



## **Influence of Television Programs Genre on Violent Behaviour among Young Children**

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### **Authors' contributions**

*This work was carried out in collaboration between all authors Author MRN designed the study, performed the statistical analysis, and wrote the protocol and the first draft of the manuscript. Authors MSH, MNO and SP managed the analyses of the study. Author MSN managed the literature searches and theoretical aspects of study. Author MAY reviewed the literature search. Author SP reviewed the first draft and prepared final manuscript. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.*

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### **ABSTRACT**

**Aims:** The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between television program genre and aggression behaviour in primary school students.

**Study Design:** Cross sectional design.

**Place and Duration of Study:** The current study conducted in the five provinces of Iran which selected through a multi-stage random sampling from different geographical areas comprising of North, South, West, East and central area of Iran during September and December, 2011.

**Methodology:** Four hundred twenty four primary students from different grades (grade one to five) were recruited in study. This survey investigated whether exposure to television program type was related to children's use of social aggression that explored using Buss-Perry standard questionnaire.

**Results:** The results of the survey revealed a significant relationship between watching

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movies with action genre and aggression level among students ( $p < 0.05$ ). Finding indicated that there was no difference between mean of aggression level among children who interested in particular type of TV programs, except animation which showed a significant difference ( $p < 0.05$ ).

**Conclusion:** In conclusion current study provides additional evidence to support that content of television programs particularly its genre is very important in shaping the children behavior. As a new perspective, focus on genre as an important element in producing of television programs could be helpful for authorities.

*Keywords: Aggression; genre; primary school; students.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Studies have shown that children behave more aggressively after exposure to film or televised violence [1]. Many parents are concerned about the influence of viewing violence on children. Researchers have revealed that children's television comprises about 20 violent acts per hour and that children who view a lot of violent television probably have more altered attitudes and behaviour [2]. The message of aggressive cartoons for the Youths might be: "aggression works and wins", although they also laugh or mention that it is fantasy. Although there are various ideas about how much TV violence is harmful to children, it is known that watching TV violence repeatedly has a real influence. Those who are watching TV more than three hours daily, younger children, children from violent homes, boys, and those who are insecure seem to be more influenced by contact to TV violence [3,4]. Children often behave differently after they've been watching violent programs on television. In one study, preschool children were observed both before and after watching television; some watched cartoons that had many aggressive and violent acts; others watched shows that didn't have any kind of violence [5]. Children who watched the violent shows were more likely to strike out at playmates, argue, disobey authority, and were less willing to wait for things than those children who watched nonviolent programs [6]. Other research, however, suggests that the effect of watching violent TV content is not short-lasting and studies linking excessive TV watching and disruptive behaviour in children are not always able to account for the influence of family and genetic factors underlying this association [7]. Television aggression can affect more apparently some children with some characteristics including person factors (Person factors include all the characteristics a person brings to the situation, such as personality traits, attitudes, and genetic predispositions) and situational factors (include any important features of the situation, such as presence of a provocation or an aggressive cue) [8].

Slater [9] analyzed selective exposure in a large scale study of 8th grade students (3100 students). His finding has confirmed that adolescents prefer violent movies and especially with action genres. Researchers have identified television lessons that are being taught by children and adult programming alike. These lessons were: 1) television teaches that the level of violent among good and bad characters is almost the same. 2) aggression behaviour on television is used for solving the problems 3) hero on television actively use the violence in order to resolve dilemmas; and 4) Since after violence act, all victims recovered completely, therefore the violence is not harmful [10,11,12].

