Exploring Causes of Radicalization and Violent Extremism among Children: The Effects of Toy Guns on Children in Pakistan

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Abstract

A child's interaction with toys is essential for their social and behavioural development. This paper examines the relationship between toy guns and radicalisation, specifically its effects on children's cognitive and behavioural development and whether they contribute to future violent patterns. The study used a mixed-method approach with children aged six to 15, both boys and girls, in a Lahore-based school. The exercise aimed to understand the amount of real hostility, pretending aggression, playing rough-and-tumble (R&T), and pretend-to-nonaggressive to investigate the relationship between toy gun play and aggression. The paper concludes that radicalism and its violent manifestations result from a combination of factors simultaneously playing out at the macro (political and economic) and micro (social and individual) levels.

Keywords: Radicalisation, Toy guns, VE, Macro-level factors, Micro-level factors, Aggression, Children and Toy Guns, Pakistan

Introduction
Radicalization: Meaning and Concept

Toys are primarily a child's medium of expression; they identify themselves with the toy and begin to create their identities. They even associate their emotions with certain toys, which eventually start their behaviour formation and impact an individual's personality expansion. Radicalisation envisages many behaviours, and only sometimes everyone is inherently flawed. On the contrary, some behaviour patterns have resulted in global social change. Depending on the context, radicalisation has been approached differently. According to one definition, [radicalisation] refers to the wish to quash traditional and procedural restrictions, supporting the status quo, which may inevitably be unfair and hinder meaningful change (European Commission's Expert Group on Violent

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Radicalization, 2008, p. 5). Furthermore, the negative connotation accompanying the term 'radicalisation' often neglects that many individuals, once considered 'radicals' or 'extremists' later came to be regarded as renowned reformers and revered political leaders (Awan & Blakemore, 2013: 6). Nelson Mandela is one such example among many.

Violence prevails in all human societies, having had devastating effects on numerous lives. Domestic violence is rampant in Pakistani society (Ali et al., 2011). According to a report by the Human Rights Commission (2019), slapping, threatening, pushing, punching, and kicking are also prevalent (ranging from 52 to 40 per cent. These violent crimes manifest lost morals and erroneous patriarchal paragons.

The tools used in incidents of violence include acids, knives, and strangulation. Only 20% (44 million) people are gun owners in Pakistan (Human Rights Commission, 2017), meaning that guns and violent behaviour are not causally related. Some other factors might affect the root of the issue, other than merely allowing children to play with toy guns. This paper intends to explore the underlying causes of violent conduct.

Toys can also aid in early childhood development by assisting children in learning and exploring new things. Children play with toys to learn how to use them and for what purpose they are used. This helps them open their minds and resolve questions that may arise in the child's mind, making it a part of cognitive development. Even though radicalism and violent extremism have been routinely linked, the empirical evidence and scientific research on the causal relationship between radicalism and violent extremism is circumstantial. Holding radical ideas and acting upon them are two different things. Some espousing radical views sometimes do not necessarily lead to deploying them through violent tactics or acting on violent tendencies. Similarly, they may engage in acts of violence without adhering to radical beliefs or being driven by radicalism. For instance, during World War II, most of the Kamikaze Pilots who engaged in suicidal violent acts did so because they thought they were duty-bound to it and out of social pressure as opposed to radicalism or radical beliefs (Ohnuki-Tierney, 2006).

Literature Review

The scholarship on violent extremism and education has grown tremendously over the past few years. One of the reasons for this trend might be the growing interest of international organisations and the availability of funding to study these concepts academically. Many academics and researchers have investigated the relationship between violent extremism and educational programmes and highlighted the role of various educational strategies and policies

in affecting student behaviour (Christodoulou & Szakács, 2018, pp. 25–35; Qurban et al., 2020). Another reason is the growing concern of policymakers in countering violent extremism effectively, hence paying more attention to prevention than cure (Christodoulou & Szakacs, 2018). Additionally, studies show that schools have significantly promoted radicalisation (See Emma Broadbent et al., 2017). Gensewing and Walsh (2021) describe the involvement of former radicals in radicalising youth at schools through media.

