

# Media Violence Contents and its Effect on the Audience

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## Abstract

*This paper discusses the relationship between media violence and real-world violence and aggression. Media violence poses a threat to public health inasmuch as it leads to an increase in real-world violence and aggression. Fictional television and film violence contribute to increase in aggression and violence in young viewers. Television news violence also contributes to increased violence, principally in the form of imitative suicides and acts of aggression. Video games are clearly capable of producing an increase in aggression and violence in the short term, although no long-term longitudinal studies is capable of demonstrating long-term effects have been conducted. Still, the average overall size of the effect is large enough to place it in the category of known threats to public health. One of obvious changes in current social environment during this modern day is the emergence and concentration of mass media where radio, television, movies, videos, video games, and computer networks have feigned main roles in people's everyday lives. With the rising exposure to mass media, violence content has become one of public concerns over the years. It is very ubiquitous and pervasive while people may encounter violence in various forms in mass media indirectly and unknowingly. Furthermore, violence is a well-known form of entertainment. For example, people like to watch or read news about violent crime and also watch movies with violent scenes. Considering the media effect and power to influence people, there are ample research which found that exposure to violence content would increases the likeliness of violent behavior on the audience's part just like living in real violent environment.*

**Keywords:** Violent, Television, Children, Youth, Violence Content, Mass Media

## Dampak Kandungan Keganasan dalam Media kepada Khalayak

### Abstrak

*Makalah ini membincangkan hubungan antara isi kandungan media yang mengandungi elemen keganasan dengan kekejaman dan keganasan dalam dunia nyata. Keganasan yang ditonjokan oleh media ini dikhuatiri menimbulkan ancaman kepada khalayak kerana ianya boleh membawa kepada peningkatan keganasan dan kekejaman dalam dunia sebenar. Filem fiksiyen bertemakan keganasan telah menyumbang kepada peningkatan pencerobohan dan keganasan dalam kalangan penonton muda. Kandungan keganasan dalam berita televisyen turut menyumbang kepada peningkatan keganasan; ada penonton terpengaruh untuk turut membunuh diri dan bertindak kejam. Permainan video pula menghasilkan peningkatan keganasan dan kekerasan dalam jangka pendek, walaupun tiada kajian tentang kesan jangka panjang yang telah dilakukan dan diperakui. Secara purata, kesan itu cukup besar untuk diletakkan dalam kategori ancaman terhadap kehidupan awam. Salah satu perubahan yang jelas dalam persekitaran sosial semasa adalah apabila radio, televisyen, filem, video, permainan video, dan rangkaian komputer telah merosakkan peranan utama dalam kehidupan seharian kita. Dengan peningkatan pendedahan kepada media massa, kandungan keganasan dalam media massa, menimbulkan kebimbangan para pengkaji sejak bertahun-tahun lamanya. Perkara ini tidak boleh diabaikan kerana ada penonton mungkin didedahkan dengan keganasan dalam pelbagai bentuk media massa secara tidak langsung dan tanpa disedari. Selain itu, keganasan juga merupakan suatu bentuk hiburan. Sebagai contoh, ada orang suka menonton atau membaca berita jenayah ganas dan juga suka menonton filem yang mengandungi unsur-unsur kejam. Memandangkan kesan media dan kuasa mempengaruhi penonton, terdapat banyak dapatan penyelidikan yang menunjukkan kandungan keganasan meningkatkan kemungkinan kelakuan ganas dalam kalangan khalayak untuk hidup dalam persekitaran keganasan sebenar.*

**Kata Kunci:** Keganasan, Televisyen, Kanak-kanak, Belia, Kandungan Keganasan, Media Massa.

## **Introduction**

Media has become one of the most universal powers in the world these days. Whether inside homes, on the road, in the mall, or in office, people are constantly bombarded with messages and images through numerous types of media channels. From television to radio to the Internet, from billboards to iPods to DVDs in cars, there is no escaping the reach of this high technology.