In the field of communication, there are many theories and each of them looks into specific dimensions of the media's roles and importance. A number of theories concern with the

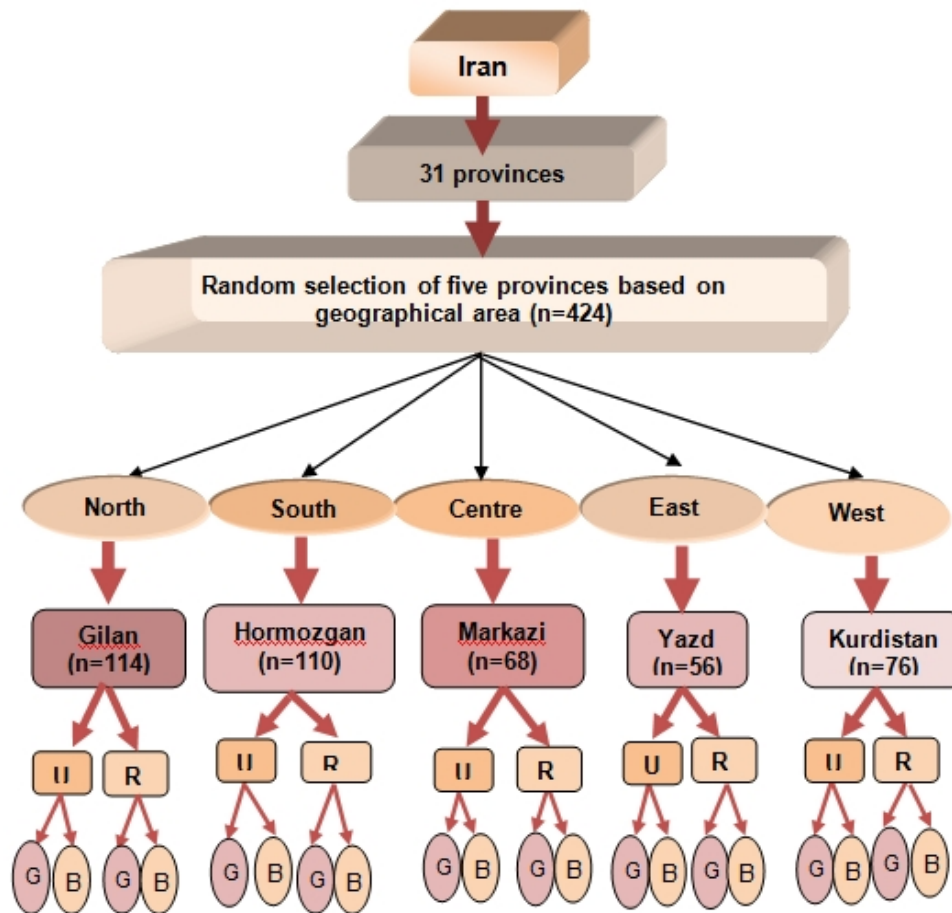
impacts of TV violence on the audience, creating an increase in aggressive behaviour. To analyse the relationship between TV violence and aggression, social cognitive theory seems to be suitable among general media effects theories. Social cognitive theory proposes that human functioning is the product of reciprocal determinism, or the dynamic interplay of (a) personal factors (e.g., cognition, affect); (b) behaviour; and (c) environmental influences, which interact to influence human behaviour. It offers a comprehensive understanding of how people learn behaviours in a range of contexts; including those based on media exposure [13]. Social Cognitive theory provides an explanation for how violent media may influence childhood aggression. Social Cognitive theory posits that a child learns how to act and forms his or her attitudes from observing important role models in his or her life [14]. Characters portrayed in the media may become models that influence the child's attitudes, beliefs, and behaviour. He or she may learn to see violence as a part of everyday life and an acceptable way to solve interpersonal problems. Younger children do not understand the difference between reality and fantasy, according to research [15]. Developmentally, they are less able to discern reality from fantasy and are more likely to be emotionally and cognitively affected by the violence they observe [16]. However, the effects of television programs are dependent on the type of content of programs viewed. Therefore, present study proposed the following research hypotheses: the genre of children's favourite TV programs is significantly related to their aggression behaviour. However, the effects of television programs are dependent on the type of their content and genre. The term "genre" comes from the French language and means "type" or "kind." According to Kellner [17] a genre refers to as coded set of formulas and conventions which indicate a culturally accepted way or organizing material into distinct patterns. Once established, genres dictate the basic conditions of a cultural production and reception. For example, crime dramas invariably have a violent crime, a search for its perpetrators. Genre is the term for any category of literature or other forms of art or entertainment, e.g. music, whether written or spoken, aural or visual, based on some set of stylistic criteria. Television program genres can be categorized according to the setting of the program. Nevertheless, programs with the same settings can be very different, due to the use of different themes, format or moods. Berger [18] stated that some of the more important formulaic broadcast television genres, and programs that can be placed in each genre, are as follow: commercials, news, sports broadcasts, action adventures, drama, religious programs, science and education shows, game shows, talk shows, comedies and so on.

