



Effects of Media Exposure and Family Communication on Violent Behaviour of Jordanian Adolescents

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Abstract. Violence is one of the most common problems in societies now a days. Cases of adolescent violence are increasing in many countries, particularly Jordan. Violence has negative effects on adolescents which has become a major obstacle to the stability and progress of society. While exposure to media and family communication are one of the most important factors that contribute to the violence. Therefore, this study aims to learn more about the effect of media exposure and family communication on adolescent violent behaviour. Quantitative methodology is adopted to find out relationship among the variables, however, stratified random sampling is employed to get data from the respondents through questionnaire. Moreover, Smart PLS-SEM approach is used to examine the relationship among the variables. The findings revealed that there is a positive relationship between media exposure and violent behaviour, while a negative relationship found between family communication and violent behaviour. It is also found that media exposure and family communication are significant factors in promoting violent behaviour among adolescents. In addition, the paper discusses implications, limitations, and recommendations for future studies.

Keywords: violent behaviour · media exposure · violent movies · family communication

1 Introduction

Violence has become a prominent social issue which has already affected more than half of population of the adolescents, causing significant psychological, physical, and social harm [1]. On the other hand, social circle of adolescents, such as friends, is also considered as motivational factor of violence [2]. Teenage violence is rising substantially, causing negative consequences for both individual and society. Recognizing violence is important since it is part of behavioural changes that occur during adolescence [3].

Previous research on violence in Arab world indicated that violent behaviour among adolescents has been increased over the years, and, resultantly, a significant proportion of adolescents have been physically assaulted [4, 5]. According to WHO report (2018) violence is one of the significant causes of death among adolescents worldwide. Its

prevalence, on the other hand, varies significantly on the basis of geographical location and cultural practices. It is observed that while entering into adolescent age (12 to 18), violent behaviour reaches at its peak level during this period [6].

There are many reasons of violence among adolescents [7], however, the present study is intended to focus on media exposure for instance, watching violent movies that might increase level of violence among adolescents [8]. Moreover, less family communication also leads to violent behaviour [9, 10]. Although teenage violence is one of the most investigated issues in many countries [11], however, few studies have looked at the effects of media exposure and family communication on teenage violence [12, 13]. Therefore, the current research seeks to fill these gaps in Jordan as violence is increasing day by day which necessitates more investigation [14]. Also, previous research focused on violent behaviour of Jordanian youth and violence against women [15, 16]. However, the impact of media exposure and family communication on adolescent violent behaviour were not investigated in Jordan. As Raffee et al. [17] recommended that more research is needed to understand this phenomenon in Jordan.

Given the negative effects of violent behaviour of adolescents, there is a need to focus on the relationship between media exposure, family communication, and violent behaviour among adolescents. There is little evidence about cases of violence in Jordan. Therefore, this must be investigated through several studies to facilitate the underestimation of the seriousness of violence. This study will provide data about the impact of media exposure and family communication on violent behaviour among adolescents.

2 Theoretical Background

2.1 The Conceptualization and Empirical Works

It is difficult to define and distinguish concepts like aggression and violence while examining the notion of violent behaviour because researchers interpret these terms according to the intensity of the harm caused by the acts [18]. Most academicians define aggression as any behaviour performs to harm another innocent person, either physically or psychologically, considers violent act e.g., death or severe physical injury [18]. Thus, this study conceptualizes violent behaviour of adolescent-causing severe physical harm or injury to others.

Additionally, theoretical support is provided by Bandura's Social Learning Theory. It is emerged as an attempt to recognize and describe human behaviour in a comprehensive manner [19]. The theory emphasizes on learning behaviour that happens within a social context, in which individuals are supposed to learn from one another [20]. It is postulated that individuals can learn violent behaviour through observing others. Moreover, Bandura [21] mentioned that aggression patterns could be adapted through three primary sources. The first source of aggression was family members. Secondly, subculture is also source of aggression with which individuals live together and interact with it frequently. The third source of aggression is the media. Individuals have ample opportunities to observe a whole series of aggressive actions on TV.

2.2 Media Exposure, Family Communication and Violent Behaviour

Media has always been a key source of entertainment for children and teenagers, studies showed that they prefer to watch violent films [22]. As a result, a relationship was found between violent television content and violent behaviour of the viewers [23]. Violent media exposure is shown a risk factor for violent behaviours [24]. Research on media violence and violent behaviour supported the idea that violent media exposure influences violent behaviour. For example, Aslam [14] asserted that the Bollywood films are key source of violence and delinquent behaviour among the adolescents. The author conducted interviews with parents, teachers, psychologists, physicians, and police officers to better understand the impact of violent media content on viewers. According to the findings of the study, adolescents are more inclined towards violent acts than adults. Even though exposure to violence in media such as internet, video games and television is linked to a higher risk of significant violent behaviour, other influential factors e.g., family, and social contexts were found to be the primary cause of violent behaviours [25].

