

ROLE OF PARENT -CHILD CONFLICT AND CARTOON VIOLENCE IN AGGRESSION AMONG GENERATION ALPHA

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Abstract

Existent study focused on investigating the part of parent and child struggle and cartoon violence in aggression among generation alpha. This research based on correlational research design, and convenient sampling method was utilized. Online Google forms were prepared and data was collected from children. Current study sample comprised (N = 250) children with the representation of male (n = 163) and female (n =87) respectively. Variables in the current study were operationalized using self-report measures. In this study the level of parent-child conflict was measured by the parent-child conflict subscale derived from the Parental Environment Questionnaire (PEQ). Parent -Child scale consists of 12 items (Elkins et al., 1997). The Attitude Scale for Children toward Cartoon Violence (Odukamaiya 2014), This scale consists of 16 items and the Self –Report Aggression Scale, (Orpinas & Frankowski, 2001). Data was analyzed through SPSS. Findings of the study show that parent child conflict significantly positively predicted aggression. Cartoon violence significantly positively predicted aggression. Research design explored that parent child conflict had significant negative association with cartoon violence, and positive with aggression. Cartoon violence has significant positive correlation with aggression. The results of the regression show that cartoon violence significantly and positively predicted aggression among children. Findings depict that cartoon violence significantly and positively predicted aggression. Moreover, study also indicates that mean differences are not significant among gender, family system and education groups across study variables. Remaining demographics show non-significant link among the study variables.

Keywords: Parent child conflict, Cartoon violence, Aggression

Introduction

Parent-child conflict is a word used to depict the disputes and resistant behaviors between parents and children. These disputes may occur over several topics such as parenting, nurturing, self-dependence, priorities and communication. These conflicts may differ in severity and prevalence depending on individual and family aspects, as well as social and cultural dispute. Parent-child conflict is an anticipated part of the progressive journey, as a way for children to found their freedom and for parents to socialize their children. But when these arguments are extreme, they can influence the bond between parents and children and have adverse outcomes on the mental and emotional comfort of both parents and their children. Studies have shown that conflict between parents and their children is predisposed by various factors, such as parenting styles, the child's temperament, and external stressors like socio-economic status and community environment (Laursen & Collins, 2009). (For instance, authoritative parenting (high affection and strict control) typically connected with basic level of conflict with children, in distinction to controlling and indulgent parenting (Baumrind, 1991). Children's age also affects parent-child conflicts. Adolescence is a duration when conflicts are usually maximum as teens aim for freedom and affirm their autonomy (Steinberg, 2001).

Young children, in contrast, may have conflicts focused on compliance and obedience. Understanding the dynamics of parent-child conflict is essential for fostering healthy family relationships and supporting the developmental needs of children.

Generation Alpha

The name given by generational specialist Mark McCrindle (2008) scores the initiation of a younger generation, after Generation Z that the stopped cycle of generational labeling with the Latin writing system. Gen Alpha is the term referred to present people born between 2010 and 2025, to the Millennials. This age group born at the pace of almost 250 babies per minute, 2.1 million babies per week, and is estimated to reach two billion by 2025 (McCrindle, 2008; Carter, 2016). The year 2010, marking the beginning of Gen Alpha, also saw "app" being named Word of the Year and the presentation of the iPad and Instagram, essential technologies are novel in digital world. The generation is developing in a phase of elegant, widespread technology that is affecting each part of their lives which include entertainment and gaming along with education, especially during the times of the COVID-19 outbreak. By age two, many Gen Alpha children are having pro in using touchscreens and navigating various apps, earning them tags such as "generation glass," "screenagers," "digital natives," and the "connected generation" (Williams, 2015).

Parent -Child Conflict

Children in families where parent and child bond are full of dispute tend to have problem gaining self-control skills, which can lead to violence. The parent-child relationship is among the earliest and most influential relationships individuals form, serving as a foundational schema for other interpersonal relationships (Furman & Buhrmester, 1985; Sroufe, 2005). As such, the bond between parents and children serves a significant role in children's social and emotional growth by providing a framework for positive relationships along numerous social settings (Baumrind, 1991). For instance, emotional warmth, support, and acceptance from caregivers can act as protective or positive factors for children's main stressors (Khaleque & Rohner, 2012). Conversely, early conflicting parent-child relationships can lead dysfunctional interaction patterns and problems to finding social backgrounds (Cummings & Davies, 2010).