Research studies note that radicalism is not 'the primary' cause of violent extremism; rather, it could be among one of the 'potential' causes (Neumann, 2013; Hafez & Mullens, 2015; Borum, 2011; Aslam et al., 2020). Moreover, while not all radicalism can lead to violent extremism, only some can. It is, therefore, essential to draw a line between the one that can and cannot. Researchers have categorised them into 'non-violent radicalisation' and 'violent radicalisation' (Veldhuis & Staun, 2009). They define non-violent radicalisation as the active pursuit of far-reaching changes in society without necessarily accepting the use of violent means to achieve those goals and violent radicalisation as the deliberate pursuit of the declared objective while tolerating the use of force to accomplish objectives (Veldhuis & Staun, 2009: 4).

Another similar distinction has been made between 'cognitive radicalisation' and 'behavioural radicalisation'. Cognitive radicalisation involves the development of extremist beliefs and ideologies. In contrast, behavioural radicalisation concerns radical action pathways resulting in committing terrorist and violent extremist actions. These distinctions have been made to aid in analysing these phenomena separately. The focus can be mainly on action pathways rather than ideological elements (Dzhekova et al., 2016, p. 12). It has been shown that adopting violent terrorist pathways does not necessarily need holding extremist ideologies (Porta, 1995; Sageman, 2004). Porta and LaFree argue that "action (behaviour) and attitudes (aims and perceptions) are linked but must not be understood as necessarily depending on or even corresponding to each other" (Porta & LaFree, 2012, p. 7).

Furthermore, social movement research notes that "becoming involved in violent groups and engaging in acts of violence does not always presume adherence to radical aims and frames of reference, but can be motivated by, for example, personal relationships and loyalty to a group" (Neumann, 2013: 873). Some have challenged this idea, claiming that it is impossible to have a comprehensive knowledge of radicalisation by isolating political convictions from political behaviour (Neumann, 2013: 873). Sprinzak (1991) posits that the individual committing such acts begins elsewhere. He argues that "none of the

terrorists starts directly by applying force or violence but that they reach terrorism gradually" (p. 51).

Theoretical Perspectives

Sprinzak's theory raises two crucial questions: (1) is radicalisation a necessary pre-requisite for violence? (2) Must all radicalisations end up in violence? (Dzhekova, Stoynova, Tsenkov, 2016; 15). Veldhuis and Staun (2009) define "terrorism as one of the worst possible, but avoidable, outcomes of violent radicalisation" (p.6). Alternatively, although every terrorist is a radical, not everyone is a terrorist." Here, terrorism is conceptualised as the product of radicalisation, suggesting a causal relation between the two factors (Dzhekova et al., 2016; p. 15).

Borum (2011a, 2011b, 2011c) suggests caution should be exercised when linking radicalisation to terrorism. While many policies aimed at de-radicalization have focused on this connection, Borum argues that radicalisation is only one of several paths towards terrorism, and it cannot fully explain why some people with radical beliefs resort to violence while others do not. Instead, he proposes that we should consider radicalisation as just one of many possible pathways to terrorism involvement. The broader question we should ask is how people become involved in terrorism, stay involved, and sometimes disengage from it. According to Borum (2011a, 2011b, 2011c), it is essential to approach the connection between radicalisation and terrorism with caution. Although many de-radicalization policies have focused on this link, Borum argues that radicalisation is just one of several routes towards terrorism, and it cannot fully account for why some individuals with radical beliefs turn to violence while others do not. Instead, Borum suggests that we should view radicalisation as simply one of many possible pathways to terrorism involvement. Ultimately, we should ask broader questions about how people become involved in terrorism, remain involved, and sometimes disengage.

