



# The Association between Television usage and times spent with friends among adolescents ages 12-21 controlling for Sex

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## Introduction

- ❖ The more television children watch alone, the fewer activities they engage in with their friends (Bickham, 2006).
- ❖ As people age, the relationship between watching television and doing activities does not appear to change. Greater television watching in the elderly is associated with increased sedentary behaviors and depression. (Fingerman, 2021).
- ❖ While TV watching and social interaction have a negative association, few studies have examined gender differences or looked at a nationally representative sample.
- ❖ This study investigates the association between television usage and social interactions among adolescents by gender.

## Methods

### Sample

- ❖ Participants were selected from Add Health Wave 1, a longitudinal study of people ages 12-21

- ❖ The study involved a balanced representation of genders and diverse ethnic backgrounds.

### Measures

- ❖ Television usage was quantified by the hours per week.

## Research Questions

- ❖ How does television usage relate to the frequency of social interactions among adolescents ages 12-21
- ❖ Are there gender differences in the relationship between television usage and social interaction?

## Results

### Univariate Analysis

- ❖ The sample had a mean of 16.23 hours of Television viewing per week (M = 16.23, SD = 15.28)
- ❖ Social interaction frequency per week: 9.77% 0 times, 23.31 1-2 times, 26.98% 3-4 times, 39.94% 5 or more times.

### Bivariate

- ❖ Television usage was not significantly associated with social interactions  $r = -0.01186$  ( $p=0.339$ ) (Figure 1)
- ❖ Age and sex were not moderating variables.

### Multivariate Analysis

- ❖ Multivariate Analysis showed that Television viewing was not associated with social interaction or sex at any level.

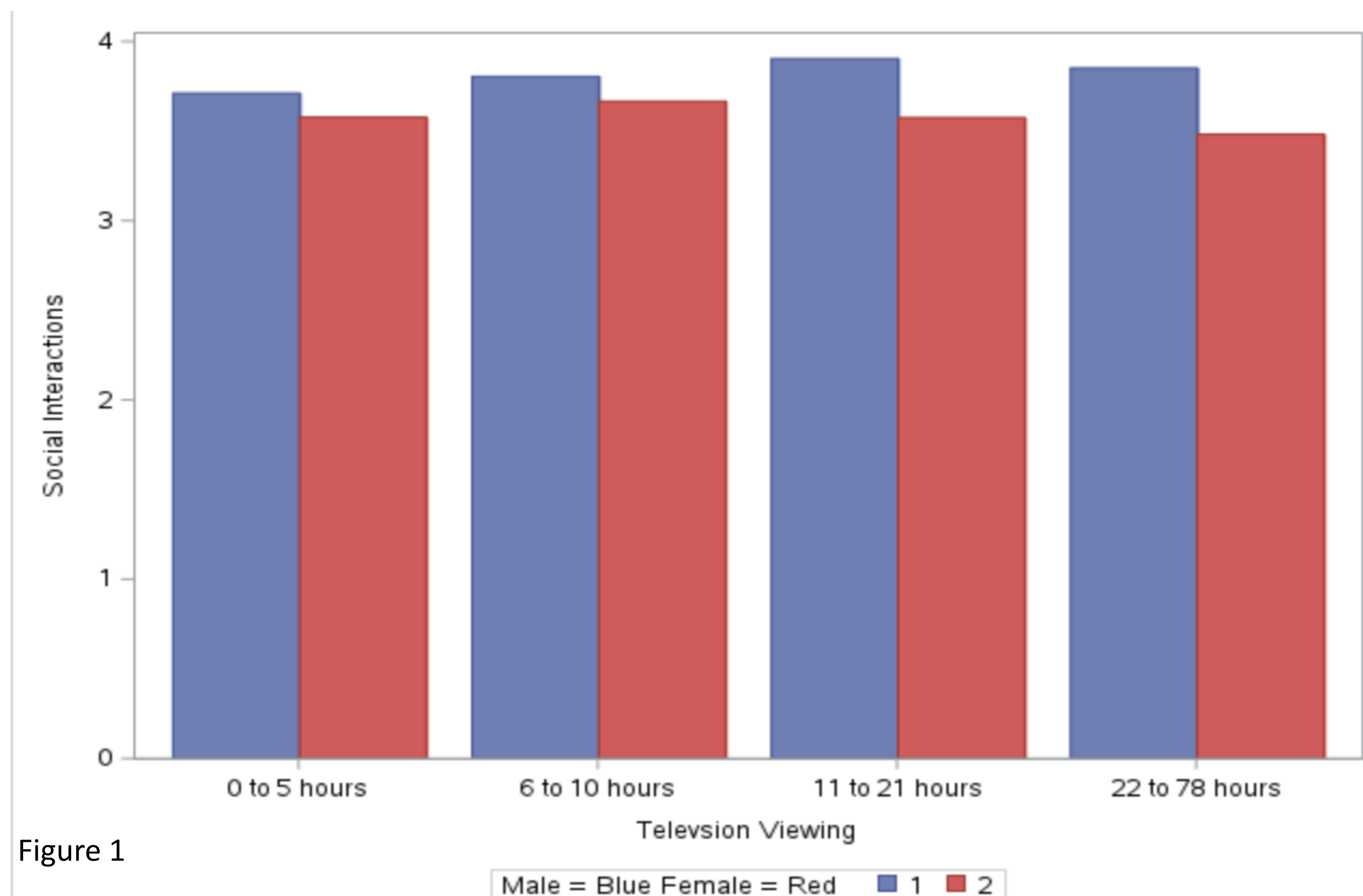


Figure 1

## Discussion

- ❖ A limitation of the study is that television can be considered a social interaction I assumed that television viewing was an individual activity
- ❖ Since TV was not associated with social interaction, further research should look into what is associated with social interaction, such as exercise and the number of friends an individual has.
- ❖ Further research is needed to explore other factors influencing adult social interactions.

## References

- Fingerman, K. L., Kim, Y. K., Ng, Y. T., Zhang, S., Huo, M., & Birditt, K. S. (2021). Television Viewing, Physical Activity, and Loneliness in Late Life. *The Gerontologist*, 62(7), 1006–1017. <https://doi.org/10.1093/geront/gnab120>
- Bickham, D. S., & Rich, M. (2006). Is Television Viewing Associated With Social Isolation? *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine*, 160(4), 387. <https://doi.org/10.1001/archpedi.160.4.387>