

SOUTH AFRICAN HUMAN SCIENCES RESEARCH COUNCIL



**SENTRUM VIR BIBLIOTEEK- EN
INLIGTINGSDIENSTE
CENTRE FOR LIBRARY AND
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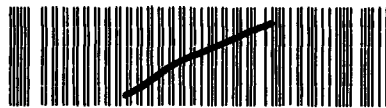
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Dr P.C.J. Jordaan	Institute for Communication Research
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1. INTRODUCTION

The data presented in this research finding constitute a subsection of a comprehensive project being undertaken by the Institute for Communication Research to determine the effect of television on school children. This comprehensive investigation resulted from the recommendations made by the Commission of Enquiry on Matters Relating to Television and by the Technical Advisory Committee of the SABC, namely that research be undertaken into the socio-cultural structure of the South African community, and the effect that television could have on this structure.

The project covers a period of eight years, namely from 1974 to 1981, and involves pupils from Standard 3 to Standard 10. Some of the Standard 3 and Standard 6 pupils that were included in the first survey (1974) are being followed up annually until they reach Standard 10. A number of pupils from Standard 3 to Standard 10 were involved in the investigation in 1974, 1975 and 1977 for control purposes.

Data are collected by means of questionnaires and standardized tests, and a study is made of various aspects such as personality, relations (personal, home, social and formal), study habits and attitudes, social behaviour, value orientations and utilization of time. On account of the extent of the data that have been collected in connection with each of these aspects, for the purpose of this research finding, attention is devoted only to the reading patterns (time utilization) of English-speaking Standard 5 day-scholars.

Overseas researchers (Besco, 1952; Furu, 1962 and Himmelweit, Oppenheim and Vince, 1958) found that in the short term television had an effect on the reading of certain types of reading matter. Maccoby, 1951; McDonagh et al., 1950 and Witty and Kinsela, 1959 also found that soon after the introduction of television people generally read less. However, these findings cannot be applied without more ado to South African conditions. South Africa not only differs culturally from overseas countries, but its television service also has a distinctive character. The introduction of a television service in South Africa in January 1976 made it possible to examine these aspects in loco.

2. AIM

2.1 The aim of this investigation is to examine the probable short-term effect* that television may have on the following aspects of the reading patterns of English-speaking Standard 5 day scholars:

- a. The extent to which certain types of reading matter are read.
- b. The time generally devoted to reading.
- c. The extent to which people read matter on certain topics.

2.2 Attention will also be devoted to the short-term effect of television on the library membership outside the school context of these same pupils.

3. METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

3.1 SAMPLE

The data used in this report were collected in 1974 and 1976 during a comprehensive investigation conducted in provincial schools of the four provinces in the RSA. A sample of 7 108 Standard 3 pupils, stratified in respect of the following variables, was drawn in 1974, that is, before the introduction of television: sex, language of instruction, urban and non-urban situation of the schools attended by the pupils, as well as the province in which the schools are situated. A large number of these children were involved in a follow-up investigation in 1976, in other words after the introduction of television. For the purpose of this study a selection of all English-speaking (home language and medium of instruction) day scholars was made from this broad sample. These pupils were further classified into a group which at that stage (1976) had already watched television (the experimental group) and another group of pupils which had not yet watched television at that time (the control group). Both groups were further subdivided according to sex. The reason for making this selection and subdivision was to make the experimental and control groups comparable in respect of variables which could play a role in reading patterns. Researchers found that the following variables inter alia are related to reading patterns of children and young people, sex

*In this research finding short-term effect refers to the effect of television during the first year of transmission.

(Stone, 1953; Roberts, 1955; and Landman, 1972) and home language (Pieterse, 1967). Only those pupils who had a television set at their disposal at home and who watched television during the week and during week-ends were included in the experimental group. To allow for the "novelty effect" only respondents who indicated in the Television Questionnaire that they had had television sets for three months or longer were involved. Respondents who did not have a set at home, but who watched elsewhere were not included in this or in the control group. The control group therefore consisted of respondents who did not have a set available at home and who did not watch television elsewhere. The experimental group and the control group consisted of 436 and 50 boys and 455 and 47 girls respectively.

3.2 THE MEASURING INSTRUMENTS

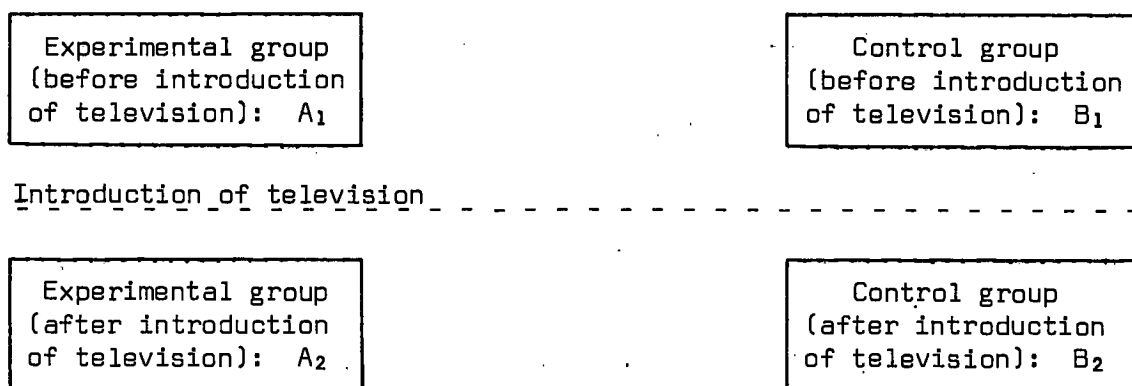
The information used in this research finding was obtained from the data collected during the previously mentioned surveys by means of the time utilization, biographical and television questionnaires. Only the questions referring to reading patterns were utilized.

3.3 THE EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN*

As can be seen from the description of the sample in Paragraph 3.1, use is made in this investigation of a test-retest design with one control group. This is shown schematically in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1

EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN: TEST-RETEST WITH CONTROL



*Prof. D.J. Stoker from the Department of Statistics of the University of Pretoria was initially consulted in the planning stages of the project and his suggestions in connection with statistical methods are incorporated in this design.

A series of comparisons was made between the groups indicated in Figure 1 in respect of the answers to every question. Since the answers are available in frequency form only, the chi square statistical test (χ^2) (compare Siegel, 1956), was used for these comparisons.

