

The Influence of Cartoon on Senior Pupils and Its Countermeasures

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ABSTRACT. *Cartoons are an important part of children's culture and an important social factor accompanying the growth of primary school students. How to play a positive role of animation culture in the growth of primary school students is the purpose of this study. Through interviews and questionnaires for senior students and their parents, this paper shows the pupils' preference for cartoons along with positive and negative effects. According to the research results, some students had unreasonable time to watch cartoons. The selected viewing content was not conducive to the healthy development of mind and body. The good news was that most of parents could actively participate in the process of children watching cartoons and provide powerful supervision means for children.*

KEYWORDS: *cartoons, Social, Development*

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Born in 1907, the animation was marked by the invention of the “frame-by-frame” method by Stuart Blackton. As an industry, the world animation is rapidly developing and has been widely applied to entertainment, advertising, psychotherapy research and other fields. Although Chinese animation industry started relatively late, the attraction of animation to primary school students is increasing.

The characters and storyline created in cartoons are the source of their knowledge, the role models and the emotional companions. They even partially replace the school, teachers and parents, becoming the “first mentor” of primary school students. The colorful animation provides sufficient nourishment for the growth of pupils. It gives them audio-visual enjoyment with sound images, bringing the pleasure of the senses. The cartoon also offers a picture of the real world and various ideals of life for elementary school students whose mentality is not yet sound and extremely plastic.

In fact, the world reflected in cartoons is not comprehensive and all positive. The commerciality of cartoons makes it often escape from reality. Many cartoons are filled with rich scenes, beautiful romance, brutal violence, naked pornography, etc.

The values of primary school students are in their infancy, and the cognitive style is mainly based on emotional thinking. What's more, their behavioral orientation is easily affected by the external environment. As a highly permeable medium, cartoons have some subtle influences on the values of primary school students.

Research on the impact of cartoons on children has been abundant.

KelmethD. Gadow et al. (1987) allowed preschoolers to watch offensive and controlled cartoons and evaluated the effects of cartoons on their behavior by directly observing their behavior in the classroom. In both two classes, the pattern of children's responses to cartoons is clearly demonstrated. Meanwhile, the level of non-physical attacks is increased after watching the specified cartoons. However, contrary to expectations, not only does the child's compliance become smaller, but also the offensiveness is smaller after watching the cartoon. KristenM. Peters et al. (2002) found that "the violent behavior seen by young children on television shows, especially in cartoons, has less impact on children's violent behavior than we currently think." The study critically examined the impact of violence in cartoons on children's moral understanding and behavior. The purpose of this behavior is to enable children's educators and children's parents to make a good decision of which television programs are potentially harmful to children.

2. Methodology

2.1 Research Design

First of all, two questionnaires (by reference to appendix) were independently designed. One questionnaire, named "the influence of animation on senior primary school students and countermeasures", was designed for primary school students to fill in, aimed at understanding the animation preferences of senior primary school students, including favorite types of animation, animation plot and characters. Meanwhile, through the independent assessment and self-advice of pupils, the impact of cartoons on their daily life and physical and mental health could be truly understood. Another questionnaire, which concerned parents about the impact of cartoons on the values of primary school students, was intended for parents to catch on the situation of primary school children watching cartoons.

The questionnaires were distributed to students in Grade 4 to Grade 6 and parents were invited to conduct online questionnaires on WeChat during National Day. After one week, the data was collected and analyzed. Finally, corresponding countermeasures were proposed for the influence of cartoons on the primary school students.

2.2 Participants

A sample survey of senior students (Grade 4-6 from Wuling primary school in Changde, Hunan province) was conducted for 50 students in each grade. On the one hand, this group of people had the commonality of primary school students. In other words, their cognitive style was mainly based on emotional thinking and behavioral orientation was easily affected by the external environment, which was the target population of the survey. On the other hand, they had a certain sense of independence. To a certain extent, they could control and regulate their own behaviors. What's more, the independence and stability of self-evaluation were gradually improved along with grade increasing.

Participants in the survey also included 160 parents of students, who were the direct supervisors of their children. Parents could assist their judgment and enhance the authenticity of the survey.

2.3 Instrumentation

The two self-designed questionnaires were filled out by students and their parents according to their actual situations. There was no right or wrong answer. The questionnaires were based on multiple choice questions, supplemented by short answer questions. Students were required to specifically clarify the positive and negative effects of watching cartoons and put forward measures to improve the negative effects.

2.4 Data Analysis

When the data was just acquired, there was no chaos and rules. The data was processed by mapping, tabulation, etc., making it more visual and intuitive.

In addition, the four-dimensional analysis method was used to describe the type of descriptive, diagnostic, predictive and instructional analysis of the survey, solving the problem of what cartoons were preferred by the primary school students, why they liked it, what impact they had, and what needs to be done for the negative impact.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Time and Motivation for Senior Students to Watch Cartoons

3.1.1 The Frequency and Duration of Senior Pupils Watching Cartoons

Chart 1 shows that about 70% of the senior students chose to watch cartoons in their spare time. Among them, 40% of students watched cartoons once or twice a week, and 8% of students watched cartoons every day. In terms of viewing time,

most students watched less than 30 minutes each time, and only a small percentage of students chose to watch more than 2 hours (Chart II).

