



# The Impact of Social and Cultural Norms on Violence Among Arab Adolescents in Israel

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## Abstract

*Cultural and social standards in Arab civilizations frequently encourage disciplinary behaviour (Abdulla, 2018). According to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the latter is considered child abuse (Tobin, 2019). In Arab culture, physical punishment, "light" beating, cursing, or yelling are accepted forms of socialization (Majali & Hussein, 2019).*

*According to Bonnie and Backles (2019), reasons for violence against adolescents were studied in the social and cultural norms analysis context. During the study's discussion and the focus groups, the attitudes, viewpoints, values, and beliefs that prove the existing social and cultural norms on violence among Arab adolescents were studied (Perrin et al., 2019). In this research, we briefly describe the introduction, literature review, materials and methods, results, discussion, and conclusion, according to which the acquired data was analyzed and systematized.*

*This paper will discuss the impact of social and cultural norms on violence among Arab Adolescents in Israel. The study examined how social and cultural norms impacted violence among 833 Arab adolescents in Israel between the ages of 14 and 18 who lived in various residential locations. A self-report questionnaire was used to gather the information to evaluate the frequency of exposure to violence during the last 12 months.*

*According to the study's findings, nearly two-thirds of Arab teenagers had personally encountered social and cultural norms of violence during their lifetimes, and nearly every adolescent (99.8%) had seen instances of such standards in action*

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**Keywords:** *Arab Adolescents, Violence, Cultural Norms, Social Norms, Israel*

## Introduction

Cultural and societal standards significantly impact people's behaviour, mainly whether they use violence (Perrin et al., 2019). Norms can prevent violence but also enable and promote its use. One risk factor for all forms of interpersonal violence is the cultural acceptance of violence, whether as a standard dispute resolution technique or as a common component of childrearing (James, 2019). It might also shed light on why nations with high rates of one form of violence also

have higher rates of the other. When children are punished physically or experience violence in their families, the media, or other environments, they will likely learn to tolerate violent behaviour in society (Organization, 2022).

Social and cultural norms are guidelines or standards of conduct and cognition based on accepted values within a particular social or cultural group (Liu et al., 2022). Even though they are sometimes unspoken, social norms provide guidelines for what is and is not acceptable conduct in human interactions (McLeod, 2023). Because norms can establish an atmosphere that can either stimulate or soothe violence and its negative repercussions, social and cultural norms significantly impact individual behaviour in various settings, including violence and prevention (Affairs, 2020).

According to Bruinsma and Johnson (2018), several social and cultural conventions influence how people respond to violence. Researchers have proposed that children who get physical punishment or see violence in their families, the media, or other contexts develop social and cultural norms that result in tolerance of violence (Gershoff, 2018). The acceptance or commission of violent behaviours or acts can result from early exposure to violence. Still, it can also serve as a powerful intervention point for violence prevention programs. Although there is little study in this field, many early studies indicate the potential to actively influence or change current social norms to decrease the incidence of violence within a particular society (Haferkamp & Smelser, 2019).

The study examined how social and cultural norms impacted violence among 833 Arab adolescents in Israel between the ages of 14 and 18 who lived in various residential locations. A self-report questionnaire was used to gather the information. The children's gender and the frequency of violent exposure during the previous 12 months were strongly associated. Without any discernible correlation to social or cultural factors, the frequency of witnessing violence during that time was higher than the frequency of personally experiencing it. The frequency of being

exposed to mild violence incidents during that time was higher than that of being exposed to severe violence incidents during the same time (Oliver, Alexander, Roe, & Wlasny, 2019).

## **Literature Review**

According to UNESCO (2019), over the past three decades, there has been a rise in both academic and public interest in how often children and adolescents in Israel are exposed to acts of violence. However, there is a dearth of comparable research examining how social and cultural norms affect violence among Israeli Arab youth (Ben-Porat, Levy, & Itzhaky, 2018). This article presents the findings of a study on the rates of exposure to violence and some of its correlates among this demographic to close a gap in the knowledge. According to Darawsha (2020), children and adolescents are frequently exposed to violence outside the house that they may have witnessed or experienced, but not media violence.

