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A comparative study of the television viewing habits of children in a typically developing preschool classroom versus children in an integrated preschool classroom

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**A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE
TELEVISION VIEWING HABITS OF CHILDREN IN A
TYPICALLY DEVELOPING PRESCHOOL CLASSROOM
VERSUS CHILDREN IN AN INTEGRATED
PRESCHOOL CLASSROOM**

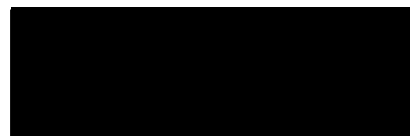
A MASTER'S PROJECT

**Submitted to the Department of Education
University of Dayton, in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Science in Education**

by

**Cynthia Ann Calobrisi
University of Dayton
Dayton, Ohio
June, 1995**

Approved by:



Official Advisor

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This study was inspired by my contact with many children, who taught me the importance of language development and the vital role it plays in a person's life.

This study was possible because of the support of my loving husband, John, and the patience of my two children Jamie and Jason.

I want to express my gratitude to Dr. James Rowley of the Graduate School of Education at the University of Dayton for his support and for allowing me to focus on my area of interest throughout the course of my graduate work.

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my family and friends who encouraged me
to see the light at the end of the tunnel.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

With the passage of PL. 94-142, The Education for All Handicapped Children Act in 1975, which specifically mandated the identification of handicapped children; and with the provisions from PL. 99-457, which provided further and more specific criteria for identifying and serving handicapped and developmentally delayed children from birth to five years of age, integrated preschool units were implemented. The goal of these two identification procedures was not to segregate young children with special needs, but to provide appropriately for each child's unique needs. The passage of these two laws, brought benefits for both non-handicapped children and children with special needs. Many children, between the ages of three and five years of age, qualify for placement in integrated preschool settings that provide the proper support for their individual needs.

One aspect that is addressed with children with special needs is oral communication. Children learn and benefit from communication with one another through chosen personal interactions, both verbal and non-verbal. Communication is integral to a successful and productive life. How one is able to communicate is vital to the success of relationships one builds with others. Oral communication develops over the first years of life. The way children orally communicate with others is an important factor. Children develop the

ability to have others understand their wants and needs as infants. Oral communication continues to develop and expand in the toddler and preschool years of development.

As children develop and grow, their oral communication becomes more proficient. Often, children have oral communication delays. With television programming so readily available today, watching television does have an influence on the development of preschoolers' oral language.

The writer of this study was working with nineteen preschool children that were placed in an integrated preschool classroom. Sixteen of these children had been previously assessed and qualified for placement in this program due to special needs. The three other children in this preschool setting were typically developing peers, whose parents had elected that their child participate in the integrated preschool program. The daily schedule consisted of two, half-day sessions that met four days a week. The fifth day was used to schedule home visitations with the parent and child.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to compare television viewing habits between a typical preschool classroom with those television viewing habits of preschoolers that attend an integrated preschool classroom.

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study the following operational terms were used:

Oral communication. How a child comprehends information conveyed verbally from another person through listening and relays his thoughts and ideas to that person through speech.

Preschooler. A child between the age of 3 years to 5 years of age.

Parent. A person who is responsible for the child's well-being and care.

I.E.P. (Individual Educational Program) According to P.L. 94-142 established that every handicapped child, regardless of the severity of the handicap, is entitled to a free appropriate education. It (P.L. 94-142) requires that an appropriate education for each handicapped child be individually defined in an (Individual Educational Program) I.E.P.

Integrated Preschool. Is a center-based preschool classroom that includes young children with special needs who are integrated into a typical early childhood setting with peers of similar age. Specialized services, such as therapies are delivered within the child's natural and meaningful environment. The goals of these services are to support, supplement and enhance the child's interaction with peers and adults.

Limitations

It was not the purpose of this study to include preschoolers from all types of preschool settings. Only two different types of preschool settings were surveyed for comparison in this study. The writer collected information from families who live in two adjoining counties in which the study was conducted. In County A, parents had a preschool child enrolled in an integrated preschool classroom during the time of this study. In County B, parents had a child enrolled in a typical preschool program. Therefore, the results apply

only to the families who reside in Counties A and B in which this study was conducted, and have children enrolled in the integrated and typical preschool classrooms.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

The purpose of this chapter was to review the literature on television viewing and present criteria from the literature for quality television programming for young children. This chapter is divided into two sections. Section One deals with the discussion of the benefits of watching television during the preschool years. Section Two deals with television viewing habits of preschool children. Section Three deals with the discussion of criteria for quality children's television programming.

Benefits of Watching Television During the Preschool Years

The research shows that preschoolers during the 3 to 5 year age have remarkable word acquisition capabilities, that were virtually obtained unassisted by adult intervention (Rice, Buhr, Oetting, 1992). By the age of six, the child has learned over 14,000 words. This means the child learns an average of nine new words a day, or one word for every waking hour (Halle, Bresnan and Miller, 1978). Learning each word involves a long-term developmental process.

Where does the process of word learning begin? In a baby's early years there is much concentrated teaching on routine words like "bye-bye" and on naming objects by the

parents. Parents usually discontinue this teaching method after the child turns two years of age. The child acquires most of the 14,000 words from hearing people use them in normal contexts and through the connotation in which the word was used (Halle, Bresnan and Miller, 1978).

By the age of four, the child has developed conceptual distinctions between actions, objects, and things that the child is able to visualize. At this age, the child has developed a distinction between verbs and nouns (Halle, Bresnan and Miller, 1978).

The ideal language-learning environments were those that adults shared with children (Lemish and Rice 1986). When they speak to their child, parents tend to use speech that is clear, well-formed, and semantically and syntactically simpler than speech addressed to adults. The research also stated that parents, when talking to young children, restrict their comments to the "here and now," by slowing the rate of talking, using short and simple sentences, and repeating themselves frequently (Rice, 1984). Mothers do not correct sounds produced by their language learning child, nor does the child pay much attention to the feedback upon receiving it (Ginsberg and Shatz, 1982). Yes or no questions and simple one-two word phrases tend to be the interaction parents provide for the child to respond to in early language growth. For language development to occur, certain conditions must be met in the language-learning environment. There has never been a child observed to speak a human language without having had a communicating partner from whom to learn. Speech heard on television or through conversations of others is not an adequate environmental support for the acquisition of language (Ginsberg and Shatz, 1982).

Television Viewing Habits of Preschool Children

Examination of the research shows the following effects of watching television during the preschool years. By the age of 3 years, American children are frequent television viewers. Fifty percent of 2 1/2 year olds regularly watch television. By the age of 3, seventy-six percent were able to name their favorite television program. At the age of 4, parents reported that their child spent one-third of their waking hours viewing television (Anderson and Levin, 1976).

During the preschool years, children tend to average 2 1/2 hours of daily television watching (Rice and Woodsman, 1988). Two important areas where education takes place are in school and in the home. Television has become a major influence in both of these areas, effecting a child's education (Paler, 1984). Time spent watching television directly displaces time that the child could devote to other activities. The research showed that children spent considerable amounts of time viewing television. Many children played with toys, slept, and interacted with siblings and parents with the television on, but not while attentively watching (Anderson, Field, Colleens, Loch and Nathan, 1985).

The extent to which television was a meaningful source of language-related experiences for young children, depended upon viewing habits during the early stage of language acquisition (Blemish and Rice, 1986). Research identified four categories of verbal behavior in young children during television viewing:

1. children expressed an interest in naming objects, characters, animals, and other things on the screen,
2. they questioned adults present about the television content presented,

3. they expressed repetition of parental comments or television dialogue,
4. they expressed descriptions of the television content (Blemish and Rice, 1986).

Parents affect their child's television viewing experiences. Research indicated that television viewing was the most frequently shared activity among family members. Young children develop program preferences based on observations of older family members present when the child viewed television. Fathers reported that mothers made most of the decisions of what was viewed by the child (Peters, Fitch, Hudson, Wright and Eakins, 1991). Parents were more concerned about what types of programs their child watched, versus the amount of time that their child spent watching television. Selections of quality programming in the preschool years and parental encouragement to watch good programming were important (Peters, Fitch, Hutson, Wright and Eakins, 1991).

Parents, who were selective of their child's television viewing habits, were more apt to watch television with their child. According to the research, parents who encouraged particular programs at particular times were thoughtful and more careful about their child's television viewing. Program content was the most frequent reason for both encouragement and restriction for young children watching certain programs. Parents valued educational programming and specials that were prepared with young children in mind. Violence, sexual suggestively and frightening content were the primary reasons parents restricted their child's viewing of specific programming (Peters, Fitch, Hutson, Wright and Eakins, 1991).