In 2012, Demetriou argued that ideology plays a critical role in connecting radical beliefs to violence. According to Demetriou, this connection is not unidirectional but dialectic, where political radicalisation and violence are interrelated. In other words, political violence may fuel political radicalisation and vice versa. However, Demetriou (2012) suggests several other factors influencing this dialectic relationship. For instance, social interactions and group dynamics may shape an individual's radical beliefs and propensity towards violence (392). Similarly, organisation and leadership may impact how individuals perceive and engage in political violence. Therefore, Demetriou's view suggests that a comprehensive understanding of violent political extremism requires an

examination of the complex interplay between ideology, social interactions, organisation, and leadership, as well as structures of power, mobilisation, resources, and threats and opportunities.

Methodology

This paper engages a mixed methods approach. According to Mackenzie and Knipe (2006), the pragmatic paradigm is linked to mixed research methods as it allows the collection and analysis of a wide range of data from different sources using different techniques. This research will be connected to the pragmatic paradigm, focusing on solving real-world problems. The study uses quantitative and qualitative approaches to understand the causes and impact of toy guns on children, which can eventually take towards VE and radicalisation. Secondary data, i.e. journal papers, articles, and academic research, is used for this study.

Survey

Quantitative data allows us to analyse the hypothesis and understand the effect of toy guns on children. Patterns will include age, geography, education, household follow-ups, applications used (which ones, for what purpose), etc. 6 to 15-year-olds, selected through convenience sampling, were watched in free play in their schools and coded for real hostility, pretend aggression, rough-and-tumble play (R & T), and nonaggressive pretend play to investigate the relationship between toy gun play and aggression. The children were also coded based on four factors. First, for the time they spent playing with toy guns during the break, then the rated aggressive level of their favourite television shows, the rated aggressive level of their favourite toys, and the amount of time their parents physically punished them. In contrast, qualitative research explores the reasons, feelings and emotions behind the use and attraction towards toy guns. This pattern helped me understand many reactions and thinking about children with different backgrounds and their similarities and differences.

Hypothesis

H1: Parents' demographic factors affected the toy gun purchasing decision.
H2: The child's demographic factor affected the toy gun purchasing decision.
H3: A child's attraction towards toy guns may lead to VE in future.
H4: The purpose factor also affected the decision to purchase the toy gun.

Data analysis

The theoretical approach and thematic analysis were used to analyse the observations and hypothesis, which helped divide the responses into codes and themes. Victoria Clarke and Virginia Braun (2022) argued that thematic analysis

is both deductive and inductive, as it allows the creation of common groups based on the participants' results. Together with the analysis and survey results, these thematic groups were used to formulate the research results.

Fixed Variable

In this research, age is the fixed variable. This research focuses on the effect of toy guns on children, which can take them towards radicalisation or violent extremism. For this purpose, age was a fixed variable, i.e. 9-15. As the children were less than 18, permission was obtained from the school management.

Correlation between toy guns and violence

Some studies show a relationship between first-person shooter games and violence (Anderson & Dill, 2000, pp. 788-789). Still, no studies have shown a relationship between playing with toy guns as a child and engaging in violence as an adult. However, the causality that violent games influence a child's aggressive behaviour is not entirely clear here because most of the children studied in this regard, i.e., children who behaved aggressively in real life and violent video games, were found to be aggressive in the baseline. This meant they had a natural tendency to aggression.

The natural tendency to be aggressive in unlikely situations, which is called 'Trait Aggression' in behavioural science, is said to be the root cause of children inclining towards violent video games in the first place. That said, violence is a learned behaviour, and if anything, violent video games, television, and films do two things: show how to carry out violence in times of distress and that during such times, violence is our only way out and thus acceptable.

The Catharsis Hypothesis and Toy Guns

Lorenz (1966), Tinbergen (1968), and other ethnologists portrayed animosity regarding energy that develops over the long haul. This energy should be delivered or set off by a suitable outer improvement. The strength of the improvement and the sum of gathered forceful energy decide the degree of the forceful demonstration. This model of hostility suggests that forceful energy should be delivered intermittently. Assuming the forceful energy is not delivered by a suitable upgrade, then, at that point, animosity will be uprooted in the presence of a frail upgrade. That is, it will take progressively less to invigorate forceful conduct.