The mass media today is filled with violence content. We can see that violence is highly exposed in mass media now. Violence refers to an action of hurting other people or to oneself, mentally or physically. It does not limit to put a forceful in action of hurting other people's physical, but violence can be done through words too. The violent content in mass media can leave remarks to viewers. Adolescents, in particular, spend a significant amount of time viewing and interacting with media in the form of television, video games, music, and the Internet. Considering all of these sources together, children spend more than six hours per day using media. Nearly half of that time is spent watching television. The remainder of the time is spent using other electronic media alone or in combination with television (Dein, 2013).

According to Trend (2007), debates about the effects of media violence ranging from books to video games have a long history. Nowadays, the abundance of violence and aggression is spreading into our minds from Internet, television screens and pages of magazines or newspapers. A brief statistic showed that American children spend an average of six hour and 32 minutes each day using various forms of the media including television, movies, video games, computer, and the Internet (Ferguson, 2001).

Media violence is defined as visual portrayals of acts of physical aggression by one human against another. This definition of media violence does not include off-screen poisonings that implied, but rather it refers to visually portrayed physically aggressive acts by one person against another (Huesman & Taylor, 2006). Otherwise, violence refers to extreme forms of aggression, such as physical assault and murder. All violence is aggression, but not all aggression is violence (Huesman & Taylor, 2006).

There is a significant relation between exposure to media violence and aggressive behavior. Anderson (2009) asserted that exposing children and adolescents to violent visual media increases the likelihood that they will engage in physical aggression against another person. By “physical aggression” we mean behavior that is intended to harm another person physically, such as hitting with a fist or some object. A single brief exposure to violent media can increase aggression in the immediate situation. It comes from the repeated exposure that leads to general increases in aggressiveness over time. Thus, this relation between media violence and aggressive behavior is causal (Anderson C. , 2009).

Furthermore, the mass media inventions such as the television and the digital computer forever changed the way people gain information about the world, including information about how violent the world is. Therefore, the potential harm of media violence to our society became a problem of national and global concern. It has become one of the most debatable public issues, which has obvious social and political backgrounds. There are various forms of media violence including television, movies, novels, music, games and so forth.

## **Television and Films**

Most research on the impact of media violence on violent and aggressive behavior focused on violence in fictional television and film. This is not surprising given the prominence of violent content in these media and the prominence of television and film in modern life whereby children in the United States spend an average of between three and four hours per day viewing television (Huesman & Taylor, 2006). It clearly shows that from the moment a child is born, he or she is already learning from observing. According to Ahmed (2003), nearly 60 per cent of them have television sets in their bedroom, and the growth of satellite and digital television has brought new channels devoted to cartoons, often violent and imported from America.

Therefore, as the children grow up and start watching television, they cannot distinguish between what is reality and what is fantasy. “In the minds of young children, television is a source of entirely factual

information regarding how the world works.” For instance, they will imitate violent acts after watching violent movies such as *Superman*, *Star Wars*, *Star Trek*, and *Rocky* (Prince, 2009). It felt fun to imitate these so called heroes because it seemed like the characters in the movies were invincible. Moreover, the main characters in the movies were always liked and respected. The other movies that contain blood, realistic injuries, and torture action are *Saw*, *Hostel*, *Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, *Fight Club*, *Kill Bill*, *The Matrix*, *Seven*, and *Rambo*. All of the mentioned movies are allowed to be watched by the viewers although there are a lot of violent scenes.

Television is a central fixture in everyone life. Therefore it consumes a large amount of time as we can see that every crime film in this world has led to negative perception and violence behavior towards people such as children who tend to be attracted to programs that are action oriented. Meanwhile, television has replaced other daily activities such as reading, playing and interacting with the family.

Some scholars also argue that the continuous viewing of violent acts make teenagers more susceptible to become violent themselves. If aggressive children constantly watch violence on television or in films, it is not impossible for them to become more violent from time to time. For instance, boys who usually watch *Ultraman* or *Power Rangers* on television will tend to be harsher and be involved in bullying cases in school compared to the boys who watch educational TV programs like *Barney and Friends*. It is because the battle between the hero and the villains involve antagonistic actions and dangerous types of equipment that will end up with murder and death. The actions portrayed in every TV program can easily influence children to follow and apply the actions that they watch in their daily lives either when they are at home, outside the house, in school, in shopping mall or at the playground (Mrug, 2016).

