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ABSTRACT

This research study was designed to present some comparative data on the Teenage Nonviolence Test (TNT) across grades and across gender. The sample for this descriptive study included a total of 837 seventh through twelfth graders from the rural northwestern section of the United States. Girls were significantly more nonviolent than boys for all but one subscales. While trends were not incremental across each grade, there were discernible trends where seventh graders were less nonviolent and twelfth graders were more nonviolent on all of the subscales of the TNT. (Author/GCP)

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Nonviolent Tendencies of Adolescents Across Gender and Grade

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Abstract

This research study was designed to present some comparative data on the Teenage Nonviolence Test (TNT) across grades and across gender. The sample for this descriptive study included a total of 837 seventh through twelfth graders from the rural northwestern section of the United States. Girls were significantly more nonviolent than boys for all but one subscales. While trends were not incremental across each grade, there were discernible trends where seventh graders were less nonviolent and the twelfth graders were more nonviolent on all of the subscales of the TNT.

Nonviolent Tendencies of Adolescents Across Grade and Gender

In today's fast paced society, violence is quickly becoming an everyday phenomenon. Opening a newspaper or turning on the television is all it takes to read about or see the violence. While Schwartz (1996) indicated that no nationwide data exists on the full extent of youth violence, smaller studies that have been conducted do suggest slight increases in youth violence. Schwartz reported that children and adolescents are using guns to resolve conflicts more frequently than they have in the past. Hechinger (1994) sees U.S. children and adolescents as becoming more involved in violence at younger ages, both as perpetrators and as victims. Hechinger reported that one million adolescents between the ages of 12 and 19 fall victim to violent crimes each year.

In the wake of the incredible amount of media attention that has been paid to recent school violence incidents, there has been an overwhelming amount of research done to try and identify risk factors for youth violence and develop programs to mediate aggression within the schools (e.g. Schwartz, 1996; Hechinger, 1994). With all of the research that is going into preventing violence and developing violence and aggression prevention programs, there is a great need for instruments that can effectively evaluate the success of these programs. Mayton and his associates developed an instrument called the Teenage

Nonviolence test (TNT) which was designed to measure nonviolent tendencies in the teenage population based on the philosophy of Mohandes K. Gandhi (Mayton, 1999).

Through a series of studies, the reliability and validity of the TNT has been shown to be adequate for five of the six subscales (Konen et al., 1999; Mayton, 1999; Mayton et al, 1999). In this study we present some comparative data on the TNT across gender and across grades.

Method

Participants

The sample for this descriptive study included a total of 837 seventh through twelfth graders from the rural northwestern section of the United States. Boys made up 47.7% of the sample and girls the remaining 52.3%. Ethically, most of the sample was White (88.4%) with Latinos (3.6%) and Native Americans (2.5%) being the largest minority groups.

Instrument

The Teenage Nonviolence Test (TNT) is based on the philosophy of Mohandas K. Gandhi and contains 55 Likert items (See Appendix for TNT and scoring key). The labels and general focus of each subscale are as follows:

- (1) physical nonviolence (16 items)
- the conscious rejection of behaviors or the threat of behaviors intended to inflict bodily injury on another person in an attempt to coerce, curtail, or eliminate their

behavior in favor of alternate forms of conflict resolution,

(2) psychological nonviolence (16 items)

- the conscious rejection of behaviors or the threat of behaviors intended to humiliate, intimidate, or in other ways demean the human dignity of another person or group in and attempt to coerce, curtail, or eliminate their behavior in favor of alternate forms of conflict resolution

(3) active value orientation (4 items)

- the willingness to perform behaviors designed to achieve a situation commensurate with one's own norms, values, and goals

(4) empathy and helping (5 items)

- assisting others in minor levels of need

(5) satyagraha (10 items)

- the active search for wisdom and the willingness to change his or her conception of truth

(6) tapasya (4 items)

- the willingness to endure hardship or suffering rather than to inflict harm on others

Procedures

The TNT was administered to respondents on a voluntary basis during regularly scheduled classes by the public school teachers. Students were asked to place their surveys in a provided envelope that was sealed after all students in the class completed their surveys. Less than two percent of the students in all the classes declined to participate in this survey.

Results and Discussion

The means for each subscale for the entire sample and for males and females separately are presented in Table 1. The means

for each subscale for grades 7 through 12 computed separately are presented in Table 2. Tables 3 and 4 present the means for males by grade and females by grade, respectively.

Six separate two-way ANOVAs were computed to determine the gender by grade differences for each subscale of the TNT. Main effects for gender were significant for five ($p < .001$) of the six TNT subscales. Therefore, clear and consistent gender differences were identified. Girls were significantly more nonviolent than boys for nearly all subscale. Main effects for grade was significant for all six TNT subscales ($P < .05$). While trends were not incremental across each grade, there were discernible trends where seventh graders were less nonviolent and the twelfth graders were more nonviolent on all of the subscales of the TNT. No gender by grade interactions reached statistical significance.

As could be expected, girls were consistently more nonviolent than boys. This is consistent with research findings on aggressive tendencies where girls are less aggressive than boys. Older adolescents tended to be more nonviolent than their younger counterparts which is also consistent with trends for aggressive behavior throughout the adolescent years.

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Table 1
Overall Gender Differences on TNT Subscales

TNT Subscales	<u>Males</u> (n=411)	<u>Females</u> (n=426)	<u>Total</u> (n=837)
Physical Nonviolence	2.45	2.90	2.68
Psychological Nonviolence	2.65	3.00	2.83
Active Value Orientation	3.14	3.13	3.14
Helping/Empathy	2.71	2.99	2.85
Satyagraha	2.94	3.09	3.02
Tapasya	2.77	2.93	2.85

Table 2
Overall Grade Differences on TNT Subscales

TNT Subscales	Grade					
	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th
Physical Nonviolence	2.67	2.66	2.59	2.82	2.68	2.77
Psychological Nonviolence	2.80	2.80	2.75	2.99	2.78	2.92
Active Value Orientation	3.11	3.03	3.14	3.13	3.23	3.20
Helping/Empathy	2.82	2.75	2.74	2.98	2.90	3.05
Satyagraha	2.94	2.96	2.93	3.10	3.06	3.17
Tapasya	2.57	2.82	2.71	3.08	2.91	3.08
n =	110	196	177	65	131	163

Table 3
Male Grade Differences on TNT Subscales

TNT Subscales	Grade					
	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th
Physical Nonviolence	2.54	2.41	2.38	2.63	2.48	2.45
Psychological Nonviolence	2.70	2.60	2.59	2.81	2.62	2.69
Active Value Orientation	3.15	3.07	3.14	3.04	3.19	3.20
Helping/Empathy	2.78	2.51	2.57	2.94	2.83	2.91
Satyagraha	2.92	2.86	2.86	3.06	3.00	3.07
Tapasya	2.56	2.64	2.58	3.12	2.92	3.01
n =	55	98	89	29	62	82

Table 4
 Female Grade Differences on TNT Subscales

TNT Subscales	Grade					
	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th
Physical Nonviolence	2.80	2.91	2.80	2.97	2.85	3.08
Psychological Nonviolence	2.91	3.01	2.92	3.13	2.93	3.14
Active Value Orientation	3.07	3.00	3.14	3.19	3.27	3.19
Helping/Empathy	2.85	2.99	2.91	3.01	2.96	3.19
Satyagraha	2.97	3.07	3.00	3.14	3.11	3.28
Tapasya	2.59	2.99	2.84	3.04	2.91	3.14
n =	55	99	88	36	69	81



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