In the Israeli National Survey of Adolescents, 23% of the participants reported being victims of and witnessing violence during their lifetime (Olivas, 2019). According to Organization (2020), children and youth are twice more likely to be victims of a severe violent crime outside the home, such as robbery and aggravated assault, than adults are. They are also three times more likely to be victims of a simple assault outside the home than adults are (Organization, 2022). Over one in four children and adolescents (273 per 1,000), they had committed a property offence. More than one in three (375 per 1,000) had witnessed violence or experienced another type of indirect victimization during the study year, according to a recent comprehensive survey conducted by (Finkelhor, Turner, Shattuck, Hamby, & Kracke, 2019). The survey focused on the exposure of children and youth aged 9-17 years to violence, crime, and victimization.

Other research on the impact of social and cultural norms on violence among Arab adolescents in Israel has found that most adolescents and teenagers living in Israel's inner cities have witnessed at least one violent act (Fishman, Mesch, & Eisikovits, 2019). According to a study of urban teenagers, 67% had seen shootings, 50% had seen stabbings, and 25% had experienced extreme violence (James, 2019). Additionally, according to studies, those who said they had seen a murder also said they had seen other instances of extreme violence (such as robberies, shootings, and stabbings), which indicates that those adolescents lived in a "violent milieu." (Frederique, 2020).

According to Savitsky et al. (2021), other Israeli neighbourhoods have also been reported to have high rates of violence 54% of Israeli teens had witnessed minor violence, and 38% had engaged in it, according to research. The annual rates for observing and directly suffering serious violence were 28% and 9%, respectively (Harrendorf & Malby, 2020). Seventy-five per cent of Arab adolescent participants in a study said that frequent rape events occur in their communities. More than half of them claimed to have seen or heard about several violence involving guns or other weapons (Darawsha, 2020).

Two World Health Organization-sponsored studies that explicitly examined exposure to violence connected to schools have gathered information on how often Israeli children and young people have been exposed to violence (Organization, 2022). In those studies, 20% of the Israeli students who took part had experienced bullying, harassment, or intimidation three or more times, compared to 50% who had experienced it at least once. Although (Sciences, Medicine, Division, Education, & Applications, 2019) offered extensive data on teenagers' exposure to violence, they only looked at exposure to violence in the immediate school environment and on the way to school.

The Arab adolescents were also questioned about victims of violence and violent offenders. Although a thorough study in numerous nations has demonstrated that seeing violence is the most common pattern of exposure to violence, they were not questioned about it. There are now several social and cultural standards regarding violence among Arab teenagers in Israel (Affairs, 2020). The socioeconomic status (SES) of their family and neighbourhood, their race and ethnicity, gender, and age are the key determinants of this.

### **Social Economic Status**

Urban settings with high proportions of families with limited financial and other resources are more likely to be where community violence occurs. Poor housing conditions, low-income levels, and high drug usage rates define those places (Spooner & Hetherington, 2018). However, there is also evidence of high rates of violence in rural areas and suburban areas, regardless of housing conditions or other socioeconomic circumstances (Ceccato & Abraham, 2022).

### **Identity-based on race and ethnicity**

All ethnic groups in Israel are subjected to social and cultural norms on violence, according to studies on the subject, although ethnic minorities are affected at disproportionately high rates (Affairs, 2020). Comparative comparisons between teenagers from Jewish and Arab backgrounds and those from other ethnic and racial groups have shown that Arab adolescents are most exposed to acts of social and cultural forms of violence (Bonnie & Backles, 2019). It has been suggested that Arab youth's increased exposure to violence may be related to the SES of their homes and neighbourhoods. In Israel, urban areas with low SES and high rates of crime and violence are overrepresented by ethnic minorities (Daoud, Alfayumi-Zeadna, Tur-Sinai, Geraisy, & Talmud, 2020).

## Gender

According to research, male adolescents and children are likelier than female adolescents to experience and witness violent crimes in the neighbourhood (Organization, 2022). Males were shown to be more likely than females to witness community violence, be physically assaulted, and experience other direct patterns of community violence among upper-middle SES groups and inner-city groups, according to (UNESCO, 2019). However, it was discovered that females were more likely to be exposed to violence connected to sexual assault (Sciences, Medicine, Division, Education, & Applications, 2019).

