

The power of perception

The relation between media images and
Flemish children's self-esteem

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Cultivation theory

→ Media's influence on how we see children



Source image: www.istockphoto.com

How we see children relates to children's self-esteem

Adults



Source image: www.advanced-television.com

Adults: influence on formal and informal support



Children: information on actual and future roles; information on their own social group



Source image: www.learningexpressblog.typepad.com

In sum...



➔ *This hypothesis is tested among Flemish children and youth*

Empirical study

- Data: Youth Research Platform (JOP) self-report study 2013 (survey through mail)
- Research questions:
 - Which images do children and youth perceive about themselves in the media? Do they believe these images correspond with reality?
 - Is there a significant correlation between media use and perceived images?
 - Are perceived media images related with self-esteem and if so, how?

Media images according to JOP respondents

How often do you see in the media...?

Children and youth in a threatening situation or who are victim of an offence

Children and youth who commit an offence

Children and youth who do fun activities with their friends

Every day!

Children and youth who are rewarded because they did something positive

Do you think this image corresponds with reality?

Children and youth who do fun activities with their friends

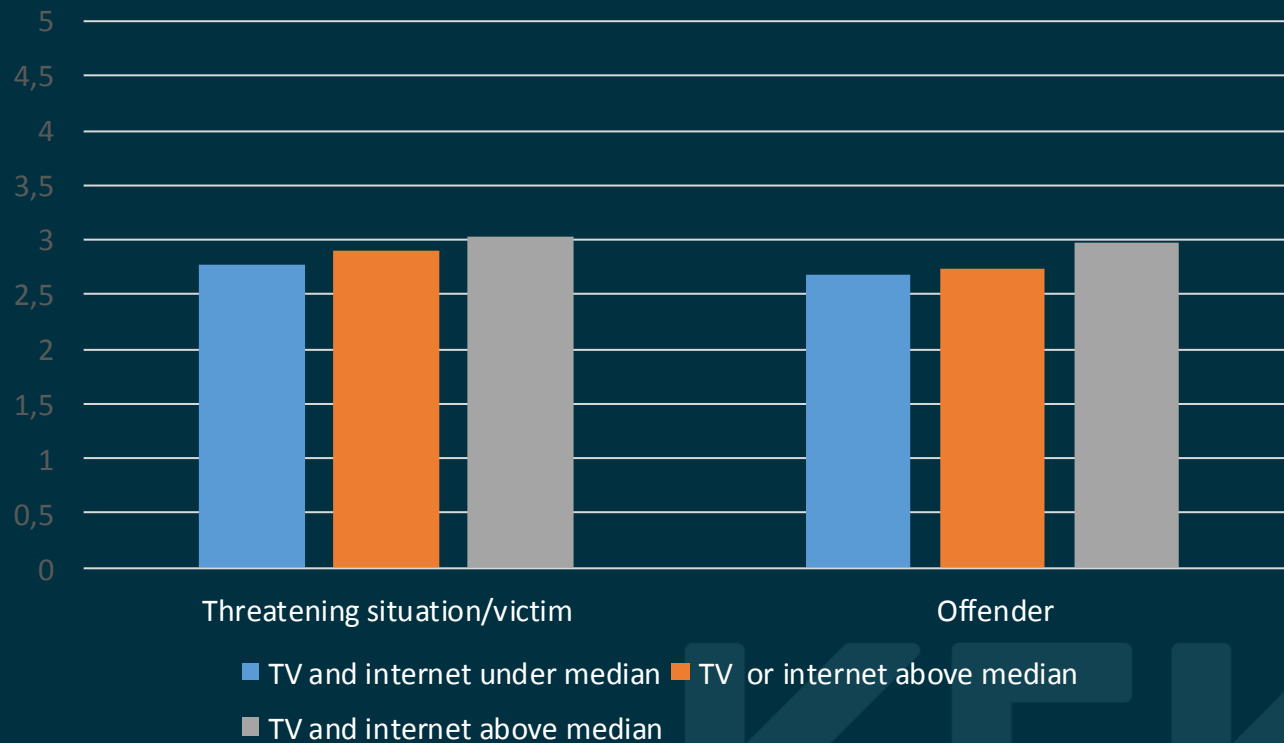
Children and youth in a threatening situation or who are victim of an offence