Parents and child conflict involve opposing interactions in which parents and their children display negative affect and behaviors. Patterson et al. (1989) refer to these compelling interactions as paired. Parents and child conflict intersect with extremely strict parenting, which includes negative parental emotions, interference, and aggression (Baumrind, 1991; Dodge et al., 1994; Gershoff, 2002; Lansford et al., 2002).

Cartoon Violence

Cartoon the word "cartoon" first appeared in the Middle Ages, when it was previously used to describe sketch or preliminary portrayal for a visual art like painting, tapestry, and fresco. Back to 19th century, beginning of a magazine in 1843, the term "cartoon" initially unluckily led to amusing artworks in such magazines and newspapers. This word ultimately came to apply to comic and political comics, and starting at 20th century, to animation films that looked like comic panels. For more than 80 years, children have been fascinated by television programs and animated movies. The first major animated star was Felix the Cat in the 1920s. Within the next decade, characters created by Disney Brothers' Cartoon Studios, such as Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck, and Pluto, became international celebrities, generating substantial revenues. Today, animated vintage and new shows can be seen on channels like Cartoon Network, Boomerang, and The Disney Channel.

Violent Elements in Cartoons

Violence is a common feature in cartoons, with a higher frequency than in live-action dramas or comedies (Potter & Warren, 1998). Therefore, children have greater vulnerability to

violence during Saturday morning cartoons than during peak hours (Gerbner et al., 1994). There is distinction between the explicit violence of cartoons and dramas. Children's cartoons, in comparison to adult cartoons like Heavy Metal, tend to portray low level violence, without graphic consequences and realistic death .

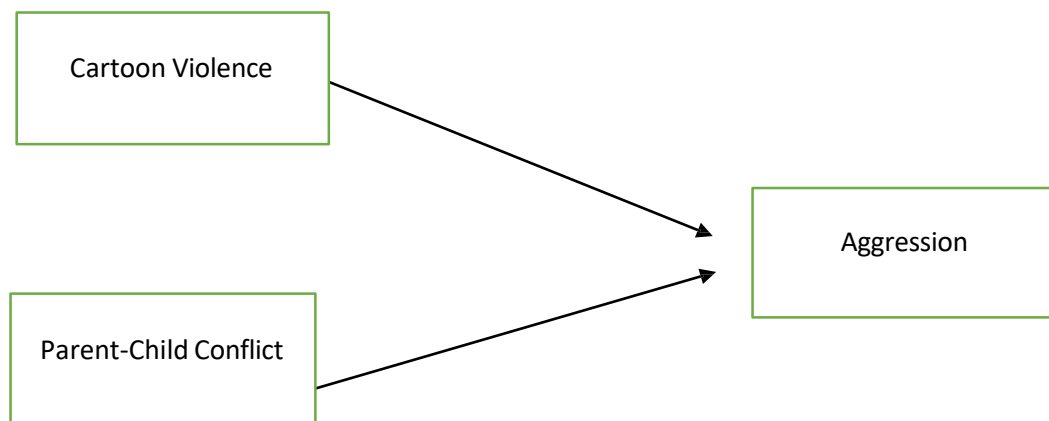
Aggression

Childhood violence is complex and can have psychological, biological, and social underpinnings. This aggression can manifest as physical violence, verbal abuse, and social exclusion (Berk, 2018). Early childhood aggression is often a precursor to antisocial behavior and academic challenges later in life (Loeber & Hay, 1997). Environmental influences, such as exposure to violent media, family dynamics, and peer relationships, are significant contributors to the development of aggressive behaviors (Anderson et al., 2003; Dodge, Coie, & Lynam, 2006). Effective interventions typically focus on enhancing social skills, improving parental practices, and fostering emotional regulation (Webster-Stratton & Reid, 2003). Parent-child conflict, marked by frequent and intense disagreements, can increase stress and emotional dysregulation in children, which in turn can lead to aggressive behaviors (McCoy, George, Cummings, & Davies, 2013). Persistent family conflict can undermine a child's sense of security, potentially leading to externalizing behaviors like aggression (Cummings, Goeke-Morey, & Papp, 2004). Cartoon violence is also a contributing factor in aggressive behavior. Studies indicate that repeated exposure to cartoon violence can desensitize children to aggression, making it more likely they will exhibit such behaviors themselves (Linder & Gentile, 2009).