## Age

Despite significant discrepancies in the results, most studies have found a link between age and exposure to social and cultural norms about violence. Because violence is so prevalent in their culture, many experts have hypothesized that many Arab adolescents see violence in their societies at a very young age (Affairs, 2020). According to research, 10% of parents of children aged 1 to 5 said their adolescents had seen shootings or stabbings, while 47% said they had heard gunfire (Harrendorf & Malby, 2020).

In a different survey of Arab adolescents in Israel, older adolescents were more likely than younger ones to report experiencing violence (32% vs 19%), witnessing violence, or being indirectly exposed to a violent assault (72% vs 61%; (Sui, Massar, C.Ruiter, & Reddy, 2020). However, a study of adolescents between the ages of seven and fifteen found no association between age and seeing a homicide, gunshot, or stabbing (Sharma, 2018).

There is a shortage of comparative research on the rates and risk factors of this problem among Israeli youth in general and Arab Israeli youth in particular, despite the availability of

studies on the exposure of children and teenagers to communal violence in various nations (Daoud, Alfayumi-Zeadna, Tur-Sinai, Geraisy, & Talmud, 2020). In recent decades, Israel's Arab community has seen socioeconomic, cultural, and sociopolitical changes. Although some of those changes have sparked growth and development, there is no doubt that they have also contributed to pressures on an individual and societal level, including poverty, unemployment, alienation, and experiences of discrimination and exclusion. It is considered that these changes and experiences may be somewhat relevant to many social issues in Arab society, such as intergroup violence (Pohlan, 2019).

The current study is one of the first to look into these issues. What are the prevalence and features of exposure to various forms of intergroup violence among Israeli Arab youth? Is there a relationship between the youths' age and gender and their exposure to various forms of intergroup violence? The results of this study, which include the stressors as mentioned earlier and transformations as well as the traumatic consequences of such exposure and the coping mechanisms used by young people to deal with those consequences, should pave the way for further, in-depth research on the risk factors of Arab youth exposure to community violence (Powell, Wegmann, & Backode, 2021).

## **Materials and Methods**

The study employed statistical methods to evaluate the impact of social and cultural norms on violence (UNESCO, 2019).

### **Participants**

Arab students in Arab junior and senior high schools in Israel comprised the study population from which the current sample was taken.

In all age categories, there were substantially more females ( $n = 488$ ) than boys ( $n = 345$ ;  $\chi^2 = 11.42$ ; degree of freedom [df] = 4;  $p > .05$ ) in the sample. The participants' ages ranged from 14 to 18 years (mean [M] = 16.5, standard deviation [SD] = .90) (Koenig, 2018).

Adolescents from four different kinds of Arab communities and one community that was both Arab and Jewish made up the sample. The participants were divided into four groups: small towns (less than 10,000 citizens), medium towns (10,000–27,000 residents), significant towns (between 27,000 and 60,000 inhabitants), and large cities (more than 60,000 inhabitants) and (Over 60,000 residents).

## Measures

Five Arab professionals who were experts in sociology, psychology, social work, and education focused on violence, family, and adolescence and pilot-tested each of the measures after they were translated from English into Arabic. They assessed the measures' suitability, clarity, and relevance. Together with the co-principal investigator, they also contributed to the questionnaire's Arabic translation. The questionnaire was then back-translated into English by a separate translation specialist. The translated text was then put through a pilot test with adolescents and cleaned up for clarity.

The questionnaire's sociodemographic questions asked about the respondents' age, gender, religion, the size and character of their locality, and parents' educational attainment. The participants' recollections of their initial exposure to various acts of communal violence and their ages at the time of each exposure were used to calculate their age at first exposure (Finkelhor, Turner, Shattuck, Hamby, & Kracke, 2019).



A modified version of the My Exposure to Violence Scale (MyETV, (Dusing, Richards, Ochoa, & Onyeka, 2021) was used to gauge exposure to communal violence. The original English version, which analyzes exposure to violence experienced by older children and adolescents as victims, perpetrators, or bystanders, has reported good psychometric features (Ruel, Lavoie, Hebert, & Blais, 2018). The initial version of the scale underwent several modifications at the request of the human subjects review committee of the Israeli Ministry of Education and in consultation with professional judges. Since the definition of community violence used in this study did not consider the participants' aggressive behaviour or their exposure to accidents, several items were specifically eliminated.