For example, Gentile et al. [26] focused their study on school-aged children, instructors, and parents. During the school year, survey respondents were questioned twice. They were asked to list three of their favourite TV shows, movies, and video games, as well as the degree of violence in each medium of entertainment and how often they used them. The frequency with which children watch violent media content such as video games, movie, or a show has been connected to an increase in violence and other types of physical attacks.

Previous research has found a clear link between media exposure and violent behaviours. Conclusively, the greater a viewer's exposure to the media, the more likely they are to participate in violent action. For this study, media exposure is defined as the extent to which audience encountered specific messages or media content portrayed in violent movies [27].

According to Anderson et al. [28], exposure to violent media increases violent behaviour and aggression, resultantly media violence is one of the causes of violent behaviour among adolescents. On the other hand, some studies found that there is no relationship between media violence and violent behaviour among adolescents [29].

According to Ponnann et al. [30] violent movies are prevalent among youngsters and less educated persons from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. Similarly, Saleem et al. [31] conducted an in-depth interview to explore violent behaviours of teenagers. The findings revealed a relationship between media exposure and violent behaviour. More importantly, when teenagers watch violent movies, their chances of participating in violent behaviour increase rapidly [32]. After reviewing relevant literature, we proposed a hypothetical relationship between media exposure and violent behaviour.

Hypothesis 1 [H1]: Media exposure affects violent behaviour of adolescents in Jordan.

Besides, family communication also plays a significant role in developing violent behaviour. Family communication is defined as producing ideas, family bonding, and exchange of ideas with them. Many recent empirical studies revealed that parenting interventions [33], family environment, domestic violence [34, 35], family connections and

family cohesion [36, 37] impact violent behaviour, particularly adolescents. For example, research found that parental care and family communication were essential protective variables against teenage violence; high levels of communication between fathers and mothers are associated to lower levels of physical violence in both boys and girls and sexual violence in females [10]. Similarly, Kast et al. [10] discovered that parental communication and care are important against teenage violence, violent behaviour, and victimization of violence. The authors also found that teenage preventative interventions emphasize family unity that is effective in reducing violent behaviour.

Garcés-Prettel et al. [38] published a study on the impact of family communication on teen violence and school victimization. According to the findings of this study, aggressive home communication is a risk factor for violence in school, but open communication between parents and teens is a protective approach for limiting or avoiding such violence. These results are similar to those of Kast et al. [10], who claimed that children's views of parental care are significant defensive factor against teenage violence since the authors think violent acts may be learned from the home environment. To find an illustration, according to the American Psychological Association's pamphlet on teenage violence [39], violence is a learned behaviour that is usually passed down through the parents, family or friends in the household or community. As a result, family communication motivates adolescent engagement in violent behaviours.

On the other hand, some studies have found that there is no relationship between family communication and violent behaviour among adolescents [40].

In addition, there is a link between family contact and violence, according to recent studies. It has been established that adolescent violence is influenced by aggressive communication between parents and children. Violence is predicted by poor communication between parents and teenagers, as well as early communication [41]. In other words, if family members' communication deteriorates, the chance of violent behaviour increases. According to a comprehensive study by Timshel et al. [41] violence is connected to various factors, the most significant of which are family communication, including child brought up and parent-child interactions. As a result, we recommend that:

Hypothesis 2 [H2]: Family communication affects violent behaviour of adolescents in Jordan.

Based on the previous discussions, we developed a conceptual framework as shown in Fig. 1 that characterizes Jordanian adolescents' motivation for engaging in violent behaviour.

3 Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The present study employed quantitative methodology as it is found appropriate to examine proposed variables. This is due to the following reasons. First, the quantitative approach research provides an opportunity for reliable data collection and to improve the accuracy of the respondents' responses [42]. Quantitative methods are depending on quantities or numerical information and are usually linked with statistical analysis [42]. The data for this study were collected using a cross-sectional survey approach. While data is collected at a single moment, it is referred to as a cross-sectional study.

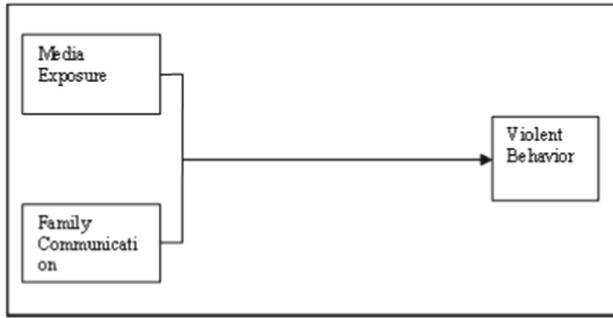


Fig. 1. Conceptual Framework

3.2 Method

The current study aimed at high schools in Jordanian province of Jerash. Public schools are selected for data collection because of their high enrollment rate and intensity of student violence. Stratified random sampling was used in this study. It is one of the appropriate probability sampling techniques to generalize results of the study to the entire population.