Differences or associations were regarded as significant on the 0,05, 0,01 and 0,001 levels. The following comparisons were made:

a. A₁ with B₁ (by means of χ^2)

If the answers from A₁ to a specific question differed significantly from those from B₁, no further processing was undertaken, since before the introduction of television the two groups were not comparable in respect of that aspect of reading patterns.

b. B₁ with B₂ (by means of direct comparison of frequencies)

Since two years had passed between the 1974 and 1976 surveys, it was necessary to make provision for changes in the answers of the pupils in the experimental group that could be ascribed to factors other than the effect of television (for example the effect of maturation). This was done by checking in the control group how the number of pupils who marked one of the two answer categories in every question changed from B₁ to B₂ (Figure 2). Each difference was then expressed as a fraction of the total number of respondents in the control group. A proportional adjustment was then made every time to the number of pupils in the experimental group who marked that answer possibility.

c. A₁ with adjusted A₂ (by means of χ^2)

Once the above adjustment had been made in respect of the number of pupils who marked each of the two answer possibilities in A₂ in Figure 2, a comparison was made between this adjusted number and that in A₁. A significant difference points to a possible effect of television.

Steps (a) to (c) are illustrated by means of the following two examples in Figures 2 and 3. (The χ^2 values that are significant at the 0,001 level are indicated in the tables with ***, those that are significant

at the 0,01 level with **, and the values that are significant at the 0,05 level with *.

FIGURE 2

FIRST EXAMPLE FOR ILLUSTRATING DESIGN: RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION: "DO YOU LIKE MOUNTAINEERING?"

	Experimental group:	Control group:
Before introduc- tion of television	A ₁	B ₁
	Yes 400	Yes 435
	No <u>100</u>	No <u>115</u>
	TOTAL 500	TOTAL 550

Introduction of television -----

After introduction of television	A ₂	B ₂
	Yes 351	Yes 460
	No <u>149</u>	No <u>90</u>
	TOTAL 500	TOTAL 550

a. A₁ with B₁

$$\chi^2 = 0,083 \quad \text{df} = 1$$

Further comparisons can therefore be made in this case.

b. B₁ with B₂ ('yes' responses)

$$B_2 \text{ (yes)} - B_1 \text{ (yes)} = 460 - 435 = 25$$

The latter differs in proportion to the total: $\frac{25}{550}$

Adjustment that has to be made in A₂

$$\frac{25}{550} \times 500 = 23 \text{ (approximated)}$$

c. A₁ with adjusted A₂

A chi square is calculated in respect of the following table:

	A ₁	A ₂ (adjusted)
Yes	400	(351 - 23) = 328
No	100	(149 + 23) = 172
TOTAL	500	500

χ^2 value: 25,458*** df = 1

In this case television may have had a deleterious effect on the respondents' preference for mountaineering.

FIGURE 3

SECOND EXAMPLE FOR ILLUSTRATING DESIGN: RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION: "DO YOU LIKE CYCLING?"

Experimental group:

Control group:

	A ₁		B ₁	
Before introduction of television	Yes	50	Yes	31
	No	<u>94</u>	No	<u>71</u>
	TOTAL	144	TOTAL	102

Introduction of television -----

	A ₂		B ₂	
After introduction of television	Yes	61	Yes	57
	No	<u>83</u>	No	<u>45</u>
	TOTAL	144	TOTAL	102

a. A₁ with B₁

$$\chi^2 = 0,330 \quad df = 1$$

Further comparisons can be made in this case.

b. B₁ with B₂ ('yes' responses)

$$B_2 \text{ (yes)} - B_1 \text{ (yes)} = 57 - 31 = 26$$

The latter differs in proportion to the total: $\frac{26}{102}$

Adjustment that has to be made to A₂.

$$\frac{26}{102} \times 144 = 37 \text{ (approximated)}$$

c. A₁ with adjusted A₂

A chi square is calculated in respect of the following table:

	A ₁	A ₂ (adjusted)
Yes	50	(61 - 37) = 24
No	94	(83 + 37) = 120
TOTAL	144	144

$$\chi^2 \text{ value: } 11,367^{***} \quad df = 1$$

As in the previous example, television probably also had an inhibitory effect on the preferences in respect of this particular activity. In the latter case, however, the effect of television is more difficult to interpret, since the unadjusted figures in Figure 3 reveal an increase (namely 11) in the 'yes' responses of the experimental group. However, the hampering effect of television in this case can be interpreted that in the absence of television an even greater increase could be expected in the 'yes' responses, but that this increase is partly kept in check or counteracted by television.

In both the foregoing examples there were only two answer possibilities to every question. Where there were three or more answer possibilities they were combined for the purpose of this research finding into two categories, so that the same procedures of processing as in the examples could be applied. The distribution of the answers of the 1976 control group was taken as the point of departure in combining the answer possibilities. A dichotomous division with the cut-off point between the two adjacent answer categories with the highest frequency was made every time in the specific tables. This cut-off point lies close to the median of the answers of the 1976 control group, and if an effect of television is indicated in this manner, it refers to shifts in the vicinity of this median and not to extreme cases.

The above design will be used throughout this study to examine the possible effect of television on each of the variables concerned.

4. FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

As mentioned in Paragraph 3.3, no deductions or calculations in connection with the effect of television can be made in cases where statistically significant differences occurred between the pre-television responses of the experimental group and those of the control group. In regard to the following questions on reading patterns, differences of this nature occurred or the numbers in the cells were too small for doing additional statistical calculations:

In how many magazines did you read something last week? (Do not include photo stories and comics) (girls).

Indicate to what extent you read each of the following types of reading matter:

literature on sport (girls)

love-stories (girls)

stories about children (girls)

war stories and adventure stories (boys)
detective stories, murder stories and Westerns (boys)
the Bible (boys)
poetry (boys)

The above variables are not reflected in the tables which follow. Statistical processing could be done in all the other questions and the results are indicated in Tables 1 to 19.

4.2 THE EXTENT TO WHICH CERTAIN TYPES OF READING MATTER ARE READ

The answers of the pupils to questions on the reading of newspapers, Sunday papers, comics and photo story booklets, books and periodicals as well as photo stories and comics which appear in newspapers are analysed in Tables 1 to 9.

4.2.1 The number of days per week that a newspaper is read

The responses of the boys and girls to the following item are expounded in Tables 1 and 2: "On how many of the seven days last week did you read a newspaper?" In the case of boys the answers to this question were dichotomously divided into "0 - 3 days" as against "4 days or more", and in the case of girls into "0 - 2 days" as against "3 days or more".