In the past few decades, a subset of research has focused on how television alters viewers' cognitive and emotional processes. In this regards, it is necessary to consider some aspects of television program on children's behaviour. So the current study aimed 1) to determine the most favourite children's TV program in order to explore their relationship with aggression level of them 2) to examine the relationship between television program genre and aggression behaviour in primary school students.

## **2. MATERIALS AND METHODS**

A cross-sectional study was carried out among primary school students between September and December, 2011. A multi-stage random sampling was used to select the schools. First, five provinces out of the 31 provinces in Iran from different geographical areas of country including North (Gilan Province), South (Hormozgan province), West (Kurdistan Province), East (Yazd Province) and Central region (Markazi Province) were selected randomly. Secondly, one city and one village were selected from each of these five provinces by simple random sampling. From ages 5 to 18, boys and girls are educated separately in different schools in Iran. Girls typically have female teachers, while boys are taught by men, so in

order to explore relationship between TV viewing habits and aggression behaviours in children, from each selected areas (rural and urban area of each selected province) two schools were selected randomly covering both genders, adding up to a total of 20 schools (Fig. 1). The subjects of current study consisted of 424 students from grade one to five (7-12 years old) from both genders. All students were granted parental permission and signed their own assent forms before participating. The survey was administered in a quiet place at the students' home. Children were interviewed by researcher with reading question stems and answer choices, and allowed students to answer the questions. Upon completion, children received a novelty pencil in thanks for their participation.



**Fig. 1. Flow chart of the sample selection**  
 U: Urban R: Rural G: Girls' School B: Boys' School

## 2.1 Participants

Four hundred twenty four primary students (grade one to five) were consulted for the present study. The participants were residing in five provinces of Iran in different geographical areas. Half of the students were male (50.5%) and residing in urban area. The mean age ( $\pm$ Standard Deviation) of children were  $9.76 \pm 1.61$  years ranging from 7 to 12 years. The

students' family size and birth rank were  $4.36 \pm 1.34$  and  $1.82 \pm 1.26$  respectively. The students' fathers and mothers mean age were  $38.82 \pm 5.91$  and  $34.28 \pm 5.54$  years. The majority of students' father worked as nonprofessional employers (52.1%) in their provinces and occupation of most their mothers were housewife (87.5%). Most of the students' parents had finished primary school as their education level (26.7% and 36.8% for fathers and mothers respectively).

## **2.2 Instrument**

A validated and reliable self-administered, structured questionnaire was used for data collection. Content validity of the questionnaire was ascertained by an expert panel, which comprised three mass communication specialists, an epidemiologist, an educational psychologist and a clinical psychologist with specialty in children behaviours.

Reliability (internal consistency) was assessed by using Cronbach's alpha. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.94 for the 25 aggression questions indicating adequate reliability of the questionnaire [19]. The questionnaire was pretested among 30 elementary students for checking the clarity of the items excluded from the study samples. The questionnaire consisted of three sections on socio-demographic information, media using habits and Buss Perry Scale for assessing aggression level.

The survey was administered in a quiet place at the students' home. Children were interviewed by researcher by reading questions and answer choices, and allowed students to answer the questions. Upon completion, children received a novelty pencil as an appreciation for their participation.