Rationale

Analyzing the main effects that contribute to parent child conflict and cartoon violence on aggression in Generation Alpha is crucial because of the external factors affecting this generation. Alpha Generation is growing up in the technological age with higher exposure to media, which has an influence in their development. Generation Alpha, born from 2010 onwards, is growing up in a unique era characterized by digital proliferation and evolving family dynamics. It is important to figure out what leads aggression in this generation to guide strategies to control it. The objective of the current study was to explore the impact of parent and child conflict and cartoon violence as key factors of aggression in the Generation Alpha.

Conceptual Framework



The figure 1 represents the relationship between predictors and its outcome.

Objectives

Objectives of the study are

- To investigate the Parent-child Conflict as a predictor of Aggression among generation alpha.
- To examine the relationship between Cartoon Violence and Aggression among generation alpha.
 - To examine the role of Parent-Child Conflict, Cartoon Violence, in Aggression among generation alpha.

Hypothesis

- Parent-child Conflict significantly predicts Aggression among generation alpha.
- Parent-Child Conflict is positively associated with Aggression among generation alpha.
- Cartoon Violence is positively associated with Aggression among generation alpha.

Operational Definitions

Operational definition of Parent - Child Conflict

In present study Parent-Child Conflict Scale (Elkins et al. 1997) was used to measure the parent child conflict among generation Alpha, including 12 items assessing aspects of parent-child relationships on a 4-point scale. Higher score indicates higher level of parent child conflict and lower level revealed the lower level of parent child conflict.

Operational definition of Cartoon Violence

The Attitudes Scale for Children toward Cartoon Violence (Odukamaiya et al., 2015) was used to measure the Cartoon Violence among Generation Alpha, including of 12 items. Higher score indicates higher level of cartoon violence and lower level score indicate low level of cartoon violence.

Operational definition of Aggression

In present study The Self-Report Aggression Scale, (Orpinas & Frankowski, 2001) was used to measure the aggression among generation Alpha, including 11 items. Higher level of score indicate the high level of aggression and lower score indicate the lower level of aggression.

Research Design

In this study, a web-based survey research design was employed to collect data. All data were gathered online using Google Forms, with children participating under parental supervision.

Sample

In the present research convenience sample of 250 children from across Pakistan was included in the study. Data were collected from both boys and girls. The age range of the child participants spans from birth onward to 2010 (Gen Alpha)

Instruments

Parent -Child Conflict Scale

In present study of parent-child conflict was analyzed by using the parent-child conflict subscale established from the Parental Environment Questionnaire (PEQ). Parent -Child scale consists of 12 items (Elkins et al., 1997). All elements were scored on a 4-point Likert scale, 1 = definitely true to 4 = definitely false. The total score was evaluated by accumulating the scores of the 12 items, high results represented more intense parents and child conflict.

The Attitude Scale for Children toward Cartoon Violence

The Attitude Scale for Children towards Cartoon Violence, by Odukamaiya (2014), measures children's mentality towards cartoon violence. This scale consists of 16 items, with responses scored as follows: (0) for No, (1) for Sometimes, and (2) for Yes.

Children's perspective is decided by their total score, where is a score below 60% (0-19 points) indicates a negative attitude and a score of 60% or above (20-32 points) represents a positive

attitude.

