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Predicting The Violent Behavior In Pakistani Youth Exposed To Community Violence: Moderating Role Of Parenting

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Abstract

According to the South Asia Terrorism Portal (2020) between 2000 and 2019 Pakistan has faced more than twenty thousand civilian deaths. Beyond terrorist attacks, street, and sectarian violence, riots and protests between political parties and gun attacks are also common across the country. These kinds of community violence not only generate a violent culture in Pakistan but also a source of exposure to violence for youth on a larger scale. Th¹ is exposure to violence is a major cause of further violence perpetration among youth. Bandura's social learning theory (1986), which asserts that human behavior is transmitted through exposure to social models, provided the theoretical framework for this study. This study examines the effects of exposure to various types of community violence on youth relevance to their violent behavior among a sample of N=500 Pakistani youth living in various cities of Southern Punjab. Furthermore, this study investigates the moderating role of parenting practices between exposure to community violence and violent behavior of Pakistani youth.

Key Words: Youth, Community Violence, Parenting Practices, Violent Behavior, Pakistan.

Introduction

WHO defines violence as "the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, or a group or community that either result in or have a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation" (WHO, 2014). According to Bevens & Loughnan, (2019) "Violence is more likely to take place when we view someone as other, or different from ourselves. This occurs through a process of dehumanization or depersonalization, which enables us to act aggressively or violently towards the other" (Rai et al., 2017) Therefore, in 2015, violence reduction and peacebuilding were the main agenda of Sustainable Development for 2030 adopted by the "United Nations General Assembly" (UN, 2015). Pakistan is considered to be one of the most multi-cultural and polarized societies due to its geopolitical position and participation in proxy wars (Noraiee, 2020). Particularly, the

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war against terrorism has not only deeply shaken the social fabric of Pakistani society but also affected its security situation (Irshad, 2011), economy (Zakaria et al., 2019) damages to infrastructure (Mubashra & Shafi, 2018) and the loss of lives accounts for more than 81,000 (Khan, 2015). Particularly, the ferocious barbarity of terrorist attack, when they made a blood bath in Army Public School in 2014 and killed more than a hundred high-grade students and other school staff (Khan et al., 2018). It was a larger scale of exposure to violence not for APS students only but for all Pakistani people through electronic and social media (Kalim & Janjua, 2019). Besides terror violence, the country faces domestic violence (Pakistan World Report, 2019) familial violence (Rizvi et al., 2019) and many other types of community violence (Nasrullah et al., 2019). Culture also plays a vital role in the prevalence of community violence, (Löfying-Gupta et al., 2018) for example, almost in every province of Pakistan the birth of a child and marriages are celebrated by firing in the air (Zaman & Sabir, 2013). Which is doubtlessly training on how to use a weapon? Rivalries between different clans, castes, and ethnicities are common (Sheikh et al., 2012) they are passed on from one generation to the next (Noraiee, 2015). Moreover, educational institutions are also a greater source of exposure to violence from childhood to youth like corporal punishment, etc., (Gershoff, 2017; Ahmed, 2012; Gershoffer al., 2016; Nafees et al., 2012; Hussain & Kashif, 2013). Media is also an important source of promoting violent behavior in youth because youth is learning new techniques and exposed to violence because of its extensive coverage of community violence daily (Gudiño et al., 2011). While looking at the current situation in the country regarding the intensity of violence (Oosterhof, 2018), one may claim about Pakistan is amongst the top violent countries of the world (Sustainable Development Voluntary National Review, 2019; Index Global Terrorism, 2018; Global Peace Index, 2019). These kinds of violence not only generate a violent culture in Pakistan but also a source of exposure to violence for youth on a larger scale (Zaman & Sabir, 2013).

According to Widom (1989), "that violence begets violence and that exposure to violence can contribute to a cycle of violence" therefore, the study has shown its concern in investigating the impact of violence exposure on youth violent behavior. Violent behavior is a form of behavior that have the intent of causing extreme physical or psychological harm/control (Martin & Cushman, 2016). Previous studies have indicated that Parental Practices have a link with children's exposure to violence (Finkelhor, et al., 2015). Parents are the first to observe internalizing and externalizing changes in their children, and they practice accordingly (Symeou & Georgiou, 2017). Because due to proper parental supervision, there is a low risk for youths indulging in problematic behavior (Hoskins, 2014). Specifically, for promoting positive development and environmental risk, Parents' Support has been quoted widely for protecting adolescents (Lehrl et al., 2020; Hall et al., 2019).