According to the chi square values (experimental group 1976 (adjusted) as compared with the experimental group 1974) no statistically significant differences occurred in the vicinity of the median in this variable.

4.2.2 The reading of Sunday papers

The responses of the boys and girls to the following question are analysed in Tables 3 and 4: "Did you read a Sunday newspaper last week?" The respondents could only answer 'yes' or 'no' to this question.

It can be deduced from Table 4 that probably as a result of television more girls read Sunday newspapers. However, no statistically significant shifts

TABLE 1

ON HOW MANY OF THE SEVEN DAYS LAST WEEK DID YOU READ THE NEWSPAPER? (BOYS)

Number of days	Number of boys									Chi Square (χ^2)		
	Control Group				Experimental Group					Experimental group 1974 compared with control group 1974 (df = 1)	Experimental group 1976 (adjusted) compared with experimental group 1974 (df = 1)	
	1974		1976		1974		1976		1976 (adjusted)			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N			%
0 - 3 days	30	61	26	52	262	60	246	56	286	66	0,000	2,598
4 days or more	19	39	24	48	174	40	190	44	150	34		
TOTAL	49	100	50	100	436	100	436	100	436	100		

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TABLE 2

ON HOW MANY OF THE SEVEN DAYS LAST WEEK DID YOU READ THE NEWSPAPER? (GIRLS)

Number of days	Number of girls									Chi Square (χ^2)		
	Control Group				Experimental Group					Experimental group 1974 compared with control group 1974 (df = 1)	Experimental group 1976 (adjusted) compared with experimental group 1974 (df = 1)	
	1974		1976		1974		1976		1976 (adjusted)			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N			%
0 - 2 days	30	64	28	61	316	69	277	61	290	64	0,393	2,931
3 days or more	17	36	18	39	139	31	177	39	164	36		
TOTAL	47	100	46	100	455	100	454	100	454	100		

TABLE 3

DID YOU READ A SUNDAY NEWSPAPER LAST WEEK? (BOYS)

Response	Number of boys								Chi Square (χ^2)			
	Control Group				Experimental Group				Experimental group 1974 compared with control group 1974 (df = 1)	Experimental group 1976 (adjusted) compared with experimental group 1974 (df = 1)		
	1974		1976		1974		1976				1976 (adjusted)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%			N	%
Yes	28	57	27	54	299	69	286	66	300	69	2,198	0,003
No	21	43	23	46	135	31	150	34	136	31		
TOTAL	49	100	50	100	435	100	436	100	436	100		

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TABLE 4

DID YOU READ A SUNDAY NEWSPAPER LAST WEEK? (GIRLS)

Response	Number of girls								Chi Square (χ^2)			
	Control Group				Experimental Group				Experimental group 1974 compared with control group 1974 (df = 1)	Experimental group 1976 (adjusted) compared with experimental group 1974 (df = 1)		
	1974		1976		1974		1976				1976 (adjusted)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%			N	%
Yes	28	61	28	61	271	60	314	69	314	69	0,000	8,721**
No	18	39	18	39	184	40	140	31	140	31		
TOTAL	46	100	46	100	455	100	454	100	454	100		

TABLE 5

HOW MANY BOOKS DID YOU READ LAST WEEK? (DO NOT INCLUDE SCHOOL-BOOKS, MAGAZINES, PHOTO STORIES AND COMICS) (BOYS)

Number of books	Number of boys								Chi Square (χ^2)			
	Control Group				Experimental Group				Experimental group 1974 compared with control group 1974 (df = 1)	Experimental group 1976 (adjusted) compared with experimental group 1974 (df = 1)		
	1974		1976		1974		1976				1976 (adjusted)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%				
0 - 1 book	19	40	29	58	193	45	285	65	205	47	0,258	0,431
2 books or more	29	60	21	42	240	55	151	35	231	53		
TOTAL	48	100	50	100	433	100	436	100	436	100		

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TABLE 6

HOW MANY BOOKS DID YOU READ LAST WEEK? (DO NOT INCLUDE SCHOOL-BOOKS, MAGAZINES, PHOTO STORIES AND COMICS) (GIRLS)

Number of books	Number of girls								Chi Square (χ^2)			
	Control Group				Experimental Group				Experimental group 1974 compared with control group 1974 (df = 1)	Experimental group 1976 (adjusted) compared with experimental group 1974 (df = 1)		
	1974		1976		1974		1976				1976 (adjusted)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%				
0 - 1 book	20	43	20	43	184	41	265	59	261	58	0,013	26,538***
2 books or more	27	57	26	57	270	59	186	41	190	42		
TOTAL	47	100	46	100	454	100	451	100	451	100		

TABLE 7

IN HOW MANY MAGAZINES DID YOU READ SOMETHING LAST WEEK? (DO NOT INCLUDE PHOTO STORIES AND COMICS) (BOYS)

Number of magazines	Number of boys									Chi Square (χ^2)		
	Control Group				Experimental Group					Experimental group 1974 compared with control group 1974 (df = 1)	Experimental group 1976 (adjusted) compared with experimental group 1974 (df = 1)	
	1974		1976		1974		1976		1976 (adjusted)			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N			%
0 - 2 magazines	28	57	28	56	256	59	262	60	267	61		
3 magazines or more	21	43	22	44	178	41	174	40	169	39	0,009	0,371
TOTAL	49	100	50	100	434	100	436	100	436	100		

were obtained in respect of boys.

4.2.3 The number of books read during the previous week

The responses of the boys and girls to the following item are traced in Tables 5 and 6: "How many books did you read last week?" The answers were reduced to two categories, namely "0 - 1 book" and "2 books and more".

After proportionate provision had been made in the experimental groups for the normal shifts which occurred in the control groups, a statistically significant difference was found only in the case of girls. Fewer girls in the 1976 experimental group (adjusted) than in the 1974 group indicated that they had read two books or more. It can probably be inferred in this case that television caused a decrease in the number of girls who read two books or more per week.

This finding corresponds to the findings of Besco, 1952 (USA) with regard to girls. Himmelweit, Oppenheim and Vince, 1958 (England) established that television caused a decline in the reading of books by boys.

4.2.4 The number of magazines in which something was read

Table 7 reflects the responses of the boys to the question: "In how many magazines did you read something last week?" The answers were divided into two categories, namely "0 - 2 magazines" and "3 magazines or more".