## **2.3 Media Using Habits**

In order to gauge the duration each participant watched television each day, a series of questions was asked where each person had to estimate the total hours of television viewing during a day. Specifically, participants had to rate the number of hours they watched in the morning (6 AM – 12 PM), afternoon (12 PM – 6 PM), evening (6 PM – 12 AM), and late night (12 AM – 6 AM). Their responses were summed to each question to create each participant's average television viewing hours per day. To determine the extent to which participants watched different genres of television, each participant had to rate how frequently they watched a variety of programs. Specifically, each participant rated on a scale from 1 (= never) to 5 (=all the time) how frequently they watched a large list of different types of programming within fourteen categories: musical TV series, action, action adventure, comedy, religious, fantasy, game show, drama, documentaries, fiction, horror, sport, educational and thriller.

## **2.4 Buss-Perry's Aggression Questionnaire (AQ)**

Buss- perry's aggression Questionnaire was validated and made norm base on Iranian culture previously [20,21] and consequently 4 items deleted from original questionnaire and finally a 25 items questionnaire was prepared. Trait aggression was measured by the total score of the AQ and scores of the subscales including Physical Aggression (items 1 to 7), Verbal Aggression (items 8 to 12), Anger (items 13 to 17), and Hostility (items 18 to 25). The AQ comprises 25 items in a 5-point Likert format from 0 (extremely uncharacteristic of me) to 4 (extremely characteristic of me). Aggression level of students defined as Low-aggressive

(percentile<25% of aggression score); Moderate aggression percentile 25 -75 and High aggression percentile >75%. The required time for completion of each questionnaire was equal to 30 minutes.

## 2.4 Data Analysis

One- way ANOVA followed by Post Hoc test (Duncan) and independent t-test were performed in the data analysis, using SPSS version 18. The level of significance for all statistics was set at  $p<0.05$ .

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1 Results

#### 3.1.1 Respondents' profile

A total of 424 participants from 5 provinces of Iran responded to the study instrument. Of the 424, 214 students were male, and 210 students were female. The age of respondents' ranged from 7 to 12 with the average age being  $9.75\pm1.60$ . Additional demographics revealed 57 first-graders (13.44%), 61 second-graders (14.38%), 92 third-graders (21.69%), 98 fourth-graders (23.11%), and 116 fifth-graders students (27.36%) responded to the survey (Table 1).

**Table .1. Demographic profile of students by province**

CHaracteristics	Provinces					Total N (%)
	Gilan N (%)	Markazi N (%)	Yazd N (%)	Hormozgan N (%)	Kurdistan N (%)	
<b>Sex</b>						
Male	56(49.10)	37(54.4)	27(48.2)	50(45.5)	44(57.9)	<b>214(50.47)</b>
Female	58(50.90)	31(45.60)	29(51.8)	60(54.5)	32(42.1)	<b>210(49.53)</b>
Total	114(100)	68(100)	56(100)	110(100)	76(100)	<b>424(100)</b>
<b>Age</b>						
7	17(14.9)	7(10.3)	10(17.9)	8(7.3)	4(5.3)	<b>46(10.84)</b>
8	14(12.3)	16(23.5)	11(19.6)	13(11.8)	7(9.2)	<b>61(14.38)</b>
9	21(18.4)	9(13.2)	8(14.3)	23(20.9)	10(13.2)	<b>71(16.74)</b>
10	21(18.4)	15(22.1)	12(21.4)	28(25.5)	23(30.3)	<b>99(23.35)</b>
11	14(12.3)	8(11.8)	11(19.61)	17(15.5)	18(23.7)	<b>68(16.03)</b>
12	27(23.7)	13(19.1)	4(7.1)	21(19.1)	14(18.4)	<b>79(18.63)</b>
Mean $\pm$ SD	9.71 $\pm$ 1.74	9.58 $\pm$ 1.65	9.26 $\pm$ 1.58	9.87 $\pm$ 1.50	10.13 $\pm$ 1.39	<b>9.75<math>\pm</math>1.60</b>
<b>Grade</b>						
1	21(18.4)	13(19.1)	10(17.9)	9(8.2)	4(5.3)	<b>57(13.44)</b>
2	13(11.4)	14(20.6)	10(17.90)	14(12.7)	10(13.2)	<b>61(14.38)</b>
3	28(24.6)	11(16.2)	14(25)	30(27.3)	9(11.8)	<b>92(21.69)</b>
4	25(21.9)	14(20.6)	9(16.10)	31(28.2)	19(25)	<b>98(23.11)</b>
5	27(23.7)	16(23.5)	13(23.2)	26(23.6)	34(44.7)	<b>116(27.36)</b>
<b>GPA</b>						
14-16	3(2.63)	5(7.35)	2(3.570)	11(10)	0.0(0.0)	<b>21(4.95)</b>
16.01-18	26(22.80)	13(19.11)	3(5.35)	28(25.45)	9(11.84)	<b>79(17.63)</b>
18.01-20	85(74.56)	50(73.52)	51(91.07)	71(64.54)	67(88.15)	<b>324(76.41)</b>
Mean $\pm$ SD	<b>19.03<math>\pm</math>1.27</b>	<b>18.78<math>\pm</math>1.43</b>	<b>19.35<math>\pm</math>1.02</b>	<b>18.59<math>\pm</math>1.53</b>	<b>19.37<math>\pm</math>0.78</b>	<b>18.98<math>\pm</math>1.31</b>