A significant relationship is also identified by Motley et al., (2017) between exposure to community violence and violence perpetration among adolescents living in a violent community. These findings are consistent with Bandura's (1986) suggestion that exposure to violence can teach new violent and aggressive behaviors to children and weaken children's disinhibition about behaving aggressively. Blinka et al., (2020) investigated that factors such as family relationships, and delinquent behavior are related to adolescent violent behavior. Economic disadvantage (Farrall et al., 2020) television violence (Faltýnková et al., 2020; Bahadur et al., 2016) and stressful events have been considered strong predictors of violent behavior (Nuttman-Shwartz, 2017). There is extensive research on the negative consequences of exposure to violence (Hoffmann et al., 2020; Spano, Rivera, & Bolland, 2010)

When adolescents are exposed to violence, their behavioral responses in other situations may have a higher probability of resulting in an aggressive reaction (Zona & Milan, 2011). The operational definition of violence in more general terms is acts of aggression intent on resulting

in extreme harm to the extent of death (Hamby, 2017). Therefore, increased exposure to violence predicted increased rates of subsequent violent behavior (Calvete & Orue, 2011). According to Bandura "one of the behavioral consequences of observational learning is an imitation of behaviors that have been observed" (1986, 1987, & 2001). There is a dire need to highlight the negative impact of violence exposure among youths in Pakistan. Other related issues concerning the relationship between exposure to violence and violent behavior among youths are underestimations of the adverse effects of exposure to violence by parents, guardians, and caregivers and even for policymakers (Moylan, 2010). Multi-level exposure to violence permeates cognition and can erode social support when the parents and caregivers do not realize the extent of the exposure nor fully understand the immediate and long-term effects of the exposure on our youth (Finkelhor & Turner, 2015). Parent's strong, caring, and positive relationship is much important for assisting youth in dealing with exposure to violence (Grant et al., 2011). Therefore, the study would also be an effort to realization and the prevalence of awareness regarding the harmonious effect of violence exposure in society.

Literature Review

Historical pieces of evidence in research have identified the numerous behavioral sequelae and mental health issues associated with exposure to violence like depression, (Voisin & Berringer, 2015) stress, (Goldner et al., 2015) fears and worries, (Stansfeld, et al., 2017) aggression, (Nyarko et al., 2017) anxiety, (Bacchini et al., 2011) low self-esteem, (Davis et al., 2020) posttraumatic stress, (Nuttman-Shwartz, 2017) and violent behavior (Humm et al., 2018). Exposure to violence has been presented to be associated with youth's violent behaviors (Nikolaidis, 2018). According to a few studies witnessing someone attacked, threatened, killed, or wounded, not only harms youth development (Turley, et al., 2017) but is also a highly consistent predictors of violent behavior in youth (Finkelhor, et al., 2013). Hue San Kuay (2018) has shown that youth who have greater exposure to violence fail to act rationally and instead respond impulsively. In the light of empirical research parents' support is linked to attenuating violent behavior (Finkelhor et al., 2015) and parents' support can buffer the effects of stress on children's violent behavior (Georgiou & Symeou, 2018). Parental practices have been considered the most prominent and persistent for children and thus a likely focus for intervention (Temcheff et al., 2018). Unfortunately, there are no detailed studies on the impact of exposure to community violence in the South Asia context (Wilke, Hippler & Zakar 2011), Bahadur (2016) has elucidated ted the various effects on Pakistani youth of television crime shows only, while Zaman (2013) has portrayed the social structure and culture of violence and its negative effects on Youth's mental health in Pakistan. Rizvi (2019) has investigated the Factors creating Violence in Pakistan. Muhammad Zaman and Imran Sabir (2013) Postulate that exposure to violence is an important reason for deep effects on youth's social functioning. Ashraf (2019) has demonstrated the role of socioeconomic status and its impact on violent behavior among Pakistani youth. In sum, several researchers have indicated that exposure to violence leads to behavioral problems in youth. But the existing literature provides insufficient information that how exposure to violence relates to violent behavior specifically and to what extent the parenting practices impede their perpetration of violent behavior?