Regardless of the absence of help for the therapy speculation, the idea motivated various individuals to explore the impact of play with toy guns on kids' forcefulness. In light of the reason that forceful play would diminish hostility,

Feshbach (1956), for instance, guessed that interest in forceful play diminishes ensuing hostility.

Sources of Aggressive Behaviors

Violent behaviour encompasses a broad spectrum of actions, including, but not restricted to, verbal outbursts, physical altercations, and even aggressive behaviour toward objects or oneself. These behaviours can stem from various underlying emotions, such as anger, frustration, or fear, and can significantly impact both the individuals involved and society. While some individuals may experience occasional outbursts of anger or frustration, the frequency and severity of such behaviours can differ widely. However, it is vital to note that not all violent behaviour is considered criminal. Instead, violent actions that result in harm to others or their property are generally categorised as criminal behaviour and can have severe consequences for the perpetrator. In summary, it is crucial to acknowledge the intricate nature of violent behaviour and its effects on individuals and society. Understanding the underlying causes of these behaviours and implementing appropriate interventions can prevent the escalation of violent behaviour and promote a safer and more harmonious community (Smith & Brown, 2023).

The causes of violent behaviour are expansive, complicated and deeply interconnected. Previous studies have shown violent behaviour as a multi-causal trait. There is no single factor that causes individuals to resort to violence. Violence erupts from myriad factors, including those forming the violent person's immediate or socio-cultural environment. An individual's internal proclivities, as well as external environments, both determine and define hostile behaviour. Observing forceful models advances forceful behaviour. The predominant wellsprings of forceful models in the youngster's current circumstance are family, peers and TV characters (Conyne et al., 2022).

Family

The family is a significant wellspring of hostility (Green, 1980). In savage homes, youngsters are uncovered to both express and specific animosity. They witness and are casualties of animosity. They, too, discover that hostility is a satisfactory method for managing struggle. Forceful guardians go about as forceful models. There is proof that kids imitate parental hostility. Youngsters who witness hostility between their folks mimic this conduct with their kin. Additionally, youngsters who have been rebuffed recreate this conduct with different kids. (Steinmetz, 1977).

The family is an expected wellspring of animosity in various ways. Brutal grown-ups serve as forceful models from whom youngsters learn forceful conduct. Guardians likewise show kids that animosity is satisfactory by managing physical discipline. Finally, hostility in the home might cause stress, which is a precursor to hostility (Gershoff, 2002).

Peers

Animosity is gained from peers by the cycles portrayed in Bandura's (1963) social learning hypothesis. Kids notice and emulate their companions' forceful practices. This is especially so when more youth at school notice more seasoned kids being compensated for forceful harassment. Friends can likewise go about it as reinforcements of forceful conduct. Nursery school hostility was built up if the casualty cried, submitted or pulled out (Patterson et al., 1967).

Aggressive or extremist peers are persuasive in animosity securing. They go about as forceful models and support forceful conduct. Besides, they evoke forceful conduct in latent youngsters. Cross-cultural comparisons show that aggression tends to be more common in societies with rigid social organisation than in those without it (Fry, 2017). Aggression increases with the hierarchical social structures of chiefdoms, kingdoms, and states. These societies exhibit far more warfare tendencies than relatively egalitarian bands and tribal cultures. This could be because, in societies with hierarchical structures, it is the survival of the fittest, which means competition. On the other side of the competition is a winner and a loser. Competition takes a toll on one's mental health, and in the end, when one loses despite all the hard work and effort they put in, it leaves a long-lasting unlike impression.

