A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF THE PERCEIVED RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MEDIA USE AND ADOLESCENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AND AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR

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To the Dean of the Graduate School:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Daniel O. Korie entitled "A Qualitative Study of the Perceived Relationship between Media Use and Adolescents' Academic Performance and Aggressive Behavior." I have examined this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in Family Studies.

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Dean of the Graduate School

DEDICATION

To my amazing parents, whose vision and foresight created the pathway for my academic journey. Thank you for your commitment and sacrifice to me, and for believing in me. I am forever grateful.

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ABSTRACT

DANIEL O. KORIE

A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF THE PERCEIVED RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MEDIA USE AND ADOLESCENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AND AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR

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This study explored media usage among adolescents and its relations to academic performance and aggressive behavior from a qualitative research perspective. This study represents the first of its kind by utilizing a phenomenological methodology to gain insights about lived experiences of adolescents' media use relative to their academic performance and aggressive behavior, from a multi-dimensional vantage point: *focus group*, *face-to-face interview*, and *time-use diary*. Participants were 19 adolescents (*Mean age* = 13.2, *SD* = 4.13) from a Boys & Girls Club located in North Central Texas. Outcomes indicated that there was no relationship between media use and academic performance. Media usage was perceived as a recreational activity consumed only during leisure time, and did not displace the time for homework or other educational activities. The relationship between violent video game play and aggressive behavior was weak. Playing violent video games served as an outlet for expressions of anger and frustration, and for relaxation.

In addition, adolescents' video game play was perceived as a buffer to commit aggressive and violent acts toward another person. Parental monitoring played a critical role in mitigating negative associations between media use and academic performance. Media use was gender-oriented, wherein boys spent more time playing video games than girls, and girls spent more time in cell phone use (both texting and talking) than boys, and cell phones were used as a means to connect with friends and family members.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Over the past few decades, there has been an increase of adolescents' media use due to easy access to electronic media (Gentile, 2009; Hofferth, 2009; Willoughby, 2008). Today, adolescents live in a world that is "media saturated," in that an average adolescent spends between 8 and 9 hours each day in consumption of one type of media or another (Roberts, Henriksen, & Foehr, 2009). The pervasive influence of media on adolescents' lives makes it almost impossible for adolescents to function on a daily basis without heavy doses of media activities. For some, it is inconceivable to perceive the existence of life outside electronic media. Studies indicate that more than 90% of American teenagers have access to the Internet either at home or at school (Lenhart, Madden, Macgill, & Smith, 2007; Willoughby, 2008). Another study indicates that there are about 93% of American teenagers living in a home with at least two computers, and 36% of them have computers in their bedroom (Rideout, Foehr, & Roberts, 2010).

Television became available to most cities in the U.S. from the early 1940s to the mid-1950s (Gentzkow & Shapiro, 2008). In 1950, only 9% of American families owned a TV set at home. However, by the 1980s the presence of TV sets in American homes had increased to 98% (Hoefferth, 2010). Media consumption dramatically increased in the 1990s and 2000s as a result of the availability of all sorts of communication tools, such as computers, cell phones, Internet, video games, etc. As of 1999, 47% of American

children between the ages of 8 and 18 had access to computers, but by 2004, the accessibility to computer usage increased to 54% (Roberts, Foehr, & Rideout, 2005).

In American culture, the environments of children and adolescents revolve around media (Korie & Garcia, 2014). According to a study by Roberts et al. (2005), it was reported that 68% of both children and adolescents between the ages of 8 and18 years old have a television in their bedroom, 54% have a DVD/VCR player, and 37% have cable/satellite. The same study by Roberts et al. (2005) suggested that 63% of family units usually have their television on during meals, and 53% have no parental regulations about television watching. The abundance of media accessibility for children and adolescents without parental rules may present a harmful environment for the healthy growth of children and adolescents.

The proliferation of media consumption, as well as its influence on the development of children of all ages, has been an issue of essential concern among researchers. According to Ohannessian (2009), media activities are sedentary activities; thus, time spent on media activities will likely affect adolescents' academic performance and pro-social adaptation. Some critics suggest that the use of media technology may displace both children's and adolescents' abilities to acquire the skills of traditional learning, such as reading and non-screen play, which are essential for healthy development (Cordes & Miller, 2000; Healy, 1998; van Evra, 2004). On the other hand, media technology may prepare adolescents for success in the 21st century. Most adult jobs in the 21st century require computer proficiency; thus, playing educational games

and acquiring the skills to search for information on the Internet can enhance adolescents' academic performance and increase their likelihood of success in today's job market (Attewell, 2001; Hofferth, 2010).

Statement of the Problem

The increased aggressive and violent activities among young people today are of serious concern to the public, parents, and educators. Some studies suggest that exposure to violent media has strong influence on adolescents' aggressive behavior (Anderson & Bushman, 2001; Bushman & Huesman, 2001; Gentile, 2009). Concerned individuals are worried about the possible link between media use and adolescents' aggression and violence. The question that still lingers in the mind of many today is, "Are there relationships between media use by adolescents and their academic performance and aggressive behaviors?" It is hoped that the findings of this research study, in view of the application of Bandura's social learning theory, will shed light in our understanding of the relational influence of mass media on adolescents' academic achievement and aggressive behaviors.

Although Internet use may serve as a vital source of educational enrichment which may help to improve academic performance, recent studies have indicated that excessive use of the Internet, especially for non-educational purposes, can have adverse effects on academic performance (Hofferth, 2010). Studies examining the relationships between media use and adolescents' academic performance have yielded mixed outcomes. However, the findings of the majority of these studies suggested negative

relationships, especially with excessive media use (Kubey, Lavin, & Barrows, 2001; Rideout et al., 2010). Moderate computer game use is associated with enhanced academic performance and cognitive skill development, but excessive use is negatively associated with both academic performance and cognitive skill development (Hofferth, 2010).

The findings of a study conducted by Willoughby (2008) suggested that Internet use for learning tasks was positively related to better academic performance, and excessive use or non-use was negatively associated with academic performance. Also, the findings of the study by Kubey et al. (2001) showed that adolescents who engaged in excessive Internet and computer game use tended to have poor academic performance.

Statement of the Purpose

The purpose of this dissertation is to investigate the relationship between media use and adolescents' academic performance and aggressive behavior. The emergence of all sorts of communication technology in recent decades provokes the investigative mind of researchers concerning implications for children and adolescents. The use of digital technology among adolescents has been on the increase in recent years, as has time spent by adolescents playing video games (Gentile, 2009). According to Bushman and Huesman (2001), exposure to media violence is a significant risk factor in adolescents' violence. Even a brief exposure to media violence elicits aggression in the lives of the adolescents. Some other studies have been able to link violent media use and adolescents' aggressive behavior (Anderson & Bushman, 2001; Huesman, Moise-Titus, Podolski, & Eron, 2003). Furthermore, excessive media use is associated with poor academic

performance (Shin, 2004). According to Anderson (2004) excessive video game play and the use of other media has been linked to aggressive behaviors, poor academic performance, and decreased pro-social behaviors.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical frameworks used in this qualitative study include Bandura's social learning theory (Bandura, 2002) and displacement theory (Valkenburg & van der Voort, 1994). In the examination of the relationship between media use and adolescents' academic and social outcomes, embracing conceptual frameworks that encompass multiple perspectives will provide richer and more in-depth insights than a single theory. Since media are ubiquitous, the influence on adolescents is multidimensional. Moreover, adolescence is a transitional period marked with intense exploration and construction of gender identity (Arnett, 1994). Thus, an examination of relational influence of media on adolescents is better understood from a multidisciplinary perspective – a perspective that uses a variety of disciplines.

Social Learning Theory

Albert Bandura's social learning theory provides a theoretical framework in understanding the influence of violent media content on adolescents' aggressive behaviors. According to social learning theory, social behaviors are acquired through observation, modeling, and imitation (Bandura, 2002; Bandura, Ross & Ross, 1963). This theory assumes that behaviors are affected by social and environmental cues operating in a given situational context. It also assumes that learning of new behaviors is a function of

observing the behaviors of others and coding the observed information in memory. Thus, aggressive behaviors as portrayed in video games are stored in adolescents' memories and may be acted out as they observe such aggressive characters on a consistent basis.

Although most studies about video games have been focused on their influence on aggression, a few studies have suggested some benefits associated with non-violent video games. Playing video games has been linked to greater spatial and visual perceptual skills, such as eye-hand coordination (Subrahmanyam & Greenfield, 1994). Playing video games has also been associated with improved motor skills, visual attention, ability to read images, spatial skills, and learning skills (Gee, 2003). Playing non-violent video games has the potential to improve adolescents' pro-social behavior by increasing social interaction with family members and with friends (Colwell, Grady, & Rhaiti, 1995).

Displacement Theory

In the analysis of theories of media influences on adolescents' academic performance, there are two hypotheses that deserve attention: (a) stimulation hypothesis, which suggests that programs designed to stimulate children and adolescents intellectually can enhance their academic performance; and (b) reduction hypothesis, which suggests that the unique nature of media serves as an inhibiter to the users' intellectual processing, resulting in poor academic performance (Valkenburg & van der Voort, 1994). Displacement hypothesis is one of the examples of reduction hypotheses, and will be the focus of discussion in this section.

Displacement theory proposes that time spent in media use displaces time for academic activities, such as reading and studying (Neuman, 1995). Displacement hypothesis goes beyond the effect of media on academic achievement; it includes media time displacing creative activities (such as free play) and physical activities (such as sports and hiking). It contends that the time adolescents spend on a new activity is a borrowed time from a previous activity, which produces decline of time for many other activities (Hofferth, 2009). This can also include time spent using new media, which displaces time for the use of old media. In a nutshell, this hypothesis posits that media use affects students' academic performance by displacing other activities that are crucial to students' academic development, such as reading and studying.

According to this theory, consequences are associated with time spent in media use. That is, the time spent in media entertainment or online social networking, such as Facebook, replaces the time needed for reading, studying, sleeping, and physical activity, which negatively affects academic achievement. One study indicates an inverse relationship between media use and academic performance for adolescents who spent more than 10 hours per week using media (Shann, 2001). It is possible that overdependence on media use could negatively affect adolescents' school attendance and relationships with teachers, parents, and peers. However, minimal media use does not necessarily suggest a threat to academic performance since the amount of time displaced may be insignificant to the amount of time needed for academic activities (Hofferth, 2010).

The adverse effect of media use is not only limited to adolescents' academic performance, but also extends to their pro-social behavior. For example, adolescents who use media more frequently are more likely to develop low self-esteem, increased social isolation, inability to relate to others, and media overdependence (Hofferth, 2010; Lee & Peng, 2006; Subrahmanyam, Greenfield, Kraut, & Gross, 2001). From a displacement theory standpoint, the more time adolescents spend on non-academic activity, such as the media, the less time they spend on productive activities, such as reading, studying, sports, sleep, and pro-social behavior.

Research Questions

This research was guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the perceived relationship between media use by adolescents and their academic performance?
2. Does the perceived use of violent media by adolescents influence their aggressive behavior?

Research Approach

This research study employed a qualitative phenomenological approach as a means of gaining an in-depth understanding of the influence of media in adolescents' academic performance and aggressive behavior. Generally, a "phenomenological approach seeks to explore, describe, and analyze the meaning of individual lived experience" (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 19), and "…how they perceive it, describe it, feel about it, judge it, remember it, make sense of it, and talk about it with others"

(Patton, 2002, p. 104). The approach was inductive; 19 participants in focus groups were interviewed about their media use, and the principal investigator used probing questions in an attempt to gather in-depth data that reflected participants' emotions, perceptions, and lived experience of media use and the effects on academic achievement and social behavior. In addition to focus group interviews, data were collected through face-to-face interviews and time-use diaries. The participants were adolescents in the North Central Texas area, and their ages ranged from 11 to 18 years.

Definition of Terms

For clarification purposes, the following idiosyncratic terms were operationally defined in this study:

1. *Academic performance* refers to grades students receive in academic courses and school activities. This includes GPAs that students receive on their progress reports.
2. *Adolescence* is a developmental stage that leads to the establishment of an adult identity (Marcano, 2000). It is a transitional period of moving from the immaturity of childhood into the maturity of adulthood, when one becomes more independent and prepares for the future. Adolescence is culturally defined, and the age at which one is considered an adolescent varies culturally. In this study, the adolescence ages applied were between 11 and 18 years.
3. "Aggression is behavior intended to harm another individual who is motivated to avoid that harm; [and] it is not an effect, emotion, or aggressive thought, plan, or

wish" (Anderson & Bushman, 2001, p. 354). *Aggression* does not include accidental acts that may lead to harm; however, an action intended to harm another person even if the action fails is consider an aggression. For example, if a driver uses his car to strike a pedestrian, and misses the pedestrian, such action is considered an aggression; but if a driver loses control of his car and accidentally strikes a pedestrian, such action is not an aggression.

4. *Discretionary Media Use* (DMU) is the use of media only in one's leisure time, which does not interfere with or displace time for homework or other activities such as reading or sports. It also involves the exercise of self-control, parental monitoring, or school regulations about media use relative to educational activities.
5. *Media* are forms of electronic communication that reach or influence people, such as television, Internet, video games, cell phones, radio, and other types of communication tools.
6. *Media saturation* refers to abundance or myriad of media.
7. *Parental control* refers to characteristics and behavior of parents in order to control media usage of their adolescent children, as well as moderate the effects of media on their lives.
8. *Social outcomes* refer to adolescents' social and aggressive behaviors as a result of media use.

9. “Violence refers to extreme forms of aggression, such as physical assault. All violence is aggression, but not all aggression is violence” (Anderson & Bushman, 2001, p. 354).
10. “Violent media are those that depict intentional attempts by individuals to inflict harm on others. An ‘individual’ can be a nonhuman cartoon character, a real person, or anything in between” (Anderson & Bushman, 2001, p. 354).

Assumptions

In this study, several assumptions were identified based on review of literature, theoretical framework, and adolescents’ firsthand experience with media use. The following assumptions were applied in this study:

1. Participants in this study will be open and honest in describing the types of media they use and the amount of time they spend each day in media consumption.
2. Adolescents will honestly disclose incidences of aggressive behaviors.
3. Adolescents will honestly disclose their school grades.
4. Adolescents have freedom to choose the type of media and the amount of time spent in media use.
5. The researcher will bracket his own judgment and expression of personal opinions.

Delimitations

Delimitations are useful in qualitative research to manage the scale of range of the study (Creswell, 2007). The following delimitations were presented in this study:

1. The research participants were limited to adolescents enrolled in Boys & Girls Club in North Central Texas.
2. Participants' age groups were limited to 11-18 year olds.
3. All participants had access to several kinds of media.
4. The research participants were limited to adolescents residing in North Central Texas.
5. The research participants were volunteers from purposive sampling based on the researcher's criteria.