The present study has included the various dimensions of parenting practices as a moderator for the attenuating of violent behavior in Pakistani youth exposed to violence. In Pakistan, some empirical studies are available, but they have investigated the accumulative impact of exposure to community violence on youth. But, no study to date has analyzed in Pakistan the direct impact of exposure to community violence on youth's violent behavior and the moderating role of Parental Practices. There is an imminent need for more research into the question of the possible mechanisms of the impact of exposure to violence on violent behavior among youth. Therefore, the present study aimed to fill this research gap by empirically exploring the impact of exposure to violence as violent behavior in Pakistani Youth and to what

extent parenting practices can be successful in controlling their perpetration of violent behavior?

Informed by social learning theory and based on previous research, the study will examine three following hypotheses:

- Exposure to community violence (ECV) has a positive impact on violent behavior (VB) among Pakistani youth.
- There is a significant positive relationship between ECV and VB in Pakistani youth.
- There is a significant moderating role of parenting practices (PP) between ECV and VB in Pakistani youth.

Methods & Investigation techniques: The main purpose of this research is to construct new significant results regarding the application of PP as a protective factor for youth exposed to community violence. The current study is quantitative and Quantitative data will be collected by using a questionnaire survey technique to identify how Community violence has an impact on violent behavior by considering the moderating role of parenting practices. We will also test a moderation model to elucidate whether PP played a role in the association between exposure to community violence and violent behavior in youth. As if the role of exposure to community violence as a core component of violent behavior depends upon the PP. The Children's Report of Parent Behavior Inventory (Schaefer, 1965) would be used to evaluate the rules of parentchild interaction perceived by the children, both concerning the father and the mother. The initial questionnaire includes 52 items (distributed into 8 factors for the father and 8 for the mother), which present typical situations of everyday life and family education. A three-choice scale is presented (never, sometimes, and always). These are the dimensions: a) Permissiveness: total freedom without rules or limits; b) Autonomy and Love: sociability and independent thought are stimulated; c) Love: positive evaluation, expressing affection, emotional support; d) Love and Control: intellectual stimulation of the children, a discipline focused on the child; e) Control: intrusiveness, control through blame and paternal guidance; f) Control and Hostility: applying strict rules and punishments; g) Hostility: predominance of irritability, negative evaluation, and rejection; h) Hostility and Negligence: hostility and, at the same time, extreme autonomy, where the children perceive a lack of attention to their needs. The ECV would be assessed by using "nine items from the Chicago Youth Development Study Stress Measure (Tolan & Gorman-Smith, 1991)" and the VB will be measured "individual youth involvement in violence using a modified version of the Self-Report of Delinquency questionnaire developed for the National Youth Survey (Elliott, Dunford, & Huizinga, 1987). Items are classified as violent or nonviolent, with violent behavior referring to behaviors that inflict physical harm on another person."

Demographic Information Sheet

In this study, data related to socio-demographic characteristics i.e., gender, age group, education, organization name, employment nature, and length of services are gathered from the questionnaire.

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of sample collected from various institutions of South Punjab region aged 18 to 45 years, sample size 500, data collection period 2021.

Variables	Frequency	Valid %
Gender		_
Male	280	56.0
Female	220	44.0

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	10+ year	31	6.2

Table 2: Descriptive statistics and correlation between study variable (N = 500)

	VB	CVE	PP
VB	1		
CVE	.819**	1	
PP	016	.060	1
Mean	13.436	17.348	134.752
SD	7.469	7.933	15.288
Cronbach's Alpha	0.875	0.919	0.852

^{**.} Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

VB = Violent Behavior

CVE = Community Violence Exposure

PP = Parenting Practices

Table 3: Moderating role of parenting practices between violent behavior and community violence exposure (N=500)

	В	SE	β	
Step 1				
Education	.629	.467	0.062	
Employment Nature	1.535	.754	0.095*	
Length of Service	.779	.420	0.089	
Step 2				
Employment Nature	1.639	.432	.101***	
CVE	.767	.024	.814***	
Step 3				
Employment Nature	1.734	.430	.107***	
CVE	.770	.024	.818***	
PP	037	.012	.075**	
Step 4				
Employment Nature	1.798	.430	.111***	
CVE	.767	.024	.814***	
PP	040	.012	081**	
$PP \times CVE$.310	.153	.052 *	