Television

How much animosity is evoked by savagery depicted in the not entirely settled by the apparent authenticity of the savagery? TV influences family cooperation overall. Guardians who watch brutal TV endure more elevated levels of hostility in their youngsters. Besides, TV might give a few guardians a contorted thought of the job of animosity on the planet (Gerbner et al, 1980). For the model, they might imagine that animosity is valuable in acquiring objectives and ought to be empowered in this manner. In rundown, there are three ways in which TV impacts youth animosity. In the first place, it gives forceful models which kids might duplicate. Also, vicious TV programs increase excitement, improving the probability of a forceful reaction. Thirdly, guardians who watch a great deal of forceful TV endure and empower kids' forceful practices, which can lead them to adapt to radical elements of society.

Causal Linkage of Radicalization and VE with Toy Gun

There are at least four viewpoints regarding the causal relationship between radicalisation and violent extremism. If there is a causal link between two things, it simply means that one thing is responsible for causing the other thing (Collins, n.d). If one has to say there is a causal link between radicalisation and violent extremism, then radicalisation must be causing violent extremism. The literature, however, is divided on the matter.

According to one viewpoint, there is no link whatsoever and radicalisation and violent extremism or terrorism — its most common form- are distinct. Veldhuis and Staun (2009) illuminate the difference: "Terrorism [or violent extremism] is above all a political tool that, irrespective of its success rate, is used to bring about political or societal change. Radicalisation, on the other hand, is a process of transformation that does not serve a clearly defined purpose and that does not necessarily have to be related to violence" (Veldhuis & Staun, 2009: 6). Hence, violent extremism is a tool with a clearly defined objective and an ulterior political motive, while radicalisation, is an ever-occurring and ever-happening process where beliefs and perceptions are constantly evolving and transforming.

Another viewpoint invokes that radicalisation and violent extremism are interlinked. Spinzak (1991) argues that violent extremism is a product of the radicalisation process called 'transformational delegitimation' (p. 52). He further notes that terrorist groups apply violent means gradually, but the beginning and the end of the radicalisation process are not necessarily violent. Linked with the discourse of causes of violent extremism is another important one: the execution of violent extremism. What causes violent extremism is essential, but so is how violent extremism is executed (See Ahmed et al., 2021). There is a somewhat elaborated list of instruments that help in execution. Most instruments require some rudimentary knowledge to operate them. The military and other forces highly value the know-how and skill to operate weapons. Toy guns and pretend aggressive plays act as cues and practice for natural aggression. Repeated interactions with them play into cognitive rehearsal, in which aggressive scripts are constructed and become increasingly available as action tendencies over time (Huesmann & Eron, 1984).

Many variables impact youngster development: some factors are in guardians' minds when buying toys. Item-evolving plans, quality, requests, and innovation, are the fundamental factors that enormously impact guardians' toy determination and purchasing conduct. Improvement has consistently been a subject of interest among behaviourists, analysts, and analysts. Analysts have created various hypotheses that help clarify various sections of kid improvement and practices. (Bushman, 2002).

Many studies have linked aggressive fantasy and aggressive behaviour positively. Feshbach's research found increased aggressive behaviour after playing with aggressive objects in elementary school children (Feshbach, 1956). Another study found that children who had engaged in fantasy play were more aggressive in their response choices in a frustrating situation than the rest (Lockwood & Roll, 1980). Another study showed something similar: angry subjects who were asked to ruminate about the person who had upset them while hitting a punching bag were subsequently more aggressive than subjects who had hit the punching bag while thinking about exercise (Bushman, 2002). This last one is interesting for two reasons: first, it confirms that people with aggressive tendencies are more likely to engage with aggressive objects more aggressively, and second, it shows that such objects could aid and reinforce their internal aggressiveness.

There exists a consensus in social and behavioural psychology that violence is a learned behaviour. Toy guns and pretend aggression play, along with violent video games, television and films, are said to contribute to violent extremism in precisely two ways: (1) by showing how to carry out violence in times of conflict and (2) by approving violence as the only way out of that situation and thus justifiable.