Thus, this can bring harm to them and also to all the people around them. Therefore, it is very compulsory for parents to guide and filter their children's favorite programs or channels on television. To highlight, by “violence” we mean an extreme act of physical aggression, such as assaulting another person through violence content in mass media. Thus,

it is important for every individual to control and filter the media usage as to prevent any negative behavior that can lead to bully, murder and other crime cases existing in the world.

Children and teenagers tend to imitate the violence action that they observe from the media contents. In the advanced technological world, the media plays an important part in shaping who we become or want to be. Violence content could cause violent behaviour among people of all ages especially the young ones. It is due to the violent content promoted in the media. It is because the human brain tends to accept what it sees and viewers are easily influenced to act violent due to their brain which has not fully developed. Children look to their heroes who use violent methods to solve crime or to get what they want as an acceptable way to deal with conflict (Caldrin, 1997).

## **Video Games**

Video games that is played by children and adults encourage violence such as murder, assassination, rape, womanizing, and arson. The famous games containing violent elements are *Counter Strike*, *Doom*, *Grand Theft Auto*, and *Wolfenstein 3D* which contain graphics of blood and sounds of screaming aimed at attracting the viewers. In all the games, the players' main task is to harm, wound, or kill opponents. Parents should be aware of video games played by their children to avoid being influenced by violent behavior. Scholars such as Walsh (1999), said that by the end of the 20th century, even more graphically violent games became available to players of all ages. While Buchman & Funk, (1996) stated that fourth-grade girls (59%) and boys (73%) reported that the majority of their favourite games were violent ones (Anderson & Bushman, 2001).

Although the effects of violent television and film have received the most research attention, violence in video games also causes an increase in aggression. This finding has strong public health implications for some reasons as the children are spending an increasingly large amount of time playing video games, most of which contain violence. Video game units are now present in 83 percent of homes with children, with no socioeconomic differences in video game unit ownership. In 2004,

children spent 49 minutes per day playing video games, and on any given day, 52 percent of children ages 8 to 18 years play video games (Barker & Petley, 2001).

## **Music**

Modern music lyrics have become increasingly explicit concerning sex, drugs, and violence against women that lead to contribute the violence among the viewers who love to listen to the music. The most downloaded songs and lyrics off the internet are those of “Eminem, Dr Dre, Limp Bizkit and all whom have been criticized for their violent and misogynist lyrics” (Media Awareness Network, 2009). A more alarming issue is that children and young people can even download the lyrics that had been censored from retail versions of songs (Media Awareness Network, 2009), like Akon’s “I Wanna Love You” (A.K.A. “I Wanna F\*\*\* You”) with Snoop Dog for example. Moreover, any child and teenager can easily visit websites like newgrounds.com, gorezone.com, and rotten.com that feature violent images and video clips (Media Awareness Network, 2009).

## **Theoretical Explanations of Media Effects**

Cantor (2003) suggested that media violence can lead to aggression. The most straightforward explanation of media effects is social learning theory. It suggests that individuals learn from direct experience and from behavior modelled by others, which can occur through the media. Proponents of the media effects argument, such as L. Rowell Huesmann (2007), therefore suggest that media violence has short-term and long-term effects as:

### *Short-Term Media Violence Effects*

According to Huesmann (2007), the short-term effects of media violence are largely attributed to priming, mimicry or arousal. Priming processes suggest that external stimulus can inherently be linked to cognition such as the sight of a gun is linked to aggressive thoughts. Primed concepts thus make behaviors linked to them more likely to occur. Mimicry suggests that merely viewing media violence can lead to imitating the observed behaviour.

Anecdotal evidence, for example, copycat crimes will effectively increase the likelihood of children behaving in the same way. Bryant et al. (2003) stated that arousal theory is referred to as excitation-transfer theory proposed by Dolf Zillmann. The theory is based on some assumptions about emotional responding including anger, fear, and sexual arousal that are said to involve a substantial increase in sympathetic activation such as elevated heart rate and blood pressure (Cantor, 2003). According to excitation-transfer theory, physiological arousal that occurs due to an emotion decays relatively slowly and can linger on for some time after the cause of the emotion.