Summary

Existing studies have suggested negative relationships between the amount of media consumed by adolescents and their academic performance (Anderson & Dill, 2000; Roberts, Foehr, Rideout, & Brodie, 1999). Research findings also showed consistent negative associations between video game play and school performance, and positive associations between frequent use of violent video games and aggressive behaviors (Gentile, Lynch, Linder, & Walsh, 2004). Some studies examining the relationships between media use and adolescents' academic performance have yielded mixed results. However, the findings of the majority of other studies suggested negative relationships, especially with excessive media use. Although computer and Internet use for educational purposes improves academic performance, research findings suggest that adolescents who use the computer and Internet to play games show poor academic performance (Lieberman, Chaffee, & Roberts, 1988; Willoughby, 2008).

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

As children grow into adolescents, media use also continues to grow. In examining the relationships between media use and adolescents' academic performance and social outcomes, it is important to note that it is not just the media use itself that has the most profound effect on the adolescents, but the content and frequency of the media use. While educational media may improve academic and cognitive skills in adolescents, consuming inappropriate media is associated with numerous undesirable developmental outcomes, including poor academic performance, aggressive behaviors, and obesity (Anderson & Bushman, 2001). This review of literature will address media influence on academic performance and media influence on aggressive behavior.

Media Influence on Academic Performance

Although Internet use may serve as a vital source of educational enrichment and may help to improve academic performance, recent studies have indicated that excessive use of Internet, especially for non-educational purposes, can have adverse effects on academic performance. Research findings by Willoughby (2008), which involved 1,591 high school students of an average age of 15.66 years, suggested that Internet use for learning tasks was positively related to better academic performance, and excessive use or non-use was negatively associated with academic performance.

In addition, studies suggest that adolescents who engaged in excessive media use (more than 16 hours per day) tended to have poor academic performance (Kubey et al., 2001; Rideout et al., 2010). Media use, such as having Internet access and the use of computers, can provide educational opportunities for adolescents. Parents are said to buy computers for their children and adolescents in order to prepare them for the "information age" and to improve their educational opportunities (Willoughby, 2008). Educators as well are generally in favor of the use of educational-based technology (Wood, Mueller, Willoughby, Specht, & DeYoung, 2005). Hofferth (2010) posited that computer knowledge is beneficial to the adolescents because contemporary job requirements involve computer literacy. In other words, both educational game play and access to the Internet have the potential to enhance adolescents' computer skills and academic performance. But critics of adolescents' media use have postulated the *time displacement hypothesis*, which suggests that the time adolescents spend playing computer games, surfing the Internet, and consuming other non-educational media prevents them from engaging in educational activities such as doing their homework (Austin & Totaro, 2011; Hofferth, 2010; Ravizza, Hambrick, & Fenn, 2014).

Some studies suggest a small negative link between the total hours a child spends viewing television and the child's academic achievement. Viewing educational television is positively linked with academic achievement, and viewing entertainment television is negatively linked to academic achievement (Schmidt & Vandewater, 2008).

Although this linkage may be valid for television, it is reasonable to infer the existence of such linkages with other interactive media.

Electronic media have become part of a typical teenager's life, as ways to stay connected with friends and to spend leisure time. An average of six hours each day is spent by an adolescent consuming one or more media, and when media multitasking is put into consideration, the actual amount of time the adolescent spend becomes eight to nine hours per day (Roberts et al., 2005). The amount of time adolescents spend on the Internet has been increasing for the past decade (Greenfield & Yan, 2006). The most prevalent activities among adolescents are playing video games, which involve 78% of adolescents; communication with others through email (73%); social networking sites (68%); downloading music (65%); and watching videos (57%) (Jones & Fox, 2009).

Media Influence on Aggressive Behavior

Aggression is an action intended to harm another individual who is motivated to avoid that harm. It is not an effect, emotion, or aggressive thought, plan, wish, or accidental act that leads to harm, but behaviors intended to harm even if the attempt fails. *Violence* refers to extreme forms of aggression, such as physical assault (Anderson et al., 2001). Accordingly, all violence is aggression, but not all aggression is violence.
The increased aggressive and violent activities among young people today are of serious concern to the public, parents, and educators.

The use of digital technology among adolescents has been on the increase in recent years, as has time spent by adolescents playing video games (Gentile, 2009). The

emergence of new digital technologies with sophisticated processing power elicits the excitement and inducement of greater media consumption among the adolescents. The interactive nature of video games sets them apart from other types of media. While it is possible for the adolescent to do his or her homework while watching TV or talking on the phone, playing video games demands active participation of the user and incorporation of instructional techniques with adaptable levels of difficulty. In a meta-analysis of the effects of video games, Anderson (2004) reported that "…exposure to violent video games increases aggressive thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, increases arousal, and decreases helping behavior" (p. 114). Research findings indicate that even brief exposure to media violence causes significant increases in adolescents' aggression, and that repeated exposure to media violence increases their aggressiveness as young adults (Anderson et al., 2010; Bushman & Anderson, 2001).

Generally, media violence is a significant risk factor in youth violence. Over the past 30 years, extensive studies have confirmed the relationships between televised violence and violent behavior among youth (Beresin, 2010). According to Beresin (2010), there were only 10% of American homes that had televisions in 1950, but today 99% of American homes have televisions, with a steady increase of televised violence. Lack of parental supervision has given rise to the accessibility and consumption of media that glamorize aggression, violence, sexualization, drugs, or alcohol use (Korie, 2015). The media have become a major source of interaction for adolescents by displacing family time and parental involvement in the life of their adolescent children. Television

and video games have also become a convenient method for parents to keep their adolescent children engaged while parents work late hours or engage in other activities. The irony of the whole dilemma is that some of the televised programs that the teens are watching and the video games available to them are inappropriate for their ages.

Video Games

Video games, just like the television, have the capacity to produce violence and aggression in the lives of young people. Researchers believe that video games are more likely to increase aggressive and violent behaviors than television because of their interactive nature, which engage players as active participants in the violent action. Electronic video games are on a steady increase. An average of more than 7.5 hours per week are spent playing video games by boys at the age of 8 to 13 years old, and youths between the ages of 8 and 18 spend more than 40 hours per week using some other type of media (Rideout et al., 2010). Findings of a study of 70 games revealed that video games often glorify violence, with nearly every game containing some violent content, too often without consequences to the perpetrator or the victim (Glaubke, Miller, Parker, & Espejo, 2001).

The violent effects of repeated play of violent video games among adolescents have been an issue of debate between researchers and leaders of media industry. The findings of a study conducted by Anderson and Bushman (2001) showed that exposure to violent video games is correlated with aggressive and violent behaviors in children and adolescents, both male and female.

In 1971, Lefkowitz and colleagues conducted a study in which they interviewed a group of 8 year old boys. In the study, it was discovered that the boys who watched more violent TV were more likely to act aggressively in the real world, even at age 18 (Lefkowitz, Eron, Walder, & Huesmann, 1971). Lefkowitz et al.'s (1971) finding confirmed the findings of a similar study conducted by Eron in 1960 in which he studied 850 Grade 3 students. His findings indicated that boys who watched violent televised programs at home engaged in aggressive behaviors at school (Eron, 1974). Even 11 years later, the same boys were more likely to get into trouble with the law as teenagers, and as 30 year old men, they were more likely to be convicted of violent crimes and to use violence to discipline their children. This compelling empirical evidence suggests that exposure of media violence to children is correlated with aggressive and violent behaviors.

The General Aggressive Model (GAM) was developed by Anderson and Dill (2000) to explain the associations between exposure to media violence and aggressive behaviors. The GAM illustrates multiple stage processes in which stimuli, such as playing violent video games and aggressive personality, elicit aggressive behaviors. It also illustrates the differences between short-term and long-term effects of violent video games on the player. Short-term exposure to violent video games prime aggressive thoughts and hostile feelings, which increase aggressive actions. The long-term exposure to violent video games may lead to players' desensitization to violence, expectations that

others will act in an aggressive manner, and the belief that violence is an effective means of resolving differences (Anderson & Dill, 2001; Glaubke et al., 2001).

Research findings do not indicate positive relationships between video game play and academic performance (Hofferth, 2010). Rather, numerous studies have linked video games to aggressive behavior and lower levels of pro-social behavior (Anderson, 2004). Therefore, playing video games poses more damaging effects than other types of media because of the interactive nature of such games. The findings of negative relationships between video games play and academic performance is consistent with the displacement hypothesis, which assumes that time spent consuming media displaces time that adolescents could use to engage in educational activities such as homework, reading, and studying (Anderson et al., 2001; Hofferth, 2010). Electronic media are like any other teaching technology, as suggested by empirical data; they are beneficial to some and bad for others – depending on how they are used (Schmidt & Vandewater, 2008).

Cell Phones

The popularity of cell phone use among adolescents has rapidly increased in recent decades. One study shows that 75% of adolescents owned a cell phone in 2010, which is an increase from 45% in 2004 (Lenhart, Ling, Campbell, & Purcell, 2010). Data analysis by the Nielsen Company suggested that adolescents exchange approximately 1630 text messages each month, an equivalent of 54 messages per day (Lenhart et al., 2010). Although some schools prohibit the use of cell phones in the classrooms, it is estimated that 65% of students bring their cell phones to class and engage in at least one

text message per day (Lenhart et al., 2010). The impact of cell phone use on academic performance has been an issue of concern to both educators and researchers. A study by Jacobsen and Forste (2011) reported a negative relationship between cell phone use in the classroom and academic performance. Another study of 71 undergraduate psychology students with an average age of 20.21 years, suggested that cell phone noise, such as ringing, and texting in the classroom were linked to students' impaired academic performance (End, Worthman, Mathews, & Wetterau, 2010). The control group in the above study performed better on test items and was able to remember more test information than the experimental group.

Intensive cell phone use in the classroom among a sample of high school students in Spain was correlated with school failure (Sanchez-Martinez & Otero, 2009). *School failure* in the above study was operationalized as failing of four or more classes or repeating a previous grade level. Research suggests that the study behavior of students is easily distracted by cell phone use, such as texting and accessing the Internet, less than six minutes after a class session has been initiated (Barks, Searight, & Ratwik, 2011; Rosen, Carrier, & Cheever, 2013). Generally, cell phone use has been described by some researchers as an addiction, in the sense that people are compulsively using their cell phones for online social networking and to stay connected to friends and family members (Barks et al., 2011; End et al., 2010; Jacobsen & Forste, 2011; Sanchez-Martinez & Otero, 2009).

The emergence of smart phones makes it possible for students to have access to the Internet anywhere and anytime of the day, thus expanding the typical use of cell phones beyond calling and texting. According to Jacobsen and Forste (2011) about 75% of college students use their cell phones to text, email, and check their Facebook while studying or doing their homework. Although media multi-tasking is a common practice among high school and college students, several studies have suggested negative relationships with academic achievement (Junco & Cotton, 2012; Rosen et al., 2013; Wood, et al., 2012). Data analysis of multi-tasking with cell phones and other electronic devices suggested a negative impact on learning and overall high school and college GPAs (Wood et al., 2012).

Parental Involvement

Parental involvement and supervision of the type of media consumed by their adolescent children can help to mitigate the influence of media on their teens (Walsh & Gentile, 2001). Parents should know the contents of the video games purchased for their adolescent children, because some video games labeled age-appropriate for their consumption are sometimes inappropriate for them. In a study conducted by Ostrov, Gentile, and Crick (2006), it was found that more exposure to violent media increased teens' rates of physical aggression shown at school. The study also found that the more educational media the teens watched, the more relationally aggressive they became. Many educational programs spend most of the time establishing conflict, rather than resolving such conflict. This is indicative of the need for concerned parents to become

actively involved in what their children are watching. Whenever possible, parents should watch TV programs with their children and actively participate in the interpretation and critique of the programs as a means of family discussion. Parents should not be overly permissive by caving in to the demands of their children by purchasing video games without knowing the contents of the video games. Ninety percent of teens in grades 8 through 12 reports that their parents never check the ratings of video games before allowing the purchase, and only 1% of the teens' parents had ever prevented a purchase based on a game's rating (Walsh & Gentile, 2001). The media industry may be responsible for glamorizing violence, but parents have a greater responsibility for what they permit their children to consume without regulations.

The Role of School in Academic Performance

School plays an important role in students' academic success. Studies indicate that school efforts to engage students in academic activities lead to better academic performance, while lack of engagement increases the likelihood of school dropout (Archambault, Janosz, Fallu, & Pagani, 2009; Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004; Reschly & Christenson, 2006). There are a number of ways schools can influence how student engagement is fostered. First, positive teacher-student relationships have been shown to enhance student engagement (Anderson, Christenson, Sinclair, & Lehr, 2004; Klem & Connell, 2004; Muller, 2001). Teachers who support and care for their students, along with positive relationships, increase the likelihood of students' high levels of engagement in school activities. Clear expectations and structure from teachers create a

positive learning environment for students, as well as enhancing their autonomy (Fredricks et al., 2004). However, unstructured autonomy may lead to lower levels of students' engagement (Elffers, 2011).

Second, peer collaborative learning contributes to high level of student engagement (Fredricks et al., 2004; Svinicki & Mckeachie, 2014). Peers motivate one another as well as enhancing engagement and cooperative learning. Group activities help to increase the level of student engagement, as well as helping students apply concepts, acquire skills that are beyond the classroom lectures, and achieve a lifelong learning process. Studies have found that students learn better and retain more information if they have to teach another student (Annis, 1983; Bargh & Schul, 1980). Consequently, teaching another student results in greater levels of engagement and learning than being taught.

The benefit of peer interactions in the learning process is that they enable students to learn in a cooperative environment, work well with others, and improve cognitive outcomes (Miller & Grocia, 1997). Peer interaction in the learning process increases the opportunity for mutual support and stimulation among students (Johnson, Maruyama, Johnson, Nelson, & Skon, 1981). Cognitively, peer interaction in the learning process provides an opportunity for elaboration and helping students to translate materials into their own words. Students are able to alternate between listening and teaching among themselves. According to Svinicki and McKeachie (2014), peer interaction helps to reduce the chance that a student is simply a passive recipient. Peer interaction in the

learning process enables students to share information and concepts, and to give feedback in a non-threatening manner.

Third, parental involvement has been linked to better academic performance. Parental involvement includes volunteerism, attendance of parent-teacher conferences, and homework assistance (Englund, Luckner, Whaley, & England, 2004). A plethora of research suggests a positive relationship between parental involvement and their adolescent children's academic success (Englund et al., 2004; Lawson & Alameda-Lawson, 2012; van Voorhis, 2001; Zellman, & Waterman, 1998). Children whose parents are highly involved in their education have been shown to have high levels of academic achievement. Studies have found that home-related activities, such as parental assistance in doing homework and engagement in educational activities, are associated with enhanced academic performance, pro-social behaviors, and school attendance (Englund et al., 2004; El Nokali, Bachman, & Vortruba-Drzal, 2010; Yeung & Leadbeater, 2010).