Progression of Radicalization into Violent Extremism

There is no single cause or standard path of radicalisation to violent extremism or speed at which it happens (Dzhekova et al., 2016, p. 20). Violent extremism results from a complex interplay of different factors, which are social, political, economic, and environmental, playing out simultaneously at the individual, local, and global levels. This makes it nearly impossible to pinpoint any decisive factor that leads to the eventual act of violence (Ranstorp, 2010: 3-4).

Bjørgo's framework identifies several categories of root causes, including structural, facilitating, motivational, and triggering (Bjørgo, 2005: 3-4). All mentioned categories refer to factors that play a direct or indirect role in causing violent behaviour. Moreover, Veldhuis and Staun (2009) also developed a multi-cause model (micro and macro-level), explaining that macro-level causes provide pre-conditions to radicalisation (p. 24). However, understanding micro-level (individual and social) factors is salient to explain reasons for radicalisation.

Types of causes	Types of catalysts

Macro level		Political	Trigger events
		Economic	
		Cultural	
Micro level	Social	societal recognition	Recruitment
		Social interactions and group dynamics	Trigger events
		Relative deprivation	
	Individual	Psychological traits	Recruitment
		Personal knowledge/experiences	Trigger events

Source: Veldhuis & Staun (2009: 23-24)

Three types of radicalism have been most studied: (1) Right-wing radicalism, (2) Left-wing radicalism, and (3) Islamic radicalism. However, there are other forms, such as ethno-nationalist radicalism (i.e. LTTE) and single-issue radicalism (i.e., environmental radicalism). They differ in motivations, intensities, and routes to terrorism. Nevertheless, there are commonalities across the three regarding the factors and causes that lead to violence: perception of impotence to affect political change, past training activity, political activity, proneness to violence and experience of adverse meaningful events (RAND Europe, 2011).

Some consensus has been generated on pull factors (external), push factors (internal), and the background environment (or contextual factors) in which the interaction between pull and push factors is taking place. Push factors are those that 'drive' individuals towards violence. These include but are not limited to marginalisation, inequality, discrimination, feelings of being persecuted, poor education, denial of rights, and other grievances. As psychology has it, every human action is predicated on some need. In the same way, every violent action is predicated on manipulating some basic need. The acts of violent extremism, Kruglanski says, are derived from exploitation of the most basic human need: the need for significance (2014).

The quest for significance is a human drive to search for meaning, purpose, and value in existence and being. It is the most fundamental human motivation (Frankl, 2000; Becker, 1962; Maslow, 1943, 1967). Like any motivation, the quest for significance must be activated, and it is activated by any event that makes it acutely desirable. As Kruglanski explains, it is activated in three ways: (1) loss of significance, (2) threat of loss of significance, and (3) gain of significance. Loss of significance could occur in response to any of the push factors stated above. Now, loss of significance is either personal or social. For example, it is believed that in the case of black widows, the fact that they were widows, which is considered a stigma to a woman's identity in many traditional societies, may have contributed to perceptions of loss of significance, thus igniting

a spark for its restoration. Conversely, the motivation behind many of the terrorist attacks on Western nations by Islamist radicals is to find justification for their actions in foreign occupation, which they perceive as a threat to their Muslim social identity.

Pull factors, on the other hand, are those that 'attract' individuals towards violent extremism, such as well-organized violent extremist groups that provide services, revenue, and employment, an ideology which seeks to eliminate ambiguity and provide answers. They also offer a 'place to belong' and a supportive environment. One thing common among people attracted to these extremist organisations is the need for closure. The need for closure is defined as having any answer on a given topic instead of further ambiguity (Webster & Kruglanski, 1994). To put it differently, the desire for closure results in an intense need for structure, order, and certainty to relieve the gnawing feeling of doubt, which is frequently existential. (Kruglanski, 2014). Everyone gets stressed out by uncertainty, wants answers, and desires closure occasionally. Such a feeling, however, is momentary for most, persistent and profound in some. These individuals needing closure are predisposed to seek the thought systems and ideologies most provide. Extremist ideologies thus appeal to those needing closure. As Kruglanski (2014) explains, it is for two reasons: (1) these ideologies are very coherent, black and white, right or wrong (i.e., ordered, specific, unambiguous); (2) they afford the possibility of becoming different, and part of a larger whole (meaning by joining the ranks of such an organisation an individual rises above self which corresponds with the earlier discussed need for significance). In addition, that kind of belief system appeals to young people who lack a clear sense of self-identity and yearning for significance.