GPA: Grade Point Average

### 3.1.2 The most favourite children's TV programs

One of the objectives of this study was to determine the most favourite children's TV program in order to explore its relationship with their aggression level. Data obtained from the first study showed that all students interested in 22 programs. According to the findings, most of the students (n=64) reported Amoo Poorang as the most favourite TV programs, followed by two TV programs (Fetileh and Khaleh Shahdooneh) (n=53), Tom and Jerry (n=49) and Ninja Turtles (n=35). The least favourite TV programs was Cinderella (n=4). Findings also showed that the most aggression level was found among students who reported Ninja Turtles (n=15), Captain Tsubasa (n=13), Batman (n=12), Spiderman (n=10), Ben Ten (n=10) and Pokemon (n=7) as their favourite TV programs (Table 2).

**Table 2. Comparisons of students' aggression level by their favourite TV programs**

Favourite TV Programs	Level of Aggression			Total
	Low Aggression <25 N (%)	Moderate Aggression 25-75 N (%)	High Aggression >75 N (%)	
1-Amoopoorang	17 (26.56)	42 (65.62)	5 (7.81)	64
2- Fitile	18 (33.96)	29 (54.71)	6 (11.32)	53
3- Khaleh Shadoneh	19 (35.84)	31 (54.49)	3 (5.66)	53
4- Tom and Jerry	22 (44.89)	27 (55.10)	0 (0.00)	49
5- Ninja Turtles	4 (11.42)	16 (45.71)	15 (42.85)	35
6-Mal Mal	3 (10.71)	23 (82.14)	2 (7.14)	28
7- Captain Tsubasa	0 (0.00)	4 (23.52)	13 (76.47)	17
8- Spiderman	0 (0.00)	7 (41.17)	10 (58.82)	17
9-Ben Ten	0 (0.00)	3 (23.07)	10 (76.92)	13
10-Batman	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	12 (100)	12
11- Shaun the Sheep	4 (44.44)	5 (55.56)	0 (0.00)	9
12- Megaman	0 (0.00)	3 (33.33)	6 (66.67)	9
13- Superman	0 (0.00)	3 (33.33)	6 (66.67)	9
14- Pink Panther	1 (12.50)	7 (87.5)	0 (0.00)	8
15-Pino Kio	4 (50.00)	4 (50.00)	0 (0.00)	8
16-Brave Boy	4 (57.14)	3 (42.85)	0 (0.00)	7
17-Pat and Mat	4 (57.14)	3 (42.58)	0 (0.00)	7
18-Pokemon	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	7 (100.00)	7
19-Anne Shirly	1 (20.00)	3 (60.00)	1 (20.00)	5
20-Mr Bin	1 (20.00)	4 (80.00)	0 (0.00)	5
21- Red Riding Hood	5 (100.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	5
22- Cinderella	2 (50.00)	2 (50.00)	0 (0.00)	4