On the other hand, this sampling technique was chosen to maintain heterogeneity across all schools in order to find true representative of the population [43]. This study focused on schools where there are cases of violent activities occurred before.

3.3 Respondents

The population of the study comprised of 621 students with disciplinary issues in 20 schools of Jerash. The respondent ages range from 12 to 18 years; 234 students were chosen as a sample size for this investigation [44]. The researchers circulated 350 questionnaires to the respondents in order to assure an acceptable response. In response to that, 283 were returned, 248 questionnaires were valid for analysis, showing 70.8% response rate. It is deemed sufficient for data analysis [45].

3.4 Instrumentation

Self-administered questionnaire was used for data collection which is based on several sections whereby the first section contained the demographic factors of the respondents. The second section consisted of items for measuring violent behaviour developed by Straus et al. [46]. The third section included items for measuring media exposure as suggested by Den Hamer et al. [47]. The fourth section contained items for measuring family communication according to idea of Bakar and Afthanorhan [48]. The researcher used five-point Likert scale in the second, third, and fourth sections.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of constructs

Constructs	Mean	Sta. Deviation
Violent behavior	2.1193	.75805
Media exposure	1.9453	.66592
Family comm.	3.5266	.80371

4 Results

4.1 Descriptive Analysis

To calculate means and SDs for each variable, the sample of respondents was utilised. Using SPSS version 26, Table 2 displays the descriptive statistics for the study variables. The independent variable, family communication has the highest arithmetic mean of (3.52) and SD of (0.803), followed by the dependent variable, violent behaviour with an arithmetic mean of (2.11) and SD of (0.758). Moreover, media exposure showed an arithmetic mean of (1.94) and SD of (0.665). All the factors are listed in detail as shown in Table 2. The variance inflation factors (VIFs) in all the models were less than ten, according to the analysis. Consequently, the regression analysis' variables were all kept (Table 1).

4.2 Assessment of Reflective Measurement Model

In structural equation modelling, it is important to analyse the measurement model [49]. The Fig. 2 showed all loaded items accompanied by their related construct's items. The values of loaded items are higher than the set criterion of threshold which values 0.5. The values of loadings differ from 0.532 to 0.863 which indicated that the constructs are more valued than half of the observed variation of examined variables.

Moreover, some of the items for instance FC3, FC9, and FC12 showed less loadings compare to 0.5 which has been reduced because of the internal consistency of constructs which elevated to the significant level of threshold value. Consequently, the items are linked to each other because of the same underlying construct [50]. Additionally, results showed that if internal consistency of all structures kept under acceptable range of 0.876 to 0.934 the items automatically removed from the desired scale.

To measure convergent validity, average variance extracted has been used. It helps to calculate and determine the values of convergence validity as shown in Table 3 that reflect AVE of latent constructs which were higher than 0.5, standard value of acceptability.

Moreover, the outcomes of measurement model is shown in Table 2 in which primary constructs: media exposure, family communication, peer pressure, cultural values and violent behaviour are showed valid measures to corresponding constructs on the basis of their parameter that present estimated values and statistical significance of the values [51]. In a nutshell, the model constructs presented accurate convergent validity.

Table 2. Convergent validity

Constructs	Alpha	CR	AVE
Violent Behavior	0.915	0.929	0.524
Media Exposure	0.876	0.901	0.507
Family Comm.	0.911	0.924	0.507

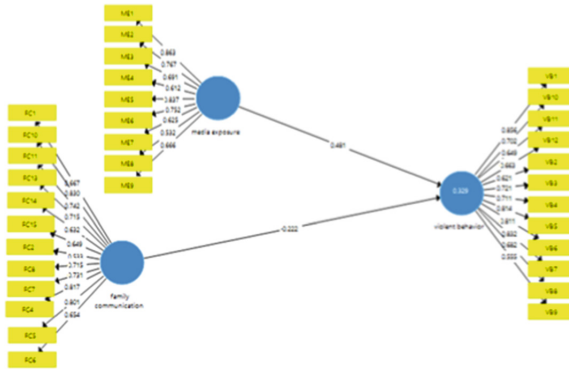


Fig. 2. Measurement model

4.3 Hypotheses Results

As shown in Table 3, the results of PLS-SEM test revealed a significant relationship between “media exposure” and “violent behaviour” (= 0.481, t = 10.913, p 0.05). As a result, H1 was confirmed. It suggests that media exposure affects adolescent violent behaviour, and that the relationship between the two is positive, i.e., higher chances of violent media exposure led to more violent behaviour among adolescents.