Interpretation of Observation Results

The survey results indicated that most students, primarily boys, played with toy weapons. Specifically, 61 per cent of the students reported playing with toy guns, swords, or similar toys that mimic violence. Further analysis revealed that parenting style and toy gun play were linked to increased levels of actual violence in children, irrespective of gender. Specifically, the study found that the level of parenting reprimand significantly impacted actual aggression in both boys and girls. It also discovered that the number of toy gun plays predicted an inclination to aggression in boys.

However, the study also found that when it came to pretend aggressiveness, the level of violence in children's preferred toys was the best predictor, while toy gun play was the most minor predictive factor. This means that children who preferred toys with high levels of violence were more likely to

engage in pretend aggressive play, even if they did not play with toy guns specifically. Interestingly, the study found that toy gun play did not affect non-aggressive pretend play, indicating that playing with toy guns did not necessarily lead to more aggressive pretend play.

Lastly, the study found that parental punishment negatively impacted non-aggressive pretend play. This means that children disciplined more strictly by their parents were less likely to engage in pretend play that did not involve aggression. These findings suggest that toy gun play and parental punishment are linked to increased levels of actual violence but not pretend aggression.

Conclusion

Toys play a significant role in a child's personal and behavioural development. Many parents are concerned about the impact of toys on their child's behaviour. Parents consider their child's behaviour and growth when buying a toy. Therefore, parents must choose toys carefully. Being selective is a top strategy, and parents keep certain factors in mind that influence their toy purchasing decisions. A study has shown that parents worry about the toys they choose for their children. Toys are an essential tool for early childhood development, so both teachers and parents must wisely select toys that can contribute to a child's positive behavioural growth. Toys can help toddlers learn and improve communication, social, and intellectual behaviour, significantly influencing a child's personality and behaviour development. Toys play a crucial role in shaping a child's personality and behaviour. As a result, many parents are understandably concerned about the impact of toys on their child's behaviour. Parents usually buy toys based on their child's behaviour and growth. Therefore, parents must be careful when selecting toys for their children, considering certain factors that can influence their toy-purchasing decisions.

According to studies, parents are increasingly concerned about the toys they choose for their children. Toys are considered an essential tool for early childhood development, and both teachers and parents must choose them wisely to contribute to a child's positive behavioural growth. Toys can help toddlers learn and improve their communication, social, and intellectual skills. Toys are an excellent way for children to explore their environment, learn new skills, and have fun. For example, building blocks can help children develop their problem-solving skills, while puzzles can improve their cognitive skills.

Choosing appropriate toys for a child's age, interests, and skill level is essential. For instance, a complicated toy may frustrate a child and negatively impact their behaviour. Hence, parents must always consider their child's developmental needs and abilities when selecting toys. In conclusion, toys

significantly impact a child's personality and behaviour development. Therefore, parents must be careful when choosing toys for their children, considering factors such as age, interests, and skill level. Parents can help children learn, develop essential skills, and positively shape their behaviour by selecting suitable toys.

Recommendations

1. Children should be provided with alternative play choices such as arts and crafts or physical games rather than offering them toy guns or any other toys that could potentially incite violence.
2. Awareness sessions should be held for parents of young children to educate them about healthy ways of raising children**.**
3. Schools should have sessions to teach the value of peace, mutual respect and tolerance.
4. The media and community also have a role in eradicating the culture of 'violence' from neighbourhoods, streets, and schools.

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