The table concerned reveals that television probably had no effect on the number of magazines in which boys read something. No statistical calculations could be made in respect of the girls.

4.2.5 The number of comics and photo story booklets that were read

In regard to the number of comics and photo story booklets that were read, the answers of the boys were divided into the categories "0 - 4" as against "5 or more" (see Table 8). In the case of girls (Table 9) the categories were "0 - 2" and "3 or more".

TABLE 8

HOW MANY COMIC BOOKS AND PHOTO STORY BOOKS DID YOU READ LAST WEEK? (BOYS)

Number of photo story books and comics	Number of boys									Chi Square (χ^2)		
	Control Group				Experimental Group					Experimental group 1974 compared with control group 1974 (df = 1)	Experimental group 1976 (adjusted) compared with experimental group 1974 (df = 1)	
	1974		1976		1974		1976		1976 (adjusted)			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N			%
3-4 comics and photo story books	24	49	25	50	183	42	224	51	220	51	0,561	5,697*
5 comics and photo story books or more	25	51	25	50	250	58	211	49	215	49		
TOTAL	49	100	50	100	433	100	435	100	435	100		

TABLE 9

HOW MANY COMIC BOOKS AND PHOTO STORY BOOKS DID YOU READ LAST WEEK? (GIRLS)

Number of photo story books and comics	Number of girls									Chi Square (χ^2)		
	Control Group				Experimental Group					Experimental group 1974 compared with control group 1974 (df = 1)	Experimental group 1976 (adjusted) compared with experimental group 1974 (df = 1)	
	1974		1976		1974		1976		1976 (adjusted)			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N			%
0 - 2 comics and photo story books	21	45	23	50	149	33	168	37	144	32	2,202	0,068
3 or more comics and photo story books	26	55	23	50	306	67	286	63	310	68		
TOTAL	47	100	46	100	455	100	454	100	454	100		

Fewer boys in the 1976 experimental group (adjusted) than in the 1974 group indicated that they read 5 or more comics and photo story booklets (compare Table 8).

In the case of Table 9 it appears that television had no effect on the number of comics and photo story booklets read by girls.

Furu (1962) found in Japan that television caused boys and girls in Standards 3 to 5 to devote less time to the reading of comics on Fridays and Sundays.

4.2.6 Frequency with which comics and photo stories in newspapers were read

The following item was included in the questionnaire to determine whether television had any effect on the extent to which pupils read comics and photo stories: "How often did you read comics and photo stories which appeared in newspapers last week?" The results are shown in Tables 10 and 11.

According to Table 10 television had an inhibitory effect on the regularity with which boys read comics and photo stories in newspapers. The inhibitory effect of television in this case can be interpreted that in the absence of television an even greater increase could have been expected in the number of boys reading this type of reading matter three or more times per week.

It appears from Table 11 that television had no effect on the extent to which girls read comics and photo stories which appear in newspapers.

4.3 THE NUMBER OF HOURS DEVOTED TO READING PER WEEK

Tables 12 and 13 show the time boys and girls devote to reading per week. The answer categories of boys as well as girls are grouped together not in one, but in five different ways to obtain a more complete image of the effect of television on the weekly reading time.

TABLE 10

HOW OFTEN DID YOU READ COMICS AND PHOTO STORIES WHICH APPEARED IN NEWSPAPERS LAST WEEK? (BOYS)

Response	Number of boys								Chi Square (χ^2)			
	Control Group				Experimental Group				Experimental group 1974 compared with control group 1974 (df = 1)	Experimental group 1976 (adjusted) compared with experimental group 1974 (df = 1)		
	1974		1976		1974		1976 (adjusted)					
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%				
Twice	26	53	18	36	212	49	209	48	283	65	0,179	22,560***
Three times or more	23	47	32	64	223	51	227	52	153	35		
TOTAL	49	100	50	100	435	100	436	100	436	100		

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TABLE 11

HOW OFTEN DID YOU READ COMICS AND PHOTO STORIES WHICH APPEARED IN NEWSPAPERS LAST WEEK? (GIRLS)

Response	Number of girls								Chi Square (χ^2)			
	Control Group				Experimental Group				Experimental group 1974 compared with control group 1974 (df = 1)	Experimental group 1976 (adjusted) compared with experimental group 1974 (df = 1)		
	1974		1976		1974		1976 (adjusted)					
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%				
Twice	30	64	31	67	277	61	270	59	254	56	0,057	2,077
Three times or more	17	36	15	33	178	39	184	41	200	44		
TOTAL	47	100	46	100	455	100	454	100	454	100		

TABLE 12

HOW MANY HOURS PER WEEK DO YOU USUALLY SPEND ON READING (EXCLUDING YOUR SCHOOL-WORK)? (BOYS)

Number of hours and response	Number of boys									Chi Square (χ^2)		
	Control Group				Experimental Group					Experimental group 1974 compared with control group 1974 (df = 1)	Experimental group 1976 (adjusted) compared with experimental group 1974 (df = 1)	
	1974		1976		1974		1976		1976 (adjusted)			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N			%
Less than one hour	12	24	8	16	115	26	98	23	135	31	0,013	2,087
One hour or more	37	76	42	84	321	74	337	77	300	69		
TOTAL	49	100	50	100	436	100	435	100	435	100		
Less than 2 hours	26	53	20	40	218	50	196	45	253	58	0,065	5,516*
Two hours or more	23	47	30	60	218	50	239	55	182	42		
TOTAL	49	100	50	100	436	100	435	100	435	100		
Less than 3 hours	32	65	26	52	276	63	274	63	332	76	0,014	16,898***
Three hours or more	17	35	24	48	160	37	161	37	103	24		
TOTAL	49	100	50	100	436	100	435	100	435	100		
Less than 4 hours	33	67	32	64	312	72	321	74	336	77	0,203	3,398
Four hours or more	16	33	18	36	124	28	114	26	99	23		
TOTAL	49	100	50	100	436	100	435	100	435	100		
Less than 5 hours	36	73	37	74	350	80	353	81	351	81	0,872	0,005
Five hours or more	13	27	13	26	86	20	82	19	84	19		
TOTAL	49	100	50	100	436	100	435	100	435	100		

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TABLE 13

HOW MANY HOURS PER WEEK DO YOU SPEND ON READING (EXCLUDING YOUR SCHOOL-WORK)? (GIRLS)