As demonstrated in Table 3, the outputs of the PLS-SEM test suggest a significant relationship between family communication and violent behaviour (= -0.222, t = 4.027, p 0.05). As a result, H2 was confirmed. It indicates that the relationship between the two variables is negative, meaning that the less family communication, the more violent behaviour of adolescents.

Table 3. Results of direct relationship

Standard bootstrap results						
	Std. beta	Std. Error	t-values	p-values	5.00%	95.00%
H1	0.481	0.044	10.913	0.000	0.404	0.568
H2	-0.222	0.055	4.027	0.000	-0.335	-0.119

5 Discussion

According to the findings of the study, media exposure is significantly linked to violent behaviour. It demonstrates that the more media exposure adolescents receive, the more violent their behaviour becomes. Also, adolescent exposure to violent media is a substantial predictor of more violent behaviour. The finding of the study is supported by Kaya's [52] description of media exposure. The author investigated the negative impacts of the media and discovered that media exposure is associated with violent behaviour. Violent media, such as violent movies, may change adolescents' attitudes toward violence in the form of reasoned entertainment and joyful activity. This change may impact consumer behaviour, leading to more violent behaviour in some consumers, especially youngsters [53]. The findings of this study are consistent with several recent studies [54, 55] in terms of the impact of violent content in media on society. In addition, violent media is one of the causes of violence at school and real-life [56]. Experiment research has revealed that those who are exposed to violent content in media become more hostile and violent [57].

According to the findings of the analysis, family communication was found to be a critical factor in violent behaviour, as it is appeared that weak family communication between parents and adolescents was the cause of violent behaviour of teenagers. These findings align with other studies [58, 59], which found conclusive evidence that family communication influences violent behaviour of teenagers. School violence was associated with a lower level of family communication [60]. Many recent studies have found a link between family communication, family bonds, and adolescent violence. Adolescents with less family communication, for example, are more likely to participate in violent behaviour. Adolescents who reported improved family communication experienced less violence and recovered faster [61]. Generally, it indicates that a family environment is important for ensuring optimal adolescent development. Individual behaviour was found to be strongly influenced by family communication. Despite the fact that several studies have looked at the impact of media violence on violent behaviour, the results of this study provide new insights of how media violence affects developing countries, especially Jordan.

6 Research Implications

The results of this study add important information to the body of knowledge about violent behaviour. The most important one is the theoretical implications of this study. First, there are few studies that have looked at factors that influence violent behaviour, including exposure to media and family communication, especially in developing countries such as Jordan. Moreover, the population of this study was adolescent girls and boys of different ages from different socioeconomic status, which provides an opportunity to apply the results to a wide range of adolescents in Jordanian society. Finally, the findings provide an essential information about the factors of violent behaviour among adolescents empirically.

In addition, the results of the current study have practical consequences as well. This study will be helpful for parents, officials and government to better understand use of

violent media and importance of family communication which contribute to increase violent behaviour of adolescents. The results of the study can raise awareness among decision-makers and enable them to think about how to develop appropriate strategies and policies for adolescents studying in schools. By and large, these practical steps will be useful to reduce the prevalence of violence in schools and other social settings.

7 Research Limitations

Social science studies often have limitations while carrying out the study, so there are some limitations to the current study, most notably; First, while this study showed a relationship between media exposure, family communication, and real-life violent behaviour, a link does not always imply causation. Moreover, due to financial and time constraints, this study examined schools in one governorate only (Jerash). As a result, caution should be exercised when extending or generalizing results to all schools or adolescents in Jordan. Finally, the current study focused on a group of students with disciplinary problems, so a comparison with students who do not have these problems is important and will provide useful information and results.

8 Conclusion

Try to start this section by reintroducing your topic and discuss important findings of the study. The results of the current study revealed that adolescent violence is affected by media exposure and family communication. This study contributes to a better understanding of the most critical factors that lead to an increase in adolescent violence, especially in developed countries such as Jordan, although there is a lot of empirical research on violence. The current research found helpful strategies for measuring the impact of media exposure and family communication on teenage violent behaviour. In addition, the current study presents many suggestions for future researchers that may assist researchers in conducting and working on it. Future studies should concentrate on teenagers and youth from other countries, particularly those who have similar values and cultural norms to Jordanian society as the Arab countries. The representation of adolescents from other countries and large sample size can help generalize the results to a large segment of adolescents. In order to provide more extensive and accurate data regarding adolescent violence, future research should use different methodologies such as a mixed-method or a longitudinal approach. Furthermore, to gain a more in-depth understanding and knowledge of the main drivers and causes of violent behaviour, it is suggested that researchers use various qualitative methods such as interviews. Furthermore, it is suggested that researchers use various qualitative methods such as interviews, to gain a more in-depth understanding and knowledge of the main drivers and causes of violent behaviour. In sum, violence is a complex matter that needs more investigations.

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