### 3.1.3 Relationship between TV programs' genre and students aggression level

The other study objective was about relationship between genres of TV program and level of aggressive behaviour. Finding showed that there were higher levels of aggression in all domains found in some children's programs genre including Action adventure (n=42), Action (n=27), Sport (n=11) and Horror (n=9), as compared to other programs like Comedy, Drama, Fiction, Documentary, Educational, religious and Musical TV series (Table 3).

**Table 3. Respondents' TV favourite genres by different aggression level**

TV favourite genres	Level of Aggression			Total
	Low Aggression N (%)	Moderate Aggression N (%)	High Aggression N (%)	
1-Musical	31 (33.33)	58 (62.36)	4 (4.30)	93
2-Action	0 (0.00)	35 (56.45)	27 (43.55)	62
3-Action Adventure	0 (0.00)	14 (25.00)	42 (75.00)	56
4-Comedy	22 (45.83)	24 (50.00)	2 (4.16)	48
5-Drama	14 (40.00)	20 (57.14)	1 (2.85)	35
6-Fiction	7 (26.92)	18 (69.23)	1 (3.84)	26
7-Documentaries	9 (37.50)	15 (62.50)	0 (0.00)	24
8-Sport	2 (10.52)	6 (31.58)	11 (57.89)	19
9-Educational	9 (64.28)	5 (35.71)	0 (0.00)	14
10-Horror	0 (0.00)	3 (25.00)	9 (75.00)	12
11-Thriller	3 (27.27)	7 (63.63)	1 (9.09)	11
12-Game Show	3 (30.00)	7 (70.00)	0 (0.00)	10
13-Fantasy	4 (44.44)	5 (55.56)	0 (0.00)	9
14-Religious	3 (60.00)	2 (40.00)	0 (0.00)	5
<b>Total</b>	107 (25.23)	219 (51.65)	98 (23.11)	424

The most preferred TV program genres included Musical TV Series (with mean  $\pm$ SD: 17.51 $\pm$ 4.20, 15.10 $\pm$ 3.53, 14.53 $\pm$ 3.69, 22.24 $\pm$ 5.66 for various aggression domains consists of physical, verbal, anger and hostility respectively), Action (with mean  $\pm$ SD: 24.20 $\pm$ 3.79, 20.11 $\pm$ 2.52, 18.62 $\pm$ 2.47, 30.24 $\pm$ 4.05 for various aggression domains consists of physical, verbal, anger and hostility respectively), Action adventure (with mean  $\pm$ SD: 27.08 $\pm$ 3.69, 21.07 $\pm$ 2.59, 19.17 $\pm$ 2.28, 31.85 $\pm$ 3.22 for various aggression domains consisting of physical, verbal, anger and hostility respectively), Comedy (with mean  $\pm$ SD: 17.64 $\pm$ 3.90, 14.89 $\pm$ 3.88, 13.16 $\pm$ 3.44, 21.64 $\pm$ 4.94 for various aggression domains consisting physical, verbal, anger and hostility respectively). But the highest level of aggression in all domains was detected in Action, Action adventure, sport and Horror respectively while the lowest level of aggression was displayed in Religious, Fantasy, Game show and educational genre (Table 4).

Since different TV program genre showed various level of aggression in different domains, so for exploring whether different genres can display more aggression in various domains, an ANOVA was conducted comparing children's favorite program genres and their aggression level which reported a significant difference in all components of aggression level considering students' favorite TV genres ( $p < 0.05$ ) (Table 5). In other word students who preferred to watch these genres were more likely to show physical aggression than other subtype of aggressions. In order to further exploring these findings, a Duncan post-hoc test was conducted which showed that students who watched more these programs, significantly ( $p < 0.05$ ) illustrated more aggression level than other programs. The study also was established same results for all domains of aggression including; physical, verbal, anger and hostility.

