

# The manifestation of disturbing behavior on adolescents as a result of using violent video-games

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## Abstract

The use of violent video-games among teenagers is becoming undisputed. The goal of this study is identifying the video-game typology played by teenagers in two most important High Schools in the two most important cities of Albania and present the effect of this video-games. There were twenty-six participants in this study, all students in the tenth grade. Of these selected students, sixteen were boys and ten were girls. For selecting the participants in the study, it was used the accidental sampling method and for the data collection it was used the semi-structured interviews. Thematic analysis is used to analyze the data collected.

One of the most interesting findings of this study is that the use of violent video-games can cause a remodeling in teenager's behavior, accompanied by a psychological vitality, which in many cases could be negative, especially when this experience is direct. The study doesn't have a generalizing character.

**Keywords:** video-games; teenagers; aggressive behavior.

## Introduction

When the American teenager, Devin Moore, from Alabama, shot to death two police officers and a dispatcher in 2003, he finalized his act by saying: *"Life is a game. Death is the final destination."* This helped the society be more aware about the possible correlation between violent video-games and crime in real life. (Elise, A.2014)

According to Mary Ellen Otole, for a group of people, the continuous exposure to violent social media, it can serve as an encouraging factor and amplifier by reinforcing a violent behavior that the individual is willing to consider in order to become famous. In their study, *"Video-Games and Thoughts, Feelings and Behaviors in Lab and Real Life"* Craig A. Anderson and Karen. E. Dill, highlight the effects of violent video-games in the everyday life. Their first study has concluded that the uses of the video-games that contain violent acts from real life are positively correlated with aggressive behavior and crime rates. The aggression was stronger at individuals with previous aggressive characters, especially men's. Academic achievements had a negative correlation with the amount of time spent on video-games. In their second

study, as a result of laboratory exposure to a violent video-game, it was ascertained that the respondents showed an increase of aggressive thoughts and behavior.

### *Problem determination*

The main focus of this study has been the use of violent video-games among teenagers in one of the High Schools located in Fier, and one of the High Schools located in Tirana, the capital city of Albania, and the effect of this video-games on student's personal behavior, when they are individual users or in their friend's behavior when they are not the individual users.

### *The Objective of the study*

This purpose of this study was to identify the direct experiences, positive or negative and the impact of these experiences on the behavior of young people of High Schools "Janaq Kilica" in Fier, and High School "Petro Nini Luarasi" located in Tirana the capital city of Albania, as a result of the use or non-use of violent video-games.

### *The Objectives of the study*

This study has had various objectives. The objectives are:

- a) To identify the typology of the video-games that young people play.
- b) To determine personal use or others of these video-games.
- c) To interpret the experiences generated because of using these video-games.
- d) To analyze whether these experiences have a negative impact on the behavior of these young people.

### *Ethical Consideration*

This study has considered all elements of ethics. At first participants were presented with the nature of the study and the fact of voluntarily participating in it. Also, it was made clear to the participants that the data drawn from this study will be used only for academic purposes.

### *The methodology of the study*

Berg (1989), stated that qualitative studies are important because they observe daily events and activities as occur in their natural environment, human contact is direct and personally affected their experience of living in the environment where they live, the events seen in a comprehensive and individualized in their social context, and most importantly, the researcher understands and develops empathy for participants of a social research and doesn't collect only superficial data.

### *The choice of participants in the study*

For selecting participants in this study was used the accidental sampling method (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000). Based on this technique, the applicant makes the selection of participants in the study from the environment where he/she has more access. Thus, the participants in this study were selected from the tenth grade of High School "Janaq Kilica" in Fier and the tenth grade in "Petro Nini Luarasi" High School in Tirana.