Many programs popular with young children tended to be those in which the verbal component was appropriate to the child's linguistic abilities (e.g. *Sesame Street* and *Mr.*

Rogers' Neighborhood) (Rolandelli, 1989). The dialogue of these two educational programs tended to be much like a mother's speech to her preschool child. The format had simple grammar, and focused on key words that involved frequent use of the content and form of the program (Rice and Woodsmall, 1988). When educational television was reinforced by supportive parental interactions with the child, the situation was well suited for language acquisition (Rice and Woodsmall, 1988). The research showed that young children in their preschool years were able to learn new words from television programs, if the script was appropriate for young children.

In the research, *Sesame Street* writers used a technique called the "phantom reinforcer," in which an actor would deliver a phrase such as "This is a _____," followed by a pause, and then a target word was delivered. Many times children called out the target word while viewing, just before the actor delivered the target word. This technique was a very successful way of introducing new words and concepts to young viewers (Rice, Buhr, Oetting, 1992).

Children showed a rapid growth in oral language abilities between the ages of 3 to 5 years of age. This was the targeted age presented in *Sesame Street*. From 5 to 7 years of age, the child continued to acquire new vocabulary but at a more sophisticated level than what was emphasized on *Sesame Street*. Children tended to shift their preferences for cartoons and adult programming at this time. *Sesame Street* viewing for children at 6 1/2 to 7, suggested that more slowly developing children continued to find the program interesting even when they were slightly beyond the age of its intended audience (Rice, Hutson, Truglio and Wright, 1990).

The research showed that educational and prime-time television programs had more dialogue than commercial children's programs, such as cartoons (Rice, 1984). *Sesame Street* highlighted and clarified key dialogue for children by presenting them repeatedly with slight changes in the context. In the educational program, *Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood*, the speaker provided very explicit instructions to the young viewer. The educational programs, *Sesame Street* and *Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood*, were similar in their low incidences of repetitions, their consistent characteristics of simplifications, their high percentage of complete sentences (Rice, 1984), the use of the present tense, and observations limited to the here and now (Rice, 1986).

Cartoons used a lot of heavy background music, had a moderate use of dialogue, a high rate of repetitions, and very fast pace (Rice, 1984). The research stated that cartoons were popular with young children due to the animation, and a simple, humorous, repetitive plot. The dialogue was minimal and filled with loud noises and a fast activity (Rice, 1984). Cartoon dialogue was spoken in "garbagese" with puns and complex sentences presented in the program (Rice, 1986). Moral messages presented in several cartoon shows were ignored by young children. This was due to the child focusing their attention on the visual features of the cartoon, rather than the other characteristics presented in the program (Hayes and Birnbaum, 1980).

Children do not tend to view programs that are heavy in adult-like dialogue. Young children did not attend well to men's voices but did attend well to children's voices, and to a lesser extent, to women's voices. The linguistic messages presented by children's voices

may be more suited to the linguistic competencies of a young child than the verbal communication patterns of adults, particularly males (Rice, 1984).

Criteria for Young Children's Television Programming

Recent evidence has shown that television facilitates vocabulary and language acquisition (Rolandelli, 1989). The difficulty lies in the fact that the typical language of television was linguistically difficult and incomprehensible for young children to understand. Given the use of child-directed speech (e.g. concrete words, a slow rate of speech, simple sentences, immediate referents, repetition), the language of television can be made comprehensible to the young child (Rolandelli, 1989).

A Gallup Organization and the Family Channel in a 1994 poll found that fifty percent of adults felt that television had become more violent, more sexually explicit and more profane in the last year (Catalfo, 1995). Eighty-three percent said that television violence directly effected their child's behavior. Seventy-one percent polled said that they monitor their child's television viewing (Catalfo, 1995).

The problem with children's television programs was for the producers of educational television programming to successfully compete with the violent-prone offerings on entertainment television (Anderson, Levin, 1976). Young children were more attentive to television programming when the following were present in the program:

- eye contact was made in dialogue
- puppets were involved in the presentation
- peculiar voices were heard

- animation
- movement
- lively music was heard
- rhyming, repetition and alliteration used in conversation
- auditory changes were made during the program.

Adult men's voices , animals, inactivity and still drawings aroused little interest in young children watching educational television programs (Anderson, Levin, 1976).

Nonviolent programming content was important, according to Dr. Chen because:

1. Preschoolers easily mistook violence or disturbing televised programming to be occurrences in real life.
2. Preschoolers often imitate what they have viewed on television from the *Mighty Morphin Power Rangers*, *Teenage Mutant Turtles*, or the *X-Men*.

Cartoons taught young children to laugh at violence. They showed the young viewer through the cartoon hero, that violent behavior was the first recourse in solving problems. American television was among the most violent television in the world (Catalfo, 1995). In Dr. Murray's research, television programming was monitored during a typical 18-hour day. His research stated that a total of 2,605 violent acts were shown in children's television programming, in the Washington D.C. area. Much of the violence was shown through children's cartoons (Catalfo, 1995). According to Dr. Murray research, preschoolers who watch violent television programming, tolerated higher levels of aggressive behavior by throwing things, calling names and taking much longer to calm down (Catalfo, 1995). Young children who watched violent cartoons were more likely to

watch violent adult television programming by the grade school years than preschoolers, who watched educational television (Catalfo, 1995).

The time to instill good television viewing habits with the child was between the ages of 2 and 3. During this time, the research showed the child started to make decisions, about what to watch, when to watch, and how long to watch. Parents need to manage television watching sensibly with their child (Weissbourd, 1995).

Children in the preschool years have established a sense of security about their world. Television not monitored properly during the preschool years, presented a scary picture of the world of violence through the news and violent television programming. Soap operas presented characters that showed emotional anguish, which was confusing to young children. Commercials presented to young viewers, a world of constant consumption. Too much television viewing leads to a lack of imaginative play and conversations with other people (Weissbourd, 1995). Research showed that violent television programming resulted in aggressive behavior in young children, and caused a lack of tolerance for solving problems except by the use of force (Weissbourd, 1995).

According to research, parents should screen television viewing beforehand, and determine if the television program or videotape is compatible with the child's interests and age development. Parents should look for television programming that include singing, dancing, and programs with physical actions, along with an appropriate song or story. Preschoolers have a curiosity about nature, words, and different cultures that shapes their growing world around them. These ideas should be presented in good television programming for young children. Parents need to remember that preschool

children cannot recognize the difference between fact and fantasy. Children think the characters in television are real (Weissbourd, 1995).

Television represents a poor substitute for creative play, and interaction with peers and adults, which are all basic ingredients for development during the preschool years.

Children should not watch television alone. Parents should cuddle up and interact with the child, and discuss a television program watched together.

Fast-paced television programming tended to promote poor learning habits in children. Young children, who watched moderate amounts of television during preschool years, proved to be excellent students. Children who watched a lot of television were short-changed in other activities pertinent to their development (Catalfo, 1995). Young children who watched television more than three hours a day, tended to be more restless, and less able to focus on a task (Catalfo, 1995). Dr. Murray of Kansas State found that children who watched more than four hours of television a day were able to give elaborate accounts of stories watched, but were not able to invent an original story of their own (Catalfo, 1995).

Educational television gave young children an incredible wealth of information, knowledge, and intelligence about the world. Television programming can teach and reinforce social values, and tolerance of others in a positive manner. Dr. Lesser showed in his research that young children who viewed *Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood* demonstrated sharing, nurturing, and cooperative behaviors (Catalfo, 1995).

Parental supervision was the key to mitigating any negative effects and enhancing the benefits of television viewing. When television becomes the baby-sitter, children's

behaviors reflect the images of good and bad values viewed. Dr. Chen stated, when parents actively raise young children with attention, games, books, balanced meals, outdoor play, hugs, lots and lots of talk, and *some* television -- their world widens with possibility (Catalfo, 1995).

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURES

The purpose of Chapter III was to describe the methods employed by the writer using Parental Survey on Television Watching. Specifically it included subjects and settings, instrumentation, and data collection and analysis.

Subjects and Settings

All parents who participated in this study had a preschool child between the ages of three and five years enrolled in an integrated preschool program or in a typical preschool classroom. Some of the children qualified for special intervention services, such as speech therapy, while others were tuition paying students with no need for intervention.

The Auglaize County Integrated Preschool serves two integrated center-based preschool classes for children from Wapakoneta, Cridersville and Waynesfield, Ohio. The preschool class was organized into two sessions. The morning session included seven children enrolled with special needs and one tuition paying student, without special needs. The afternoon session included eight children enrolled with special needs and two tuition paying students.

Children with special needs were assessed and evaluated for placement into the integrated preschool program. These children had I.E.P.'s in place, to address their individual needs. Tuition paying students did not need to be assessed and evaluated for placement. Their parents contacted the Auglaize County Board of Education for available placement in the preschool program. The intervention team included a full time classroom teacher and a speech pathologist. The speech pathologist did weekly speech intervention with all of the children in group activities, and through individual speech therapy. All speech activities were classroom-based.