The first version of MyETV measured exposure in three different settings: at home, at school, and in the community. This study did not examine the individuals' exposure to violence at home. The following five settings were used to measure exposure to social and cultural norms: "at the home of an unrelated acquaintance," "at the home of a stranger," "in school," "in the neighborhood," and "outside the neighborhood" (Jaffe, 2018). In the last 12 months, the frequency of exposure to violence was evaluated on a scale of zero to ten, with zero being the least frequent and ten being the most frequent. Participants were also questioned if they had ever experienced each sort of violence in their lifetimes in addition to questions concerning the annual occurrence of exposure to violence (Finkelhor, Turner, Shattuck, Hamby, & Kracke, 2019).

A three-item subscale was utilized to determine whether the victim was "a close acquaintance who is not a family member," "an acquaintance," or "a stranger" in order to gauge the degree of connection between the victim and the violent offender as well as to concentrate on exposure to violence outside the home (Ben-Porat, Levy, & Itzhaky, 2018). Regarding the

offender, the same three things were mentioned. Three scales were used to determine the extent of community violence exposure.

The final 12 items of the questionnaire, to which the participant may have provided a positive response based on a dichotomous scale of 0 (no) and 1 (yes), were added together to determine the subject's lifetime chronicity of exposure to violence. The Arabic version's internal reliability, according to Cronbach's alpha, was .73. This scale included two subscales: lifetime personally experienced violence (Cronbach is  $\alpha = 0.55$ ) and lifetime saw violence (Cronbach is  $\alpha = 0.68$ ). The fact that all of the items were dichotomous is probably reflected in the low alphas.

A 12-item scale was used to estimate the severity of the violence during the previous year. It evaluated the frequency of witnessed community violence (Cronbach is  $\alpha = 0.69$ ) and the frequency of personally experienced social and cultural violence (Cronbach is  $\alpha = 0.63$ ).

## **Procedure**

During a single class session of a school day, students anonymously answered a self-administered questionnaire. The questionnaire includes demographic questions and the measures discussed below that were previously used and modified for this study. It was decided not to sample Arab teenagers from neighbourhoods on confrontation lines, whose populations are already or potentially subjected to regular occurrences of political violence, in order to reduce bias stemming from exposure to political violence. (i.e., violence that occurred in light of the Arab-Israeli conflict) (Hall & Canetti, 2019).

Although the Arab communities were chosen for their size, location, and religious diversity (including residents who are Muslim, Christian, and Druze), they were unable to be stratified by SES because almost all Arab communities in Israel fall into the two lowest socioeconomic clusters,

out of a possible ten official clusters, according to the Israel Central Bureau of Statistics (Haj-Yahya, Khalaily, Rudnitzky, & Fargeon, 2022). Nevertheless, a diverse sample of Arab youth was obtained, taking into account factors like gender, age, and religion in addition to the location, kind, and size of the area of residence, even if a purely random sampling approach was not used to obtain the sample. As a result, it can be said with a high degree of certainty that the findings of this study apply to the entire population of Arab youth in Israel (Ayalon, Blass, Feniger, & Shavit, 2019).

With no bias toward self-selection, data were gathered by simultaneously sampling all communities. Each sampled community chose one senior high school and one junior high school. The largest school in each municipality was initially asked to take part. When a school's administration declined to participate in the study, it was attempted at the next school on the list provided by the community until the principal permitted the survey to be carried out at that particular school. Five out of the seven school administrators contacted agreed to let their pupils participate in the study. Two or three classes from each age group, from ninth to twelfth grade, were included in the sample at each of the nine schools.

Following approval from the principal, the researchers went to each classroom with the homeroom teacher to inform the children about their research. The Adolescents received explanation notes and consent forms that needed to be signed by them and their parents. Before the date on which the survey was to be conducted, students were instructed to submit the notes to their parents and return the signed consent forms; 80% of all recruited families agreed to let their children take part in the study. All of the adolescent participants whose families approved of their involvement in the study completed the surveys in the classroom anonymously and without providing any identifying information after returning the signed consent forms.

## Results

In this part of the study, we would like to briefly review the results on the impact of social and cultural norms on violence among Arab adolescents in Israel.