The Self-Report Aggression Scale

The Self-Report Aggression Scale, (Orpinas & Frankowski, 2001). The Aggression Scale is the 11 items scale designed to evaluate behaviors that can have adverse effect on other students, either psychologically or physically. While the scale guidelines do not state a context, most items concentrate on violent behavior towards other students, in or outside of school. The scale does not assess other types of aggressiveness, such as aggression towards parents or other adults, or property destruction. It only analyzes explicit aggression, as opposed to social aggression such as hurting another person through involvement with their peers. The scale measures the frequency of common visible aggressive acts such as verbal teasing, aggression, calling names, inciting fights and intimidating to hit or hurt, and physical aggression such as slapping, pushing, hitting and kicking and information about anger being easily annoyed and angry most of the time.

These components are combined into a single scale. Measuring such aggressive behaviors is crucial in research on school violence prevention, as these behaviors are not only unacceptable in school settings but may also indicate low self-control, a personal characteristic linked to delinquency (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990). To lower memory bias, the scale focuses on the last seven days. Each item is scored from 0 to 6 or more times and the items are added together, making a score on the Aggression Scale of 0 to 66 points. The guidelines about how to complete the scale are read out by the reviewers on a 6-point Likert scale where 0 = 0 times to 6 = 6 or more time.

Procedure

The current study was approved by the supervisor and was conducted in the Department of Psychology in the University of Sargodha. The fact that this is an academic study and that the only use of the findings would be for educational reasons is made very apparent to the participants. A questionnaire incorporating English version scales was created using Google Forms. The respondents were contacted individually through Snapchat and WhatsApp. They were further asked to take part in the Google Forms link and questionnaire provided to them. Convenient sampling was employed, and participants were assisted in case of any inquiries. They were supposed to spend between 10 to 15 minutes in completion of the scales. Confidentiality was maintained and guaranteed by stating that the information would be used for research purpose only. Participants efforts were acknowledged and appreciated for their time and effort for the data collection process.

Results

This segment briefly describes the all the artifact of the study.

Table 1

Demographic frequency of Participants (N = 250)

Demographic variables	N	(%)
Gender		
Boys	163	65.2
Girls	87	34.8
Age		
8-9	95	38.0

10-11	111	44.4
12-13	44	17.6
Education		
4-5 grade	103	41.2
6-7 grade	111	44.4
8-9 grade	36	14.4
Location		
Urban	110	44
Rural	140	56
Family System		
Nuclear	140	56
Joint	110	44
Socioeconomic Status		
High	27	10.8
Medium	206	82.4
Low	17	6.8

Table 1 revealed demographics frequency and percentage of all including gender, age, family system, location and socio-economic status used in the present study.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics and Alpha Reliabilities for All the Variables of the Study (N = 250)

Scales	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	α	Range
PCCS	12	27.47	8.37	.93	12-48
ASCTCV	16	19.81	9.1	.94	16-48
SRAS	11	66	34.12	.93	11-77

Note. PCCS = Parent child conflict scale; ASCTCV = The Attitude Scale for Children toward Cartoon Violence; SRAS = Self-report aggression scale.

Table 2 shows results that high alpha reliability. Coefficient alpha for parent child conflict scale ($\alpha = .93$) for cartoon violence ($\alpha = .94$), and for aggression scale ($\alpha = .93$). Results also

demonstrates mean and standard deviation values of study variables are mentioned.

Table 3
Correlation Study Variables (N =250)

Variables	1	2	3
1 PCCS	-		
2 ASCTCV	-.66**	-	
3 SRAS	.36**	.63**	-

Note. ** $p < .01$. PCCS = Parent child conflict scale; ASCTCV = The Attitude Scale for Children toward Cartoon Violence; SRAS = Self-report aggression scale.

The correlations between parent and child dispute, fictional violence and aggressiveness among generation Alpha is shown in Table 3. It suggested that parent child conflict negative correlation with cartoon violence ($r = -.66^{**}$, $p < .01$) and positive with aggression ($r = .36^{**}$, $p < .01$). Cartoon violence has positive correlation with aggression ($r = .63^{**}$, $p < .01$).

Table 4
Regression Coefficient of Parent Child Conflict on Aggression (N = 250)

Variables	B	β	SE
Constant	52.43***		3.10
PCCS	.66***	.37	.10
R ²	.13		

Note. PCCS= Parent child conflict scale

*** $p < .001$

Table 4 revealed that parent child conflict positively predicted aggression among children. The value of R² is .13 proves that parent child conflict explain 13% variance in aggression with $F(1,248) = 38.03$, $p < .001$. Findings illustrate that parent child conflict positively predicted aggression.