Dependent variable: violent behavior

***. p < .001 or less, **. p < .01, *. p < .05.

CVE = Community Violence Exposure

PP = parenting practices

 $PP \times CVE = cross-product term of parenting practices \times community violence exposure$

Table 4: Effect of individual subscales of parenting practices on violent behavior (N = 500)

	В	SE	β	\mathbb{R}^2
Controlled variables				
Education	.629	.467	0.062	
Employment Nature	1.535	.754	0.095*	3.0%
Length of Service	.779	.420	0.089	
SC	138	.030	202***	4.1%
NPC	.161	.050	.143***	2.0%

P	.548	.147	.164***	1.6%
N	.310	.101	.135**	1.8%

Dependent variable: violent behavior

***. p < .001 or less, **. p < .01, *. p < .05.

SC = support and communication

NPC = negative psychological control

P = Permissiveness

N = Negligence

Children's Report of Parent Behavior Inventory

The children's report of parent behavior inventory (Schaefer, E.S. 1965) was composed of 26 items that measure the ten parental behavior based upon four molar dimensions: autonomy, love, control, and hostility. Each item was rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The Cronbach's alphas for these subscales used in this study support and communication, negative psychological control, permissiveness, and negligence are 0.878, 0.801, 0.560, and 0.691 respectively.

Chicago Youth Development Study Stress Measure

The Chicago youth development study stress measure (Tolan & Gorman-Smith, 1991) subscale community violence exposure has used that list nine specific items related to victimization and witnessing violence. Each item was rated on a five-point scale ranging from 0 (exposure to zero violent event), 1 (exposure to one violent event), 2 (exposure to two to three violent event), 3 (exposure to four to five event), and 4 (exposure to six or more violent event). The Cronbach's alpha of the scale community violence exposure is 0.919 represents a solid level of internal consistency for the current study.

Violent Behavior

Violent behavior of youth is assessed by employing a modified version of the Self-Report of Delinquency questionnaire developed for the National Youth Survey (Elliott, Dunford, & Huizinga, 1987). Items are classified as violent or nonviolent, with violent behavior referring to behaviors that inflict physical harm on another person. The Cronbach's alpha of the scale violent behavior is 0.875 represents the consistency of the scale for this study.

Results:

- 1. Correlation among demographic and study variables are computed and observed that length of service has a positive significant relationship with community violence exposure and violent behavior while education and employment nature have the positive significant relationship with violent behavior, therefore these variables are controlled in the regression analysis.
- 2. To assess the moderating role of parenting practices is evaluated by using violent behavior community violence exposure connection. To achieve this objective, stepwise regression analysis was used. In the first step education, employment nature, and length of service were entered, all these variables account for only 2.40% of the variance in violent behavior F = (3, 496) = 5.090, p < .01. When variable community violence exposure was introduced in step 2, it is evident that community violence

exposure is a significant predictor accounting for 65.5% of the variance in the violent behavior (Adjusted R² increased from 2.4% to 67.9%) F = (4,495) = 264.554, p < .001. In step 3, parenting practice was introduced in the model, it has a significant effect, F = (5,494) = 216.698, p < .001, it accounted for 0.5% of the variance (Adjusted R² increased from 67.9% to 68.4%). In the final step of regression analysis, the cross-product term of parenting practice × community violence exposure is introduced in the model, it turned out to be a significant predictor, F = (6,493) = 182.391, p < .05 and accounted for 0.2% of the variance in violent behavior (Adjusted R² increased from 68.4% to 68.6%) suggesting that parenting practices significantly moderate relationship between violent behavior and community violence exposure.

- 3. The impact of the subscale of moderating variable parenting practices on the violent behavior is evaluated by using regression analysis. To do this, education, employment nature, and length of service were controlled, and subscales of parenting practices (support and communication, negative psychological control, permissiveness, and negligence) were tested one by one using regression analysis.
- 4. The support and communication account for 3.1% of the variance in violent behavior F = (4, 495) = 9.402, p < .001, and $\beta = -.202$ which is statistically significant at 0.001 level this shows a negative relationship between support and communication and violent behavior. The negative psychological control account for 2.0% of the variance in violent behavior F = (4, 495) = 6.462, p < .001, and $\beta = .143$ that is statistically significant at 0.01 level, while permissiveness account for 2.6% of variance in violent behavior F = (4, 495) = 7.383, p < .001, and $\beta = .164$ that is statistically significant at 0.001 level, and negligence account for 1.8% of variance in violent behavior F = (4, 495) = 6.223, p < .001, and $\beta = .135$ which is statistically significant at 0.01 level. The variable negative psychological control, permissiveness, and negligence have positive relationship with violent behavior.