Number of hours and response	Number of girls						Chi Square (X^2)					
	Control Group			Experimental Group			Experimental group 1974 compared with control group 1974 (df = 1)	Experimental group 1976 (adjusted) com- pared with experimen- tal group 1974 (df = 1)				
	1974		1976		1974				1976 (adjusted)			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%				
Less than 1 hour	6	13	7	15	107	24	97	21	86	19	2,240	2,576
One hour or more	41	87	39	85	348	76	357	79	368	81		
TOTAL	47	100	46	100	455	100	454	100	454	100		
Less than 2 hours	20	43	12	26	228	50	192	42	267	59	0,694	6,590*
Two hours or more	27	57	34	74	227	50	262	58	187	41		
TOTAL	47	100	46	100	455	100	454	100	454	100		
Less than 3 hours	27	57	23	50	286	63	264	58	298	66	0,326	0,649
Three hours or more	20	43	23	50	169	37	190	42	156	34		
TOTAL	47	100	46	100	455	100	454	100	454	100		
Less than 4 hours	32	68	25	54	340	75	327	72	389	86	0,663	16,498***
Four hours or more	15	32	21	46	115	25	127	28	65	14		
TOTAL	47	100	46	100	455	100	454	100	454	100		
Less than 5 hours	36	77	31	67	380	84	361	80	403	89	0,991	4,816*
Five hours or more	11	23	15	33	75	16	93	20	51	11		
TOTAL	47	100	46	100	455	100	454	100	454	100		

As far as the boys are concerned (see Table 12), statistically significant differences were obtained in two groupings, namely "Less than 2 hours" as against "2 hours or more", and "Less than 3 hours" as against "3 hours or more". In the case of girls (see Table 13) statistically significant differences were obtained in three groupings, namely "Less than 2 hours" as against "2 hours or more", "Less than 4 hours" as against "4 hours or more", and "Less than 5 hours" as against "5 hours or more". These differences indicate television probably had an inhibitory effect on the time boys and girls devoted to reading. This finding on the short-term effect of television corresponds to that of Himmelweit, Oppenheim and Vince, 1958 (England); Maccoby, 1951 (USA); McDonagh et al., 1950 (USA) and Witty and Kinsela, 1959 (USA).

4.4 THE EXTENT TO WHICH MATERIAL ON CERTAIN TOPICS IS READ

The dichotomous division of the answer possibilities (compare Paragraph 3.3) resulted in the answers of the pupils in some topics being divided into the categories "Read them a lot" as against "Read them now and then/ Never read them" (Tables 14 and 16), whereas in the rest of the topics the answers were divided into the categories "Read them a lot/Read them now and then" as against "Never read them" (Tables 15 and 17). The latter classification occurred especially in respect of topics which pupils read to a lesser extent.

The following was found with regard to the extent to which pupils read on certain topics:

- . In the case of boys, generally speaking television had no effect on the preferences for the topics in Tables 14 and 15. The only possible exception to this is the extent to which they read Bible stories. Fewer boys in the 1976 experimental group (adjusted) than in the 1974 experimental group indicated that they read Bible stories.
- . With regard to girls (Tables 16 and 17) television probably had a stimulating effect on their preferences for the following topics: Bible stories, war and adventure stories, detective stories, murder stories and Westerns, as well as literature on hobbies. The preferences for the Bible, plays, poetry and historical novels have declined. With two exceptions all these shifts occurred in topics which pupils read to a lesser extent.

TABLE 14

INDICATE THE EXTENT TO WHICH YOU READ THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF READING MATTER (EXCLUDING YOUR ORDINARY SCHOOL-BOOKS) (BOYS)

Topic of reading matter and response	Number of boys					Chi Square (X^2)	
	Control Group		Experimental Group			Experimental group 1974 compared with control group 1974 (df = 1)	Experimental group 1976 (adjusted) compared with experimental group 1974 (df = 1)
	1974	1976	1974	1976	1976 (adjusted)		
	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %		
<u>Funny stories</u>							
Read them a lot	25 51	17 34	273 63	190 44	264 61	2,092	0,266
Read them now and then/Never read them	24 49	33 66	162 37	244 56	170 39		
TOTAL	49 100	50 100	435 100	434 100	434 100		
<u>Animal stories</u>							
Read them a lot	19 39	14 28	203 47	146 34	192 45	0,861	0,347
Read them now and then/Never read them	30 61	36 72	230 53	284 66	238 55		
TOTAL	49 100	50 100	433 100	430 100	430 100		
<u>On sport</u>							
Read them a lot	18 38	13 26	201 47	161 37	211 49	1,108	0,377
Read them now and then/Never read them	30 62	37 74	230 53	270 63	220 51		
TOTAL	48 100	50 100	431 100	431 100	431 100		

TABLE 15

INDICATE THE EXTENT TO WHICH YOU READ THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF READING MATTER (EXCLUDING YOUR ORDINARY SCHOOL-BOOKS) (BOYS)

Topic of reading matter and response	Number of boys					Chi Square (X^2)						
	Control Group		Experimental Group			Experimental group 1974 compared with control group 1974 (df = 1)	Experimental group 1976 (adjusted) compared with experimental group 1974 (df = 1)					
	1974	1976	1974	1976	1976 (adjusted)							
	N	%	N	%	N	%						
<u>Love stories</u>												
Read them a lot/ Now and again	15	31	13	26	129	30	112	26	132	31	0,004	0,068
Never read them	34	69	37	74	302	70	314	74	294	69		
TOTAL	49	100	50	100	431	100	426	100	426	100		
<u>Stories about children</u>												
Read them a lot/ Now and again	33	67	25	50	311	72	250	58	325	76	0,293	1,136
Never read them	16	33	25	50	120	28	180	42	105	24		
TOTAL	49	100	50	100	431	100	430	100	430	100		
<u>Poems (recitations)</u>												
Read them a lot/ Now and again	24	49	14	28	195	45	93	22	183	42	0,120	0,570
Never read them	25	51	36	72	236	55	338	78	248	58		
TOTAL	49	100	50	100	431	100	431	100	431	100		

TABLE 15 (CONTINUED)

- INDICATE THE EXTENT TO WHICH YOU READ THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF READING MATTER (EXCLUDING YOUR ORDINARY SCHOOL-BOOKS) (BOYS)