### *Chronicity of Lifetime Social and Cultural Norms on Violence Exposure*

Results of participants' lifetime exposure to gender inequalities and social and cultural norms about violence are shown in Table 1. Nearly all participants (99.8%) said they had seen community violence in their lifetimes, and 64.4% said they had personally experienced it. Compared to occurrences involving weapons, harm, or death, Arab teenagers reported being more exposed to chasing and beating episodes. According to the report, more people were exposed to violence involving non-firearms than violence involving firearms ( $\chi^2=282.5, p<.001$ ). Compared to girls, boys were shown to be significantly more exposed to all forms of violence.

*Table 1 shows the lifetime exposure of Arab adolescents to both personally witnessed and witnessed community violence broken down by gender.*

Violence and type of exposure	Exposed (N, %)	Boys N = 345	Girls N = 488	X <sup>2</sup>
Witnessing chasing	667 (79.6%)	88%	73.6%	26.15***
Witnessing beating	624 (73.7%)	79.2%	69.7%	9.47***
Hearing shots	559 (66.2%)	74.1%	60.6%	16.92***
Witnessing assault with a weapon	559 (66.2%)	74.1%	60.6%	16.92***
Witnessing assault with firearms	223 (26.4%)	36.3 %	19%	32.98***
Witnessing injury by firearms	138 (16.4%)	24.1%	10.9%	26.16***
Witnessing violent death	178 (21.2%)	26.9%	17.2%	11.33***
Witnessing violence: total	852 (99.8%)	99.7%	99.8%	0.05
Personally experienced chasing	328 (38.6%)	53.8%	27.6%	59.62***
Personally experienced beating	439 (52.3%)	59%	47.3%	11.64***
Personally experienced assault with a weapon	169 (19.9%)	32.6%	10.8%	61.58***
Personally experienced firearm assault	49 (5.8%)	21.5%	1%	47.91***
Injury by firearm	31 (3.7%)	8.2%	0.4%	33.17***
Personally experienced violence: total	559(64.4%)	81.3%	55.7%	59.86***

\* $p<.0.5$ ; \*\* $p<.0.1$ ; \*\*\* $p<.001$ .

**Exposure over the previous year**

Boys indicated that, on average, during the previous 12 months, they had witnessed 15 violent occurrences (M = 14.79, SD = 5.38) and had personally experienced seven incidents (M = 7.21, SD = 3.11), as shown in Table 2. Arab females reported seeing an average of 12 violent occurrences (M = 12.45, SD = 4.3) and directly experiencing six violent incidents (M = 6.10, SD = 2.53) over the previous year. For all forms of violence, boys reported much more exposure (both as a witness and as a personal experience) than girls.

*Table 2 shows the means and standard error (SE) of exposure to various forms of community violence among Arab adolescents over the previous 12 months, broken down by gender. (Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney)*

Types of violence	Boys		Girls		Z
	M	SE	M	SE	
<b>Witnessing</b>					
Chasing	2.98	.08	2.4	.07	-5.35***
Beating	2.52	.08	2.17	.06	-3.58***
Hearing shots	2.11	.02	1.83	.02	-2.68**
Assault with weapon	1.53	.07	1.23	.05	-6.12***
Assault with firearms	1.4	.05	1.11	.03	-6.51***
Injury by firearms	2.82	.05	2.49	.02	-2.73***
Violent death	1.36	.04	1.24	.03	-3.33***
<b>Total witnessing</b>	14.79	.93	12.45	.60	-5.65***
<b>Personal experience</b>					
Chasing	1.74	.06	1.33	.03	-6.49***
Beating	1.67	.06	1.55	.05	-2.57***
Assault with weapon	1.44	.05	1.14	.02	-7.01***
Assault with firearms	1.23	.04	1.04	.02	-6.77***
Injury by firearms	1.13	.03	1.04	.02	-4.9***
<b>Total first-hand experience</b>	7.21	.42	6.10	.24	-5.15***
<b>Total exposure</b>	21.0	1.30	13.04	.75	-5.9***

*Note. The Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney test was used to assess the significance of gender-related differences in the frequency of exposure to violent episodes due to non-normal distribution, particularly concerning exposure to occurrences of low frequency (Hart, 2019).*

\*\*p<.01;\*\*\*p<.001.

### *Age of First Exposure*

The findings from the initial exposure to various forms of communal violence are summarized in Table 3. The average age at which a person first witnesses someone being beaten was 12.75 (SD = 3.03), the average age at which a person first experiences being beaten personally was 11.36 (SD = 3.18), and the average age at which a person first witnesses someone being chased was 11.07 (SD = 3.43). The median age at which a person was personally pursued for the first time was 11.36 (SD = 3.26).