Discussion

These findings support previous studies (Piatkowski et al., 2015; Nasreen et al., 2015; Kim-Ju et al., 2018) as with the current findings that community violence exposure may play a significant role in the violent behavior of individuals. In many cases, community violence exposure is associated with individual violent behavior. Bandura (1986) suggests that community violence exposure can teach new violent and aggressive behavior to children. Wisdom (1989) strengthens this argument and suggests that the violence brings violence hence, exposure to violence fuel the violence cycle and increases overall violence in the community.

The current findings that parenting practices are associated with the violent behavior of individual or community violent exposure following these concerns explanations are required. First, the finding suggests that parents want to raise their children in a better manner, due to parent's attention and good communication with children parenting practices have a negative association with individual violent behavior. Secondly, parenting practices are positively associated with community violence exposure the possible explanation of this negative psychological control put more stress on the children and stressful events have considered a robust predictor of violent behavior (Humm et al., 2018), while giving extensive laxity or carelessness to children leads to the adoption of negative traits like bullying others after observing this in the community (Widom, 1989), media (Bahadur et al., 2016; Gudino et al., 2011), in education institutions (Gershoff, 2017; Ahmed, 2012; Fershoffer et al., 2016; Nafees et al., 2012; Hussain & Kashif, 2013).

Current findings are inconsistent with earlier research (Stansfeld, et al., 2017; Kim-Ju et al., 2018; Temcheff et al., 2018; Nuttman-Shwartz, 2017) that explored the impact of community violence exposure has a positive impact on violent behavior. Blinka et al., (2020) suggest that adolescents when exposed to violence, there is a higher probability that behavioral response on other occasions results in an aggressive reaction. Kim-Ju et al., (2018) support this argument and suggest that exposure to violence causes the behavioral problem in youth. Piatkowski, et al., (2015) reported significant association among family socio-economic status and anti-social behavior. Nasreen et al (2015) observe person enduring with less socio-economic status are more likely to have offending behavior. Batool (2013) also supports this finding and reported lesser family socio-economic status is significant reason for involving violent behavior. Current findings are in accordance with the previous research finding (Eitle & Turner, 2020) that suggest increased exposure to violence predicted an increased rate of subsequent violent behavior.

The secondary objective of this study was to evaluate whether parenting practices moderate the link between community violence exposure and violent behavior. The present study indicates that parenting practices negatively predict violent behavior. The current findings are in line with previous research (Kim-Ju et al., 2018; Finkelhor et al., 2015; Nikolaidis, 2018; Humm et al., 2018). Kim-Ju et al., (2018) suggest that parents' support is linked to attenuating violent behavior. Parents' support can shield from the effects of stress on adolescents' violent behavior (Nyarko, et al., 2010). It has also been observed that the interaction between parenting practices and community violence exposure significantly predict violent behavior. It is observed that parenting practices cushioned the effect of community violence exposure and are more likely to limit the effect of community violence exposure on the violent behavior of Pakistani youth.

Conclusion

Research Concludes important aspects which are listed in reference to relation found between parenting behaviour and violence exposure leading to the violence happening in the community. Countering violent extremism in developing and low-socioeconomic status-carrying societies is tough to practice though but the appropriate and in-line countering effort may help to curb the menace of violence and extremism. Exposure to violence, parenting practices and youth openness to societal happenings contribute much to violent behaviour. In a larger frame, parenting tactics are more to be considered as a child grows and learns his first lesson at home. Its dilemma of developing societies that parents do not take much care while dealing with their kids and the impact of domestic and inter-personal harshness is seen on sapling minds. In later years of the age, it is questioned why youth is turning to be violent and inclined to extremist activities. To find the reason it is important to trace back the track of development and growth of the mind which ends with parenting practices at first and community exposure to violence later on.

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