Topic of reading matter and response	Number of boys									Chi Square (X^2)		
	Control Group				Experimental Group					Experimental group 1974 compared with control group 1974 (df = 1)	Experimental group 1976 (adjusted) compared with experimental group 1974 (df = 1)	
	1974		1976		1974		1976		1976 (adjusted)			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		N	%	
<u>Bible stories</u>												
Read them a lot/ Now and again	41	84	37	74	381	88	314	73	356	83		
Never read them	8	16	13	26	52	12	116	27	74	17	0,409	4,271*
TOTAL	49	100	50	100	433	100	430	100	430	100		
<u>On hobbies</u>												
Read them a lot/ Now and again	33	67	29	58	309	71	288	67	328	76		
Never read them	16	33	21	42	124	29	142	33	102	24	0,177	2,450
TOTAL	49	100	50	100	433	100	430	100	430	100		
<u>On school subjects - not your ordinary school-books</u>												
Read them a lot/ Now and again	31	63	26	52	303	70	235	55	284	66		
Never read them	18	37	24	48	132	30	196	45	147	34	0,569	1,236
TOTAL	49	100	50	100	435	100	431	100	431	100		

TABLE 15 (CONTINUED)

INDICATE THE EXTENT TO WHICH YOU READ THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF READING MATTER (EXCLUDING YOUR ORDINARY SCHOOL-BOOKS) (BOYS)

-Topic of reading matter and response	Number of boys									Chi Square (χ^2)		
	Control Group				Experimental Group					Experimental group 1974 compared with control group 1974 (df = 1)	Experimental group 1976 (adjusted) compared with experimental group 1974 (df = 1)	
	1974		1976		1974		1976		1976 (adjusted)			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N			%
<u>Biographies</u>												
Read them a lot/ Now and again	30	61	25	50	255	60	193	45	241	56	0,005	0,810
Never read them	19	39	25	50	173	40	235	55	187	44		
TOTAL	49	100	50	100	428	100	428	100	428	100		
<u>School and boarding school stories</u>												
Read them a lot/ Now and again	22	45	18	36	214	49	172	40	210	49	0,202	0,000
Never read them	27	55	32	64	219	51	255	60	217	51		
TOTAL	49	100	50	100	433	100	427	100	427	100		
<u>Historical stories</u>												
Read them a lot/ Now and again	40	82	34	68	357	82	276	64	334	78	0,008	2,352
Never read them	9	18	16	32	77	18	153	36	95	22		
TOTAL	49	100	50	100	434	100	429	100	429	100		

TABLE 15 (CONTINUED)

INDICATE THE EXTENT TO WHICH YOU READ THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF READING MATTER (EXCLUDING YOUR ORDINARY SCHOOL-BOOKS) (BOYS)

Topic of reading matter and response	Number of boys						Chi Square (X^2)					
	Control Group		Experimental Group				Experimental group 1974 compared with control group 1974 (df = 1)	Experimental group 1976 (adjusted) compared with experimental group 1974 (df = 1)				
	1974		1974		1976 (adjusted)							
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%				
<u>Travel stories (other and foreign places)</u>												
Read them a lot/ Now and again	36	73	32	65	320	74	258	60	293	68	0,017	3,013
Never read them	13	27	17	35	114	26	172	40	137	32		
TOTAL	49	100	49	100	434	100	430	100	430	100		
<u>Plays</u>												
Read them a lot/ Now and again	22	47	10	20	202	47	103	24	219	51	0,022	1,261
Never read them	25	53	40	80	230	53	328	76	212	49		
TOTAL	47	100	50	100	432	100	431	100	431	100		
<u>Science fiction</u>												
Read them a lot/ Now and again	40	82	32	64	339	78	282	65	358	83	0,108	2,638
Never read them	9	18	18	36	93	22	149	35	73	17		
TOTAL	49	100	50	100	432	100	431	100	431	100		

TABLE 16

INDICATE THE EXTENT TO WHICH YOU READ THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF READING MATTER (EXCLUDING YOUR ORDINARY SCHOOL-BOOKS) (GIRLS)

Topic of reading matter and response	Number of girls					Chi Square (X^2)						
	Control Group		Experimental Group			Experimental group 1974 compared with control group 1974 (df = 1)	Experimental group 1976 (adjusted) compared with experimental group 1974 (df = 1)					
	1974	1976	1974	1976	1976 (adjusted)							
	N	%	N	%	N	%						
<u>Funny stories</u>												
Read them a lot	24	51	16	35	272	60	189	42	262	58		
Read them now and then/ Never read them	23	49	30	65	179	40	262	58	189	42	1,150	0,372
TOTAL	47	100	46	100	451	100	451	100	451	100		
<u>Animal stories</u>												
Read them a lot	25	53	21	46	241	54	182	40	216	48		
Read them now and then/ Never read them	22	47	25	54	208	46	268	60	234	52	0,008	2,673
TOTAL	47	100	46	100	449	100	450	100	450	100		
<u>Bible stories</u>												
Read them a lot	28	60	12	26	199	45	98	22	249	55		
Read them now and then/ Never read them	19	40	34	74	248	55	352	78	201	45	3,299	10,062**
TOTAL	47	100	46	100	447	100	450	100	450	100		

TABLE 16 (CONTINUED)

INDICATE THE EXTENT TO WHICH YOU READ THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF READING MATTER (EXCLUDING YOUR ORDINARY SCHOOL-BOOKS) (GIRLS)

Topic of reading matter and response	Number of girls					Chi Square (X^2)						
	Control Group		Experimental Group			Experimental group 1974 compared with control group 1974 (df = 1)	Experimental group 1976 (adjusted) compared with experimental group 1974 (df = 1)					
	1974		1974		1976 (adjusted)							
	N	%	N	%	N	%						
<u>The Bible</u>												
Read it a lot	22	47	18	40	213	47	130	29	161	36		
Read it now and then/ Never read it	25	53	27	60	240	53	321	71	290	64	0,016	11,480***
TOTAL	47	100	45	100	453	100	451	100	451	100		
<u>School and boarding-school stories</u>												
Read them a lot	17	36	18	39	165	36	160	35	147	33		
Read them now and then/ Never read them	30	64	28	61	288	64	291	65	304	67	0,016	1,302
TOTAL	47	100	46	100	453	100	451	100	451	100		

INDICATE THE EXTENT TO WHICH YOU READ THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF READING MATTER (EXCLUDING YOUR ORDINARY SCHOOL-BOOKS) (GIRLS)