*Table 3 shows the characteristics of the first exposure age, in years, among Israeli Arab adolescents.*

Type of violence	Mean, the first year of exposure	Median, the first year of exposure	SD
Witnessing beating	12.75	13	3.03
Witnessing chasing	11.07	11	3.43
Hearing shots	12.95	14	2.82
Witnessing assault with a weapon	13.31	14	2.82
Witnessing injury by firearms	14.25	14	1.94
Witnessing shooting without injury	13.86	14	2.5
Witnessing violent death	12.81	13	3.1
Beaten	11.36	12	3.18
Chased	11.36	12	3.26
Assaulted with weapon	13.13	14	3.1
Assaulted with firearms	13.89	14	2.14
Injured by firearms	12.26	13	2.9

*Note. SD = standard deviation*

### *Location of Exposure to Community Violence During the Past Year*

Participants stated that most community violence was primarily experienced outside their neighbourhood, as seen in Table 4. For instance, 47.7%, 44.2%, and 39.7% of the participants said they had seen someone being chased, shot at with a gun, and beaten outside the area. However,

they claimed their area was the central location where they were exposed to beatings (both as witnesses and victims).

*Table 4. Prevalence of Exposure to Social and Cultural Norms in Different Locations Among Arab Adolescents in Israel During the Past 12 Months*

Type of violence/exposure	Location of Exposure				
	A	B	C	D	E
<b>Witnessing</b>					
Chasing	18.5%	13.5%	46.3%	53.4%	47.7%
Beating	12.5%	9.8%	35.3%	35.5%	39.7%
Hearing shots	10.6%	9.3%	18.4%	31.1%	32.8%
Assault with weapon	5.5%	5.2%	4.7%	11.1%	13.8%
Assault with firearms	4.2%	2.9%	2.7%	6.1%	10.1%
Injury by firearms	11.2%	9.4%	3.6%	34.8%	44.2%
Violent death	3.4%	4.3%	3.1%	6.8%	9.9%
<b>Total witnessing</b>	<b>34.5%</b>	<b>29.7%</b>	<b>60.3%</b>	<b>77.6%</b>	<b>80.7%</b>
<b>Personal experience</b>					
Chasing	5.9%	3.6%	11.7%	16.8%	16.6%
Beating	7.1%	4%	17.7%	16.2%	11.7%
Assault with weapon	4.4%	3.1%	5.1%	8.3%	9.7%
Assault with firearms	2.6%	1.4%	2%	3.1%	4%
Injury by firearms	1.9%	1.5%	1.9%	1.4%	2.1%
<b>Total first-hand experience</b>	<b>13.3%</b>	<b>9.3%</b>	<b>25.6%</b>	<b>30.4%</b>	<b>28%</b>

*A* represents exposure at a non-family friend's house, *B* represents exposure at a stranger's house, *C* represents exposure at school, *D* represents exposure in the area, and *E* represents exposure outside the community. The proportion of participants who said they experienced violence at each location.

***The Relationship with the Victim and Perpetrator of Violence***

Results indicating participants' familiarity with victims and perpetrators of communal violence are shown in Table 5. While distinguishing between the various sorts of violence, emphasis is given to those who witnessed numerous incidents of violence over the previous year. For instance, 40.9% and 41% of the participants said they had seen someone being chased by a stranger or an acquaintance, respectively. In comparison, 32.9% and 36% said they had seen someone being assaulted by a stranger or an acquaintance.

While distinguishing between various forms of violence, Table 5 also shows results regarding the kind of relationship (degree of acquaintance with the perpetrator) among teenagers who personally encountered community violence over the previous year. In most cases, participants reported that the perpetrator was a friend whom they saw or experienced social and cultural norms of violence, while the victim was typically a stranger. For instance, when the culprit was a close friend, an acquaintance, or a stranger, respectively, 8.4%, 16.8%, and 15.2% of the participants said they had been chased. In addition, 6.1%, 8%, and 6.2% of the participants said that a close friend, an acquaintance, or a stranger had assaulted them with a weapon, respectively.

