?
10. What kind of objects/toys do your children normally use when playing with their friends?
11. Violent films and video games also stimulate physical aggression on children, mostly towards their peers, how do you control this as a parent?
12. Due to the advancement of technology, children are able to access violent films and video games without the knowledge of their parents. Do you think the effects of violent films and video games on children will be reduced as time goes on, explain?