The Role of Community-Based Youth Programs

Community-based youth programs are designed to assist children and adolescents in enhancing their personal and social development, school grades, and academic achievement, and to reduce social problems and delinquent behaviors (Durlak, Weissberg, & Pachan, 2010). Community-based youth programs often inspire parental involvement and other volunteers who provide individual tutoring or small group activities for students.

A number of studies have been able to link attendance at community-based adolescent programs to improved academic performance, increased pro-social behaviors, and higher levels of school attendance (Anderson-Butcher, Newsome, & Ferrari, 2003; Anthony, Alter, & Jenson, 2009; Shernoff, 2010). Analysis of 35 studies conducted by Lauer et al. (2006) suggested that community-based youth programs were positively related to improved academic performance and reduction in deviant behaviors among children and adolescents. These studies identified several significant improvements in math and reading skills for high school students more than elementary school and middle school students.

Participation in high quality community-based or after-school programs has been linked to several positive outcomes for adolescents, such as better peer relations, increased school attendance, improved academic performance, and reduced incidences of antisocial behaviors (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2003; Durlak et al., 2010; Schinke, Cole, & Poulin, 2000). Long-term participation as well as consistency in attendance has been linked to numerous benefits for at-risk adolescents. For example, various studies have been able to link decreased incidences of poor academic achievement, school dropout, delinquency, and substance abuse to long-term and consistent involvement in community-based programs (Anderson-Butcher & Cash, 2010; Durlak et al., 2010; Lambert, Brown, Phillips, & Ialongo, 2004; Peck, Roeser, Zarrett, & Eccles, 2008; Posner & Vandell, 1994; Schinke, Orlandi, & Cole, 1992).

Summary

While the advent of television in the past seven decades has been a source of attraction to young viewers, it has also been a source of research interest for educators and family scientists. A few studies have positively correlated media consumption with academic achievement in adolescents, while the findings of other studies emphasize the importance of the media content as the mediating factor in the relationship (Kirkorian, Wartella, & Anderson, 2008). Studies examining the relationships between media use and adolescents' academic performance have yielded mixed outcomes. However, the findings of the majority of these studies suggested negative relationships, especially with excessive media use. Moderate computer game use is associated with enhanced academic performance and cognitive skill development, but excessive use is negatively associated with both academic performance and cognitive skill development (Hofferth, 2010).

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine phenomenologically the relationship between media use and adolescents' academic and social outcomes. The participants for this study included 19 students in the North Central Texas area between the ages of 11 and 18. In this study, the principal investigator recruited participants from a Boys & Girls Club in North Central Texas. In addition, the principal investigator sought and obtained permission from the branch director of a local Boys & Girls Club in North Central Texas area, in order to use the facility to conduct the study. The principal investigator conducted all the focus group interviews in one location of Boys & Girls Club. The location hosts over 300 children and adolescents during summertime and is demographically diverse.

The conceptual framework for this qualitative study included the application of displacement theory in order to examine the negative relationship between media use and academic performance. The theoretical framework in explaining the relational influence of violent media on adolescents' aggressive behavior was social learning theory. The application of these theories is appropriate in this phenomenological study because of their unique abilities to shed light on the relationships between adolescents' media use and their academic performance and aggressive behavior.

This study included three phases of data collection. The first phase was the focus group, comprised of five members in the first three focus groups and four members in the fourth focus group. The second phase was comprised of face-to-face interviews, which involved random selection of 5 adolescents out of the 19 participants. The third phase was the time-use diary, which involved 10 adolescents who were also randomly selected from the 19 participants; but only 8 submitted completed time-use diaries to the principal investigator. The time it took for each focus-group interview was 35 minutes, except the fourth focus group, which took 45 minutes. The time it took for each face-to-face interview was 30 minutes. The time-use diary involved eight participants who were randomly selected to record time of duration of different types of media used each day for four consecutive days (Saturday – Tuesday). An estimated time that it took to complete the time-use diary was 5 minutes each day, for a total of 20 minutes. This chapter addresses research questions for this study, population and sampling techniques, data collection processes and procedures, instruments, treatment of data, credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

Research Questions

This research was guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the perceived relationship between media use by adolescents and their academic performance?
2. Does the perceived use of violent media by adolescents influence their aggressive behaviors?

Population and Sampling Techniques

The participants for this study consisted of elementary, middle, and high school students from the North Central Texas area. The age of the participants was between 11 and 18 years of age encompassing fifth through twelfth grades. Prior to recruiting participants through the use of flyers (Appendix A), the principal investigator first sought and obtained a letter of permission to use the facility (Appendix B) from the branch director. A purposive sampling method was used to select the research participants. The study included both male and female students of different racial and ethnic backgrounds such as African American, Asian, Hispanic, Mixed Race, and White. All fifth through twelfth grade students in the participating Boys & Girls Club in North Central Texas were given consent forms (Appendix C) for their parents or legal guardians to sign. In the consent form, the parents of the participating students were informed of the purpose of the study and given information concerning identity protection, risks and benefits associated with participation in the study, and participants' rights to withdraw from the study at any time without repercussion. Students participating in the study were informed about compensation for participation and the condition upon which compensation could be made. The consent forms included both the primary investigator's and major advisor's contact information for clarification of issues of concern and questions about the study.

Data Collection Process and Procedures

The data collection procedure is a systematic process that enables researchers to collect data for research purposes. Using an accurate data collection procedure is essential in qualitative research in order to ensure a more reliable outcome. The primary method for data collection of this study was focus group interviews, face-to-face interviews, and time-use diaries, which were used to examine phenomenologically the relational influence of media use on adolescents' academic performance and aggressive behavior. The number of participants for this study was 19 adolescents, ranging in ages from 11 to 18 years. Collected data were transcribed verbatim and analyzed for themes as each focus-group interview or face-to-face interview was completed.

In this present study, the researcher interviewed students from North Central Texas area in order to examine the relationships between media use and academic performance and aggressive behavior. Elementary, middle, or high school grades were used to determine academic performance. Participants' school grades were determined based on self-reported grades. Aggressive behavior was also determined based on self-reported aggressive incidents within the last month. The principal investigator met with the participants at the Boys & Girls Club located in North Central Texas area and conducted focus group interviews. The questions were designed to assess participants' exposure to different types of media and their corresponding impact on academic performance and aggressive behavior. There were three primary methods of data collection that this research used in the following order. The first method was focus

group interviews, the second was face-to-face interviews, and the third was time-use diaries (Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Saldana, 2013; Seidman, 2006). The use of three methods to collect data was useful for data triangulation.

Focus Group Interviews

In the focus group interviews, the number of persons in each group ranged from as small as 4 to as large as 12 (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). The members of each focus group did not know each other; however, they did display similar characteristics relevant to the study. Focus group interviews allowed members of the group to express different points of view and prompted discussions among members in a supportive environment. Focus group interviews allow researchers to collect data in a more relaxed and naturalistic setting than a one-to-one interview or an artificial experiment. They also allow the interviewer or focus group leader to ask focused questions in order to elicit discussion and expression of differing views and opinions from the members of the focus group (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). In this study, the principal investigator recruited participants from a local Boys & Girls Club for the study. In addition, the principal investigator sought and obtained permission from the branch director of the local Boys & Girls Club in order to use the facility to conduct the study. The number of participants in this study was 19. The principal investigator conducted all the focus group interviews and the face-to-face interviews at the recruited Boys & Girls Club.

Face-to-Face Interviews

Face-to-face interviews are considered the most widely used data collection method in qualitative research (Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Yilmaz, 2013). This method is often used to gather data on sensitive issues, such as aggressive behaviors and sexual behaviors. It helps researchers to observe and record the lived experiences of their participants (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Face-to-face interviews allow researchers to seek for clarification from the respondents, as well as gather emotional data.

In this present study, the researcher interviewed students who were enrolled at North Central Texas Boys & Girls Club in order to examine the relationships between media use and academic performance and aggressive behavior. Participants' school grades were used to determine academic performance from self-reported face-to-face interviews. Aggressive behavior was determined based on self-reported aggressive incidents that occurred within the period of one month prior to the interview. The principal investigator met with the participants at the Boys & Girls Club located in North Central Texas and conducted face-to-face interviews. The questions were designed to gather more detailed information about the participants' exposure to different types of media, including cell phone use and video game play, and the corresponding impact on academic performance and aggressive behaviors.

Time-Use Diary

In addition to the use of face-to-face and focus-group interviews, the principal investigator incorporated time-use diaries in the process, which served as a means to

triangulate the collected data of the participants. Time-use diaries are useful in providing detailed information about the activities of the participants, which includes time, duration, and order of the activities for the entire day (Hellgren, 2014). It records a full day of activities of the participants, which is aimed at capturing the order of the activities and time spent on each activity.

The time-use diary offers two types of application. First, it involves the participants being required to reconstruct the time of the activities of the previous day; the second involves the participants being required to record the activities of each day, which includes the order, time, and duration of the activities (Hellgren, 2014). The latter application was used in this study because it involves recording activities as they occur rather than relying on perceived time and activities. The participants were required to use a time-use diary to record time and duration of different media used each day. Data collected via time-use diaries enabled the principal investigator to obtain a fairly good estimate or average of time that the adolescents spent each day on media use. The time-use diary also triangulated data collected during face-to-face or focus group interviews.

Data Analysis

Interviews with participants were audio-recorded and transcribed by the principal investigator. In this process, the principal investigator carefully transcribed the words, pauses, and expression of emotions in each participant's voice, as well as significant non-verbal communication. This procedure elicited different directions that allowed the principal investigator to capture the participants' unique experiences. The transcriptions

were executed in a conscientious manner as to eliminate possible biases or preconceived ideas in identifying the themes.

In order to document and analyze the data confidentially, numbers were assigned to each participant, number 1 to 19. No names or identifying information about the participants were used. In an attempt to establish trustworthiness and credibility of collected data, the principal investigator sought the help of two doctoral-level research assistants to triangulate the collected data (Creswell, 2007).

The two research assistants randomly selected transcripts to read and highlighted important themes. Then the principal investigator met with the research assistants and discussed and agreed upon emerging themes of the transcripts. The use of "member checking" helped to verify the accuracy of data transcription, interpretations, and themes, and thus enhanced the credibility of the entire process of data analysis (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Shenton, 2004).

Coding

In this data analysis, there were three types of coding methods that were used: In Vivo Coding, Initial Coding, and Holistic Coding. Each of the coding methods used had an important role in enriching the data analysis process and determining the themes.

In Vivo Coding is also known as "literal coding" or "verbatim coding" and uses short phrases to represent the actual words of the participants (Saldana, 2013; Strauss, 1987). In Vivo Coding is useful for studies that honor the voice of the participants, such as studies that involve children and adolescents, whose voices are often marginalized. In

Vivo Coding helps to code the actual words of participants as well as enhancing adults' understanding of the participants' worldviews and cultures.

Initial Coding is breaking down qualitative data into discrete parts, closely examining them, and comparing them for similarities and differences (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 102). Initial Coding helps researchers to have a deeper reflection of the content of their data, and to code studies with a variety of data forms, such as interview transcripts, field notes, and diaries (Saldana, 2013).

Holistic Coding is an attempt "…to grasp basic themes or issues in the data by absorbing them as a whole rather than by analyzing them line by line…" (Dey, 1993, p. 104). Holistic Coding is applicable when the researcher already has a general idea of what to investigate in the data or "…to 'chunk' the text into broad topic areas, as a first step to seeing what is there" (Bazeley, 2007, p. 67). Holistic Coding is appropriate for coding studies with a variety of data forms, such as interview transcripts, diaries, journals, documents, and field notes (Saldana, 2013).

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is the process of establishing reliability and validity in a qualitative study (Jackson, 2003). According to Law (2002) trustworthiness '"…increases readers' confidence that the findings are worthy of attention…" (p. 337). It enables the researcher to persuade his or her audience that his or her findings are authentic. It also delineates the quality of both the research process and the reporting (Curtin & Fossey, 2007). Thus, trustworthiness provides a reliable reflection of the lived experience of the

respondents (Barbour, 1998). The process of establishing trustworthiness can be both complex and challenging; therefore Guba (1981) developed the following criteria of establishing trustworthiness in qualitative research: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

Credibility

Credibility seeks to ensure that the study measures what it purports to measure (Shenton, 2004). In a qualitative study, credibility deals with the issue of how the research finding is in agreement with reality (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In order to achieve credibility, it is important for the researcher to consider several factors. One of the factors to consider includes "prolonged engagement" between the researcher and the participants (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This criterion was achieved in this study by the researcher spending time with the participants through volunteer work. The researcher established rapport with the participants during the time of volunteering at the Boys & Girls Club in order to gain their trust and to be able to obtain valid responses from them.

A second factor for achieving credibility is "triangulation." According to Shenton (2004) '"…triangulation may involve the use of different methods, especially observation, focus groups and individual interviews, which form the major data collection strategies for much qualitative research" (p. 65). Triangulation was achieved in this study through the use of multiple methods to collect data, such as focus groups, face-to-face interviews, and time-use diaries. A third method of enhancing credibility in

qualitative research is “member checking.” Creswell (2007) described “member checking” as ‘“…taking the final report or specific descriptions or themes back to participants and determining whether these participants feel that they are accurate” (p. 196). Member checking can take place “on the spot” and at the end of data collection process (Shenton, 2004). The researcher used member checking to clarify and verify emerging themes and concepts during the data analysis phase of the study. The researcher sought clarification whenever participants deviated in their responses or gave responses that might be difficult to code.

Transferability

Transferability is the ability to apply research findings of one study to other situations or populations (Merriam, 1998). In a qualitative study, it is a challenging task to demonstrate the application of one study to other situations or populations since the findings are often specific to a small number of people (Shenton, 2004). However, transferability is made possible in a qualitative study when the researcher provides a thick description in order to enable readers to compare his or her findings to other situations or populations. In this present study, rich, thick description was not achieved due to the age of the participants, who were also uncomfortable about providing detailed information in a semi-structured setting.

Dependability

Reliability simply means consistency, that is, if the study were to be repeated (all things being equal) the outcomes would be the same each time (Shenton, 2004). Dependability is closely related to credibility in a qualitative study, with the later having greater influence in ensuring the former (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In this study, dependability was achieved through the use of several methods of data collection, such as the focus groups, individual interviews, and time-use dairies. Furthermore, the researcher provided detailed information about the process used in the study, in order to enable future researchers to duplicate the study.