### *Long-Term Media Effects*

The long-term effects of media violence are said to be due to observational learning and to the activation and desensitization of emotional processes such as desensitization theory (Huesmann, 2007). Observational learning theory suggests that when children observe others' behaviors and make attributions for their actions, this leads to the development of cognitive scripts.

As children age, normative beliefs about appropriate social behaviours become entrenched and act as filters to limit inappropriate social behavior. These normative beliefs and scripts are thus influenced, in part, by children's observation of behaviours around them, including those observed in the media. The theory therefore suggests that children who are developing scripts and normative beliefs can become aggressive if they observe violent behaviours depicted in the media.

## **Media Violence Affects Children's Health**

Based on a research done by Comprehensive National Survey, more than 60 percent children are exposed to violence within the past year, either directly or indirectly, and 46.3 percent assaulted at least once in the past year. A little more than 25 percent of children witnessed a violent act, and 9.8 percent saw a family member assault another. This research also shows that all of this media exposure has long suspected of having negative effects on child and adolescent health and behavior for some reasons. Firstly, media use which is normally an inactive activity that is

believed to replace physical activity and thus to contribute to the growing obesity problem in the United States. Second, increased exposure to violent images in the media suspected of encouraging violent behaviors among the nation's youth. Across all age groups, the percentage of overweight individuals in this country has more than doubled in the past three decades. Particularly among adolescents, the percentage has more than tripled that is from five percent to more than 17 percent while the other 16 percent are at risk. Being overweight is known to increase the risk for many chronic diseases, such as heart disease and diabetes. Specifically, overweight adolescents are at increased risk of being overweight and acquiring coronary artery disease as adults. One study found that the prevalence of overweight among children aged 8 to 16 years was greatest among those watching the most TV and lowest among those watching the least (Education, 2008).

## **Parental Guidance**

Parents should play their important roles in solving the media violence problem as the violence usually started from the birth age of the children. They are likely to imitate the other's behavior since they are still young and are kids. Thus, parents are the ones who should monitor on what their children watch on television and other types of media channels. Parents should explain the true consequences of violence, and point out how unrealistic it is for the viewers to get away with violent behavior. Apart from that, it is important for parents never to let the children spend too long with virtual violence. The more time they spend immersed in violent content, the greater its impact and influence (Knorr, 2015).

In its effort to control and reduce media violence, the government is the biggest player as it should play the most significant role in reducing it. The government has the power to come up with stricter censorship and rating guidelines of the contents in all types of media. Media especially the television is a multi-billion-dollar industry, and the primary concern of the television industry is to net a profit and then entertain the consumers. In regards to that, the producers should be concerned with the content of their programs. They should limit on what they want to provide to the viewers as most of the producers today only think about money and profit

instead of finding a way in reducing the problem of violence in media that keep arising every day.

The media landscape is ever changing, with new technologies resulting in greater interactivity on smaller, graphically superior, and computationally more powerful devices. These new technologies are incredible resources for learning and knowledge gaining at a rate unparalleled in the past (Anderson, 2012). Mass media nowadays become the main source in order for people to get information, entertainment and idea to their subconscious emotions as well.

Violent content in the mass media can easily affect the mind of those who are watching and listening to the content. What is it like to grow up in today's world? The children and young adults are affected by the movies and television programs they see, the radio programs and recordings they see, the radio programs and recordings they hear, the newspaper, magazine, and books they read. Modern technology nowadays in the era of globalization can easily influence people. They feel the mass media is the way to gain the information about the world — women as sex objects on promoting the product in the advertisements, films and songs. Violent content slowly become a cultural norm in the media industry to deliver their ideas.

Mass media explosion occurred in the 20th century and transformed the way people gained information about their world (Bushman and Anderson, 2001). The media plays a central part in the lives of North Americans, as they interact on a daily basis in the form of music, television, the Internet, or video games. Basically, we use media for entertainment, information, and communication. Although people do not necessarily seek out violent content, violence is an integral part of the media landscape. Its influence is often delicate and always unpreventable (Nevins, 2004).

