

Research Article

Impact of television watching on academic achievement of adolescents with special reference to their socioeconomic status

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Abstract

The present study was aimed to examine the impact of television watching on academic achievement of adolescents with special reference to their socioeconomic status. The sample for the study was 240 (120 heavy viewers and 120 low viewers) selected secondary school adolescents of 15 to 17 years of age, which were randomly selected from high and higher secondary schools in District Srinagar (J&K) run by the Government. Blank self constructed TV viewing information was used for the identification of heavy and low TV viewers. Academic achievement has been assessed on the basis of aggregate marks in all the subjects secured by the students in their two consecutive examinations, conducted by the J&K State Board of School Education. The statistics applied on the data comprised percentage, mean, standard deviation (SD) and 't' test were used for analysis of data. Line graph was plotted in order to make the results transparent. It was found that the heavy and low television viewer adolescents differ significantly in their academic achievement. The mean difference favors low television viewer adolescents. It indicates that low TV viewer adolescents exhibit a higher scholastic achievement than the heavy TV viewer group of adolescents. On the other hand, heavy and low television viewer adolescents, on the basis of gender, do not differ significantly with respect to academic achievement.

Key words: Heavy and low TV watching, academic achievement, secondary school students.

INTRODUCTION

Television is the electronic carpet that transports millions of persons each day to faraway places. It is the twentieth century creations of the technological revolution that has been transforming much of the world. Television, although relatively a new medium, has already made its impression on the world civilization very strikingly. It has been aptly mentioned that television bounces signals of space satellites and uses oceanic cables to transmit live telecast to and from people all over the world. Television can represent the world in no time. Today, one can watch television via the internet, by means of mobile phones, and with the help of little pocket TV sets. It is everywhere and for everyone. Today, it is very common in every country for a household to have at least one television. In fact, it is so common that it is difficult to imagine a household without TV. Ever since TV took its strike, it has remained the most influential medium

among the mass media. It can be considered a credible source of information. The reasons being that the full colour, action packed and real actors filmed make TV seem to be real to the audience. The influence of TV on teenagers, adolescents and youth is widespread. Children and adolescents have been found to be the most devoted and faithful viewers of television, whether the programmes are designed for them or not (Mrunalini, 1997). Parker (1961) established that television has considerably reduced the time spent for other activities. Television has had a large influence on people's attitudes and behaviour (Lund and Blaedon, 2003). Moses (2008) revealed that moderate amount of television viewing was found to be beneficial for reading, and that the content of programmes viewed by children matters. Miller (2007) revealed that higher frequency television viewing is associated with attention problems and hyper-activity in pre-school children. According to Greeson (1991), television has been found to reflect and possibly shape the attitudes, values and behaviour of young people. TV viewing is associated with more behavioral outcomes and poor performances among children and teenagers (Christakis et al., 2004; Van Evra, 2004; Johnson et al., 2007; Mistry et al., 2007). Viewers with heavy consumption rates of television confuse real life with dramatized life on TV, and television values seem closer to real-life values (O'Guinn and Shrum, 1997). In 1989, Condry found that the frequency of watching television reduced with the increase in levels of education and income. According to Hornik (1978), television is a good medium for demonstrations since the camera can look in a microscope, peer into corners and give close-ups of things which could never be so closely or accurately observed in a normal classroom situation. Studies report that continuous watching of television amounts to low performance in school subjects (Caldas and Bankston, 1999). In a study with high scholars, researchers found that viewing educational television programs as preschoolers was associated with higher grades, more reading, less aggression and more value placed on academics when those children reached high school (National Institute on Media and the Family, 2002). Television influences social behavior not only by teaching new behavior but also by contributing to children's definition of what constitutes appropriate and inappropriate behavior (Robert, 1987).

Television is used both as an educational resource and as a leisure activity. Adolescents who watched informative educational shows as a preschooler continue to watch more informative shows as adolescents. Likewise, adolescents who watched more entertainment-type shows as children continued to watch those shows and watched fewer informative shows than their peers. These individuals use television as a source of leisure (Huston and Wright, 1996). A young child's viewing habits are actually founded on his or her parents' habits and the parents' level of education. Parents with higher degrees of education tend to run households with more emphasis on reading and less time for watching television. Compared to children of less well-educated parents, children of well-educated parents watched more educational programming and less programming designed for adults. Also, when children are accused of watching too much television, their bad habits can actually be the result of their parents' bad TV-watching habits; therefore, it is possible that the parents can often be the source of "too much television viewing" for their children (Huston and Wright, 1996). Television can do better than the average teacher and traditional educational institutions, but in situations where both teacher and educational institutions are not available, television is the answer to obtain educational objectives (Lochte, 1993). It has been dubbed as "a unique potent teacher" (Liebert and Sprafkin, 1988) and identified as an educational curriculum in itself (Barry, 1993). Yuki (1999) indicates that the frequency of television viewing stresses the importance of viewers' cognitive activities when consuming television messages. The impact and impression of TV viewing is being studied from various angles. The studies carried out mainly focus on different groups with different areas. The present investigators feels that there is a need to conduct a study on adolescents to see the impact of television watching on academic achievement of adolescents in relation to their socio economic status (SES).