**Table 4. Mean and Standard Deviation of various components of aggression among students by TV programs' genres**

Aggression Components Genre	Physical		Verbal		Anger		Hostility	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Musical	17.51	4.20	15.10	3.53	14.53	3.69	22.24	5.66
Action	24.21	3.79	20.11	2.52	18.62	2.47	30.24	4.05
Action Adventure	27.09	3.69	21.07	2.59	19.17	2.28	31.85	3.22
Comedy	17.64	3.90	14.89	3.88	13.16	3.44	21.64	4.94
Drama	18.74	5.06	15.54	3.89	14.71	3.71	22.77	5.50
Fiction	17.77	4.64	15.65	4.33	15.23	3.73	24.69	6.03
Documentaries	19.29	4.16	15.45	3.41	13.33	3.33	21.62	5.11
Sport	24.89	6.22	19.26	3.89	17.63	3.78	28.73	7.48
Educational	15.93	3.47	12.85	3.50	13.42	2.84	19.85	4.55
Horror	27.58	3.28	21.83	1.85	20.00	2.82	31.08	3.72
Thriller	20.45	6.21	16.81	3.25	15.27	4.17	24.45	6.65
Game Show	18.80	4.13	14.00	4.98	13.80	3.11	24.30	4.21
Fantasy	16.22	7.17	14.77	2.90	13.33	4.30	23.00	7.59
Religious	18.00	3.93	13.60	2.96	12.20	2.68	20.40	3.64

**Table 5. ANOVA test of different aggression components by TV programs genres**

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F	Sig.
Physical	Between Groups	6318.980	13	486.075	25.659	.000
	Within groups	7766.810	410	18.943		
	Total	14085.790	423			
Verbal	Between Groups	3063.627	13	235.664	20.242	.000
	Within groups	4773.314	410	11.642		
	Total	7836.941	423			
Anger	Between Groups	2328.906	13	179.147	16.573	.000
	Within groups	4431.990	410	10.810		
	Total	6760.896	423			
Hostility	Between Groups	7212.575	13	554.813	21.113	.000
	Within groups	10774.196	410	26.279		
	Total	17986.771	423			

In addition, an independent t-test was performed to test the impact of the most favourite children television program type on their aggression behaviour, and findings indicated that there was no difference between mean of aggression level among children who interested in particular type of TV programs or no, except for animation which showed a significant difference ( $p < 0.05$ ) (Table 6).

**Table 6. Comparisons of aggression mean among students by the most favourite TV programs' type**

The most favourite TV program type		N	Mean	t	Sig.(2-tailed)
<b>Animation</b>	Yes	363	79.7 (18.04)	-2.667	.008
	No	61	73.16(15.37)		
<b>Puppet show</b>	Yes	157	77.12(17.63)	1.447	.149
	No	267	79.7 (17.88)		
<b>Game show/Musical</b>	Yes	162	77.42 (18.15)	1.197	.232
	No	262	79.57 (17.58)		
<b>Sport</b>	Yes	179	77.51 (18.59)	1.210	.227
	No	245	79.65 (17.2)		
<b>Drama</b>	Yes	242	78.34 (18.33)	.545	.586
	No	182	79.29 (17.13)		
<b>Children Series</b>	Yes	225	80.35 (17.19)	-1.964	.05
	No	199	76.94 (18.36)		
<b>Documentary</b>	Yes	106	79.36 (19.17)	-.390	.697
	No	318	78.54 (17.36)		
<b>others</b>	Yes	13	74.00 (18.96)	.919	.375
	No	411	78.90 (17.78)		

### 3.2 Discussion

The research found significant relationship between programs genre and antisocial behaviour among students, which are consistent with other studies [22, 23] and also confirmed the hypothesis of present study which stated there is a significant relationship between TV program genre and aggression level among students. Chen and his colleagues [24] also reported that aggression behaviours of students were associated with music genres. The differential effects of genre, particularly that the point estimates for educational programming were in the direction of a protective effect, are important in that they suggest that alternative programming types could offer behavioural benefits to children without necessarily reducing overall viewing time. Coyne [25] argued that indirect aggression was more likely to be portrayed in soap operas than other genres.