Violence has long been major themes of mythology, drama, literature and popular culture. Concerns about their influence on public life, on children and young people and crime, and their implications for social control, in general, is more recent. We are concerned and stirred by the mass production, and easy availability of both the implements and images of

violence in the mass media and has raised issues of conflict, fear, and power that reach into the structure of societies on the broadest, deepest, and, at times, even the highest levels. They illuminate the use of force to control, isolate, dominate, provoke, or conquer (Gerbner, 1988).

Violent behaviours involving physical force are intended to hurt or kill or damage someone or something. All these actions are used to portray in the mass media to gain people's attention. Children are exposed to violence in cartoons in a greater frequency than in live-action dramas. Although adults consistently rate these comedic cartoons as containing little violence, the research on youth is equivocal (Kirsh, 2006). Findings show that it is aligned with existing research that has examined gender differences in news reporting. When covering presidential election campaigns, male reporters associated with a masculine physique will approach violence that emphasized competition. Women, however, employed a more feminine and gender-neutral news frame (Martins, 2013).

A satisfactory explanation of social phenomena, such as violence, stereotypes, consumerism or prejudice, will involve understanding the combined and interactive effects of multiple factors, of which television may be one such factor, although probably not a major one (Curran, 1996).

## **Violence content against children and women**

When viewing violent action and adventure films, the boys get significantly higher mean scores than the girls. Likewise, the boys' appraisal (level of enjoyment) of the films watched is also higher. The appraisal, in controlled conditions, of the violent cartoon scenes reveals that the boys perceive them as being funnier, more thrilling and inexpensive, whereas the girls give them the more violent rating (Aluja-Fabregat, 1998). If the games nowadays are more thrilling, the children would have higher enjoyment. Boys become more aggressive when they are playing the game such as GTA game from PlayStation (PS4).

The depiction of women in stereotypical contexts continues to exist in advertisements for several product categories, leading to inaccurate

conclusion that females may appropriately be viewed as sexual objects for the pleasure of male consumption. The influence of sexualized violence as an advertising appeal on consumers' beliefs, attitudes and intentions become principal. Consistent with previous scholars, sexualized violence is an overarching term used to describe any violence, physical or psychological, carried out through sexual means or by targeting sexuality. Advertisements portraying gang rape, murder of women, domestic violence, stalking and women in sexual compromising positions are common to some of the most popular companies out there such as *Dolce and Cabbana*, *Calvin Klien*, *Wranglers*, *American Apparel*, *Valentino* or *Burger King*. The portrayal of sex and violence against women is used to sell a variety of products such as from toothpaste to gum, to clothing, even a whopper. Research findings are mixed as to whether these sexually violent advertisements even accomplish their purpose to sell their product.

Visual media is a powerful tool which can shape human thinking. It can dehumanise human beings and make them more unfeeling and insensitive, or it can reinforce human values and sense of fair play. The media authorities must be aware of their responsibility to try and give women the respect and honours they richly deserve (Srivastva & Agarwal, 2004: 65).

Violence is an action that involved physical force intended to kill, hurt or damage something or someone and it not only involve physical but also psychological consequences. Media play an important role to shape the citizens, especially the young generation. It is because 93 percent of the media content will lead to violence (Goebel, 2010). Besides that, parent should also be aware of what their children watch or listen when they spend time with their friends. If they are not controlled, it will influence them to carry out the violence activities which will affect their attitudes and behavior. With technology era now a day, content especially in media are not limited and can access through mobile phone and internet. In Malaysia, the content towards media especially broadcast is exposing viewers to the violence. Other than that, advertisements also contain the violent content. When selling the product, they would show something inappropriate and unsuitable to under aged viewers.

With the violent content in mass media, young citizens tend to follow what had been portrayed. Somehow this would affect citizens and would bring a bad image of the country. In the west, it is normal to show violent content because western censorship does not have limits, especially in broadcasting. However, it is different in Malaysia where we do not practice the same law and we are more sensitive towards the content that portrayed in media. One of the reasons is Malaysia have multi ethnic country that is caring for its citizens. What had been portrayed in the media reflects the culture of the country.