Ethical and Political Considerations

The principal investigator made conscientious efforts and took precautionary measures to ensure the protection of the human participants in this study. The Texas Woman's University Institutional Review Board (TWU IRB) guidelines were enforced during the entire procedure. Before submitting a full review application form to TWU IRB, the principal investigator had already submitted a request to the director of a local Boys & Girls Club and was able to obtain a letter of facility use (Appendix B). With this approval of facility use from a local Boys & Girls Club, and an approval of the dissertation proposal from the Dissertation Committee, the principal investigator then submitted an IRB application form to TWU IRB. With an approval from the TWU IRB, the principal investigator used a purposive sampling method to select adolescents who met the requirements of the study. The participants were given consent forms (Appendix

C) for one of their parents or legal guardians to sign. The consent form contained the names and phone numbers of the principal investigator and the research advisor for contact in the event that participants or parents had questions or concerns about the study. The consent form also contained information about the purpose of the research, participants' right to withdraw from the study at any time, confidentiality, potential risks associated with participation, and participation benefits, which included a $10 gift card.

The researcher created a file for each participant that contained the consent form, responses, and any other non-identifying data. All digital information was stored on the researcher's password-protected computer. Hard copy data were stored in the locked file cabinet of the researcher's home office, and will be shredded within three years after the study is completed. The consent forms will be sent to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) office at Texas Woman's University.

Summary

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the influence of media use on adolescents' academic performance and aggressive behaviors. Studies examining the relationships between media use and adolescents' academic performance have yielded mixed outcomes. However, the findings of the majority of these studies suggested negative relationships, especially, with excessive media use. Moderate computer game use is associated with enhanced academic performance and cognitive skill development, but excessive use is negatively associated with both academic performance and cognitive skill development (Hofferth, 2010).

The study used focus group interviews, face-to-face interviews, and time-use diaries to collect data. The interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed, and analyzed for themes. The researcher retained two assistant researchers, who assisted in data triangulation and member checking, in order to establish the issues of trustworthiness and credibility.

Researcher's Autobiography

The researcher is a doctoral candidate at Texas Woman's University in Denton, Texas. The researcher's interest in the relationship between media use and adolescents' academic and social outcomes was influenced by various experiences as a school teacher, father, and uncle. Anyone who has adolescent children can attest to the degree to which their world revolves around media. However, of greater influence of the researcher's interest in this topic is his first-hand experience as a college instructor, in which he has consistent interaction with students on a weekly basis. The time they spent consuming media invariably displaces the time they could have spent on school activities.

The researcher has infallible passion for teenagers, and a desire in identifying factors that shape their views about life that ultimately affect their success in life. More specifically, what influence does media have on adolescents, and what can adult society do to help them? Adolescents are future leaders, and how they are socialized today will have significant impact on their lives. It is important to recognize that they are sitting on a critical threshold. The decisions they make today will determine their futures.

The primary influence of the researcher's academic pursuit was his late father, Robert Korie. His vision, along with the loyal support of the researcher's mother, Keziah Korie, has paved the way for the researcher's educational journey. Both parents played major roles in his work ethics, integrity, respect for all human beings, and faith in God through His Son, Jesus.

The researcher is a father of one son, and he is an adjunct professor of sociology and psychology at Tarrant County College. He is also a graduate teaching assistant at Texas Woman's University (TWU) Family Sciences Department. His publications include "Teen Media Use, Cognitive Development, and Academic Achievement" at Voice of the Youth Advocate, and "Sex in the Media: Teen' Perception of Body Image and Attitude toward Sex" at Voice of the Youth Advocate. He received his Bachelor's degrees from University of Texas at Dallas (UTD) in public administration and Sociology, and his Master's degree from Texas A&M University, Commerce in Sociology and in Psychology.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

This chapter reports the results of this qualitative study on the relationship between media use and adolescents' academic and aggressive behavior. This study employed three different methods of data collection namely, *focus group interviews*, *individual face-to-face interviews*, and *time-use diaries*. The study was designed to assess participants' levels of exposure of different types of media and their corresponding impact on academic performance and aggressive behavior.

The theoretical frameworks used in this qualitative study were social learning theory and displacement theory, in order to gain understanding of the relational influence of media on adolescents' academic and social outcomes. Social learning theory served as a lens in providing a clearer picture of the relationship between adolescents' media use and their social outcomes, especially aggressive behavior. Media is ubiquitous; thus, social learning theory frames the understanding that behaviors are affected by social and environmental cues operating in a given situational context. It also assumes that learning of new behaviors is a function of observing and imitating the behaviors of others and coding the observed information in memory. Thus, aggressive behaviors as portrayed in the video games are stored in the adolescents' memory and acted out as they observe such aggressive characters on a consistent basis.

The conceptual framework used in this qualitative study in order to gain insight on the relationship between adolescents' media use and academic performance was displacement theory. Displacement theory proposes that time spent in media use displaces the time for academic activities, such as reading and studying (Neuman, 1995). According to this theory, consequences are associated with time spent in media use. That is, the time spent in media entertainment or online social networking, such as Facebook, replaces the time needed for reading, studying, and doing homework, which negatively affects academic achievement.

Description of Research Settings

There were four focus groups used in this study, with the first three focus groups consisting of five members each and the last focus group having four members. Individual face-to-face interviews consisted of five adolescents who were randomly selected. Time-use diaries involved 10 participants who were also randomly selected, and only 8 returned a completed time-use diaries.

Sample Description

The sample of this study consisted of 19 (N = 19) adolescents, who were between ages 11 and 18 and currently attending local Boys & Girls Club after-school program at the time data were collected. The participants were recruited through personal distribution of recruitment flyers (Appendix A). Participants were given a demographic questionnaire to complete prior to each interview. Numerical codes 1-19 were assigned to

the participants in the study. All interviews were conducted in a private room of a Boys & Girls Club located in North Central Texas area.

Focus Groups

This study consisted of four focus groups: FG1, FG2, FG3, and FG4. Focus groups FG1, FG2, and FG3 consisted of five members each, while FG4 consisted of only four members. In FG1, there were three boys and two girls; FG3 consisted of four boys and one girl. Focus groups FG2 and FG4 consisted of all boys. Each focus group consisted of members who were closely related in age. The mean age of the participants in the focus groups interviews was 13.20 years. The median age was 13 years, the mode was 11 years, and standard deviation was 4.13 years. The racial/ethnic background of the participants was as follows: African American (42%), Hispanic (31%), White (11%), Mixed Race (11%), and Asian (5%). Eighty-four percent of the participants were boys and 16% were girls.

Table 1

Mean, Median, and SD of Ages of the Participants in Focus Group (FG) Interviews

	Mean	*Median*	*Mode*	*SD*	Min	Max
Age	13.20	13	11	4.13	11	18

Table 2

Demographic Description of Focus Group (FG) Members

Focus Group	Number of Members	Gender	Age Range
FG 1	5	3 Boys + 2 Girls	11 – 13
FG2	5	5 Boys	11 – 11
FG3	5	4 Boys + 1 Girl	15 – 18
FG 4	4	4 Boys	13 – 15

Individual Face-to-Face Interviews

This study consisted of five individual face-to-face interviews: IF1, IF2, IF3, IF4, and IF5. The participants were randomly selected out of the 19 participants in the focus groups. The selection process involved randomly drawing assigned numbers from a fishbowl. The range of ages of the participants in the individual face-to-face interviews was 12 to 18, with a mean age of 14.8 years. The median age was 15 years, the mode age was also 15 years, and the standard deviation was 4.04. The racial/ethnic background of the sample was 40% African American, 40% Hispanic, and 20% White. The gender of the sample was 100% males. One hundred percent of the adolescents in the face-to-face interview indicated that they lived with both parents.

Table 3

Mean, Median, and SD of Age of the Participants in the Individual Face-to-Face (IF) Interviews

	Mean	*Median*	*Mode*	*SD*	Min	Max
Age	14.8	15	15	4.04	11	18

Table 4

Demographic Description of Individual Face-to-Face (IF) Interviews

IF Interviews	Race	Gender	Age
IF1 (P17)	Hispanic	Male	18
IF2 (P19)	Hispanic	Male	15
IF3 (P18)	White	Male	15
IF4 (P14)	African American	Male	14
IF5 (P1)	Hispanic	Male	12

Time-Use Diary

Time-use diaries consisted of 10 adolescents who were randomly selected out of the 19 participants in the focus group. The selection process involved randomly drawing assigned numbers from a fishbowl. The participants in this study were required to use the time-use diary to record the time and duration of different media used each day for four consecutive days. The days that the participants were required to record their media activities included Saturday, Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday. Collecting data on media activities on both the weekend and weekdays was designed to enable the researcher to analyze patterns of media activities among adolescents during both school days and weekends. The time-use diaries were given to the selected participants on Friday and were returned on Wednesday and Thursday of the following week. The following 10 participants received the time-use diary: P1, P2, P5, P6, P8, P10, P12, P13, P14, and P17, but only the following eight participants returned a completed time-use diary: P1, P2, P5, P6, P12, P13, P14, and P17.

The racial/ethnic background of the participants in the time-use diaries was 38% African American, 38% Hispanic, 12% White, and 12% Mixed Race. The gender composition of the sample was 75% males and 25% females. The mean age of the participants in the time-use diaries was 13.63 years. The median age was 13.00 years, the mode was 11 years, and the standard deviation was 5.80 years. The following participants were involved in all three phases of data collection (focus group interview, individual face-to-face interview, and time-use diary): P1, P14 and P17.

Table 5

Age of the Participants in Time-Use Diary

	Mean	*Median*	*Mode*	*SD*	Min	Max
Age	13.63	13.00	12	5.80	11	18

Table 6

Demographic Description of Participants in the Time-Use Diary

Participants (P)	Race	Gender	Age
P1	Hispanic	Male	12
P2	Mixed	Male	12
P5	African American	Female	12
P6	Hispanic	Male	11
P12	White	Male	15
P13	African American	Female	15
P14	African American	Male	14
P17	Hispanic	Male	18

Table 7

Frequency of Media Activities by Gender, Age, and Day of the Week (7:00 am-midnight)

Time Use Diary Chart

	Gender		Age of the adolescents					Days in which time-use diary was completed				
Activity	Boys	Girls	11	12	14	15	18	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Total Hours
Listening to Music	20	53	4	35	1	32	1	21	19	18	15	73
Watching TV	21	23	6	21	2	15	0	18	10	11	5	44
Watching a Movie	13	6	1	11	3	4	0	4	9	5	1	19
Playing Video Games	71	8	7	22	14	19	17	33	24	9	13	79
Playing Computer Games	29	0	0	13	1	15	0	8	5	7	9	29
Talking on the Phone	8	20	0	15	0	13	0	8	7	8	5	28
Text Messaging	17	34	2	12	0	37	0	17	15	11	8	51
Emailing	3	2	0	3	0	2	0	3	2	0	0	5
Surfing the Internet	18	27	0	4	12	29	0	15	11	8	11	45
Other	108	27	31	54	11	30	9	7	21	42	65	135

Number of hours adolescents spent on each activity by gender, age, and day of the week, from 7:00 am – midnight (n = 8).

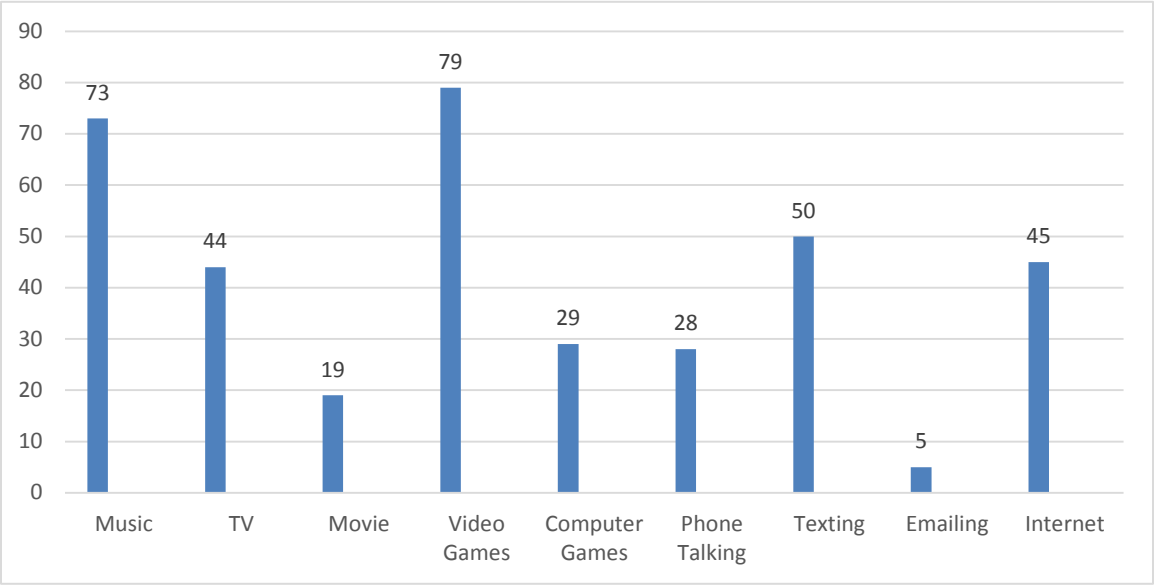

Figure 1. Total number of hours spent in each media, from Saturday to Tuesday (*n* = 8).

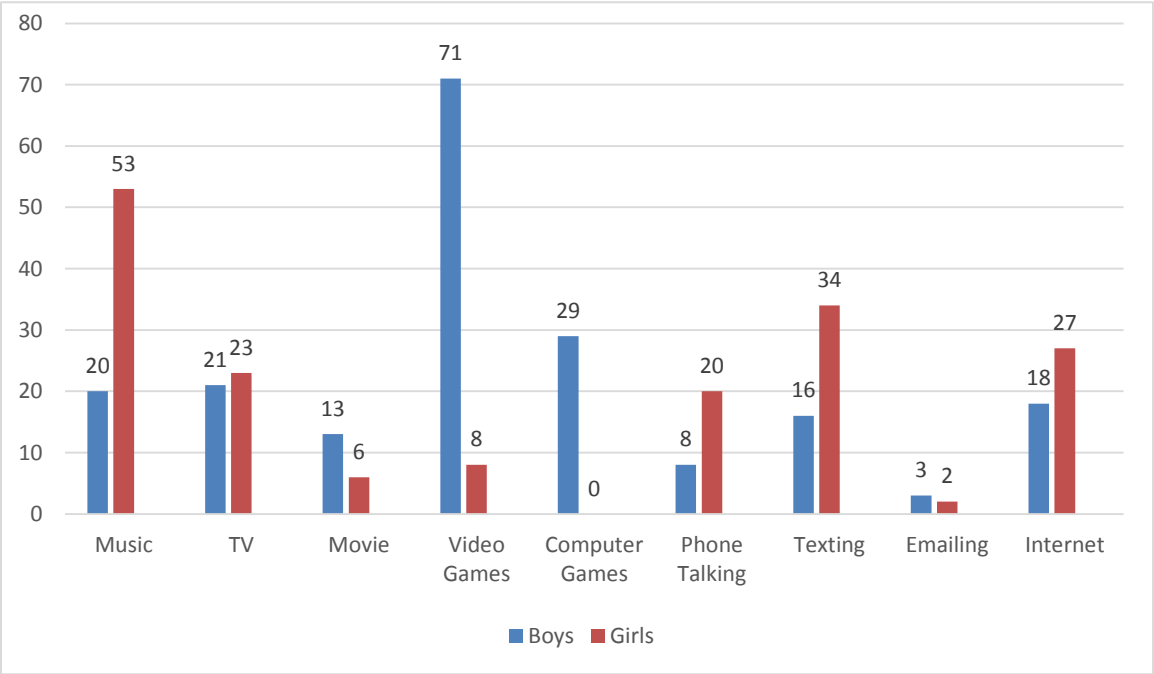

Figure 2. Total number of hours spent in each media by gender, from Saturday to Tuesday (*n* = 8).