The typical preschool classroom chosen for this study was located in a church in Allen County. Parents chose this preschool program for its own merits. There was no assessment or criteria necessary for the children to attend this preschool program. All of the children enrolled in this preschool classroom were tuition paying students with no special services necessary. The class had fourteen children enrolled with one teacher present in the classroom. The children were from different locations surrounding Lima.

This study was conducted in Northwest Ohio. County A was rural, with 44,580 residents. Members of the surrounding communities were oriented toward farming and small town activities. The agricultural industry was the economic base of the area, with some small independent manufacturing.

While County B was also rural-based with 109,750 residents. This county had an emphasis on farming along with the presence a strong industrial base.

Instrumentation

The writer was unaware of any type of prepared survey that addressed the type of television programming that preschoolers watched. Therefore, the writer devised a survey that was sent home with the children in County A and in County B for the parents to complete and return by a specified date. (See appendix A and appendix B).

The Parental Survey on Television Watching (PSTW), contained a total of twelve questions for the parents to answer.

- Question 1 was a yes or no response as to whether the parent felt the child enjoyed watching television. If the child did not have a television present in his/her home or did not enjoy watching television there would be no data gained from this survey.
- Question 2 asked parents to check the number of hours they felt their child watched television daily. The choices were 1 hour, 2 hours, 4 hours, 6 hours, more than 6 hours. By asking this question, the writer was able to collect data on the number of daily hours that were watched by the children.
- Question 3 asked for a yes or no response as to whether parents watched the television program with the child. Data were obtained from this question regarding interactions that might take place between the parent and child at this time.
- Question 4 asked the parent for a yes or no response if the child watched video tapes. This question was intended to gain data on the viewing habits of the child.
- Question 5 asked parents to respond by checking the number of hours that they felt their child watched video tapes daily. The choices again were 1 hour, 2 hours, 4

hours, 6 hours, more than 6 hours. By asking this question the writer was able to collect data on the number of daily hours that the child watched video tapes.

- Question 6 asked parents to check a yes or no response whether they watched the video tapes with their child. Data was obtained by asking this question whether interactions took place between the parent and child during video viewing.
- Question 7 asked for a yes or no response regarding whether the parent discussed the program with the child. The writer asked this question to determine if discussion or feedback took place after watching a television program.
- Question 8 asked for a yes or no response regarding whether parents felt the child learned by watching television. The writer wished to determine if parents felt television was a learning tool.
- Question 9 was asked to determine, whether parents felt their child did learn from watching television, to list what they felt that their child learned. Thus data were collected as to what the parents felt children gained by watching television.
- Question 10 asked, whether parents felt their child did not learn anything from watching television, to respond to why their child did watch television. The writer was interested to determine why their child watched television, and whether parents felt television was not a learning tool.
- Question 11 asked the parents to check the types of programs that their child watched daily. The choices offered were:
 - ♦ Educational programs
 - ♦ *Barney, Sesame Street*

- ♦ The news
- ♦ Weekly programs
- ♦ Other programs
- ♦ Prime time programming between 8:00 P.M.-11:00 P.M.

Data were gathered as to the types of programming that the children watched daily and weekly.

- Question 12 asked parents to list the types of programs that their child watched on the week-end. This question was to gain information about week-end television viewing habits.

The PSTW was quick and easy for the parents to answer questions about their child's daily television viewing habits. In this study, the PSTW was the only instrument used to gather data about preschool children's television viewing habits and the types of television programs watched.

Data Collection and Analysis

To gather the data, the PSTW (see Appendix A and Appendix B) was devised by the writer. On March 9th, 1995, each student from County A at the integrated preschool took home a PSTW for parents to answer about their child's television viewing habits. It was requested that the survey be returned to the writer no later than March 17th. The total number of surveys sent home was eighteen. A total of eighteen surveys were sent home with the typical preschool children in County B, on April 3rd and were to be returned by April 7th. All data collected from the PSTW came from white-middle class families.

The PSTW contained twelve questions that pertained their child's television viewing at home. The parents were to check the Yes or No box on Questions 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 and 8. On Questions 2 and 5, parents were asked to check the corresponding number of daily hours that they felt their child watched television. Question 9 dealt with what the parents felt was learned from their child watching television. Question 10 dealt with why their child watched television, and if the parents felt no learning occurred (enjoyment only). Questions 11 and 12 asked the parents to list the types of programming their child watched during the week and on week-ends.

On March 17th, a total of fifteen out of eighteen PSTW (see appendix A and appendix B) from County A were returned to the writer. A total of eleven out of eighteen surveys were returned from County B by the April 7th deadline. A total of twenty-six surveys out of thirty-six were returned to the writer for this study.

Data were collected and analyzed from each question on the PSTW (see appendix A and appendix B). The results of each question were discussed, represented and graphed in Chapter IV.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In Chapter IV, the writer will present the results from the Parental Survey on Television Watching (PSTW). The purpose of this chapter was to report the results of the PSTW in graphs. The following graphs show the percentages from the results of each PSTW item (see Appendix A and Appendix B):

Question 1 asked the parents if their child enjoyed watching television. The parents were to respond by checking yes or no. This question was asked on the PSTW to determine whether television was available to the survey group. If television was not available, or the child did not enjoy watching television, no data would be gained from this survey.

Most of the parents in both preschool settings who participated in this survey stated that their child enjoyed watching television; 91% from the typical group, and 93% from the integrated group. One parent (9%) from the typical preschool group chose not to respond to this question. One parent (7%) from the integrated preschool group stated that the child did not enjoy watching television (See figure 1).

Data collected from the PSTW indicated that preschool children from both the typical and integrated groups had television available, and enjoyed watching television.

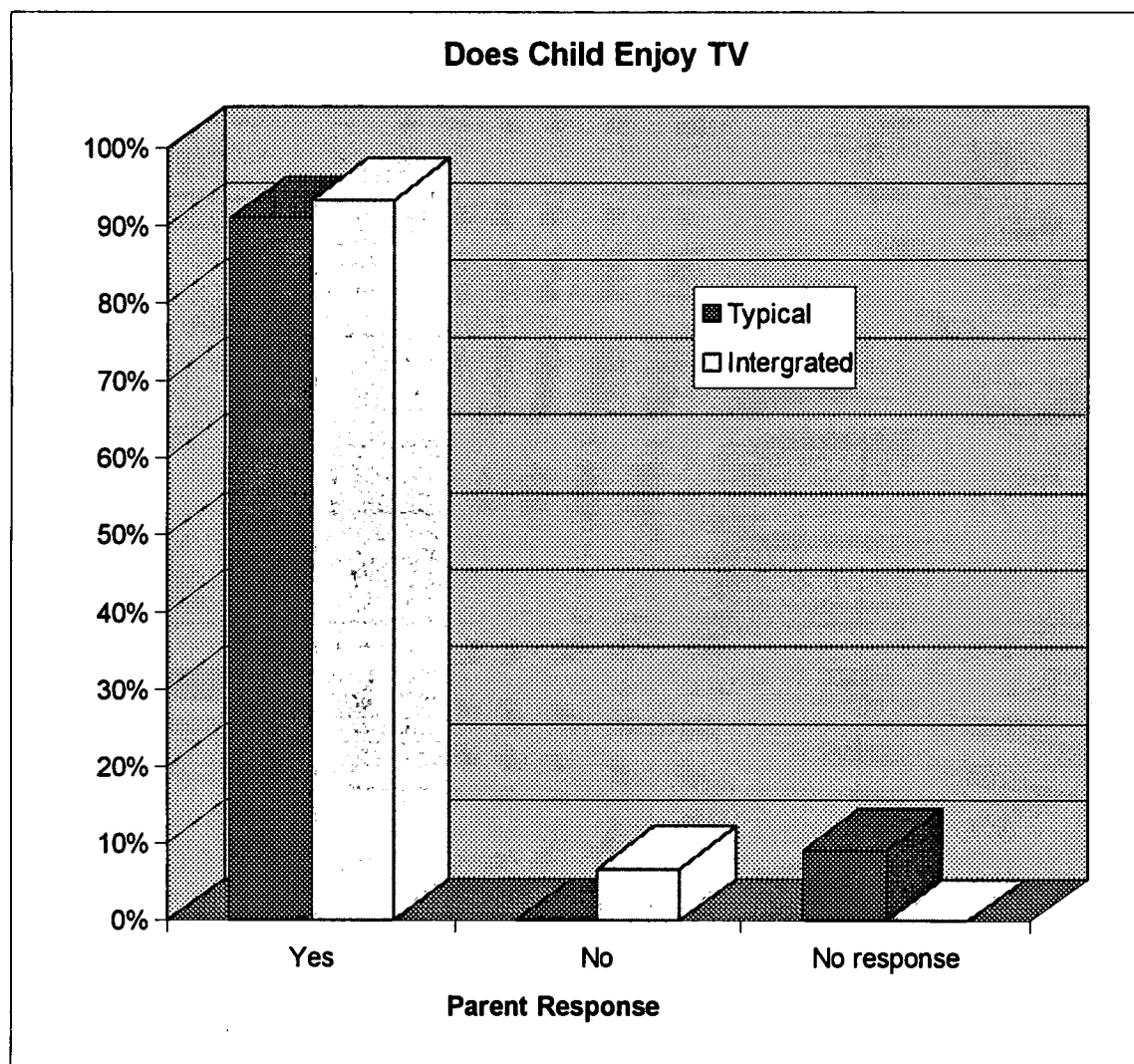


Figure 1

Question 2 asked the parents to check the number of hours their child watched television on a daily basis. The choices were-1 hour, 2 hours, 4 hours, 6 hours, more than 6 hours. The question was asked to collect data on the number of daily hours of television that were watched by the children in both the typical and integrated preschool groups.