The development of mass media is aligned with the advancement of technologies, including television and more recently, video and computer games are exposing children and teenagers to increasing doses of aggressive images (Groebel, 2019). Nonetheless, media plays a major role in the development of cultural orientations, world views and also beliefs. Unlike in the days where content of the media is only restricted to watching movies or films that contain violent scene, but with the invention of games played online has allowed consumers to have a more interactive and real-life situations just by playing games.

Most studies show that the relation between media violence and 'real' violence is interactive as media is able to contribute to an aggressive culture. Those people who are already aggressive will tend to use the media as further confirmation of their beliefs and attitudes, and in turn, are reinforced through media content itself. Perceptions on the real world are adapted to the real world which reflects on violent behaviour towards their surroundings. It is especially true for the younger generation where kids are at the stage of imitating on what they see.

Reality distorts to those people who are living in a fictional world which has become a reality. A study by Huesmann and Taylor (2006) shows the increase of violence on television and in video games. It has a direct link to the risk of violent behavior on the viewer's part just as growing up in an environment filled with real violence increases the risk of violent behavior as research evidence has accumulated over many years based on the exposure given to the consumers. Therefore, effect of consuming too much of media especially that contains violent content can affect the behaviour of those media consumers is proven.

Other research findings has found that exposure to media violence can desensitize people to violence in the real world (Anderson, 2003) and that, for some people, watching violence in the media becomes enjoyable and does not result in the anxious arousal expected from seeing such imagery. From the statement mentioned above, when we are frequently exposed to those type of content in the media, we tend to be immune to it.

Overexposure to media and media violence also may lead to children to believe that the world is primarily a dangerous and unsafe place. This phenomenon can be explained using cultivation theory by George Gerbner. The children may believe that they can be victims of violence and leave them win anxiety and stress. Over exposure of media violence also can influence the behavior of children. They tend to be more aggressive after being exposed with the violent compared to children who are not exposed. This phenomenon can be explained using social learning theory by Albert Bandura. Some producers and film directors will use the violence appeal to get high rating from the audience.

We cannot deny that we will always encounter with violent elements in the news, films, books, music videos, cartoons, video games, songs, and advertisements. The proliferation of the Internet even makes it harder to prevent children from accessing violent contents in media. Depictions of violence exist in 90 percent of movies, 68 percent of video games, and 60 percent of TV shows, with toddlers spending almost two hours daily in front of the TV sets, adolescents watched four hours per day, and a majority would start playing video games at four were recorded (Knorr, 2015).

Bandura's social learning theory suggests children learn to behave aggressively by imitating others. This theory received mixed views as some critics found a link between media and subsequent aggression while some found no link between media violence consumption and subsequent aggression (Freedman, 2002). Besides Bandura, Gerbner's cultivation theory explains heavy exposure to violent as a predictor of violent behavior. Children with higher level of aggression and conflict at home are most likely to behave aggressively over long exposure to violence in media (Knorr, 2015).

In Malaysia, most of the television programs and other media contents carry violent elements. For example, the movie *KL Gangster*, consist of elements that may encourage the viewers to get themselves involved and enjoy gangsterism activities. Cartoon programs for children such as *Power Puff Girls* and *Power Rangers* also promote elements of violence. It may affect children's behaviour. Besides that, violence in the mass media can also increase the number of bullies, especially in school. Viewers, especially children receive the highest exposure to television and video games at home, and most of them have viewed hundreds thousands of images of violence every day on television, video games and advertisements (Gerbner et. al., 1980).