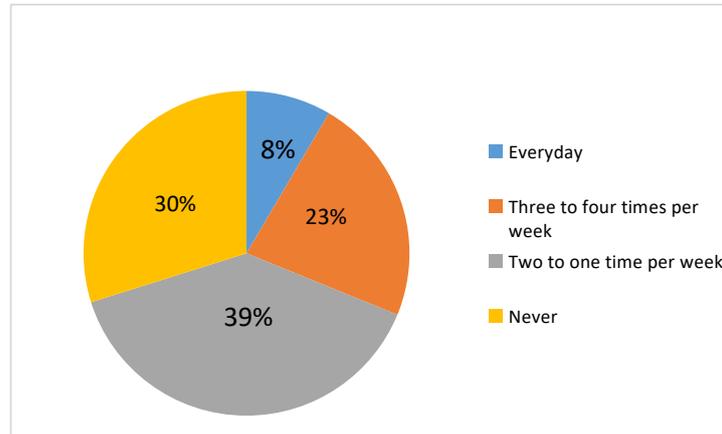


Fig.1 The frequency of watching cartoons

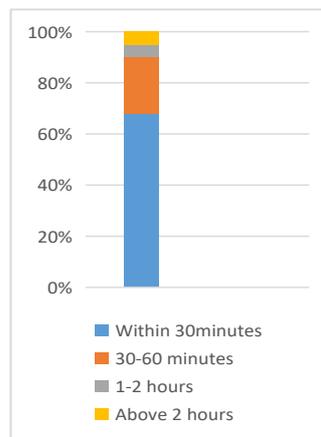


Fig.2 The length of watching cartoons every time

3.1.2 Motivation of Senior Pupils Watching Cartoons

A wealth of primary school students watched cartoons for spending leisure time and pure entertainment (Chart III). This suggests that relevant enterprises and departments should vigorously develop recreational activities and industries, which are suitable for primary school students, aimed at enriching their extracurricular life and avoiding excessively addicted to cartoons.

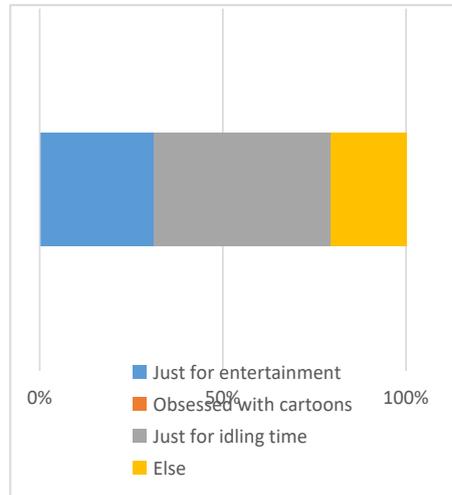


Fig.3 The purpose of watching cartoons

3.2 Cartoon Preferences of Senior Pupils

The preference of primary school students for cartoon content is the key to whether the physical and mental health of primary school students can develop healthily. Active and healthy viewing content is conducive to the healthy development of primary school students, and vice versa. Through the analysis of favorite cartoon types, animated characters and animated plots and relevant reasons, the content selection of the current primary school children watching cartoons is judged.

3.2.1 Favorite Cartoon Types for Seniors

As can be seen from the Chart IV, the story life and magical cartoons were favored by the senior students with their strong enjoyment and comprehensibility. The audience liking Individual heroism and fables were relatively small.

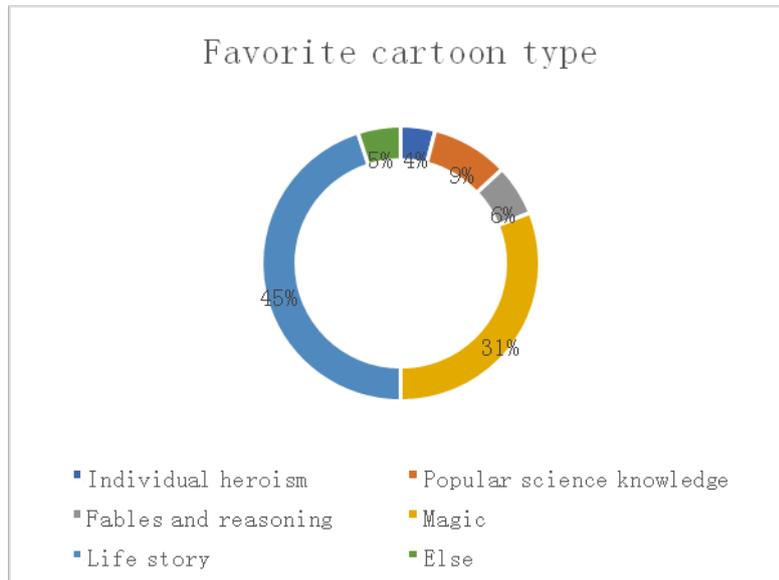


Fig.4 Favorite cartoon type

3.2.2 Favorite Cartoons and Reasons for Seniors

It can be seen from the Table I that the boys and girls in the upper grades had slightly different preferences for cartoons. However, they all liked aggressive cartoons such as Douro's mainland and Boonie Bears. Therefore, the industry and the media should fully consider this when producing and playing animations, satisfying the needs of different genders for cartoons as much as possible. Most importantly, students should be guided to distinguish between legitimate and unfair attacks.