The parents from the typical preschool group stated that their child watched the following hours of television daily: children watching 1 hour daily television was 27%; children watching 2 hours of daily television was 55%; and children watching 4 hours of daily television was 18%.. No responses from the parents of the typical preschool group that stated a child watched more than four hours of daily television.

The parents from the integrated preschool group stated that their child watched the following hours of television daily: children watching 1 hour of daily television was 0%; children watching 2 hours of daily television was 53%; children watching 4 hours of daily television was 40%; and children watching more than 6 hours of daily television was 7% (See figure 2).

Data from Question 2 showed that

1. Parents of children in the integrated preschool group allowed their children to watch more hours of television than the parents of children in the typical preschool group, or
2. Children in the integrated preschool group had greater access to the television than the children in the typical preschool group.

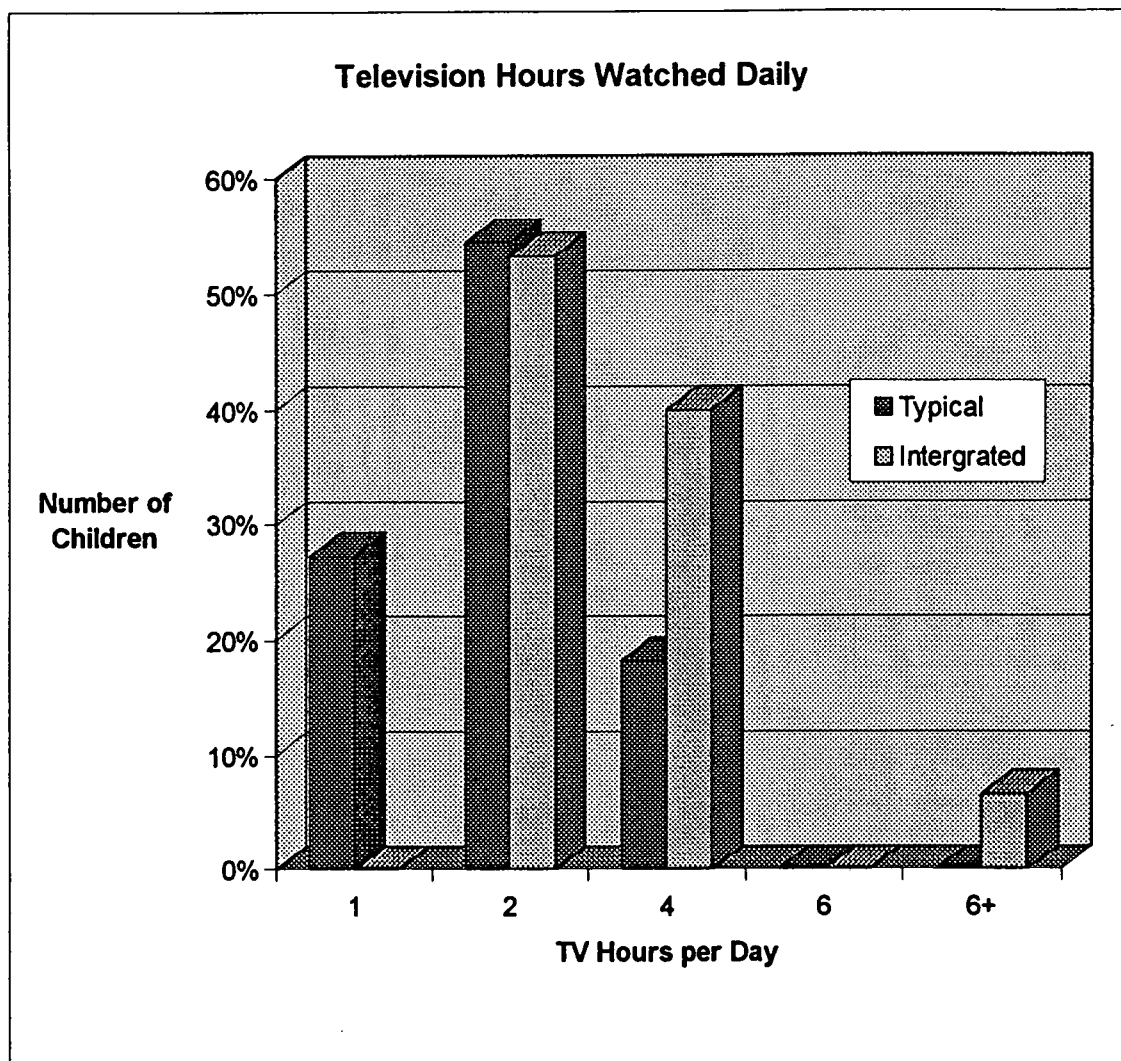


Figure 2

Question 3 asked the parents if they sat and watched television with their child. The parents were to respond by checking yes or no. This question was asked to obtain data regarding interactions that might take place between the parent and the child involving television viewing. Question 3 also provided a foundation to build upon development of the data gathered in following questions in this survey as to the content, quality and effect of the television programming on their preschool child.

Most parents who participated in this survey stated that they watched television programming with their child. The data showed 82% from the typical preschool group, and 87% from the integrated preschool group watched television with their child. Two parents from each group stated that they did not view television programming with their child. This represented 18% from the typical preschool group, and 13% from the integrated preschool group (See figure 3).

The positive response to this question showed that parents devoted the time to watch television programming with their preschool child. The results indicated that the parents either enjoyed television viewing with their child, or felt it was necessary for other reasons. As a result of active television viewing between the parent and the child together, a means for a common bond or a time of sharing between the parent and child was provided.