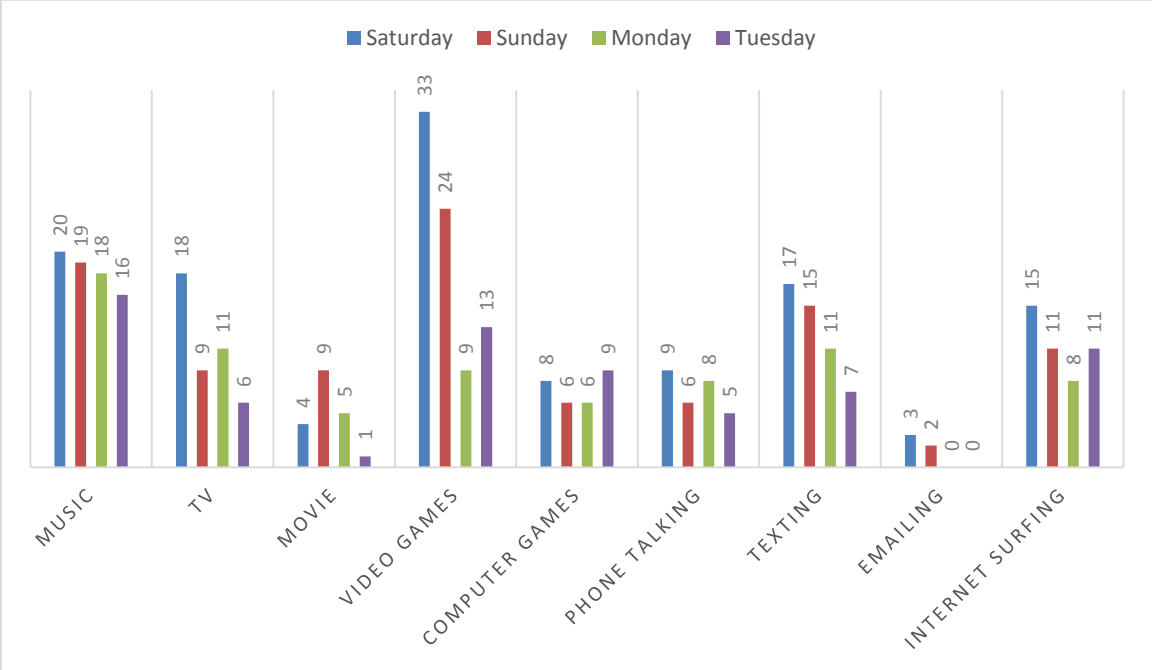

Figure 3. Total number of hours spent in each media per day, from Saturday to Tuesday (n = 8).

Findings

There were two research questions used in this study, with five main interview questions (Table 7). The interview questions consisted of 24 prompting and clarifying questions. The adolescents in the focus group interviews were asked questions relating to media use, primarily their video game play and cell phone use. Questions regarding academic performance, aggressive behavior, and parental involvement were directed to adolescents in the face-to-face interviews.

Table 8

Research Questions and Interview Questions

Research Questions	Interview Questions
1. What is the perceived relationship between adolescents' media use and their academic performance?	**Video Game-Use** 1. Tell me what type of video game do you play? ➢ Do you own a video game console? ➢ Do you play video games with others? ➢ How often do you play video games? ➢ Do you play computer games sometimes? ➢ What type of computer games do you play? ➢ Do you have a favorite video game character? ➢ Do you sometimes imitate your video game character? **Cell Phone-Use** 2. Tell me what type of cell phone do you have? ➢ How often do you use your cell phone to talk to your friends and family members? ➢ Do you talk or text with your cell phone while doing your homework? ➢ Do you use your cell phone texting in the classroom during lectures? ➢ Do you use your cell phone during mealtime? ➢ How much time do you spend texting with your phone each day? ➢ Do you use your cell phone to play games?
2. Does the perceived use of violent media by adolescents influence their aggressive behaviors?	**Academic Performance** 3. In your last progressive report, what grade did you make in your courses? ➢ What are your best subjects at school? ➢ How often do you do your homework? ➢ Do you use cell phone while doing your homework? ➢ Do you sometimes find yourself watching TV, playing a video game, talking on the cell phone, when you are supposed to be doing your homework? **Aggressive Behavior** 4. How many times do you get behavioral referrals from your teachers at school each month? ➢ How many times have you engaged in an argument with your friends, including your boyfriend or girlfriend, in the past month?

(continued)

- How many times have you been in an argument with your parents or siblings in the past month?
- How many times have you been in an argument with someone other than your friends or family members in the past month?
- How many times have any of the above arguments resulted in physical contact including pushing, shoving slapping, hitting, and fighting in the past month?

Parental Involvement

5. Do your parents regulate the TV programs you watch at home?
    - Do your parents sometimes watch TV programs with you?
    - Do your parents have to approve the type of video games you have to purchase?
    - Which of your parents do you live with?

Theme One: Perception That Video Games Are Recreational Activity

One of the themes that emerged from the data was the adolescents' perception that video games are just a recreational activity that enables them to escape reality, as well as to assume a fictional character. From adult viewpoints, video games may seem disruptive and to have negative influence on adolescents' development, but from adolescents' standpoints, playing video games is perceived as a recreational activity that enables them to become a coveted fictional character without any associated consequences. The following responses came from participants in FG4:

> It [video game] helps me to become somebody else, beating the fictional character instead of beating a real person. It calms your brain down and to stay focus[ed],

> you just focus one thing at a time, and after the game you feel calmer and relaxed. I play at night before I go to sleep because it helps me fall asleep.
>
> It [video game] calms me down when I am angry, it takes off my anger, and it helps you of being somebody else.
>
> Yes, because violent game gives you that type of energy that you do not normally get from anywhere else. It wakes you up. You know how you go to school you stay in a class for a long time and you started falling asleep, but with action violent game, it wakes you up and pumps your blood up, and motivates you to keep playing. It keeps you active instead of sitting on the couch.

Because video games are perceived as a recreational activity, adolescents indulge themselves in more video game play. The following responses came from adolescents in FG3:

> Yes, most of our time is playing video games after school. [I play] all day, once we get home from school, the first thing to do is play video games. Yes, sometimes [I] play video games instead of doing homework, but sometimes homework is done at school. I play every day, and imitate favorite sports characters, [but] not for the violent video games.

The participants in the face-to-face interviews stated that the use of media, such as the video games or cell phones, has little or no effect on schoolwork. When asked the question “Do you sometimes find yourself watching TV, playing video games, talking on

the cell phone when you supposed to be doing your homework?" The adolescents responded in the following manner:

> Oh no, I always do my home works first before playing video games or using my cell phone. (IF1)
>
> Sometimes, but I always do my home works first before watching TV or play video game. (IF2)
>
> No. (IF5)

However, the following adolescents admitted that they had used the time for doing their homework to watch TV shows or play video games, as their responses are recorded as follows:

> Pretty much, yes, [because] playing video games is all I think about most of the time. (IF4)
>
> Yes. (IF3)

When the adolescents were asked the question, "In your last progress report, what grade did you make in your courses?" The adolescents' responses:

> I know I made 88 on science, on social studies I made 83, on math I made 92, and language I made 87. (IF5)
>
> I made 95, 86, 70, 60, and 65. (IF4)
>
> My lowest grade was 70 and my highest grade was 90. About three of them I made As, two Bs, and two Cs. (IF3)
>
> I made 3 C, 5 B, and I A. (IF2)

I made B+. (IF1)

Based on the responses from the adolescents, it appears that there was no convincing evidence to suggest that media use had negative influence on the participants' academic performance. But it is possible that media use limited their academic potential. The self-reported grades of the adolescents were generally B average; perhaps these adolescents were potentially A students, if the time spent on media had been directed to schoolwork.

In the analysis of time-use diaries, it is evident that the adolescents spent more time in media consumption on weekends than the weekdays. The adolescents spent a total of 57 hours playing video games on Saturday and Sunday, compared to 22 hours on Monday and Tuesday (see Table 3). Concerning cell phone use, which included texting and talking on the phone, the adolescents spent a total of 47 hours on Saturday and Sunday, as opposed to 32 hours on Monday and Tuesday (see Figure 3). Thus, it is possible that media use has little effect on the adolescents' academic performance since most time spent on media use was on weekends, when the adolescents had little or no schoolwork.

Theme Two: Violent Video Games Are the Most Ideal Games

The type of video games that the adolescents in this study played most of the time was notably violent video games, followed by contact sports games. When each of the focus group members was asked to name the type of video games they play most often, almost every video or computer game named had violence and aggression embedded in

the story. The following video and computer games below were named by the adolescents in the focus group interviews:

Grand Theft Auto 5 (GTA 5), Assassin's Creed, Doodle, FIFA 15, Minecraft, Shooting Showdown, and Sports Champions. (FG1)

GTA 5, FIFA 15, and Call of Duty, 2K games, Madden 15 and 25, and Doodle. (FG2)

Shooting Showdown 2 Pro and Sports Champions. FG3)

Batman Arkham City, Shooting Showdown, GTA series, NBA 2K13, Madden NFL, Infiniti Crisis, Minecraft, Battlefield 3, and Injustice. (FG4)

Table 9

Video and Computer Games Rating

Video and Computer games	FG1	FG2	FG3	FG4	Rating
Assassin's Creed	+				M = Mature 17+
Batman Arkham City				+	T = Teen 13+
Battlefield 3				+	M = Mature 17+
Call of Duty	+	+			T = Teen 13+
Doodle	+	+			E = Everyone 10+
FIFA 15	+	+			E = Everyone 10+
Grand Theft Auto Series (GTAs)	+	+		+	M = Mature 17+
Infiniti Crisis				+	T = Teen 13+
Injustice: God Among Us				+	T = Teen 13+
Madden NFL	+	+		+	E = Everyone 10+
Minecraft	+	+			E = Everyone 10+
NBA 2K13				+	E = Everyone 10+
Robots			+		E = Everyone 10+
Shooting Showdown	+		+	+	E = Everyone 10+
Sports Champions	+			+	E = Everyone 10+

Video games that are rated Mature (M) usually "…require users to be at least 17 years old, and may contain intense violence, blood and gore and sexual content" (Dogruel & Joeckel, 2013, p. 677). Computer and video games in T13+ category "…are suitable for adolescents of 13 years or older and may contain violence, minimal blood or infrequent use of strong language," while games rated E10+ are "…for children aged 10 and older with more elements of mild, cartoon or fantasy violence" (Dogruel & Joeckel, 2013, p. 676). Some of the games in the E10+ category have mild to intense violence and profanity embedded in them. Examples include games like Shooting Showdown, Doodle, and Minecraft. Scenes involving aggressive conflicts, depictions of blood, and violent actions with human and non-human characters are all too common with games in the T13+ category.

When the adolescents in the focus groups were asked to rate the contents of the video and computer games they played, they offered mixed responses. When asked more specifically if the video games are violent games, their responses were recorded as follows:

> Yes, low in violence, but more of combat. (FG1)
>
> Yes, they're violent. (FG3)
>
> Yes, there're shootings, robbing, and violence in them, and some of them are for sports. (FG4)

When the adolescents were asked whether they imitate their favorite video games characters, the adolescents said:

> Sometimes, favorite characters are Trevor and Franklin. Trevor is like a psychopath, he's crazy and he does something out of random ordinary, but Franklin is like a cool guy. (FG4)
>
> [We] imitate favorite sports characters, but not for violent video games. (FG1)

Theme Three: Media and Aggressive Behavior

Factors relating to aggressive behaviors were scripted in the questions that were asked in the individual face-to-face interviews. The questions were designed to assess aggressive incidences between the adolescents and their significant others such as friends, families, and teachers. The adolescents were asked how many times they have received referrals from their teachers at school. The participants responded in the following manner:

> I don't get none, it's not that often …. Just one. (IF1)
>
> None, I did not get any referral this year, but last year I got about three or five referrals. (IF2)
>
> None, I have not received any referral in many years, not in high school or even middle school. (IF3)
>
> No referral, but 2-3 detentions. (IF4)
>
> None. (IF5)

When the adolescents were asked questions relating to behaviors that depict aggression, such as arguments and physical contact with parents, siblings, friends, and strangers, the following responses were given:

> Oh no, I do not argue with my parents. I used to be rebellious in the past, but not anymore. [My parents] taught me kindness, how to control myself, and how to achieve mental, emotional and physical strength, you know. My girlfriend about three arguments in the last two months. My siblings may be three times during the past year.
>
> We get along so great, sometimes we need each other as we get older. [Physical contact was] once with my brother, but it stopped. (IF1)
>
> My girlfriend we argue once a week, my friends we argue every time because we don't like what we say. [I argue] a lot with my sister, but with my parents once in a week. My girlfriend, we don't do that [push or hit each other], but with my sister, we do that a lot. She usually starts it. (IF2)
>
> My girlfriend we never argue about anything, but friends we argue about sports or certain events. [With my siblings] a lot, mostly about video games because sometimes we play together or share games. When I want my game back, my brother will say "Well, I am playing it right now," and we started arguing about that. Yea, sometimes [argue with parents], it will be like, "Have you made your bed up or clean[ed] your room?" and I will say "I did" and they will say "You did not." [Argument with a stranger] One time, I just had an argument yesterday.