Topic of reading matter and response	Number of girls									Chi Square (X^2)		
	Control Group				Experimental Group					Experimental group 1974 compared with control group 1974 (df = 1)	Experimental group 1976 (adjusted) compared with experimental group 1974 (df = 1)	
	1974		1976		1974		1976		1976 (adjusted)			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N			%
<u>War stories and adventure</u>												
Read them a lot/Now and then	36	77	28	61	333	74	325	72	396	88	0,068	28,082***
Never read them	11	23	18	39	119	26	126	28	55	12		
TOTAL	47	100	46	100	452	100	451	100	451	100		
<u>Detective stories, murder stories and Westerns</u>												
Read them a lot/Now and then	26	55	24	53	277	61	357	79	366	81	0,410	43,314***
Never read them	21	45	21	47	175	39	93	21	84	19		
TOTAL	47	100	45	100	452	100	450	100	450	100		

TABLE 17 (CONTINUED)

INDICATE THE EXTENT TO WHICH YOU READ THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF READING MATTER (EXCLUDING YOUR ORDINARY SCHOOL-BOOKS) (GIRLS)

Topic of reading matter and response	Number of girls					Chi Square (χ^2)						
	Control Group		Experimental Group			Experimental group 1974 compared with control group 1974 (df = 1)	Experimental group 1976 (adjusted) compared with experimental group 1974 (df = 1)					
	1974		1976		1976 (adjusted)							
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%				
<u>Poems (recitations)</u>												
Read them a lot/Now and then	35	74	32	70	348	77	188	42	210	47	0,069	89,157***
Never read them	12	26	14	30	102	23	263	58	241	53		
TOTAL	47	100	46	100	450	100	451	100	451	100		
<u>On hobbies (e.g. stamp collecting)</u>												
Read them a lot/Now and then	33	70	20	43	268	59	201	45	321	71	1,734	14,593***
Never read them	14	30	26	57	185	41	248	55	128	29		
TOTAL	47	100	46	100	453	100	449	100	449	100		

TABLE 17 (CONTINUED)

INDICATE THE EXTENT TO WHICH YOU READ THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF READING MATTER (EXCLUDING YOUR ORDINARY SCHOOL-BOOKS) (GIRLS)

Topic of reading matter and response	Number of girls					Chi Square (χ^2)						
	Control Group		Experimental Group			Experimental group 1974 compared with control group 1974 (df = 1)	Experimental group 1976 (adjusted) compared with experimental group 1974 (df = 1)					
	1974		1974		1976 (adjusted)							
	N	%	N	%	N	%						
<u>On school subjects - not your ordinary school-books</u>												
Read them a lot/Now and then	39	83	28	61	335	74	243	54	342	76		
Never read them	8	17	18	39	117	26	207	46	108	24	1,341	0,333
TOTAL	47	100	46	100	452	100	450	100	450	100		
<u>Biographies</u>												
Read them a lot/Now and then	31	66	28	61	272	60	246	55	269	61		
Never read them	16	34	18	39	179	40	198	45	175	39	0,357	0,000
TOTAL	47	100	46	100	451	100	444	100	444	100		

TABLE 17 (CONTINUED)

INDICATE THE EXTENT TO WHICH YOU READ THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF READING MATTER (EXCLUDING YOUR ORDINARY SCHOOL-BOOKS) (GIRLS)

Topic of reading matter and response	Number of girls					Chi Square (X^2)						
	Control Group		Experimental Group			Experimental group 1974 compared with control group 1974 (df = 1)	Experimental group 1976 (adjusted) compared with experimental group 1974 (df = 1).					
	1974		1976		1976 (adjusted)							
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%				
<u>Historical stories</u> (e.g. stories on the Great Trek)												
Read them a lot/Now and then	31	66	29	63	303	67	209	46	222	49		
Never read them	16	34	17	37	148	33	241	54	228	51	0,000	28,788***
TOTAL	47	100	46	100	451	100	450	100	450	100		
<u>Travel stories (other and foreign places)</u>												
Read them a lot/Now and then	32	68	28	61	301	67	274	61	307	68		
Never read them	15	32	18	39	151	33	177	39	144	32	0,002	0,162
TOTAL	47	100	46	100	452	100	451	100	451	100		

TABLE 17 (CONTINUED)

INDICATE THE EXTENT TO WHICH YOU READ THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF READING MATTER (EXCLUDING YOUR ORDINARY SCHOOL-BOOKS) (GIRLS)

Topic of reading matter and response	Number of girls					Chi Square (χ^2)						
	Control Group		Experimental Group			Experimental group 1974 compared with control group 1974 (df = 1)	Experimental group 1976 (adjusted) compared with experimental group 1974 (df = 1)					
	1974		1974		1976 (adjusted)							
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%				
<u>Plays</u>												
Read them a lot/Now and then	35	76	28	61	310	69	205	46	273	61	0,781	5,842*
Never read them	11	24	18	39	142	31	245	54	177	39		
TOTAL	46	100	46	100	452	100	450	100	450	100		
<u>Science fiction</u>												
Read them a lot/Now and then	27	57	21	46	239	53	171	38	224	50	0,197	0,806
Never read them	20	43	25	54	213	47	280	62	227	50		
TOTAL	47	100	46	100	452	100	451	100	451	100		

It can be deduced from the foregoing that television may have had a greater effect on the reading preferences of girls than on those of boys.

In their study on the reading patterns of pupils in the age groups 10-11 and 13-14 years Himmelweit, Oppenheim and Vince, 1958 (England) found that television had a stimulating effect on the reading of factual literature. These pupils began to take a special interest in literature on birds and animals often shown in television programmes. Greater interest was also shown in fictional subjects, such as those about cowboys, that had been transmitted on television.

4.5 LIBRARY MEMBERSHIP OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL CONTEXT

The responses of boys and girls to the following question are analysed in Tables 18 and 19: "Do you belong to a library?" Respondents could answer only 'Yes' or 'No' to this question.

The results show that television had no effect on the pupils' library membership.

5. SYNOPSIS AND CONCLUSION

The aim of this investigation was to determine the possible short-term effect of television on the reading patterns of English-speaking Standard 5 day scholars (boys and girls). The total sample was divided into an experimental group (television viewers) and a control group (non-viewers). Persons who did not have a set at home, but who watched elsewhere, were not included in the investigation.