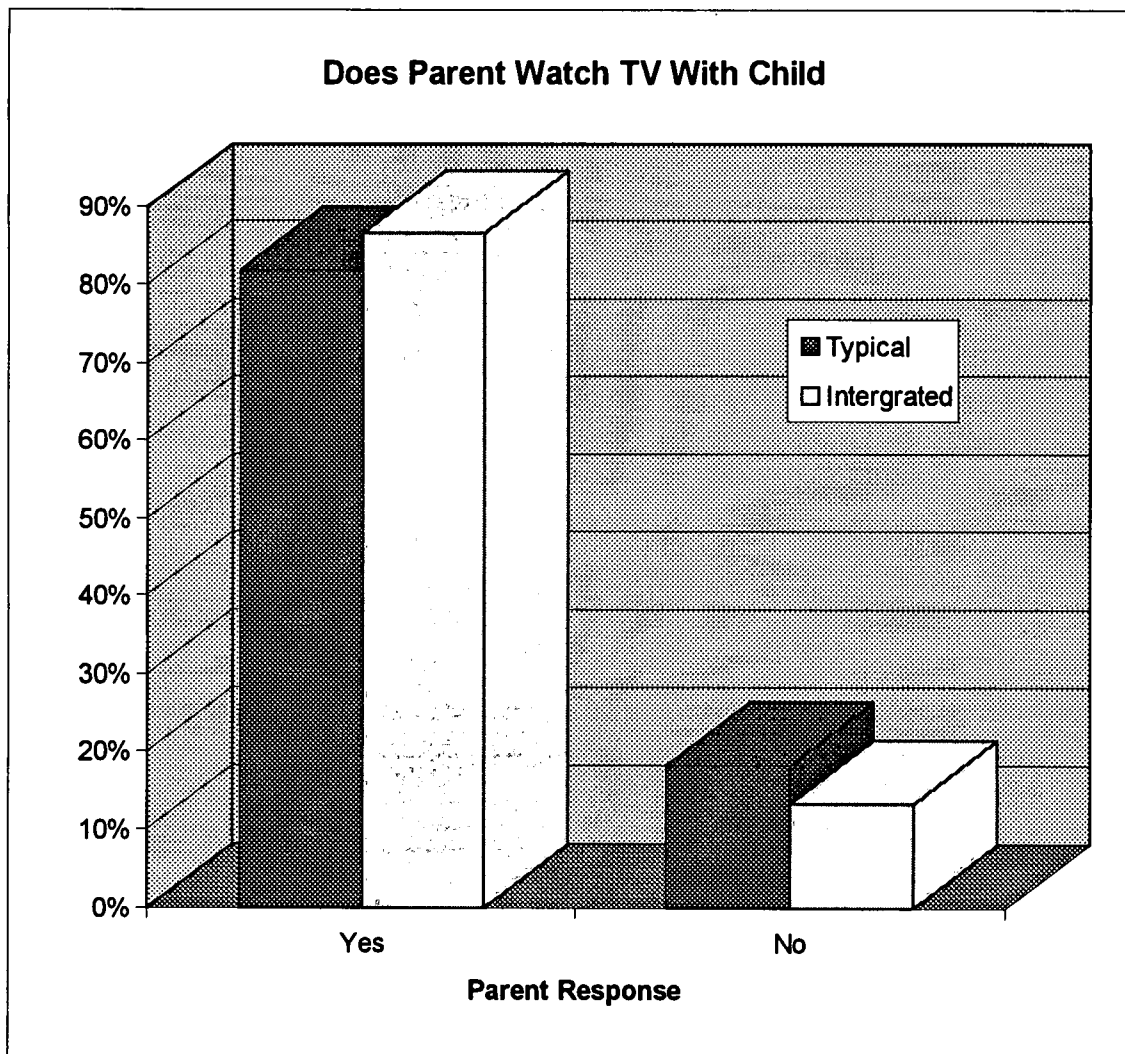


Figure 3

Question 4 asked the parents if their child watched video tapes. The parents were to respond by checking yes or no. 100% of the parents who participated in this survey, responded yes to this question. This question was asked to gain data on the viewing habits of the preschool child regarding video tapes.

Question 5 asked the parents to check the number of hours their child watched videos on a daily basis. The choices were-1 hour, 2 hours., 4 hours., 6 hours., more than 6 hours. This question provided information to determine the number of daily hours the child watched video tapes.

The parents from the typical preschool group stated that their child watched the following hours of video tape daily: children watching 1 hour of daily video tapes was 55%; children watching 2 hours of daily video tapes was 36%; children watching 4 hours of daily video tapes was 9%. No responses from the parents of the typical preschool group who stated that the child watched more than four hours of daily video tape.

The parents from the integrated preschool group stated that their child watched the following hours of video tape daily: children watching 1 hour of daily video tapes was 20%; children watching 2 hours of daily video tapes was 60%; children watching 4 hours of daily video tapes was 20%. No responses from the parents of the integrated preschool group who stated that their child watched more than four hours of daily video tape (See figure 4).

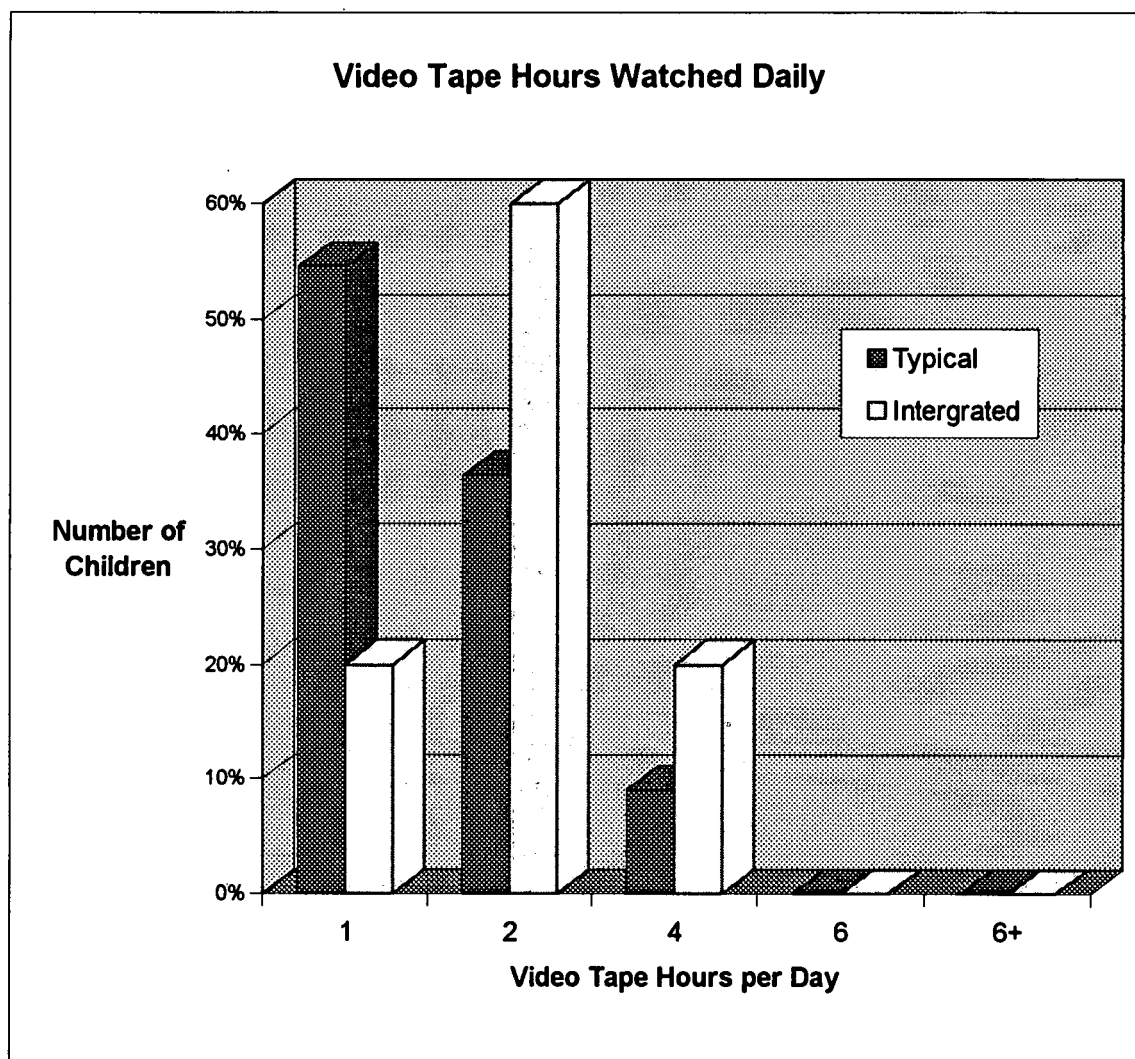


Figure 4

Question 6 asked the parents if they watched videos with their child. The parents were to respond by checking yes or no. This question was asked to obtain data regarding interactions that might take place between the parent and the child involving video tape viewing.

Almost all of the parents who participated in this survey stated that they sat and watched videos with their child. One hundred percent of the typical preschool group parents responded in the affirmative. Eighty-seven percent of the integrated preschool group parents responded affirmatively. Only two parents, representing 13% from the integrated preschool group, stated they did not sit and watch video tapes with their child (See figure 5).

The positive response to this question showed that parents devoted the time to watch video tapes with their preschool child. The results indicated that the parents either enjoyed video tape viewing with their child, or felt it was necessary for other reasons. As a result of active viewing between the parent and the child together, a means for a common bond or a time of sharing between the parent and child was provided.

With the easy use of the VCR, and the large abundance of video selections available, it requires greater effort for parents to be aware of what their child watches. Video tape content, explicit language and violent behavior require parental guidance when choosing video tapes for preschool children to watch.