Table1 Favorite Cartoons

	Boys	Girls
1	Douro's mainland	Detective Conan
2	Detective Conan	Boonie Bears
3	Boonie Bears	Eloli fairy dream
4	Spirited Away	The Eight Immortals Crossing the Sea
5	The Eight Immortals Crossing the Sea	Douro's mainland

When senior students chose cartoons, it was easier to choose cartoons with interesting plots. In addition, primary school students were more concerned about

the color and soundtrack of cartoons (Chart V).

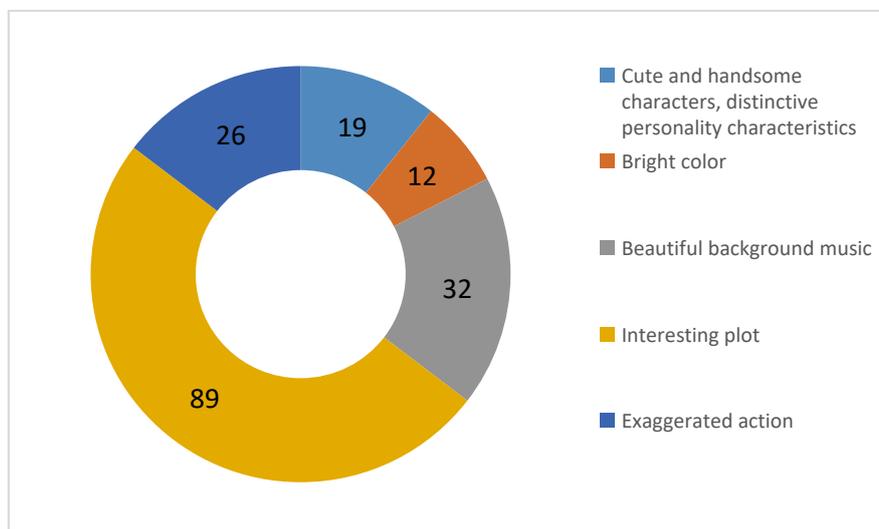


Fig.5 The biggest attraction of watching cartoons

4. Countermeasures and Conclusions

4.1 Senior School Students' Solutions to the Negative Effects of Cartoons

4.1.1 Negative Impact

(1) Watching cartoons for too long will affect vision

Chart 2 indicates that some students watch cartoons over two hours at a time. Ophthalmologists suggest that watching cartoons is no more than two hours. Every 30 minutes in the middle, it is recommended to take a rest and look at some green plants to relieve the pressure on the lens.

(2) The occasion of watching cartoons is wrong

(3) Excessive imitation of cartoon figures

As can be seen from Chart IX, 21% of students have a tendency to imitate the violent words and deeds of animated characters, which results in potential behavioral violence.

(4) Immersed in fantasy for a long time, delaying academic achievement

In Chart IX, almost half of the students indulge in cartoons and are unable to extricate themselves, affecting normal learning and life.

4.1.2 Countermeasures

In the questionnaire (by reference to Q16 and Q17 in appendix), the students were asked to describe the positive and negative effects of cartoons and put forward the appropriate measures. The following is a summary of the answers given by students.

- (1) Keep an appropriate distance from the TV while watching the cartoon. After watching, do eye exercises.
- (2) Strictly control the duration of watching cartoons.
- (3) Watching cartoons at an appropriate time, do not affect normal study and life.
- (4) Do not indulge in animation; distinguish between real life and animated scenes
- (5) Read more books in spare time and enrich life.
- (6) Watch useful cartoons and less fighting animations.
- (7) Increase parental supervision.

5. Conclusion

Cartoons are important partners accompanying the growth of senior pupils. As a new popular culture, cartoons have a huge and profound impact on older schoolchildren, affecting both the physical and mental development. Therefore, it is of theoretical and practical significance to study the status quo and countermeasures of older pupils watching cartoons.

Compared with the previous researches, the results of this study provide some fascinating insights into the preference and impact of cartoons on senior students. Granted, watching cartoons properly is beneficial to growing knowledge and gaining happiness. The adverse effects of cartoons on senior pupils cannot be ignored as well. According to the research results, some students have unreasonable time to watch cartoons. The selected viewing content is not conducive to the healthy development of mind and body. The good news is that most of senior students can remove the dross, take the essence, and propose improvements to the adverse effects.

In order to thoroughly investigate the influence of parents' attitudes on children's watching cartoons, parents of students also participated in the survey. Most parents support students in watching cartoons. Parents can actively participate in the process of children watching cartoons and provide powerful supervision means for children.

This research only focuses on senior pupils, whereas it might be important to include junior pupils as well. In fact, the inclusion of junior pupils would enable us to explore the impact of cartoons on the group of primary school students. Further studies on the current topic are therefore recommended.

References

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