> Oh, I will say one time [that argument resulted in physical contact]. (IF3)
>
> Hmmm, actually two [arguments] with my parents, and seven with my brothers. (IF4).
>
> Sometimes [I argue] with my siblings, but not with my parents. (IF5)

Violent video games model criminal activity. The relational influence of video games and criminal activity was also identified. The adolescents in the focus groups were asked if they become hyped-up and motivated to commit crime or violent acts after playing violent video games. The following responses came from the adolescents in FG4:

> Yea, because since GTA 5 came out, everybody started playing it, every kid started messing up, and breaking windows and robbing. [Another adolescent said] for me I have already been in trouble for burglarizing because of playing games like that, now I know not to act the way they act in the video. They get away with it because it was just an act, but you have a very real chance of getting caught. [Another adolescent said], yea, video games will give you tips, idea, and how to burglarize a home. My friend got in trouble doing things he saw playing GTA 4. He tried to burglarize a vacant building.

Theme Four: Cell Phones Are Perceived As Useful Tools

A number of adolescents in the focus groups and individual face-to-face interviews perceived their cell phones as a useful instrument in doing schoolwork and keeping in touch with friends and family, rather than a distraction. When the adolescents

were asked if they talk or text with their cell phone while doing their homework, they responded in the following manner:

> No, unless to look up for information for the homework, or sometimes I use computer to look up for research. (FG1)
>
> No, only use cell phone for calculator. Our parents will not allow us because we have to do homework first. (FG2)
>
> Oh yes, for calculator and research. I always do my homework first before using my cell phone. (IF1)
>
> Yes, I only use it for math, for calculator. I ignore them [text messages or phone calls] unless it is my mom or my family, I will text them back. But if it is one of my friends, I ignore them. (IF2)
>
> Yes, I use [cell phone] calculator and other apps that help me to do my work, but at the same time I get distracted when I get text messages. (IF3)
>
> No, sometimes I use my computer. (IF5)

Cell phones are used more to communicate with friends than with family members. Most of the adolescents in this study stated that they used their cell phones more to communicate with their friends than with family members. When asked whether they communicated more with family than friends, the responses were:

> More with friends, because in the morning, they [friends] say good morning, and I will text them back and say good morning. After school, I spend about 4 hours

texting, and sometimes text during dinner, but my mom will say, “Not now, you cannot text at this time.” (FG1)

Both, but mostly friends. (FG2)

Friends, because we have to keep in touch with friends to know what they are doing. (FG3)

[We] do not use the cell phone to talk to anyone; we talk to friends through texting, Facebook, and Instagram. The social media lets you use texting, Instagram, and Facebook with your cell phone. (FG4)

Texting is the most preferred means of communication over talking on cell phones. The adolescents spent more time texting than talking with their cell phones based on their responses below, which is consistent with the analysis of the time-use diaries.

More texting than talking, [and spent] 5 – 12 hours texting, [and] 30 minutes talking. (FG3)

Thirty minutes to eight hours a day texting. [We] use cell phone[s] to talk to friends.

(FG4)

More texting than talking, [about] 10 minutes to more than 7 hours each day. After school I spent about 4 hours texting, and sometimes text during dinner. Talking on the phone is 30 minutes to 5 hours or more every day. (FG1)

About 30 minutes to 3 hours texting, [and] 10 minutes talking (FG2)

Theme Five: Parental Involvement in Media Use

Parental involvement in their adolescents' media use plays a significant role in the type and duration of media consumed. *Parental involvement* in this study refers to characteristics and behaviors used by parents in order to control the media usage of their adolescent children, as well as to moderate the effects of media on their lives. There are three aspects of parental involvement considered in this study: *Parental regulation in media consumption, parental participation in media consumption,* and *parental approval in purchasing video games*.

Parental regulation in media consumption. When the adolescents were asked if their parents regulate their media usage, the followings were their responses:

> Yes, my mother sometimes says that that I should not watch some scary movies, like the other time I was watching a scary movie which has blood, she always say[s] that I will have nightmare[s]. (IF1)
>
> Yes, they tell me that I cannot watch some programs. (IF2)
>
> They put like censor in the TV that we cannot watch some certain programs, but for games, we can have any type of games we want, no matter what kind of rating it has. (IF3)
>
> Yes, because they say it is inappropriate for me to watch. (IF4)
>
> Yes, because if we watch certain programs or violent programs, we get in trouble. (IF5)

No, because we have schedule given to us by our parents, and once we finished doing our homework and other things, we can play our video games. (FG4)

Not really, because once we did our homework, we can play video games or use our cell phones. (FG3)

Sometimes, they do. (FG2)

No, because we use them as long as we can, cell phone, tablet, TV, or video games. As long as we do our work, they are okay with it. But if we have work to do, we do it and jump back to using the media. (FG4)

Parents' participation in media consumption. The followings were the responses from the adolescents when they were asked if their parents participate with them in media usage:

Yes they do, they say you cannot imitate the behaviors in TV or join gangs, because there was this movie that was showing about street gangs. (IF1)

No, we're just on our own. (IF3)

Whenever it is movie night. (IF4)

Yes, like they say do not copy them, because sometimes when they are cussing, they say "Don't copy them." (IF5)

Parental approval in purchasing video games. When the adolescents were asked whether their parents have to approve the type of video games they purchase, they offered the following responses:

Yes, that was before I was 17, because I could not watch or have games that have nudity, cussing, blood, or anything like that. (IF1)

Sometime[s], I use my own money to buy them (IF2)

No, they actually have to buy them for us. When we go to store, we tell them the games we want, they don't ask questions, they just buy them. (IF3)

No! (IF4)

Yes, because we can't have violent video games. (IF5)

Summary

This chapter presented the results of this qualitative study that was designed to explore the relationship between media use and adolescents' academic performance and aggressive behavior. Three different methods of data collection were employed: focus group interviews, face-to-face interviews, and time-use diaries. A description of participants in each level of data collection, analysis of data, and reporting of findings were provided. The data were organized according to the research and interview questions, and were read multiple times in order to determine patterns of participants' responses. The findings yielded five salient themes: (1) perception that video games are for recreational activity; (2) violent video games are perceived as the most ideal type of games; (3) media and aggressive behavior; (4) cell phones are perceived as useful tools; and (5) perceived role of parental involvement in media use.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, REFLECTIONS, LIMITATIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This qualitative study explored the relational influence of media on adolescents' academic performance and aggressive behavior, using focus group interviews, face-to-face interviews, and time-use diary methodology to collect data. The study was conducted at Boys & Girls Club located in North Central Texas area, in a private room where the researcher interviewed 19 adolescents about their media use in relation to their schoolwork, grades, and social adjustments. Time-use diaries were employed in order to gather further insights about patterns of media use among the adolescents. Demographic questionnaires were completed by all participants. Data were analyzed qualitatively to determine emerging themes. This chapter concludes the study with an examination of limitations, implications, and recommendations relative to a broader understanding of this study within the scope of family studies and human development.

Discussion of Findings

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between media use and adolescents' academic performance and aggressive behavior. Media are defined as a medium of communication that reach or influence people, such as television, Internet, video games, cell phones, radio, newspaper, and other types of communication tools.

In this study, adolescents' media use was focused primarily on video games and cell phones. This study was framed by two research questions:

1. What is the perceived relationship between media use by adolescents and their academic performance?
2. Does the perceived use of violent media by adolescents influence their aggressive behavior?

This research utilized a phenomenological methodology to gain insights about the lived experiences of adolescents' media use, relative to their academic performance and aggressive behavior. Existing studies on this subject have only used quantitative research designs as the primary methods of data collection, which, in part, undermine a critical aspect of the adolescents' lived experiences relative to media use and its impact. This phenomenological approach served as a guide in providing a philosophical insight and worldview of the relationship between media use and adolescents' academic performance and aggressive behavior, especially from the adolescents' lived experiences, perceptions, and interpretations. The findings of this study will contribute to the existing body of knowledge. The data were organized and analyzed according to research and interview questions, in order to determine patterns of participants' responses, which yielded five salient themes.

Theme One: Perception That Video Games Are Recreational Activity

One of the major themes that emerged in this study was adolescents' perception and interpretation of video game use, which has not been highlighted in past quantitative

research design. From adult viewpoints, video games may seem disruptive and to have negative influence on the adolescents' development, but from adolescents' standpoint, playing video games is perceived as a recreational activity that enables them to escape reality and become somebody else. The video games served as an outlet for expression of anger, and frustration, and for relaxation as expressed by adolescents in FG4: "It [video game] calms me down when I am angry, it takes off my anger, and it helps you of being somebody else." Another adolescent stated:

> It helps me to become somebody else, beating the fictional character instead of beating a real person. It calms your brain down and to stay focus[ed], you just do one thing at a time, and after the game you feel calmer and relaxed. I play at night before I go to bed because it helps me fall asleep.

Research findings on the relationship between violent video games and aggression have produced mixed results. Studies conducted by Anderson (2004), Anderson and Bushman (2001), Gentile and Anderson (2003), and Anderson et al. (2010) have suggested that exposure to violent video games increases aggression. However, there are other quality studies that have not been able to replicate the same findings (Ballard, Visser, & Jocoy, 2012; Tear & Nielson, 2013). Thus, playing violent video games served as a buffer against committing aggressive and violent acts toward another person. In the analysis of data collected in this study, there was some evidence, however weak, to suggest that playing violent video games has relational influence on the adolescents. Although the adolescents perceived playing action and violent video games as a fun

recreational activity, and in some cases, an avenue to unleash their grievances on a fictional character rather than on a human being, there was some evidence based on the adolescents' relationship with friends and family members that depicted aggression.

Research findings on the relationship between video game play and academic performance have been inconsistent. Some research findings suggest that time spent in playing video games has an inverse relationship with academic performance (Anand, 2007; Anderson & Dill, 2000; Ogletree & Drake, 2007), and other findings indicate insignificant relationships (Wack & Tantleff-Dunn, 2009). In this study, the average grades reported by each participant during the face-to-face interviews was B, except one adolescent whose average grade was C. Based on these self-reported grades, there is no compelling evidence to suggest that media use had negative effects on adolescents' academic performance. It is possible however, that these adolescents did not maximize the study time needed to increase their potential to be A students, and might have invested some crucial time for studies in video game play and other media activities. Hence, displacement theory argues that time spent in media activity displaces time that could have been spent in educational activities, such as reading and studying (Beentjes & van der Voort, 1989; Shin, 2004).

Furthermore, parental involvement played a critical role in moderating the negative influence of media on adolescents. Seventy-five percent of the adolescents in the focus group interviews stated that their parents forbade them from using media until homework was done, and all of the adolescents in the face-to-face interviews stated that

parents had restrictions in media use. Thus parental control of media use created pathways for discretionary media use (DMU) among the adolescents. That is, time spent in media use did not displace the time needed to do homework; consequently, media use did not negatively influence academic performance.

Another explanation why this study did not find convincing evidence to link media use to poor academic performance is because the adolescents in this study are not considered heavy media users. In a study conducted by Rideout et al. (2010), with a sample of more than 2,000 young people across the U.S., between ages 8 and 18; three types of media users were identified: heavy users, moderate users, and light users. Heavy users were those who used more than 16 hours of media every day, moderate users are teens who use 3-16 hours of media daily, and light users were those who used less than 3 hours a day. Rideout et al.'s (2010) study indicated that 47% of the heavy users' grades were Cs or lower, while light and medium users had better grades than heavy users. This finding was consistent with this study, wherein the adolescents in this study consumed less than 16 hours of media contents per day, and may be categorized as medium users. The average time of media use for the adolescents in this study was 11.39 hours (see Table 7), and their self-reported grades were generally Bs, which is consistent with the grades of adolescents who are moderate and light media users in the Rideout et al. (2010) study.

Yet another explanation why there was no relational influence of media use on adolescents' academic performance in this study is because of the role of after-school

programs such as Boys & Girls Club play in academic performance. A number of studies have linked attendance at community-based adolescent programs to improved academic performance, increased pro-social behaviors, and higher levels of school attendance (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2003; Anthony et al., 2009; Shernoff, 2010). Analysis of 35 studies conducted by Lauer et al. (2006) suggested that community-based youth programs were positively related to improved academic performance and reduction in deviant behaviors among children and adolescents. These studies identified several significant improvements in math and reading skills for high school students as well as elementary school and middle school students.

Theme Two: Violent Video Games Are the Most Ideal Games

Among the adolescents interviewed in the focus groups, there was a common trait in the type of video and computer games they played. The adolescents reported that their favorite type of video games were action and violent video games. Playing violent video games has unique psychological and physiological effects on the adolescents as implied in some of their responses: "It [video game] calms my brain down and stay focus[ed] ….. it helps me to fall asleep." "It calms me down when I am angry, it takes off my anger, and it helps you of being somebody else."

> Yes, because violent game give[s] you that type of energy that you do not normally get from anywhere else. It wakes you up. You know how you go to school you stay in a class for a long time and you started falling asleep, but with

action violent game, it wakes you up and pumps your blood up, and motivates you to keep playing. It keeps you active instead of sitting on the couch.

These findings are consistent with the research findings of Funk, Buchman, and Germann (2000), von Salisch, Vogelgesang, Kristen, & Oppl (2011), and Slater, Henry, Swaim, & Anderson (2003). Interest in violent electronic media increases with age. Younger teens tend to be at the phase of experimentation with different types of games, and as they get older, they progress into a phase of specialization (von Salisch et al., 2011). Interest in violent video games is popular among both boys and girls (Funk et al., 2000). Although the girls in the focus group interviews were less expressive about their interest in playing video games, the video games they identified as their favorites were equally violent as those identified by boys. In the analysis of time-use diary charts (see Table 7) the frequency of video game play for the girls was lower than for the boys. In addition, the average time girls spent playing video and computer games during the four-day period were lower than that spent by boys (see Figure 2). The average game play time for each of the two girls was one hour per day, compared to almost three hours by each boy. The finding in this study is consistent with the findings of a number of other studies, which have shown that boys spend more time playing both video and computer games than do girls (Burgess, Stermer, & Burgess, 2012; Gentile et al., 2004; Marshall, Gorely, & Biddle, 2006). Most games feature male-oriented activities with male characters that appeal to the interests of boys the most (von Salisch, Oppl, & Kristen 2006). Violent video games are the most popular among adolescent boys and girls;

however, boys spend more time playing them than do girls (Funk et al., 2000; Hartmann & Klimmt, 2006).