Objectives

The following objectives have been formulated for the present investigation:

To identify heavy and low television viewers.

To find and compare the academic achievement of heavy and low TV viewer's on the basis of socio-economic status.

Hypotheses

H₁: There will be a significant difference between the mean scores of heavy and low television viewers in their academic achievement in relation to their socioeconomic status.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

The present study was conducted on a sample of 240 students drawn randomly from various Government secondary and higher secondary schools of District Srinagar (J&K). It needs to be mentioned that these subject were reading in grade 10th with an age range of 15 to 17.

Tools

The following tools were used to collect data.

Television viewing information blank

This information blank was developed by the investigators to ascertain the viewing duration of the subjects towards television. Subjects whose viewing duration was on and above the 75th percentile (5 h and above) on television viewing information blank were considered as heavy viewers, and subjects whose viewing duration was on and below the 25th percentile (2 h and below) were considered as low viewers.

Academic achievement

Academic achievement of pupils refers to the knowledge attained and skills developed in the school subjects. So, academic achievement means the achievement of the pupils in the academic subjects in relation to their achievement has been measured in terms of aggregate of marks percentage by the subjects. Academic achievement in the present investigation has been assessed on the basis of aggregate marks in all the subjects secured by the students in their two consecutive examinations, conducted by the J&K State Board of School Education.

Socio-economic status scale (SES)

Socio-economic status scale was constructed by A.G Madhosh and Rafiqui which examine the socio-economic status (SES) of students. This scale is one such that holds the promise to assess the socio-economic status of the people of Kashmir. This scale has two forms: Form "A" and Form "B". Form "A" is meant for the Urban Population and Form "B" is meant for the Rural Population. Form "A" consists of 11 areas and Form "B" consists of 15 areas. These cover the individuals SES. For the purpose of present study, Form "A" (Urban) was used.

Statistical analysis

The data was subjected to statistical analysis by computing percentages, mean, standard deviation. and test of significance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data in Table 1 gives information regarding the performance standard of upper, middle and lower class (heavy TV viewers group). The analysis reveals that in case of students, the distribution of subjects in relation to performance standard is given as: distinction holders (20%), first divisioners (30%), second divisioners (20%), and third divisioners (30%). Also, Table 1 reveals the distribution of subjects from middle class (heavy TV viewer group) as: distinction holders (1.63%), first divisioners (13.11%), second divisioners (21.31%) and third divisioners (63.93%). In the same table, it is revealed that in the case of lower class (heavy TV viewer group), the distribution of subjects is reported as: distinction holders (3.44%), first divisioners (6.89%), second divisioners (17.24%) and third divisioners (72.41%).

A comparative look at Table 2 reveals that heavy TV viewers (upper class) and heavy TV viewers (lower class) group of subjects differ significantly in their academic achievement. The obtained value came out to be $t = 3.84$, which has been found significant at 0.01 level of confidence. The mean difference favors the upper class heavy TV viewers ($M = 58.93$). On this basis, it is inferred that heavy TV viewers belonging to upper crust of society are usually better grade getters.

The data in Table 3 reveals that heavy TV viewers (upper class) and (middle class) group of subjects differ significantly in their academic achievement. The obtained 't' value is 3.75, which was found to be significant at 0.01 level of confidence. The mean difference favors the upper class heavy TV viewers (M = 58.93). So, on the basis of these results, it is inferred that heavy TV viewers belonging to upper crust of society are usually better grade achievers.

Table 1. Performance standard of subjects on the basis of different levels of socio-economic status (Group Heavy viewers) (N = 120 each).