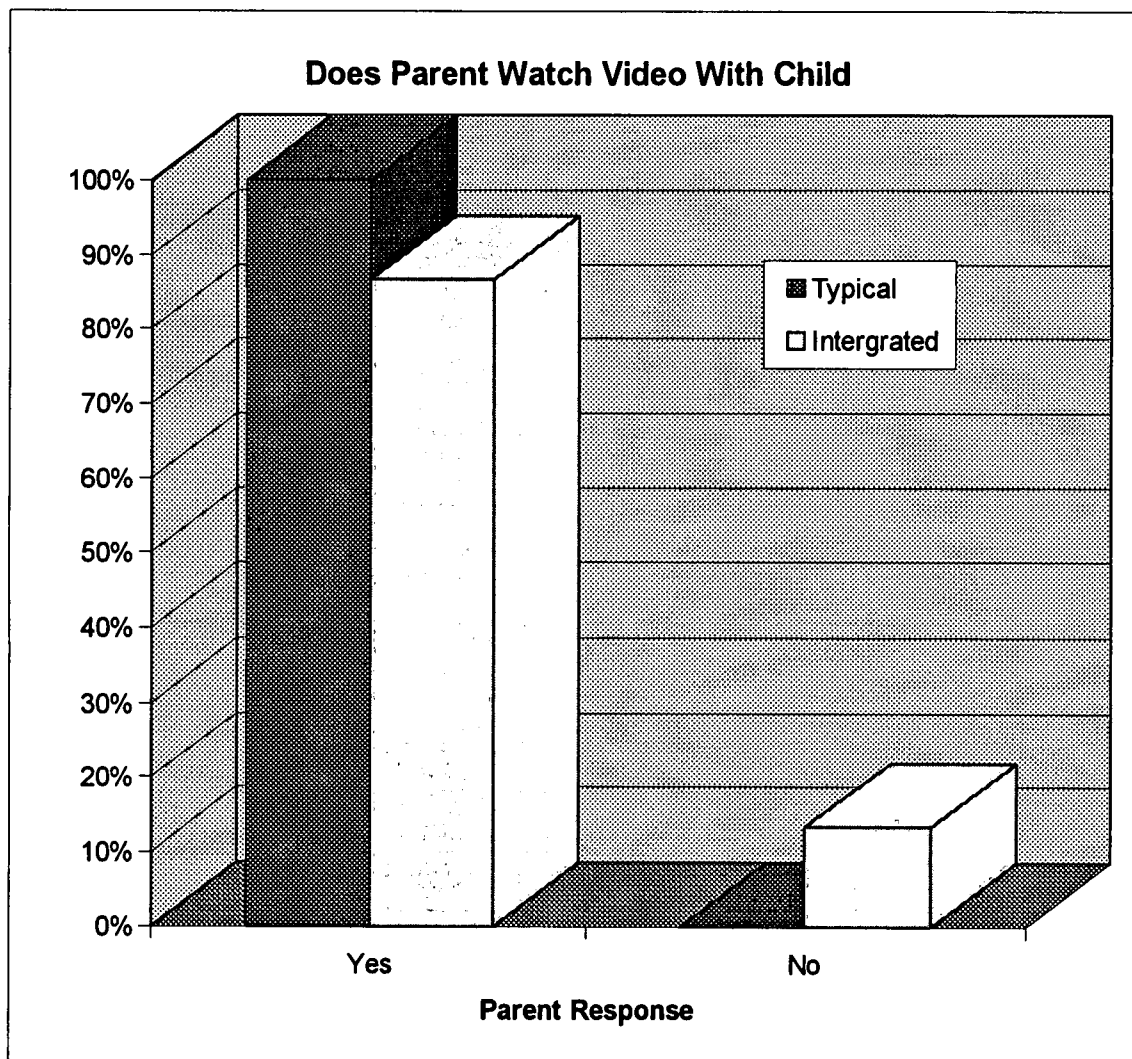


Figure 5

Question 7 asked the parents whether they talk about the television program after watching it with their child. The parents were to respond by checking yes or no. This question was asked on the survey to gather data to determine if discussion or feedback on television content took place between the parent and the child.

Ten parents from both participating preschool groups stated that they discussed the television programming watched by their child. Ten parents, representing 91%, from the typical preschool group responded that they discussed television programming with their child. One parent, representing 9%, from the typical preschool group responded otherwise.

Ten parents, representing 67%, from the integrated preschool group responded that they discussed television programming with their child. Five parents, representing 33%, from the integrated preschool group responded that they did not.

Many parents stated that sitting, viewing and discussing the television programming with their child was important to assure viewing of suitable programming material for the child. This helped them to monitor their child's television viewing habits (See figure 6).

Data from Question 7 reinforced data from Question 3 on this survey that some parents watched television programming with their child for enjoyment and sharing, not necessarily for discussion of content.

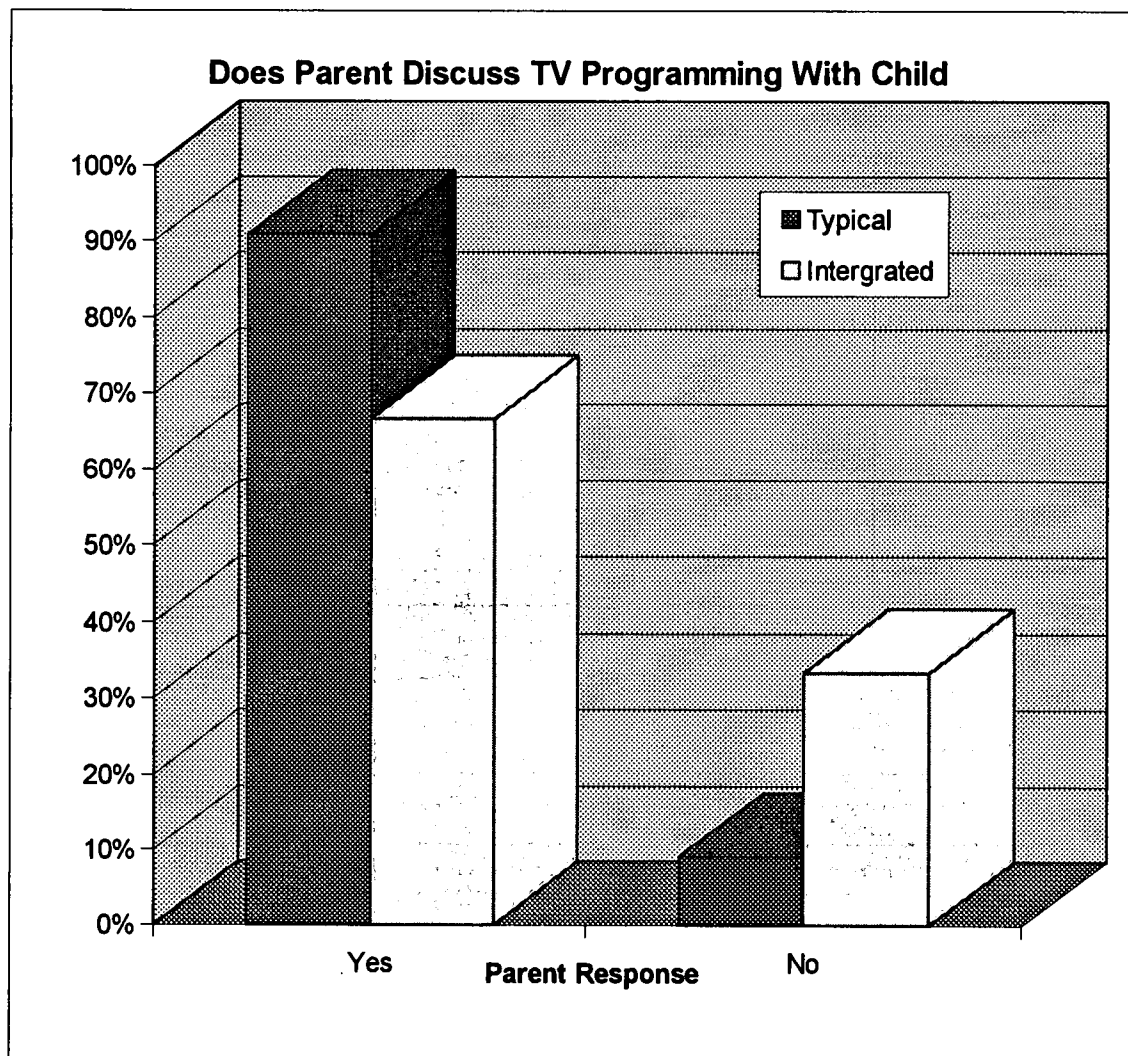


Figure 6

Question 8 asked the parents if they felt their child learned from watching television.

The parents were to respond by checking yes or no. This question was asked to determine if parents felt whether or not television provided a learning device for their preschool child.

Most parents from both preschool groups who participated in this survey stated that their child learned by watching television. Ten parents, representing 91% from the typical preschool group, responded that their child did learn from viewing television. Only one parent, representing 9% from the typical preschool group, stated that their child did not learn anything by watching television. The parent who responded "No" to this question, stated that television was "just something for her daughter to do."

Fourteen parents, representing 93% from the integrated preschool group, responded that their child did learn from viewing television. One parent, representing 7% from the integrated preschool group, chose not to respond to this question (See figure 7).

Data gathered from Question 8 in this survey showed that the parents of the children in both the typical and the integrated preschool groups felt that television viewing provided a learning device for their child. Only one response from the parent in typical preschool group responded that there was no learning benefit to television viewing.

