**Media influences on aggression – evaluation**

Positive evaluation

Negative evaluation

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| There are positive effects of the media on behaviour, as well as negative e.g. Computer gaming can improve certain cognitive skills e.g. Visuo-spatial and attentional skills (e.g. Sims and Mayer, 2002), and games with a pro-social theme can promote helping behaviour in children who play them (e.g. Gentile et al, 2009) | Aggressive actions rarely result from a single cause; rather, multiple factors converging over time contribute to such behaviour. Accordingly, the influence of the violent mass media is best viewed as only one of the many potential factors that influence the risk for violence and aggression. |
| Research has shown that for many people video games can be a catharsis for frustration, and lead to a reduction in violence in some homes. | There are implications and applications for the research in the real world. E.g. legal age ratings on violent games and films. |
| Much of the research into the effects of the media on aggression is correlational. Therefore it is difficult to establish a causal link, as it possible more aggressive individuals choose to play more of aggressive games. | There is significant empirical evidence for the role of other factors e.g. genetics in aggressive behaviour, and some research shows that the impacts of violent media are only really present in these individuals (e.g. Josephson 1987) |
| It is possible that disinhibition, in reducing the emotional impacts to aggression, may reduce actual aggression levels in real-world scenarios, as aggressive response usually require heightened emotion. | Research suggests that the negative effects of video games are short-lived, whilst positive effects can have a much longer lasting impact. |
| The extent to which individuals become involved in the media they are experiencing varies. So, disinhibition only occurs in people who are fully engaged in playing, and who are not easily distracted by external stimuli (e.g. introverts). This suggest disinhibition is not a universal effect. | Access to computer games can have practical applications to child-rearing. For example, parents can be encouraged to limit the amount of time children are playing video games, especially for the young. |