Theme Three: Media and Aggressive Behavior

Another major theme in this study is media and aggressive behavior, that is, the relational influence of media on adolescents' aggressive behavior. When the adolescents in face-to-face interviews were asked, "How many times do you get behavioral referrals from your teacher at school each month?" four out of five participants said "none." However, when they were asked about arguments and/or physical contact with parents, siblings, or friends, all the participants said that they have been involved in arguments with friends and family members, with some leading to physical contact. Here are some of the responses made by the adolescents:

> My girlfriend we argue once a week, my friends we argue every time because we don't like what we say. [I argue] a lot with my sister, but with my parents once in a week. My girlfriend, we don't do that [push or hit each other], but with my sister, we do that a lot. She usually starts it. (IF2)
>
> Oh no, I do not argue with my parents. I used to be rebellious in the past, but not anymore. [My parents] taught me kindness, how to control myself, and how to achieve mental, emotional and physical strength, you know. My girlfriend about three arguments in the last two months. My siblings may be three times during the past year. We get along so great; sometimes we need each other as we get older. [Physical contact was] once with my brother, but it stopped. (IF1)

Oh, I will say one time [that argument resulted in physical contact]. (IF3)

Three of the five participants who have been involved in arguments with friends or family members also stated that the arguments led to physical contact. This behavioral pattern is consistent with a number of studies that have linked repeated violent video and computer game play to an increased aggressive behavior (Anderson & Bushman, 2001; Anderson, 2004; Bushman & Anderson, 2001; Gentile et al., 2004). Theoretical frameworks such as social learning theory (Bandura, 2002) assume that behaviors are affected by social and environmental cues operating in a given situational context. Thus, repeated exposure of violent video games models aggressive behavior to the adolescents and negatively affects them.

A meta-analysis of violent video games and aggression, which involved 607 eighth and ninth grade students, revealed that the adolescents became hostile and aggressive after being exposed to violent video games (Gentile et al., 2004). The above study revealed that adolescents who played violent video games imitated the characters during free play. In other studies, violent video game play was linked to desensitization to real-life violence, hostility, and aggression (Bartholow, Bushman, & Sestir, 2005; Carnagey, Anderson, & Bushman, 2006).

In this study, the relational influence of violent video and computer games was also linked to criminal activity. Some of the adolescents in the focus group interview

stated that playing violent video games modeled criminal behavior for them. Below are statements of three adolescents in FG4:

> Since GTA 5 came out, everybody started playing it, every kid started messing up, and breaking windows and robbing. [Another adolescent said] For me I have already been in trouble for burglarizing because of playing games like that, now I know not to act the way they act in the video. They get away with it because it was just an act, but you have a very real chance of getting caught. [Another adolescent said], yea, video games will give you tips, idea, and how to burglarize a home. My friend got in trouble doing things he saw playing GTA 4. He tried to burglarize a vacant building.

Adolescents tend to imitate inappropriate behaviors that they observe in the media. Social learning theory (Bandura 2002) assumes that learning of new behaviors is a function of observing the behaviors of others and coding the observed information in memory. Thus, crimes that are portrayed in the video games are stored in the adolescents' memory and acted out as they observe such criminal activities on a consistent basis. It is evident in this study that there is a relational influence of violent video and computer game play on the adolescents' aggressive behavior. However, the evidence of a relationship between violent video game play and aggressive behavior is weak. The type of aggressive behavior exhibited by the adolescents in this study may not be any different from what one might find in a typical sibling relationship. It is possible that parental involvement and participation in community-based programs played major roles in

moderating the negative influence of violent media use. Long-term participation as well as consistency in attendance in community-based programs has been linked to numerous benefits for at-risk adolescents. For example, a number of studies have been able to link decreased incidences of poor academic achievement, school dropout, delinquency, reduced social problems, and substance abuse to long-term and consistent involvement in community-based programs (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2010; Anderson-Butcher & Cash, 2010; Durlak et al., 2010; Lambert et al., 2004; Peck et al., 2008; Posner & Vandell, 1994; Schinke et al., 1992).

Theme Four: Cell Phones Are Perceived As Useful Tools

Eighty-nine percent of the adolescents in this study indicated that they own a cell phone. According to a study conducted by Lenhart et al. (2010), 75% of U.S. adolescents between ages 12 and 17 own a cell phone. It is likely that the percentage of cell phone ownership among adolescents has significantly increased from 2010 to 2015. A majority of the adolescents in this study stated that cell phone use has not been a source of academic distraction for them, either in doing their homework or paying attention during class lectures. The adolescents' self-reported school grades in this study did not reflect a negative relationship between phone use and academic performance. In comparison, other studies have yielded mixed outcomes regarding a relationship between cell phone use and academic performance, although a majority of the studies have suggested a negative relationship. In a cross-sectional descriptive study that consisted of 1,328 adolescents between ages 13 and 20, it was found that frequent cell phone use was related

to poor academic performance (Sanchez-Martinez & Otero, 2009). In another study that involved 1,438 adolescents ages 10-18, it was found that texting was associated with better comprehension and reading skills, while talking on the phone resulted in a weak, but statistically significant, association with lower scores on the Letter-Word Identification Test (Hofferth & Moon, 2012). A possible explanation why the cell phone use did not have adverse effects on academic performance of the adolescents in this study is because of parental regulation, school regulation, and self-regulation about phone use. Eighty percent of the adolescents in the face-to-face interviews stated that they used their cell phone while doing their homework only for the purpose of using the calculator and searching for information. During the focus group interviews, 75% of the adolescents stated that their parents prohibit them from using their cell phones while doing their homework except for the purpose of using the calculator. In addition, 75% indicated that they do not use their cell phone at school during class lectures, because their school and teacher prohibit cell phone use in the classroom. In this study, the adolescents used their cell phone during leisure time; therefore, study time was not affected. Consequently, there was no negative relationship between cell phone use and academic performance. It is not inherent that cell phone use has to produce negative effect on academic performance, especially if the cell phone was used during leisure time or outside classroom and study time. In the examination of the relationship between cell phone use and academic performance, it is expedient to consider some intervening factors, such as the amount of time spent in using the cell phone, and when and how the cell phone was

used. Discretional cell phone use, that is, the use of cell phone that was done outside classroom, and did not interfere with homework or study time, does not necessarily have to produce a negative association with academic performance, as the finding of this study indicated.

In the analysis of the time-use diaries, the average time each adolescent spent on cell phone use (talking and texting) was 2.26 hours per day (see Figure 1). The adolescents in the focus group interviews stated that they spent more time texting than talking on the phone. Also, an analysis of time-use diary data indicated that 64% of phone use time was spent in texting, while 36% was spent in talking. Past studies have linked texting to better academic performance (Hofferth & Moon, 2012; Plester & Wood, 2009). Sending and receiving text messages could help adolescents in composing sentences and phrases, and may enhance their spelling skills and reading proficiency.

Girls who participated in the time-use diary spent more time in both texting and talking on the phone than did boys (see Figure 2). The average time each girl spent per day talking on the phone was 2.5 hours, while the average time for each boy per day was 20 minutes. Girls spent an average of 4 hours and 15 minutes in texting each day, and boys spent an average of 43 minutes texting each day. This finding is consistent with the finding of a study conducted by Jackson et al. (2008) that compared the differences between males and females' cell phone use. In that study, researchers compared the cultural and gender differences in cell phone between 600 U.S. children and 600 Chinese children, with ages ranging from 10 to 16 years old. It was found that U.S. girls used cell

phones more than any other group in the study. In another study with a sample of 704 participants, aged from 18-24 years, it was found that females were more likely to use cell phones than males as a way to connect with others and strengthen relationships (Morrill, Jones, & Vaterlaus, 2013).

Theme Five: Parental Involvement in Media Use

Parental involvement in children's media use is essential in mitigating the effect of media on children's academic performance and aggressive behavior (Nikken & Jansz, 2006). In this study, three facets of parental involvement were explored, namely, *parental regulation in media consumption, parental participation in media consumption,* and *parental approval in purchasing video games*. Valkenburg, Krcmar, Peeters, and Marseille (1999) conducted studies (pilot and main) that identified three types of parental involvement in media use: (1) Restrictive Mediation, (2) Instructive Mediation, and (3) Social Coviewing. In the studies, 642 participants were placed into two age groups. The age group of the first was between 5-8 years old, and the second was 9-12 years old. *Restrictive Mediation* is a situation where parents use rules and regulations to control their children's media use habits, as well as restraining the consumption of certain programs. *Instructive Media* is a situation where parents will discuss some certain episode of the media, in order to instruct and guide their children. *Social Coviewing* is a situation where parents and their children simply enjoy consumption of media programs together, without engaging in any specific discussion about program.

Parental regulation in media consumption. During the face-to-face interviews, the adolescents were asked if their parents put restrictions on their media consumption. The responses from the adolescents were 100% in affirmation that their parents regulated their media use, from forbidding them to watch certain inappropriate media programs to censorship and to punishing children if the regulations are violated. The caveat in this regulation is that it applied only to TV consumption but not to purchasing and using computer and video games. This finding is inconsistent with the findings of the study conducted by Rideout et al. (2010), which involved 2002 adolescents between ages 8 and 18, in which 46% of the adolescents indicated their parents had rules regarding TV viewing. In this study, parental regulation of the type of media consumed by the adolescents may have contributed in minimizing the rate of referrals the adolescents received at school. Parental involvement has been attributed in reducing adolescent conduct problems and substance abuse (Clark, Thatcher, & Maisto, 2004; Pearce, Jones, Schwab-Stone, & Ruchkin, 2003).

Parental participation in media consumption. Sixty percent of the adolescents in the face-to face interviews stated that their parents joined them in media use. During each stage of coviewing, parents discussed some certain aspects of the program, as well as giving instructive statements like: “You cannot imitate the behaviors in TV or join gangs” (IF1). “Do not copy them” (IF5). Thus, the parents of the adolescents in this study used coviewing events as teachable moments to instruct, guide, and distinguish appropriate and inappropriate media characters. Some studies have shown that parent-

child relationships that are fostered by affection and communication play critical roles in reducing social problems and child delinquency (Law, Shapka, & Olson, 2010; Pearce et al., 2003) promote emotional and social adjustment (Sui-Chu & Willms, 1996), and improve academic performance (Cheung & Pomerantz, 2011; Englund et al., 2004).

Parental approval in purchasing video games. Forty percent of adolescents in the face-to-face interviews stated that their parents did not have to approve the type of video games they purchased, while 20% stated that sometimes parental approval was needed, and sometimes was not needed. One of the adolescents in the study stated: "No, they [parents] actually have to buy them for us. When we go to store, we tell them the games we want, they don't ask questions, they just buy them" (IF3).

It is evident that some parents had little or no restriction in the type of video games that their adolescent children purchased or played. In a survey with a sample of 1,178 adolescents, ages 8 through 18, 56% of the adolescents reported that they had no parental rules about the type of video games they play, while 44% reported that they had rules about when they were allowed to play, and 7% stated that they had used their money to purchase video games without the approval of their parents (Gentile, 2009).

Focus Groups and Face-to-Face Interviews

The data for the focus groups and face-to-face interviews were collected in a private room of Boys & Girls Club located in North Central Texas. The atmosphere was relaxed and unobtrusive; however, most of the adolescents gave short and direct answers to the interview questions. They were careful to respond to the interview questions

meticulously, and made little or no effort to elaborate on their responses. In some cases, the adolescents simply stated “yes, Sir” or “no, Sir” to the questions, except when probing questions were asked. The adolescents in Focus Group 4 were more open and interactive, and offered more detailed responses than the adolescents in the other focus groups. The ages of the participants may have played a major role in the manner in which the adolescents responded to the interview questions, wherein the semi-formal setting may have limited them in expressing themselves freely.

However, the three methods used in collecting data in this study provided much-needed solid and concrete data in exploring the relationship between media use and adolescents’ academic and aggressive behavior. The use of multiple methods to collect data made it possible to examine the relational influence of media on adolescents’ academic performance and aggressive behavior from three different vantage points, with each method providing a clearer picture and credibility to the study. They were useful sources for triangulation, which enhanced the credibility of this qualitative research. According to Shenton (2004) ‘“…triangulation may involve the use of different methods, especially observation, focus groups and individual interviews, which form the major data collection strategies for much qualitative research” (p. 65).

Time-Use Diary

Time-use diaries in this study were very valuable in comparing data collected during the focus group interviews and actual media activity and time spent by each adolescent each day. The adolescents were able to record a full day’s media activities and

the amount of time spent on each activity. The diaries painted a more vivid picture of which media is more important to the adolescents, frequency of use, duration of time, and the day of the week that attracted more media activity. It was evident from the data collected from the time-use diaries, that the adolescents consumed more media on the weekends than on the weekdays. It was also evident that boys spent more time playing computer and video games than did girls, while girls spent more time in using the cell phone (both texting and talking), watching TV, and surfing the Internet than did the boys.

Conclusion

This qualitative study explored the relational influence of media use on adolescents' academic performance and aggressive behaviors, using focus group interviews, face-to-face interviews, and time-use diary methodology to collect data. The study was guided by two research questions as well as two conceptual frameworks. The theoretical frameworks served as a lens in gaining better understanding of the relationship between media use and adolescents' academic performance and aggressive behaviors. Displacement theory provided a better insight about the inverse relationship between media use and school grades among adolescents. Displacement theory proposes that time spent in media use displaces the time for academic activities, such as reading and studying (Hofferth, 2009; Neuman, 1995). This theory posits that media use affects students' academic performance by displacing the time for other activities that are crucial to students' academic success, such as reading or doing homework.

The findings in this study did not indicate an inverse relationship between media use and academic performance. An explanation to this inverse relationship is that the adolescents in this study may be described as discretionary media users (DMU). That is, media are used only after homework is done, which suggests that the time spent in media use did not displace the time for doing homework or other school-related activities. Parental involvement that placed rules and regulations on media use was instrumental in mitigating potential negative effects of media on academic performance. Past studies on the relationship between media use and academic performance have been inconsistent. Some studies have suggested that time spent in media has an inverse relationship with academic performance (Anand, 2007; Anderson & Dill, 2000; Ogletree & Drake, 2007), and another study indicated a weak relationship (Wack & Tantleff-Dunn, 2009).

Social learning theory was used to explain the connection between media use and aggressive behavior among adolescents. It assumes that learning of new behaviors is a function of observing the behaviors of others and coding the observed information in memory (Bandura, 2002). Thus, aggressive behaviors as portrayed in video games are stored in the adolescents' memory and acted out as they observe such aggressive characters on a consistent basis. There was evidence in this study that linked violent video game use to aggressive behavior. Eighty percent of the adolescents in the face-to-face interviews reported that they have had multiple arguments with siblings, parents, friends, or strangers within the last 30 days. Sixty percent of the adolescents stated that the arguments resulted in physical contact. A number of studies have shown that playing

violent video games is associated with aggressive behavior among children and adolescents (Anderson & Bushman, 2001; Gentile et al., 2004). Video violence has been linked to desensitization to real-life violence, hostility, and aggression (Bartholow et al., 2005; Carnagey et al., 2006). In addition, some adolescents stated that video games were a source of modeling criminal activity to them. "Violent media increase aggression by teaching observers how to aggress, by priming aggressive cognitions (including previously learned aggressive scripts and aggressive perceptual schemata), by increasing arousal, or by creating an affective state" (Anderson & Bushman, 2001, p. 355).