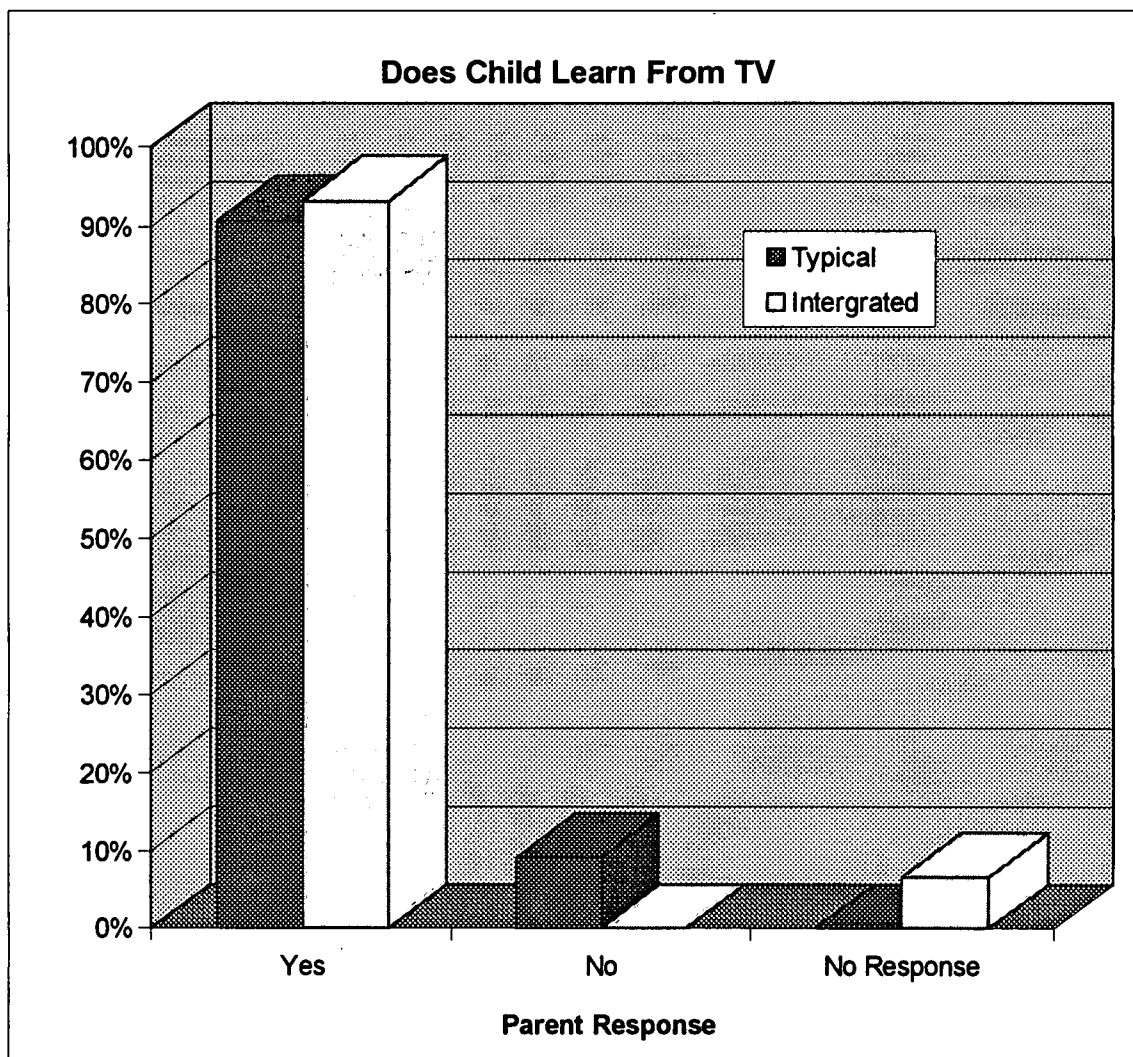


Figure 7

On Question 9, the parents were to list what they felt their child learned from watching television. This question was asked to gather data to as to what areas of learning their child had gained by viewing television.

Parents listed the following aspects as being learned from when their child watched television.

- ♦ Counting skills.
- ♦ The alphabet.
- ♦ Songs, games and movement.
- ♦ Stories, humor and vocabulary.
- ♦ Right and wrong ways to handle problems and relationships.
- ♦ Colors.
- ♦ Nature, animals, dinosaurs, and going places in the world around them.
- ♦ Imaginative play.

On Question 10, the parents were to respond why their child watched television, if they felt that no learning took place. This question was asked to gather data to as to what, if anything, their child had gained by viewing television.

Only one parent from the typical preschool group stated that their child did not learn anything by watching television.

Question 11 asked the parents to check the type of daily television programming that their child watched. The choices were- educational programs; *Barney*, *Sesame Street*, the news, weekly network programming, prime time programming with the hours being from

8:00 PM-11:00 PM. This question was asked to gather data on the types of daily and weekly television programming viewed by the preschool children.

Most parents who took part in this survey stated that their child watched more educational television programming than the other categories listed. More children in the typical preschool group tended to watch more network type television programming. The integrated preschool group of children watched less network television programming and more educational television programming (See figure 8).

The following table shows how parents listed the television programming watched by their child on weekdays:

<u>Television Programming</u>	<u>Typical Group</u>	<u>Integrated Group</u>
Educational	55%	60%
<i>Barney</i>	73%	87%
<i>Sesame Street</i>	64%	53%
News	9%	13%
Weekly Programming	73%	33%
Prime Time	9%	0%

Parents listed the following television programming watched by their child on weekdays:

- ♦ *Cartoons*
- ♦ *Nickelodeon*
- ♦ *Lamb Chop*
- ♦ *This Old House*
- ♦ *Brady Bunch*
- ♦ *Prince of Bel-Air*

- ♦ *Blossom*
- ♦ *Home Improvement*
- ♦ *Law and Order*
- ♦ *Dateline*
- ♦ *Victory Garden*
- ♦ *Chicago Hope*
- ♦ *ER*
- ♦ *Dr. Quinn*
- ♦ *Saved by the Bell*
- ♦ *Full House*

In both preschool groups, parents allowed the child to watch programs with educational content most frequently, followed by weekly network programming. Most weekly network television programs listed on the PSTW, tended to be family-oriented and watched by the entire family. *ER*, *Chicago Hope*, *Law and Order*, *Dateline*, and *Victory Garden* were watched by few preschoolers covered in this survey.

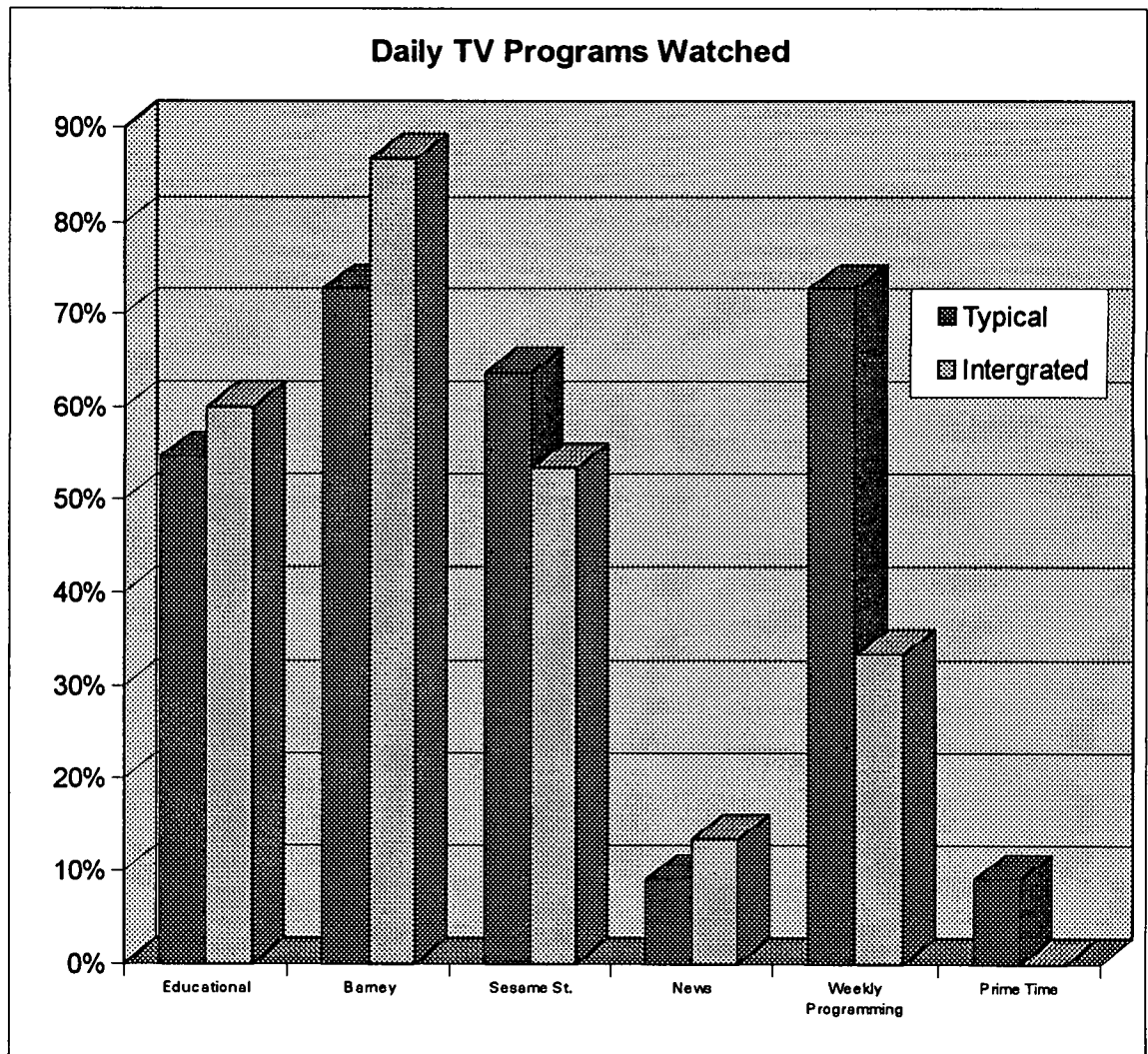


Figure 8

Question 12 asked the parents to list the television programs that their child watched on the weekend. This question was asked to gather data on the types of weekend television programming viewed by the preschool children.