Rank	Upper class (N = 30)		Middle class (N = 61)		Lower class (N = 29)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Distinction (75% and above)	6	20	1	1.63	1	3.44
First division (Above 60 - 74%)	9	30	8	13.11	2	6.89
Second division (Above 50 - 59%)	6	20	13	21.3	5	17.24
Third division (Below 50%)	9	30	39	63.93	21	72.41

Information in parenthesis is an approved criterion of the J&K State Board of Education to determine performance standard of the candidates.

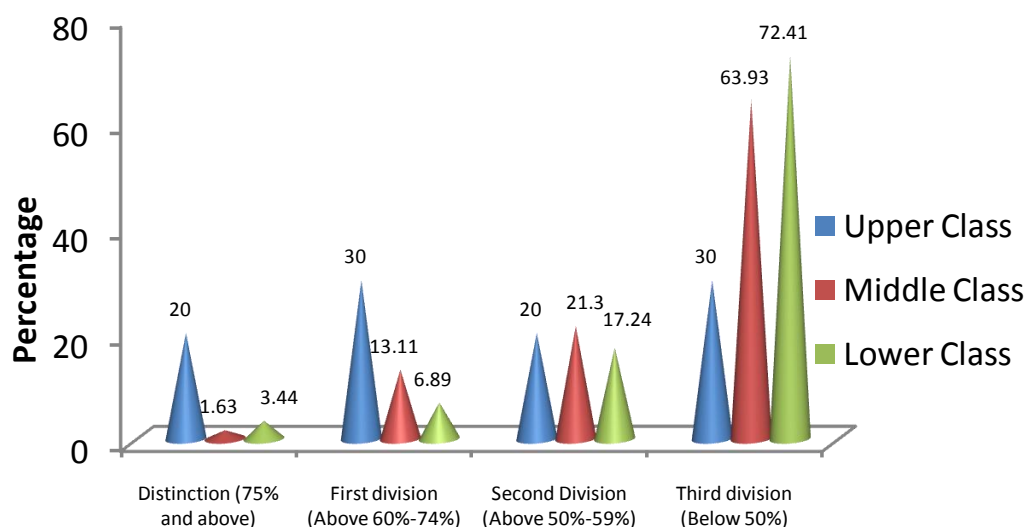


Figure 2. A chart showing Performance standard of subjects on the basis of different levels of socio-economic status group on academic achievement (Group Low TV viewers)

Table 2. Significance of differences between the mean scores of Upper and Lower class TV viewers on academic achievement (Group Heavy TV viewers).

Group	N	\bar{X}	SD	't' value	Level of significance
Heavy TV viewers upper class	30	58.93	11.47	3.84	Significant at 0.01 level
Heavy TV viewers lower class	29	49.30	7.95		

Table 3. Significance of differences between the mean scores of upper and middle class TV viewers on academic achievement (Group Heavy TV viewers).

Group	N	\bar{X}	SD	't' value	Level of significance
Heavy TV viewers: Upper class	30	58.93	11.47	3.75	Significant at 0.01 level
Heavy TV viewers: Middle class	61	50.34	7.36		

The data in Table 4 reveals that heavy TV viewers (lower class) and heavy TV viewers (middle class) group of subjects do not differ significantly in their academic achievement. The obtained 't' value is 0.69, which is not significant in

accordance with the table value. So, on the basis of these results, it is inferred that class difference (lower class and middle class), that is, heavy TV viewers do not differentiate in their scholastic achievement.

Table 5 gives information regarding the performance standard of low TV viewers group of subjects on the basis of their different levels of socio-economic status. It is found that from the upper class, 30% are distinction holders, 50% are first divisioners, second divisioners were found to be nil, and 20% third divisioners. Also, Table 5 reveals the distribution of subjects from middle class (low TV viewer group) as: distinction holders (12.28%), first divisioners (49.12%), second

Table 4. Significance of differences between the mean scores of lower and middle class TV viewers on academic achievement (Group Heavy TV viewers).

Group	N	\bar{X}	SD	't' value	Level of significance
Heavy TV viewers: Lower class	29	49.13	7.95	0.69	Not significant
Heavy TV viewers: Middle class	61	50.34	7.36		

Table 5. Performance standard of subjects on the basis of different levels of socio –economic status group on academic achievement (Group Low TV viewers) (N = 120 each).

Rank	Upper class (N = 10)		Middle class (N = 57)		Lower class (N = 53)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Distinction (75% and above)	3	30	7	12.28	Nil	Nil
First division (Above 60 - 74%)	5	50	28	49.12	8	15.09
Second Division (Above 50 - 59%)	Nil	Nil	15	26.31	25	47.16
Third division (Below 50%)	2	20	7	12.28	20	37.73

Information in parenthesis is an approved criterion of the J&K State Board of Education to determine performance standard of the candidates.