The video game such as *The Sims* series promotes violence behaviour, and most of the people including adults and young children are addicted to this game. It is because the game requires the player to control and manage their Sims as if managing routine in the real life. Therefore, this include killing them such as by letting their Sims starve to death, burn their houses, choose to be a criminal as their career and be abusive and mean towards other people. Video games or any television programs like this should be filtered and monitored as it can give major impacts towards one's behaviour and encourage them to be one. Violence on television could also lead to anxiety. Valkenburg (2001) states that the anxiety hypothesis assumes that the television-induced fright leads to regression. These television images affect children's imagination. Children today do not have to engage to their imagination, and they do not need to make up news stories or invent games. The television studios do the work for them. Research evidence has accumulated over many years that exposure to violence content on mass media increases the risk of violent behaviour on the viewers' part just as growing up in an environment filled with real violence increases the risk of violent behaviour. Promising strategies for reducing exposure to media violence are available and include limit setting by parents or guardians, Parents should reduce exposure to media violence by seeking positive programmes while limiting negative ones, technological innovations such as the v-chip which blocks inappropriate shows or content from being viewed by children, and media literacy training (Elizebeth, 2007).

In modern era, media can be available 24 hours per day where everyone can access and use on one small device like iPod or smartphones. With the advent of mass media, including television and more recently, video and computer games, children and teenagers are exposed to increasingly higher doses of aggressive images (Anderson & Dill, 2000). In many countries, there is an average of five to ten aggressive acts per hour of television. Violence among youth is also on the rise. Nevertheless, the main causes for aggressive behaviour in children is their family environment and the social and economic conditions in which they raised.

Media plays a major role in the development of cultural orientations, world views, and beliefs. Most studies show that the relation between media violence and 'real' violence is interactive: media can contribute to an aggressive culture; people who are already aggressive use the media as further confirmation of their beliefs and attitudes, which, in turn, are reinforced through media content (Gerbner & Gross, 1972). Thus, media is significantly impossible to be controlled because it is a huge medium that contain massive information that can develop people mind, belief and behaviour. Besides, more online violence games, video and images that can influence people's thinking and behaviour if they become addicted with the online violence games. It would be more disastrous if the negative effects on media are not controlled immediately.

Media has become a part of human lives and also have much to teach people. Media nowadays offer more entertainment, culture, news, sports and education to public surrounding that can relate to violent content in the mass media. Aforementioned, media affect public decision making and also creates a high impact towards the children perception and thinking in understanding the violent media message. Therefore, the producer of television, film and movie content should know an appropriate way on how to draw attention to their viewers to educate and persuade them. Indeed, they need make sure the viewers are provided with appropriate information to give them opportunity to evaluate the content of the program.

The combination of new technologies and the internet has changed the media landscape in a significant way. As known to all, the mass media

has the capability in influencing the audience values, belief and behaviour especially of children and heavy viewers.

Even though it is impossible to control the violent content from being disseminated and assessed to, the audiences particularly the parents need to exercise restrictions and self-regulation at home in effort to reduce the risk of aggressive behaviour as a result from the influence of such content. Some media content may not be suitable for children. Thus by monitoring the medium and its content provided to the children as well as the time limit for the exposure, will help to reduce the risk factor in the latter. Besides reducing risk at an individual level, self-regulation and restriction may also help to reduce juvenile or crime activity among the young adults.

In recent years, the rise in violence around our surrounding has increased drastically. Recently, the world is shocked by an act of terrorism in Paris, France and this raised a debate in various channels such as in Facebook about the violence in mass media. If the world itself shows violence, why then media is condemned in producing such content? It is perhaps that the media that is expected to educate the people and not to terrorize the feelings of the audiences. The fact that the content needs to be organized responsibly is important so that the message that is conveyed would pacify the people. We do not want the media to educate the children in a way on how to become violent and to show them that violence can be practiced in the real world.

Besides that, role playing games such as *Gran Theft Auto* series, do invite the young towards violence. Children are easily obsessed with this type of games where they may think it is easy to ignore a person by killing. This behaviour will create a violent world inside the children's mind. The Columbine massacre can be taken as an example to this. Other than that, another source of violence is through magazines or comics. Comic's series such as Marvel's *Deadpool*, who kills everyone in Marvel's Universe, includes killing heroes and villain. Readers especially children would start to believe that even heroes need to be killed.