Parents listed the following television programming watched by their child on weekends:

- ♦ Cartoons.
- ♦ Sports programming.
- ♦ *The Disney Channel*.
- ♦ *PBS*.
- ♦ *Nick Jr.*
- ♦ Video rental.

All the preschool children covered in this survey watched cartoons on the weekend. The rental of videos, *The Disney Channel* and *Nick Jr.* were other television viewing choices frequently made by preschool children listed on the PSTW.

Discussion of the Results

After the data from both the integrated and the typical preschool group surveys were viewed, all areas surveyed appeared comparable for both groups. The typical preschool group appeared to watch more network television programming, while the integrated preschool group appeared to watch more educational television programming. Parents from both groups who took part in this survey stated the following:

- that they watched and discussed television programming with their child,

- that television may instill learning when watched by their preschool child,
- that they monitor their child's television viewing.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

In Chapter I of this study the writer provided information on why integrated preschools were formed, and how oral communication develops at a rapid rate during the preschool years. The writer was interested in finding out the amount of hours watched daily by two different preschool groups, and the types of daily television programming that were watched by the two different groups.

The purpose of this study was defined as comparing television viewing habits between children in a typical preschool classroom with those television viewing habits of children that attended an integrated preschool classroom.

The writer gave definitions for the following terms: oral communication, a preschooler, a parent, an I.E.P., and an integrated preschool.

In Chapter II, the writer reviewed the literature on the benefits of watching television during the preschool years. The review of literature was divided into the three subheadings. Areas that were discussed in Chapter II were language development, television viewing habits of preschool children and television's effects upon language development during the preschool years, and criteria for watching quality television programming for preschoolers.

In Chapter III, the writer discussed the methodologies employed by a parental survey. Data collection was employed by the writer making a parental survey on daily television viewing habits from two preschool groups. One preschool group for this study was an integrated preschool classroom . The second group for this study was a typical preschool classroom with no children attending that required special services to address special needs.

In Chapter IV the writer gave a summary of the results from the Parental Survey on Television Watching. The data were presented and discussed in the form of graphs for each of the questions asked on the PSTW.

Conclusions

Results from PSTW showed that all areas surveyed appeared comparable for both preschool groups that participated in the survey. The typical preschool group appeared to watch more network television programming, while the integrated preschool group appeared to watch more educational television programming. Parents from both groups who took part in this survey stated the following:

- that they watched and discussed television programming with their child,
- that television may instill learning when watched by their preschool child,
- that they monitor their child's television viewing.

Implications

The writer stated that parents should monitor television watching during the preschool years. Parents were the major influence of the types on television programs watched, and the types of learning that took place on the part of their preschool child from television viewing. In the opinion of this writer, most parents realized how their preschool child's television viewing habits affect learning and behavior. Television viewing habits established at this early age continue into the school age years.

Parents are an important factor in implementing quality television viewing habits in young children. Parents should take the initiative to determine the programming material that is available for television viewing by their children.

Parents must undertake a stronger role in advocating quality television programming for their children. Their concerns are vital in children's programming. Teachers and parents should work together to bring this important issue to the attention of television programming management.

There are many quality television programs currently available on network and public broadcasting. Programming management can be influenced by parental concerns only if these concerns are made known to the programming management. Parents of preschool children represent a significant segment of the television viewing population. If parents took the time to make known their concerns, quality children's television programming would be made more available for viewing.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Auglaize County Board of Education

211 S. Blackhoof St.
Wapakoneta, Ohio 45895

Phone # (419) 738-3422
Fax # (419) 738-1267

J. Ronald Pepple
Superintendent

Judy Brewer
Director, Curriculum
& Staff Development

Lisa Elson
Co-Director
Special Education

Gretchen Leppia
Co-Director
Special Education

Luana Craft
Psychologist

Dale Kessler
Preschool
Psychologist

Kelth Boyd
Gifted Coordinator

Dan Cook
Drug-Free Schools
Coordinator

Dear Parents,

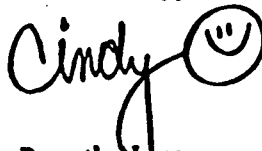
I am presently working on finishing my Master's Degree at the University of Dayton. In order to complete my degree, I am required to do a research project. I am trying to establish a correlation between watching television and language development in preschool children.

Enclosed is a survey that I would like for you to complete and return to me no later than Friday, March 17th. Completed surveys that are returned by the deadline, will go into a drawing for a free pizza from Pizza Hut!

The information collected from the surveys is for my own use only, and will be kept strictly confidential. Please feel free to contact me regarding the survey.

I appreciate your time in completing the survey and for helping me complete my degree.

With much appreciation,



Parent's Name _____
(for the Pizza Drawing)

Parental Survey on Television Watching

Please check the answer the best pertains to your child's television watching-

1. Does your child enjoy watching television? ☐ Yes ☐ No
2. How many hours daily does your child watch television? ☐ 1 hr. ☐ 2 hrs
☐ 4 hrs ☐ 6 hrs
☐ More than 6 hrs
3. Do you sit and watch television with your child? ☐ Yes ☐ No
4. Does your child watch video tapes? ☐ Yes ☐ No
5. Approximately how many hours? ☐ 1 hr. ☐ 2 hrs
☐ 4 hrs ☐ 6 hrs
☐ More than 6 hrs
6. Do you watch the videos with your child? ☐ Yes ☐ No
7. Do you talk about the television program after watching it? ☐ Yes ☐ No
8. Do you feel your child learns from watching television? ☐ Yes ☐ No
9. If you answered *Yes* to number 8, what do you feel your child learns?

10. If you answered *No* to number 8, why does your child watch television?

11. What type of daily television programs does your child watch?

☐ Educational programs ☐ Barney ☐ Sesame Street ☐ The News

☐ Others, Please list _____

☐ Weekly programs, Please list _____

☐ Prime time programming (8:00 PM-11:00 PM), Please list _____

12. What type of programs does your child watch on the week-ends?

Please list _____

APPENDIX B

Auglaize County Board of Education

211 S. Blackhoof St.
Wapakoneta, Ohio 45895

Phone # (419) 738-3422
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Co-Director
Special Education

Luana Craft
Psychologist

Dale Kessler
Preschool
Psychologist

Kelth Boyd
Gifted Coordinator

Dan Cook
Drug-Free Schools
Coordinator

Dear Parents,

I am presently working on finishing my Master's Degree at the University of Dayton. In order to complete my degree, I am required to do a research project. I am trying to establish a correlation between watching television and language development in preschool children.

Enclosed is a survey that I would like for you to complete and return to me no later than Friday, April 7th. Completed surveys that are returned by the deadline, will go into a drawing for a free pizza from Pizza Hut!

The information collected from the surveys is for my own use only, and will be kept strictly confidential. Please feel free to contact me regarding the survey.

I appreciate your time in completing the survey and for helping me complete my degree.

With much appreciation,

Cindy Calabrisi
Cindy Calabrisi

Parent's Name _____
(for the Pizza Drawing)

Parental Survey on Television Watching

Please check the answer the best pertains to your child's television watching-

1. Does your child enjoy watching television? ☐ Yes ☐ No
2. How many hours daily does your child watch television? ☐ 1 hr. ☐ 2 hrs
☐ 4 hrs ☐ 6 hrs
☐ More than 6 hrs
3. Do you sit and watch television with your child? ☐ Yes ☐ No
4. Does your child watch video tapes? ☐ Yes ☐ No
5. Approximately how many hours? ☐ 1 hr. ☐ 2 hrs
☐ 4 hrs ☐ 6 hrs
☐ More than 6 hrs
6. Do you watch the videos with your child? ☐ Yes ☐ No
7. Do you talk about the television program after watching it? ☐ Yes ☐ No
8. Do you feel your child learns from watching television? ☐ Yes ☐ No
9. If you answered *Yes* to number 8, what do you feel your child learns?

10. If you answered *No* to number 8, why does your child watch television?

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☐ Educational programs ☐ Barney ☐ Sesame Street ☐ The News

☐ Others, Please list _____

☐ Weekly programs, Please list _____

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12. What type of programs does your child watch on the week-ends?

Please list _____

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