Table 5
Regression Coefficient of Cartoon Violence on Aggression (N = 250)

Variables	B	β	SE
Constant	13.23***		1.78
ASCTCV	1.05***	.63	.08
R ²	.40		

Note. ASCTCV = The Attitude Scale for Children toward Cartoon Violence.

*** $p < .001$

Table 5 illustrate that cartoon violence significantly predicted aggression among children. The R² value of .40 reveals that cartoon violence explaine 40% variance in aggression with $F(1,248) = 167.04, p < .001$. Findings represent that cartoon violence significantly predicted aggression.

Table 6
Mean differences for Males and Females on Parent Child Conflict, Cartoon Violence and Aggression (N = 250)

Variables	Boys (n = 163)		Girls (n = 87)		t(322)	p	CI 95%		Cohen's d
	M	SD	M	SD			LL	UL	
PCCS	27.63	8.43	27.17	8.29	.41	.68	-1.73	2.65	.04
ASCTCV	20.50	8.9	18.50	9.5	1.64	.10	-.39	4.40	.14
SRAS	36.51	15.0	29.64	14.86	3.45	.001	2.95	10.78	.16

Note. PCCS = Parents and child conflict scale; ASCTCV = The Attitude Scale for Children toward Cartoon Violence; SRAS = Self-report aggression scale.

Table 6 indicates the mean differences on parent child conflict, cartoon violence and aggression among generation alpha. Results indicate non-significant mean differences on all study variables but significant mean differences among aggression. Findings indicate that mean differences are not significant among the study variables.

Table 7
Mean Differences of Family System on Parent Child Conflict, Cartoon Violence and Aggression (N = 250)

Variables	Nuclear (n = 140)		Joint (n = 110)		t(322)	p	CI 95%		Cohen's d
	M	SD	M	SD			LL	UL	
PCCS	27.15	8.3	27.87	8.42	-.67	.08	-2.81	1.38	.006
ASCTCV	19.47	9.24	20.23	9.17	-.64	.70	-3.06	1.55	.04
SRAS	34.83	15.0	33.21	15.5	.83	.32	-2.22	5.45	.11

Note. PCCS = Parent child conflict scale; ASCTCV = The Attitude Scale for Children toward Cartoon Violence; SRAS = Self-report aggression scale.

Table 7 shows the mean differences parent child conflict, cartoon violence and aggression among generation alpha. Results indicate that there is no mean differences on all study variables.

Research Findings

The present study investigating that parental child conflict and cartoon violence as precursor among generation alpha. Correlation revealed that parent child conflict was significantly negatively related with cartoon violence, and positive with aggression. Cartoon violence has significant positive correlation with aggression. The results of the regression show that cartoon violence significantly and positively predicted aggression among children. Findings depict that cartoon violence significantly and positively predicted aggression. Moreover, study also indicates that mean differences are not significant among gender, family system and education groups across study variables.

Conclusion

A study on 250 Pakistani Gen Alpha kids found that parent-child conflict and cartoon violence increase aggression. Parent-child conflict accounted for 13% of aggression, while cartoon violence accounted for 40%. Both factors were positively correlated with aggression, and negatively correlated with each other. No gender differences were found in parent-child conflict, cartoon violence, or aggression overall. The study highlights the need to address familial conflicts and monitor media consumption to reduce aggression.

Limitations

- Online data collection may have biased the sample, excluding kids without internet.
- Self-report measures may introduce response bias due to social desirability or interpretation.
- Cross-sectional design limits causal relationship inference.
- Findings may not generalize beyond Pakistan's cultural context.
- Utilized scales may not fully capture study variables' complexity

Suggestions

- Employ diverse sampling methods for comprehensive representation.
- Use mixed-methods approach for nuanced understanding.
- Conduct longitudinal studies for causal relationship exploration.
- Compare findings across cultures for nuanced insights.
- Design interventions to address parent-child conflict & cartoon violence effects.

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