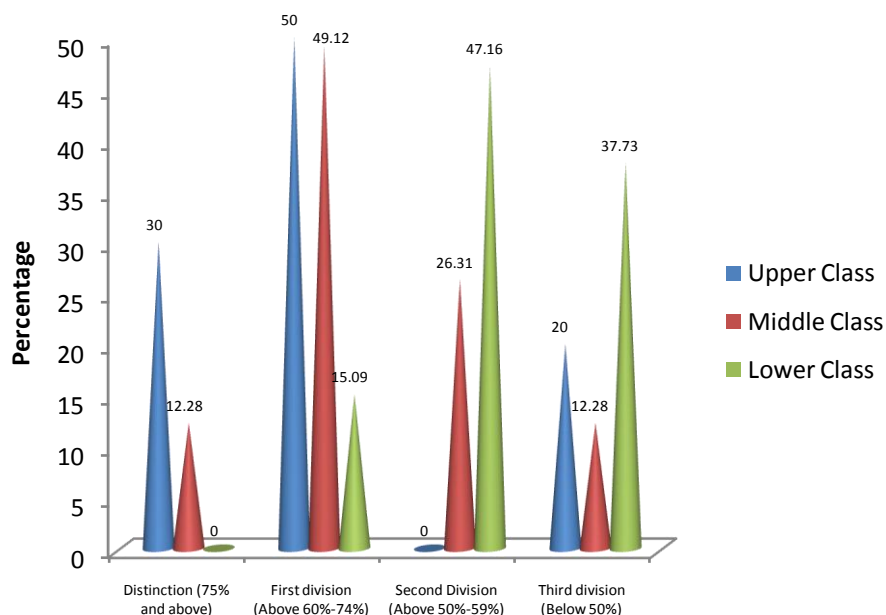


Figure 2. A chart showing Performance standard of subjects on the basis of different levels of socio –economic status group on academic achievement (Group Low TV viewers)

divisioners (26.31%) and third divisioners (12.28%). The data in Table 5 reveals that in case of lower class (low TV viewer group), the distribution of subjects is reported to be: distinction holders (nil), first divisioners (15.09%), second divisioners (47.16%), and third divisioners (37.73%).

The data in Table 6 reveals that low TV viewers (upper class) and low TV viewers (lower class) group of subjects differ

significantly in their academic achievement. The obtained 't' value is 13.36, which has been found to be significant at 0.01 level of confidence. The mean difference favors the upper class low TV viewers (M = 66.8). This indicates that low TV viewers (upper class) group of subjects exhibit a higher scholastic achievement than low TV viewers (lower class) group of subjects.

An examination of Table 7 reveals that low TV viewers (upper class) and low TV viewers (middle class) group of subjects differ significantly in their academic achievement. The obtained 't' value is 2.91, which has been found to be significant at 0.01 level of confidence. The mean difference favors the upper class low TV viewers (M = 66.8). On this basis, it may be inferred that low TV viewers belonging to upper crust of society are usually better grade achievers.

Table 6. Significance of differences between the mean scores of upper and lower class TV viewers on Academic Achievement (Group low TV viewers).

Group	N	\bar{X}	SD	't' value	Level of significance
Low TV viewers: Upper class	10	66.8	2.28	13.61	Significant at 0.01 level
Low TV viewers: Lower class	53	51.16	6.79		

Table 7. Significance of differences between the mean scores of upper and middle class TV viewers on Academic Achievement (Group low TV viewers).

Group	N	\bar{X}	SD	't' value	Level of significance
Low TV viewers: Upper class	10	66.8	2.28	2.91	Significant at 0.01 level
Low TV viewers: Middle class	57	60.61	9.58		

The data in Table 8 reveals that low TV viewers (lower class) and low TV viewers (middle class) group of subjects differ significantly in their academic achievement. The obtained 't' value is 6.01, which has been found to be significant at 0.01 level of confidence. The mean difference favors the middle class low TV viewers (M = 60.61). This reveals that low TV viewer (middle class) group of students exhibit a higher scholastic achievement than low TV viewers (lower class) group of students. The results are in agreement with the findings of the earlier researchers, such as: Sharman (1979), Angle (1981), Bachenet (1982), Searls and Ward (1985), Bianculli (1992), Levine and Levine (1996), Roe (2000), Eastman (2001), Razel (2001), Gosline (2005), Chowhan et al. (2007), and MacLeod et al. (2007).

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