*Table 5. Acquaintance With the Perpetrator Among Arab Adolescents Who Witnessed and Experienced Community Violence over the Past 12 Months*

Type of Incident	The perpetrator is a close acquaintance	The perpetrator is an acquaintance	The perpetrator is a stranger	The victim is a close acquaintance	The victim is an acquaintance	The victim is a stranger	The perpetrator is a close acquaintance	The perpetrator is an acquaintance	The perpetrator is a stranger
Chasing	27.2%	40.9%	41%	20.6%	38.3%	38.7%	8.4%	16.8%	15.2%
Beating	24.6%	34.6%	39.3%	17.7%	32.9%	36%	13.1%	19.1%	11.4%
Assault with weapon	12.4%	24.8%	30.8%	14.7%	23.2%	29.6%	6.1%	8%	6.2%
Assault with firearms	5.5%	8.4%	14.5%	7.2%	9.8%	11.7%	2.4%	2.4%	3.6%
Injury by firearms	4.9%	4.8%	9.4%	1.3%	6.4%	7.2%	1.9%	2.2%	2.6%
Witnessing violent death	4.0%	6.1%	10.5%	5.5%	5.7%	9.3%	NA	NA	NA

## Discussion

According to the study's findings, nearly two-thirds of Arab teenagers had personally encountered social and cultural norms of violence during their lifetimes, and nearly every adolescent (99.8%) had seen instances of such standards in action. Adolescents from Arab countries have a high level of violence influenced by social and cultural standards comparable to other countries (Bonnie & Backles, 2019). This study's findings align with those of studies conducted in other national contexts, showing that among Arab adolescents, the frequency of



observing all forms of social and cultural norms on violence was higher than the frequency of personal experience. Additionally, it was discovered that Arab teenagers personally experienced social and cultural norms of community violence twice or three times. They observed an average of 14 episodes of such violence during that time. The results of this study highlight the significance of taking observed social and cultural norms of community violence into account as a significant factor in community exposure to violence.

The frequency of exposure to moderate acts of violence is higher than that of brutal acts of violence when it comes to the influence of social and cultural norms on violence that Arab adolescents were exposed to (Haj-Yahya, Khalaily, Rudnitzky, & Fargeon, 2022). This exposure pattern resembles earlier investigations (Perrin et al., 2019). It should be noted that the extremely high levels of exposure to social and cultural norms on violence may be partially explained by the challenging socioeconomic circumstances in which they lived, the deficient standard of living, and the deficient level and quality of services and infrastructure in Arab communities. The Arab adolescents were sampled from socioeconomically homogenous communities. The essence and nature of the relationship between these living conditions, primarily socioeconomic situation, quality of life, quality of services, and infrastructure and other community characteristics like social and human capital and the relationship between social and cultural norms and violence among Arab adolescents from Israel still require further, more thorough research (Tobin, 2019).

Adolescents who personally experienced community violence and those who saw it differed, according to an analysis of their familiarity with the perpetrators and victims of the violent occurrences. Most Arab teenagers who watched violence claimed that all individuals involved were unknown. In contrast, almost half of those who encountered social and cultural norms on violence were assaulted by a close or familiar person (Ayalon, Blass, Feniger, & Shavit, 2019).

The variations may result from the various exposure methods. Violence may be witnessed without the exposed person being personally involved. The individual may also be more inclined to actively participate in interacting with their personal experience of violence. These findings imply that encounters between adolescents who are familiar with one another may frequently result in violent episodes (Ceccato & Abraham, 2022).

By examining violence exposure in other settings, such as in a familiar home, an unfamiliar home, the neighbourhood, and outside of it, the current study's findings add to those of earlier studies conducted in Israel in recent years that focused on social and cultural norms on violence experienced within and surrounding schools (Haferkamp & Smelser, 2019). According to the findings, the school was where beatings were experienced to the greatest extent. The degree of exposure was said to be higher outside the area for all other sorts, particularly for more severe forms of violence. Compared to other community locations, schools tend to have higher levels of supervision, high accessibility to a responsible adult, discipline, and programs for violence prevention. This may explain why there is generally less violence experienced in schools. More in-depth research is required about the locations and times of exposure outside the neighbourhood as well as the various causes causing exposure in different areas in light of the findings of this study regarding the high levels of exposure beyond the neighbourhood (Perrin et al., 2019).