### *The format of the interview*

From the reparatory literature review, there were pulled several issues which will serve as a starting point for the development of the format of the interview. It was though that for data collection it should be used a semi-structured interview format. According to Berg (1980), given that semi-structured interviews are mainly based on the most important and fundamental knowledge to what is obtained in the study, they are formulated with familiar words from study participants and reflect the efforts of researchers to support by prospects informative ideas. Initially, the interview began with questions about demographic elements of respondents. Then it continued with questions that relate to issues of research. Questions of which is composed of semi-structured interviews are:

1. *How many times in a day/week do you play video-games?*
2. *Which video-games do you play more often and why?*
3. *Do you have any friend/friends that play violent video-games?*
4. *How do you feel after playing violent video-games?*
5. *Are you impulsive or show any sign of anger after playing these video-games?*
6. *Is this "anger" related to the result of the game?*
7. *Would you recommend to other people these kinds of video-games?*
8. *Do you know any friend that became violent or showed signs of violence after playing these kinds of video-games?*
9. *Do you think the use of these video-games increases the chances that someone of your age shows signs of violence?*
10. *Other questions that may come from the respondents.*

### *The ethical consideration*

The most important ethical issues were:

- All respondents were directed to respond to address in the format of semi-structured interview.
- The names and other details of the individual respondents are not used in study. In all cases, we are using other names and identification with interviews is made in terms of interview 1, interview 2 and so on.

### *Participants in the study*

There were twenty six participants in this study, all from the tenth grades of High Schools “Janaq Kilica” and “Petro Nini Luarasi” located in Fier and Tirana, as previously mentioned. From all students, sixteen were boys and ten were girls. All participants were sixteen years old.

### *The method of collecting data*

The collection of data was made manually, meaning the interviewer wrote down the answers while the responder answered. The interviews were conducted in a restaurant bar environment in Fier, and in a bar in Tirana. All the interviews were conducted only once. The Interviews were conducted as blocks with duration of 1.5-2 hours and a half. In the first part it was made the presentation with the participants, and it was made clear to them about the study. It then moved on interviewing participants about issues that determined in the interview. This process took place in several parts, with space between the pieces, left for the participants to express their opinions, which perhaps were not related to the issues addressed in the study. This was done so that between respondents and interviewers it was created a warm climate and positive conversation, where they can express their opinions freely and without hesitation.

### *Completion of Data Collection*

At the moment in which the number of completed interviews for this study was taken, was also taken to the assertion of basic Berg (1989), under which the number of interviews is completed when the point of over satiety of is reached.

### *Analyzing the Data*

As Patton (1990) asserts, in the process of qualitative analysis, the main challenge is to derive a meaning from large amount of data, to reduce the volume of information, to identify meaningful patterns and build schemes for communicating the essence of what the data revealed. At the same continuity of thought, Krueger (1994) determines that the data must be analyzed by addressing initial proposal of study and key principle is that data analysis should always be guided by the main issues of the study.

### *The results of the study*

To retrieve the results from the study we used thematic analysis, which according Grbich, 2007, this is the process of segmentation, categorization, and reconnection aspects of data before their final interpretation. Based on Taylor, S & Bogdan, R (1984), thematic analysis of the data is structured in two phases. During the first phase is made the complete reading of the transcription and interpretation attempts are made by exploring them to find meanings. In the second phase the transcript

is coded. Subsequently, the initial codes that were created led to the construction of categories, themes and sub-themes of the issues identified in the process of getting to them. The latest step was to create summary tables. This has resulted very efficient because it has helped to only extract data from a unique case but also to identify each of the initial categories in all cases. The table below presents the topics, sub-topic and categories that have emerged from this processing.

Topic	Sub/topic	Categories
T.1 Typology of video-games used	N/T1 Video-games without violence scene	K1 Traditional Video-games
		K2 Action Video-games without violence
		K3 Sport Video-games
	N/T2	K1. Action Video-games where the main character act against human being.
		K2. Action Video-games where the main character does NOT act against human being but robots.
T.2. Personal use of Video-games	N/T1 Personal experience	K.1 Personal
		K.2 Behavior
	N/T2 Psychology vitality	K.1 Positive
		K.2 Negative
T.3. Video-game used from friends	N/T1 External influence	K.1. Environment
		K2. Society persuasion <sup>1</sup>

*Table 1. Topic, sub-topics and categories of the study*

## Discussion

In this session it will be treated the discussion of the questions about this study supported by thematic analysis of the topics, subtopics and categories that have shown as a result of information processing.

Discussion over the first question of the study: Which are the most played video-games among the teenagers of today in the High Schools “Janaq Kilica” and “Petro Nini Luarasi”, located in Fier and Tirana, and if these games are played personally by the person being interviewed or a friend?

<sup>1</sup> For the wording of the topics, sub-topics and categories, it was consulted “Educational Psychology”, by Anita Wolfolk.