Parental involvement played a critical role in the outcomes of the study. Because children and adolescents depend on their parents to provide guidance and instruction about life, so the adolescents in this study relied on the time schedules provided by their parents about their media use. According to Nikken and Jansz (2006), parental control about media use may play an important role in mitigating the negative effects of media. In this study, there was no convincing evidence to suggest that media use had a negative impact on the adolescents' academic performance. However, findings in this study suggested relational influence of violent video game play on aggressive behavior.

The use of multiple methods for data collection was a major strength to this study. It was useful in exploring the relationship between media use and adolescents' academic performance and aggressive behavior from three different vantage points, with each method providing either additional data or validating the data of the other methods. It

also served as a reliable source for triangulation, which enhanced the credibility of this qualitative research.

Reflections

A researcher plays a significant role in data collection, coding, and data analyzing processes of a study. “Good research is not good methods as much as it is about good thinking” (Stake, 1995, p.19). Reflection enables a researcher to think critically about the study, confront and challenge his own assumptions, and recognize how his own thoughts and actions might affect the outcomes of the research (Mason, 2002).

After IRB approval, I met with my major advisor to discuss the logistics of the next phase. Based upon the decision we reached, I proceeded with data collection immediately after I received the letter of approval from the Graduate School. During the course of data collection and the dissertation process, I maintained contact with my major advisor via emails, phone calls, and visits to her office at TWU. In July 15, 2015, I met with my major advisor from 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm, in which she provided much needed guidance in the coding process. Three different types of coding were identified as suitable for my data. Also, on August 10, 2015, I met with my major advisor from noon to 2:00 pm, to discuss and to update her about the progress of my dissertation.

The quest for this study has been deep rooted in my heart over the years. My passion for the topic has evolved over the years, as I have developed curiosity to have more understanding about the influence of media on adolescents’ academic performance

and aggressive behavior. It is my hope that the findings in this study will add knowledge to the existing literature, enlighten parents, and educate the public and policy makers.

Limitations

This qualitative study was not without its own limitations. There are a few important limitations identified in this study, and one of them is that the results are not generalizable to a larger population because of the limited number of participants (N = 19). Another limitation is the reliance on self-report of the adolescents' lived experiences, school grades, aggressive incidences, and completion of media time-use diaries. A corroborative report from parents and teachers would have been helpful to validate the adolescents' reports.

Implications

The findings in this study have implications that are deemed useful to family studies professionals, parents, educators, counselors, policy makers, and social workers. Based on the findings of this study, it is important to develop prevention and intervention programs in order to minimize negative associations between media use and academic performance and aggressive behavior. The programs should include multiple pathways to combating negative impacts of media on children and adolescents, and should target both at-risk and non-at-risk children. The role of family studies professionals is significant in designing such programs that should target children at a young age. The earlier such programs are implemented in the lives of children while still in their formative years, the more likely the programs will be effective. The implementation of any prevention and

intervention programs will require the active involvement of parents and educators in order to ensure effective outcomes.

Families are pathways for adolescents' healthy media use as well as psychological and social adjustments. Families of adolescents can be assisted with the development of social programs and public policies that are designed from the vantage point to encourage parents to become more involved in their adolescents' media use in order to moderate any associated negative effects. Programs that emphasize the implementation of media use schedules, parental monitoring of media use, and parental involvement in academic and social development, would be beneficial to the adolescents' attitude toward media use, academic performance and social development. Studies have shown that parent-child relationships that are fostered by affection and communication play critical roles in reducing social problems and child delinquency (Law et al., 2010; Pearce et al., 2003) promote emotional and social adjustment (Sui-Chu & Willms, 1996) and improve academic performance (Cheung & Pomerantz, 2011; Englund et al., 2004; Muller, 2001). The findings of this study suggested that parental involvement was instrumental in mitigating negative associations between media use and academic performance.

Educators play important roles in shaping students' academic paths, lives, attitudes toward media use, and social adjustment. Schools should implement policies that stipulate clear expectations of their students, such as media use at school, academic achievement, and social adjustment. School policies that promote responsible media use will help students in exercising self-discipline. Clear expectations and structure from

teachers will help in creating a positive learning environment for the students, as well as enhancing their autonomy (Anderson et al., 2004; Fredricks et al., 2004; Reschly & Christenson, 2006). In addition, regulations on media use will enable adolescents to consume media responsibly. In this study, 60% of the schools the adolescents attended instituted policies that prohibited media use at school, which in part prevented the adolescents from using media in the classrooms.

Recommendations

Future research should consider longitudinal examinations of the relationships between media use and adolescents' academic performance and aggressive behavior. Longitudinal studies may provide more comprehensive results of the effects of media use on both short-term and long-term bases. This will help to identify an array of risk factors associated with adolescents' media use. It is important for future research to investigate the effects of intervention programs, such as after-school and community-based programs in adolescents' media use. Furthermore, they may prove helpful to have a corroborative report from parents in assessing adolescents' media use.

In addition, future research should endeavor to use mixed method research designs, which will most likely yield clearer and broader outcomes of the associations between media use and adolescents' academic performance and aggressive behavior. Quantitative research allows the researcher to generate numerical data that are absolute, objective, and statistically valid, while qualitative research allows the researcher to gather in-depth data in a naturalistic setting that may reflect participants' emotions, perceptions,

and lived experience (Saldana, 2009; Seidman, 2006). Qualitative data are useful in enhancing the understanding of the lived experiences of the participants, and quantitative data are useful in establishing cause-and-effect relationships and generalizing findings to a larger population. Thus, the researcher believes that the use of one method in a study like this will tell only one side of the story, whereas mixed method research designs will yield more comprehensive outcomes.

Summary

The study of adolescents' media use and its impact on academic performance and aggressive remains a volatile topic among educators and social scientists. Although studies examining the relationships between media use and adolescents' academic performance and aggressive behavior have yielded mixed results, a majority of the studies suggested negative relationships, especially with excessive media use. It is important for educators, professionals, and counselors to corroborate and develop prevention and intervention programs in order to minimize negative associations between media use and academic performance and aggressive behavior. The programs should include multiple pathways to combat negative impacts of media on children and adolescents, and should target both at-risk and non-at-risk children. The implementation of any prevention and intervention programs will require the active involvement of parents and educators in order to ensure effective outcomes. As the findings of this study, as well as the findings of other studies, indicate parental monitoring is essential in

moderating the effects of media on adolescents' academic performance and aggressive behavior.

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Appendix A

Recruitment Flyer

Recruitment Flyer

Research Participants Wanted

- **Are you between the ages 10 and 18 years old?**
- **Are you currently in school?**
- **Do you use any type of media?**
- **Do you attend Boys and Girls after-school program?**
- **Do you want to receive a $10 gift card for your participation in a study?**

If you answer yes to the above questions, you are invited to participate in a study that examines the relationship between media use and adolescents' academic and social outcomes. This study will include a focus-group interview that will not exceed more than 1 hour. Your name and other identifying information will not be used. Your participation is completely voluntary and you may withdraw from the study at any time. In order to participate in the study, your parent or legal guardian must sign the consent form.

Appendix B

Letter of Permission to Use Facility

BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF GREATER DALLAS

March 25, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

I am pleased to inform you that Daniel Korie is permitted to conduct his doctoral research project at the Mesquite Boys & Girls Club. We are looking forward to supporting him with his research based on the relationship between media use and adolescents' academic and social outcomes.

Sincerely,

Edward Blackwell
Branch Director
Mesquite Boys & Girls Club
4869 Gus Thomasson Rd.
Mesquite, TX 75150
(972) 270 - 7645
Eblackwell@bgcdallas.org

Appendix C

Consent Form

TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY
CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Title: A Qualitative Study of the Relationship between Media Use and Adolescents' Academic and Social Outcomes.

Investigator: Daniel Korie, M.S. ...…….dkorie@twu.edu
Advisor: Joyce Armstrong, Ph.D. ……..…jarmstrong@twu.edu

Explanation and Purpose of the Research

Your adolescent child is selected to participate in a research study for Daniel Korie's doctoral dissertation at Texas Woman's University. The purpose of this research is to examine the relationship between media use and adolescents' academic and social outcomes. Your child has been asked to participate in this study because he/she is an adolescent who is between ages 10 and 18 and uses some sort of media on a daily basis.

Research Procedures

As a participant in this study your adolescent child will be asked to spend about 1 hour of his/her time to participate in a focus-group interview. The focus-group interview will take place in a reserved room at Boys and Girls Club of greater Dallas. A few days after the focus-group interview, your adolescent child may be selected for a follow-up face-to-face interview (approximately 15 minutes) and/or to complete a 4-day time-use media diary. The researcher will ask questions such as: "The types of media your adolescent child uses." "The amount of time he/she spends each day using different types of media?" The interview will be audiotaped for later transcription and data analysis, as well as to provide accuracy in reporting information discussed. Your adolescent child participation in this study is voluntary, and he/she may withdraw from the study at any time without reprisal. At the close of the interview, Daniel Korie will ask your adolescent child to complete a short demographic data form that will not ask for his/her name. The completion of the demographic form is voluntary. In order for your child to participate in the study, you must sign the consent form.

_____
Parent's Initials
Page 1 of 3

Potential Risks

Potential risk related to your participation in this study includes fatigue and emotional or physical discomfort during the interview. In order to avoid fatigue, you may take a break during the group discussion as needed. If you experience emotional or physical discomfort, you may stop answering questions at any time, and withdraw your participation in the study without penalty. If you feel you need to discuss your emotional or physical discomfort with a professional, the researcher has provided you with telephone numbers of professionals who can address any emotional concerns related to the study.

Another potential risk involves in this study is the feelings of coercion and possible repercussion. To minimize this risk, participation is strictly voluntary. You may withdraw from the study at any time without repercussion.

Loss of time is another risk associated with this study. To minimize the risk, the focus-group interview with your adolescent child will take place only at the time he/she is at the Boys and Girls Club location. In this case, there is no additional travel time required.

Loss of anonymity is another potential risk factor in this study. To reduce the risk of anonymity your adolescent child will be assigned a code number during the interview instead of using their real name. If any participants' names are inadvertently mentioned during the interview, they will not be transcribed.

A potential risk to this study is loss of confidentiality. Confidentiality will be protected to the extent that is allowed by law. Your child's responses will be stored in a locked cabinet in the researcher's office, and shredded within 5 years after the study is finished. A code number, not your real name, will be used in this study. The results of the study will be reported in scientific magazines or journals but your child's name or any other identifying information will not be included.

The researcher will try to prevent any problem that could happen because of this research. Your child should let the researcher know at once if there is a problem in order for the researcher to assist him/her. However, TWU does not provide medical services or financial assistance for injuries that might happen because your child is taking part in this research.

_____

Parent's Initials

Participation and Benefits

Your adolescent child involvement in this study is completely voluntary and he/she may withdraw from the study at any time. Following the completion of the study your adolescent child will receive a $10 gift card for his/her participation. If you would like to know the results of this study the researcher will mail them to you if you provide a mailing address.*

Questions Regarding the Study

You will be given a copy of this signed and dated consent form to keep. If you have any questions about the research study you should ask the researchers; their phone numbers are at the top of this form. If you have questions about your child's rights as a participant in this research or the way this study has been conducted, you may contact the Texas Woman's University Office of Research and Sponsored Programs at 940-898-3378 or via e-mail at IRB@twu.edu.

_____ _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian Date

*If you would like to know the results of this study please provide an address where the results may be sent:

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Email: _____

_____

Parent's Initials

Appendix D

Focus Group Interview Questions

Focus Group Interview Questions

Video Game-Use

1. Tell me what type of video game do you play?
   - Do you own video game console?
   - Do you play with video games with others?
   - How often do you play video games?
   - Do you play computer games sometimes?
   - What type of computer games do you play?
   - Do you have a favorite video game character?
   - Do you sometimes imitate your favorite video game characters?

Cell Phone-Use

2. Tell me what type of cell phone do you have?
   - How often do you use your cell phone to talk to your friends and family members?
   - Do you talk or text with your cell phone while doing your homework?
   - Do you use your cell phone texting in the classroom during lectures?
   - Do you use your cell phones during mealtimes?
   - How much time do you spend texting with your phone each day?
   - Do you use your cell phone to play games?

Appendix E

Face-to-Face Interview Questions

Face-to-Face Interview Questions

Academic Performance

3. In your last progress report, what grade did you make in your courses?
   - What are your best subjects at school?
   - How often do you do your homework?
   - Do you use cell phone while doing your homework?
   - Do you sometimes find yourself watching TV, playing video game, talking on the cell phone when you supposed to be doing your homework?

Aggressive Behavior

4. How many times do you get behavioral referrals from your teachers at school each month?
   - How many times have you engaged in an argument with your friends, including your boyfriend or girlfriend in the past month?
   - How many times have you been in an argument with your parents or siblings in the past month?
   - How many times have you been in an argument with someone other than your friends or family members in the past month?
   - How many times have any of the above arguments resulted in physical contact including pushing, shoving, slapping, hitting, and fighting in the past month?

Parental Involvement

5. Do your parents regulate the TV programs you watch at home?

- Do your parents sometimes watch TV programs with you?
- Do your parents have to approve the type of video games you have to purchase?
- Which of your parents do you live with?

Appendix F

Demographic Data

Demographic Data

Interview Location_____

1. What is your date of birth? _____
2. What grade are you in? _____
3. Which school do you attend? _____
4. What is your expected graduation date? _____
5. What are your plans after high school graduation? _____
6. How do you describe your race or ethnicity? _____
7. What is the zip code of where you live? _____
8. Are you involved in extra-curricular activities? _____

Appendix G

Time-Use Diary

Time Use Diary **Code number**

.....

Do not write your name on this time-use diary in order to protect confidentiality, only use your code number

Select the media you were using that correspond with each time frame listed here.

What media were you using?	7:00-8:00 am	8:00-9:00 am	9:00-10:00 am	10:00-11:00 am	11:00-12:00 noon	12:00-1:00 pm	1:00-2:00 pm	2:00-3:00 pm	3:00-4:00 pm	4:00-5:00 pm	5:00-6:00 pm	6:00-7:00 pm	7:00-8:00 pm	8:00-9:00 pm	9:00-10:00 pm	10:00-11:00 pm	11:00-12:00 mid-night
Listening to Music																	
Watching TV																	
Watching a Movie																	
Playing Video Games																	
Playing Computer Games																	
Talking on the Phone																	
Text Messaging																	
Emailing																	
Surfing the Internet																	
Doing Homework																	
Nothing																	
Other																	