Children and youth who commit an offence

Children and youth who are rewarded because they did something positive

Media images and (digital) media use

Age 14 to 18 years



Relation perceived images – self-esteem

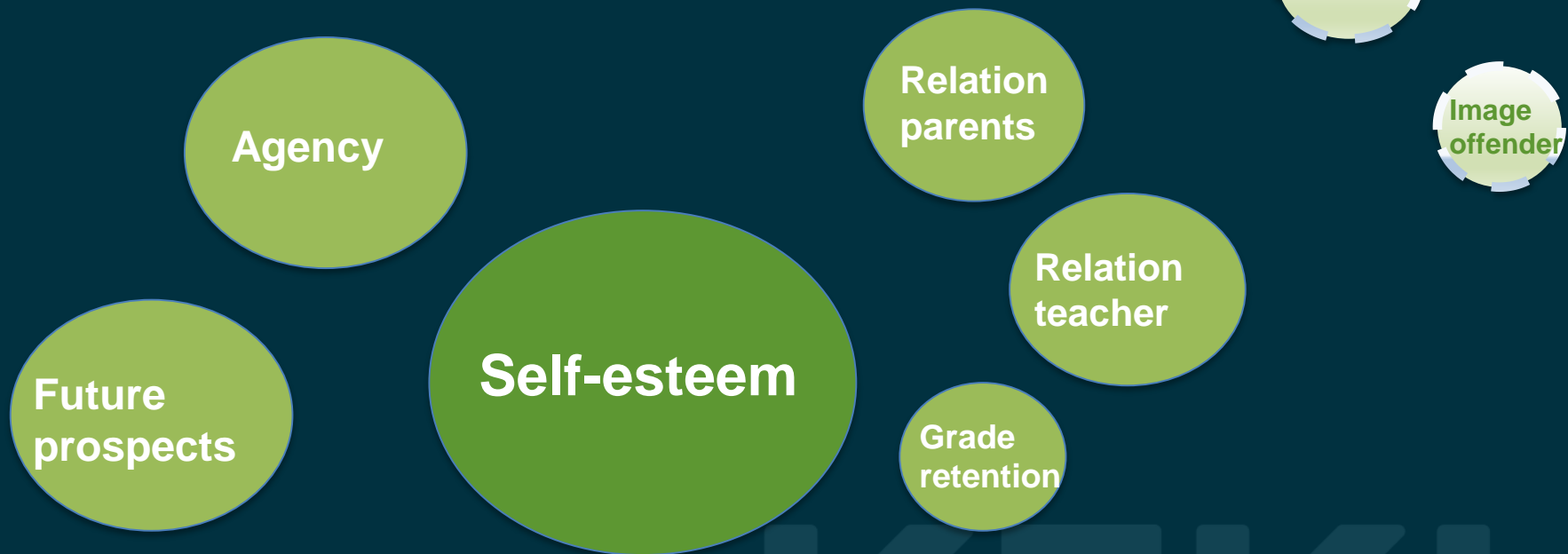
- Significant effects for ‘friends’ and ‘offender’ images



- Limited explanatory value: 2.6%

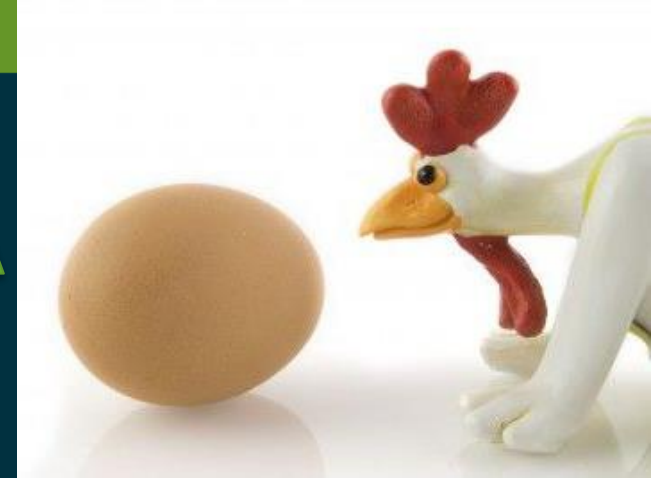
Relation perceived images – self esteem

- Effects disappear when controlling for:



- Grotere verklaaringswaarde: 46.1%

Conclusion



Source image: www.azenby.com

- Limitation: crosssectional data
- Interpretation based on cultivation theory
- Effects are small, but present

Cf. Joye (2012): media follow a subtle and innate process by building a social climate that determines perceptions and cognitions on children and youth

THANK YOU

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- This study was made possible thanks to cooperation with the Youth Research Platform
- More information:

www.keki.be

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Complete
study

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