For these questions there are two sub-topics and six categories. For the first sub-topics “Non-violent video-games” there are four categories:

1. Traditional video-games
2. Non-violent action Video-games
3. Sports Video-games
4. Video-games with automobile simulation

*One of the Interviewers answered: “I like playing more video-games like GTA (Grand Theft Auto) (no specific version was mentioned). These games are very exciting and I like to spend time playing with them. Also, one can play these games with other friends and compete with them about who gets more points.”*

*One of the teenagers reported that he likes playing sports video-games, especially soccer video-games like FIFA 2017 or Pro Evolution Soccer (PES). He likes playing this type of game because it gives him the chance of being the main protagonist of the game, playing the game after a scheme that he himself draws. This helps him learn new tactics that he can use when he plays soccer in real-life with his friends.*

For the second sub-topic “violent video-games” there are four categories:

K.1. Action video-games where the main character acts against humans

K.2. Action videogames where the main character doesn’t act against humans but against robots

*Some of the boys interviewed stated that they like playing more violent video-games like “HALO (Guardians, Spartan strike)” or “Dead Space 2.” These video-games make them feel better and more relaxed during the day.*

*One of the boy reported that he likes playing UFC (Ultimate Fighting Championship), especially UFC MMA. When he plays this game he feels like a real champion.*

An analysis of the first question made an interesting conclusion. Of the 26 respondents, only four girls admitted to playing with video games, but even those who played preferred non-violent video-games like Solitaire. From all the boys interviewed only four liked playing sports video-games like GTA or PES. Five of them liked the video-games where the main character acted against the humans, and others reportedly liked playing video-games where the main character acted against robots instead of human beings.

Also, the data turned out that all the boys interviewed played with video-games every day, the four girls that played video-games, admitted to playing with them only if one of their best-friends was playing at the moment of their presence.

Discussion over the second question of the study: What experiences are created in adolescents as a result of playing these video games?

Analyzing the information for the second question of the study, there are two sub-topics and various categories. For the first sub-topic, the establishment of direct experience emerged two categories:

1. Personal
2. Behavioral

*One of the boys interviewed said that videogames give him an immense pleasure, because he has a goal to reach when playing and it is always satisfactory reaching that goal. From the result he manages to be the master of specific moves in the game.*

*Another respondent specified that he feels motivated and released after killing one, four or five robots in the videogame that he plays almost every day.*

For the second sub-topic "the use of video-games creates a psychological vitality" there are two categories:

1. Positive psychological vitality
2. Negative psychological vitality

*Some of the interviewed boys answered that playing with video-games in which one should fight against an environment and survive in it; increases the anxiety and that made them feel very good. Later they feel powerful controlling that environment saying allowing them to express themselves however they wanted.*

But there were two other respondents who reported that video-games with violent content caused them some kind of negative psychological vitality, which they would like to paraphrase as desire to use violence against others or against household animals.

When it was discussed whether the impact on them when others played video-games, were the girl respondents that did not play video-games, who gave the most interesting answers.

For this case, there are created sub-topics "Creating borrowed experience." This sub-topic has two categories which are:

1. Environmental
2. Social Persuasion

*One of the interviewed girls answers that one of her close friends is addicted on video-games and especially those that have scenes of violence against the robots. She adds: -He tries to justify the fact of playing these games and he tried to show me how interesting they are, even though I have no interest in it.*

Discussion on the third question of study: What kind of behavior is induced in these young people as a result of using these video-games?

It is important to underline that for this question will be discussed again the topics and subthemes that are structured for the second question.

From the analysis of the interviews it was found that especially young girls who did not play video-games but see their friends playing violent video-game, had pronounced tendency to show new behaviors. This was especially for individuals who played video-games where they had to fight against a hostile environment. They often required increasing the efficiency of the game by demonstrating their actions and skills. Girls who did not play video-games but they had friends who used a lot these video-games, reported that these video-games were quite encouraging when they earned points. They saw a "positive excitement." When they lost points they were feeling sadness accompanied by anxiety and pessimism.

## Conclusions

At the end of this study it should be emphasized that, as a result of using qualitative techniques, it has been found that the use of violent video-games where teenagers are subjected may lead to a change in their behavior and there are times when this behaviors can be shaped even with negative parameters, especially when this experience is straightforward. Since the population of this study has been chosen from unbiased method, the results cannot be generalized.

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