The findings of current study illustrated that higher level of aggression in all domains was found in some students that their favourite children's programs genre were coded as Action adventure, Action, Sport and Horror. Consistently with present study, the previous research also confirmed male adolescents prefer to watch action movies more than any other types of movies [26].

By the 1990s, the action movie was the most common and popular genre, which also include science fiction, fantasy, horror, and comedy. Action is a fundamental element of the movies. Because of this, for a long time "action movies" were not thought by producers and audiences as a different genre. According to Herman and Leyens [27], Belgian television had more movies with action genres which had considerably larger audiences than other types with less violent contents. As stated by the researchers, their data supported that adolescents chose to watch a movie because of the promise of violent content. An excellent example of this is the episodic cartoon "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles" which also was one of the most favourite TV programs based on present research respondents' point of view.

These particular mutant turtles are able to walk, talk, move, think, act, and reason like human beings. They are heroes and defeat their enemies with weapons and karate moves. The message being sent is these four turtles are obvious good guys, but their actions are not that much different from the evil they eliminate. Violence is seen as justifiable in this type of representation and children absorb it like a sponge. This phenomenon also is in accordance with Social Cognitive Theory. According to social cognitive theory, children are more likely to imitate observed behaviours that are rewarded than those that are punished. Children will also imitate behaviours that produce no consequences because, especially in the case of antisocial acts, the lack of punishment can serve as a tacit reward. The type of media role model also makes a difference. Children are most likely to learn from models that are attractive and from those they perceive as similar to themselves [28]. Social cognitive theory, then, helps explain how children can acquire new behaviours from watching a media character on the screen.

Although researchers made every effort for this research to be as valid as possible, there are a couple of limitations that should be addressed. First, the causal connection cannot be ascertained from a correlational design and this design is just able to detect relationship between variables. Second, according to governmental policy in Iran, use of satellite is forbidden and consequently in some cases, respondents refused to answer questions regarding this medium and presented program types and genres. This situation might cause underestimate of satellite users and some favorite programs genre which fall in the scope of study.

This research also has some implications for media producers, especially children programs producers. The media managers and practitioners must make a new kind of children's programs comprising attractive and suitable scenes considering their genre. Television producers should pay special attention to the ways they are presenting aggression in their programmes. If later research finds more impacts, it may even be necessary for very high levels aggression programmes to warn viewers of the content. Clearly, it is impossible to omit all instances of aggression from television. In fact, it is not realistic. Since the aggression occurs in real life, it should be presented in the media as well. It is necessary to identify the potential reasons why an individual behaves like this against others and make an attempt to reduce it to a possible degree. Teachers, parents and media producers should be educated about the detrimental impacts of aggression and be taught how to identify and prevent the spread of this kind of behaviour. In this way, we can identify the impacts of viewing aggression on television and the most important of all, how to prevent these cruel aspirations from becoming a reality.

This study provides some guidance to media authorities, but additional research is needed in future studies to address certain areas. An experimental study is needed to explore the exact causality in terms of TV program genre on aggression behaviour among children. Additional short-term studies of the effects of violent TV programs are needed to further specify the characteristics of programs and of TV viewers that reduce and intensify the aggression-related outcomes.

#### **4. CONCLUSIONS**

Children were exposed to violence in action and action adventure in a greater frequency than in other genre. Television genre preference, conversely, may reflect some personal predispositions or lifestyle preferences. In conclusion current study provides additional evidence to support that content of television programs particularly its genre is very

important related to the children behavior. As a new perspective, focus on genre as an important element in producing of television programs could be helpful for authorities.

## **COMPETING INTERESTS**

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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