It was found that television probably had an effect on the following aspects of the pupils' reading patterns:

The extent to which boys read certain types of reading matter

Television probably had an inhibitory effect on the regularity with which boys read comics and photo stories which appeared in newspapers. Television viewing resulted in their reading fewer comics and photo stories per week, whereas the reading of books, newspapers and magazines was apparently not affected.

TABLE 18

DO YOU BELONG TO A LIBRARY? (NOT YOUR SCHOOL LIBRARY) (BOYS)

Response	Number of boys								Chi Square (χ^2)			
	Control Group				Experimental Group				Experimental group 1974 compared with control group 1974 (df = 1)	Experimental group 1976 (adjusted) compared with experimental group 1974 (df = 1)		
	1974		1976		1974		1976				1976 (adjusted)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%			N	%
Yes	35	71	38	76	259	59	273	63	253	58	2,188	0,069
No	14	29	12	24	177	41	161	37	181	42		
TOTAL	49	100	50	100	436	100	434	100	434	100		

TABLE 19

DO YOU BELONG TO A LIBRARY? (NOT YOUR SCHOOL LIBRARY) (GIRLS)

Response	Number of girls								Chi Square (χ^2)			
	Control Group				Experimental Group				Experimental group 1974 compared with control group 1974 (df = 1)	Experimental group 1976 (adjusted) compared with experimental group 1974 (df = 1)		
	1974		1976		1974		1976				1976 (adjusted)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%			N	%
Yes	33	70	37	80	264	58	316	70	270	59	2,092	0,114
No	14	30	9	20	190	42	138	30	184	41		
TOTAL	47	100	46	100	454	100	454	100	454	100		

The extent to which girls read certain types of reading matter

More girls indicated that they read a Sunday newspaper and it appears that they read fewer books than before the introduction of television. No statistically significant differences were obtained in respect of the reading of comics and photo stories which appear in newspapers and the reading of comic books and photo story booklets. No statistical calculations could be made in the case of magazines, since the numbers in the cells were too small.

The number of hours boys and girls devoted to reading during the week

In the case of this variable the effect of television was examined with the aid of five different comparisons. In two comparisons in the case of boys and three in the case of girls indications were found that television had an inhibitory effect on the time they devoted to reading.

The extent to which boys and girls read material on certain topics

On the whole, television had no effect on the reading preferences of boys for certain topics. The only exception to this is their decreased preferences for Bible stories. With regard to the extent to which girls read material on certain topics, television apparently had a stimulating effect on the preferences for Bible stories, war and adventure stories, detective stories, murder stories, Westerns and literature on hobbies, whereas it resulted in a decrease in the preferences for poetry, plays, stories from history, and reading of the Bible.

Library membership outside the school context

No statistically significant differences occurred in respect of this variable.

It can be expected that the longer television is transmitted in the RSA, the more it is likely to have a different effect on the reading patterns of pupils (compare Gray, 1969 and Wells and Lynch, 1954). In further reports attention will be devoted to the medium and long-term effect of television on the reading patterns of young South Africans.

5. SAMEVATTING EN SLOT

Die doel met hierdie ondersoek was om die moontlike korttermyninvloed van televisie op die leespatrone van Engelssprekende standaard 5 dagskoliere (seuns en meisies) te bepaal. Die totale steekproef is in 'n eksperimentele (televisiekykers) en kontrolegroep (nie-televisiekykers) verdeel. Kuierkykers, dit wil sê persone wat nie tuis oor 'n televisiestel beskik het nie, maar wel elders gekyk het, is nie by die ondersoek betrek nie.

Daar is bevind dat televisie waarskynlik 'n invloed op die volgende aspekte van die leerlinge se leespatrone gehad het:

- Die mate waarin seuns sekere tipes van leesstof gelees het: Televisie het waarskynlik 'n remmende effek gehad op die gereeldheid waarmee seuns strokies- en fotoverhale wat in koerante verskyn, gelees het. Dit het ook tot gevolg gehad dat hulle minder fotoverhaal- en strokiesverhaalboekies per week gelees het, terwyl die lees van boeke, koerante en tydskrifte blykbaar nie geraak is nie.
- Die mate waarin meisies sekere tipes van leesstof gelees het: Meer meisies het aangedui dat hulle 'n Sondagkoerant gelees het en verder wil dit voorkom of hulle minder boeke na die instelling van televisie as voor die instelling daarvan, gelees het. Ten opsigte van die lees van strokies- en fotoverhale wat in koerante verskyn en die lees van strokiesverhaal- en fotoverhaalboekies is geen statisties betekenisvolle verskille verkry nie. In die geval van tydskrifte kon geen statistiese berekeninge gedoen word nie, aangesien statisties beduidende verskille reeds in 1974, voor die instelling van televisie, tussen die eksperimentele groep en kontrolegroep voorgekom het.
- Die aantal ure wat seuns en meisies gedurende die week aan lees afgestaan het: Die invloed van televisie is by hierdie veranderlike met behulp van vyf verskillende vergelykings ondersoek. Met betrekking tot seuns is daar by twee vergelykings en in die geval van meisies by drie vergelykings aanduidings verkry dat televisie 'n remmende effek tot gevolg gehad het op die tyd wat hulle aan lees afgestaan het.

- Die mate waarin seuns en meisies oor sekere onderwerpe gelees het:
Televisie het in die geheel gesien geen invloed op die seuns se voorkeure vir die lees van sekere onderwerpe gehad nie. Die enigste uitsondering hierop is seuns se voorkeure vir Bybelverhale wat afneem het. Met betrekking tot die mate waarin meisies oor sekere onderwerpe lees, het televisie blykbaar 'n stimulerende effek op die voorkeure vir Bybelverhale, oorlogs- en avontuurverhale, speurverhale, moordverhale, "Westerns" en literatuur oor stokperdjies gehad, terwyl dit die voorkeure vir gedigte, toneelstukke, geskiedkundige verhale en die lees van die Bybel laat afneem het.
- Biblioteeklidmaatskap buite skoolverband: Geen statisties betekenisvolle verskille het by hierdie veranderlike voorgekom nie.

Daar kan verwag word dat namate televisie langer in die RSA gebeeldsend word, dit 'n ander uitwerking op die leespatrone van leerlinge mag hê (vergelyk Gray, 1969 en Wells and Lynch, 1954). In verdere verslae sal onder andere gelet word op die medium- en langtermyn-effek van televisie op die leespatrone van die Suid-Afrikaanse jeug.

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Master no. 4955
Dobas no. 4962