For all sorts of violent episodes analyzed, it was discovered that Arab boys were much more exposed to societal and cultural norms on violence than Arab girls. These findings concur with earlier research from other countries (Council, 2021). The lifestyle model of victimization and habitual activities might explain the difference in exposure levels between the sexes.

According to the theory of routine activities, youth who regularly engage in out-of-home activities and have less parental or responsible adult supervision are more likely to personally

experience violence, be exposed to violence, and become involved in criminal activity. This is because, in modern society, the focus of activity outside the home has shifted, giving young people more opportunities to be exposed to social and cultural violent events (Affairs, 2020).

According to the lifestyle model of victimization, daily routines connected to the job, education, and leisure activities impact how much violence an individual experiences, according to functional expectations, cultural standards, and prestige goals related to demographic factors, lifestyle development (Akosah-Twumasi, Emeto, Lindsay, Tsey, & Malau-Aduli, 2018).

As adolescents get older and spend more time in school and participating in peer group activities, it has been predicted that they will become less attached to their parents and the home environment. Regarding gender disparities, girls are anticipated to spend more time at home than males while being closely watched by their parents (Samari & Coleman-Minahan, 2019). Disparities in communication styles can contribute to gender-related disparities in activity kinds. Boys develop open relationships with a greater number of boys, but girls construct a tighter variety of bonds with a smaller number of girls (Majali & Hussein, 2019). The group activities of boys are typically more physical, take place in larger groups that include outsiders, frequently occur outside the home without the supervision of an adult caretaker, and are characterized by less social commitment in Arab societies as well as other similar traditional and transitional societies; whereas, girls gather in smaller, familiar, intimate groups for less physical activities at home or in a controlled/protected environment. Because of the abovementioned expectations and conventions, boys may be more exposed to violence than girls due to their "normal" activities and way of life (Hietamaki, Huttunen, & Husso, 2021).

According to both of these hypotheses, exposure to violence increases the likelihood of being exposed again because it encourages antisocial behaviour, putting people in situations where

they are more likely to be exposed to violence (Pohlan, 2019). The relationship between the different factors addressed in each of the two theories and the effect of social and cultural norms on violence among Arab adolescents in Israel, however, requires further study.

## **Conclusion**

The following conclusions on the influence of social and cultural norms on violence among Arab adolescents in Israel can be drawn from the study's findings: Without changing the social and cultural norms that form the foundation of these norms, it is impossible to reduce violence against children significantly, for society to fully comprehend this issue (such as the everyday use of "background" physical force is a form of violence), and for society to take a negative stance against it (Affairs, 2020).

Disregarding extreme situations (and occasionally even including them), the parent or caregiver who is engaging in child abuse is convinced that exerting forceful control over the child will ultimately produce a favourable outcome, stop the child's bad behaviour from occurring again, and move the child closer to the "ideal" stage valued by society. Additionally, parents and other caregivers for children are not fully informed on the short- and long-term effects of punishment, the advantages of positive parenting techniques, and the effectiveness of those techniques (Frederique, 2020).

The bottom line is that different groups do not disagree on what the upbringing process should serve; the child's interests are a foundation from which they will develop into full-fledged, balanced individuals. Acknowledging and recognizing the problem and demonstrating the long-term effects of strict and upbeat upbringing styles can serve as a basis for changing social and

cultural norms. One way to realize the need for an alternative model and begin its construction is to show the gap between this goal and the current methods (Olivas, 2019).

It is vital to engage the emotional component and show society the traumatic impact of abused children to change the impact of social and cultural norms on violence among Arab adolescents. It is crucial to set good examples and make protecting a child's interests a top priority in family matters, working against the ideals of non-interference. This will encourage abuse witnesses to react more forcefully to incidents (Haj-Yahya, Khalaily, Rudnitzky, & Fargeon, 2022). The impact of social and cultural norms may be a result of directed policies and communication (e.g., attitude toward minorities, where aggression toward them is noticeably declining), as well as an event running concurrently with some social shifts (e.g., growth in women's financial independence grew into their independence, le Currently, numerous directions need to be influenced by state policy and targeted communication aimed at changing the influence of social and cultural norms that serve as the foundation for violence against children (Spooner & Hetherington, 2018). Finding the problem and showing the trend is necessary for problem resolution; start a conversation and make sure people are informed; Introduce sanctions (make them known if any already exist) and support them with reasoning.

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