One of the notable changes in our social environment in the twentieth century is the advent and saturation of mass media. In this new environment, radio, television, movies, videos, video games, and computer networks have assumed central roles in our daily lives. For better or for worse, the mass media is having an enormous impact on our values, beliefs, and behaviors. Unfortunately, the consequences of one particular element of the mass media exposure has particularly detrimental effects on viewers' and others' health. Research evidence has accumulated over many years that exposure to violence on television and in video games increases the risk of violent behavior on the viewer's part just as growing up in an environment filled with real violence increases the risk of violent behavior. And now with the advancement of mass media, violent content vigorously spread, especially among youngsters.

Other than the aggressive behaviour effect in media violence, the second impact is desensitization effect where an emotional response is repeatedly evoked, and the action is tending to associate with irrelevant and unnecessary emotion. Mass media has the power to change children attitude and influence children behavior when exposed to aggressive and violence program in mass media.

Violence affects how people think in that people may react to certain situations, violently, because of what they have seen or heard. If someone is watching a television show and he or she sees an actor react violently in a certain situation, then they might think and believe that a violent reaction is the way to go. They may think that since the television person acted that way, so can they. It is especially true with children. They have more of a tendency to mimic what they see and hear without forming their own opinion.

Another example is if every time a person watches the news, they see minorities committing crimes and acting violently. Since this is what that person is seeing, they may start to think that all minorities commit crimes and act violently. This type of stereotyping is common in our society. Besides that, television news violence also contributes to increased violence, principally in the form of imitative suicides and acts of aggression. Video games are capable of producing an increase

in aggression and violence in the short term, although no long-term longitudinal studies capable of demonstrating long-term effects were conducted. The relationship between media violence and real-world violence and aggression are moderate by the nature of the media content and characteristics of and social influences on the individual exposed to that content. However, not all children raised in violent homes will become violent, not all children who play violent video games will become violent. However, there is a greater chance that they will if there is multiple risk factors which operate at the same time.

Youth need to develop skills to evaluate their media environment critically, and parents need to monitor the media that their adolescents are exposed to. The public should be aware of the risks involved in viewing media violence. A more effective rating system must be in place, and that system must be enforced. The audience receives mass media content or with the effects of content on people and society.

Media violence poses a threat to public health in as much as it leads to an increase in real world violence and aggression. The relationship between media violence and real-world violence and aggression are moderate by the nature of the media content and characteristics of and social influences on the individual exposed to that content. Still, the average overall size of the effect is large enough to place it in the category of known threats to public health (Huesmann, 2006).

Not only that, exposure to cartoon programmes in the mass media also included the violence content. Programmes, for instance, *Great Teacher Onizuka*, *Tom and Jerry*, *Power Rangers* and *Road Runner*, these programmes do portrayed violence in their content, and this will affect the viewer's especially the younger generations who are their main target audiences. Children and younger generations of today also seen so keen with the new media. As we aware, new media is a borderless world, they able to access anything from anywhere at any place just through the technological devices that they have, so as well as the violence content in the new media; be it in a form of programmes, pictures, videos and even advertising in the internet.

## Conclusion

Violence in the media continues to be an issue of public concern. The empirical evidence suggests that this concern is warranted. However, media violence is a complex issue with many different surfaces. As there remains a market for violent media, the issue does not look as though it will go away any time soon, and thus, must be addressed. Perhaps a more judicious use of violence, limited exposure, and a critical evaluation of the media environment can attenuate some of its negative effects (Nevin, 2004). The violence portrayed in the mass media, be it in the traditional or the new media, are able to influence the users or the viewers; it is just as the Cultivation Theory proposed. To prevent it from happening, the media literacy knowledge is crucial and beneficial for the users or viewers. As it is, violence is categorized into two: physical violence as well as the emotional violence. This two categories of violence are being portrayed by the media to its public. The portrayals at times are deemed to be pessimistic to the audience especially the children. However, individuals should apprehend that violence that exist in our world, and if the media is reluctant to show it to the public, they would be regarded as not portraying the truth to their audiences. Nevertheless, violence in mass media is somehow needed at some point as violence is part of real life, and thereof the element needs to be included in the entertainment programmes to tell a realistic story or even to share an honest view about the current environment (Nagle, 2009).

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