

## **Correlational Study of Media Content as Catalyst of Violent Behaviour Among Youths in Abraka Metropolis**

**Hannah Emuobosa Ivwighren** <sup>1</sup>, Department of Mass Communication, Michael and Cecilia Ibru University, Agbara-otor, Delta State

**Florence Oghenekome Chukwuebuni**<sup>2</sup>, Mass Communication Department, Dennis Osadebay University, Anwai, Asaba, Delta State

**Abstract:** This paper spotlights the rising concern of youths exhibiting violent behaviour. The scope is on cultivation and social learning theories linked to and rationalizing media content as catalysts of violent behaviour among the youths. With the aid of primary data sources for analysis, 180 questionnaires were printed and distributed to senior school students in Abraka metropolis. 178 filled questionnaires came back but 2 were incomplete so were discarded. 176 were used. Cultivation theory was identified as a theory that incites learning and practicing what a person sees on television while the social learning theory points out observation, imitation, and modeling as ways of learning. Empirical studies were also reviewed to establish other researchers' views and their findings were scrutinized in line with this paper on how media content encourages copycatting into real life. The researchers made some recommendations to the government, media houses, and institutions of learning but, specifically to the youths to be more responsible and selective of the content they expose themselves to and consume or to be ready to face immediate and severe punishment if found guilty of violent behaviour.

**Keywords:** Media Content; Catalyst; Violent; Behaviour; youths

 [Kaylaeguonor@gmail.com](mailto:Kaylaeguonor@gmail.com)

Citation: Ivwighren, H.E, & Chukwuebuni,F.O. (2023). Correlational Study of Media Content as Catalyst of Violent Behaviour Among Youths in Abraka Metropolis. *Social Sciences, Humanities and Education Journal (SHE Journal)*, 14 (2), 337 – 354.



Copyright ©2020 Social Sciences, Humanities and Education Journal (SHE Journal)  
Published by Universitas PGRI Madiun. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

## INTRODUCTION

Reports on major news streams nowadays are making it obvious that there is a rise in the exhibition of violent behaviour and a very strong possibility of a correlation between exposure to some type of media content and violent behaviour perpetrated mainly by young people. Media content refers to any form of communication that is intended to reach a large audience, such as television shows, movies, video games, and social media posts (Hartmann, Wirth, & Schramm, 2021). There is a long-standing debate about the effects of media content on violence in society. Some researchers argue that exposure to violent media content can increase the likelihood of aggressive behaviour, desensitize individuals to violence, and decrease empathy towards victims of violence. This theory is known as the "media effects" hypothesis (Lindell, Olofsson, & Jonsson, 2020). Violence in media content refers to the depiction of aggressive behaviour, physical harm, or injury to people or animals (Bushman, & Cruz, 2020; Coyne, Nelson, Graham-Kevan, Tew, Mengo, Olsen, & Lee, 2021).

Violent behaviour refers to any physical or verbal act of aggression or harm directed towards oneself, others, or property. It can include behaviours such as hitting, punching, kicking, throwing objects, shouting, or threatening others with weapons (Blahd, 2019). Such behaviour can be motivated by various factors, including anger, frustration, jealousy, fear, or a desire for power and control. Violent behaviour can have serious consequences for both the perpetrator and the victim, including physical injuries, emotional trauma, legal repercussions, and social isolation. Any aggressive act or verbal injury committed against oneself, another person or property is considered violent behaviour (Coyne, Nelson,

Graham-Kevan, Tew, Mengo, Olsen, & Lee, 2021). Violence is frequently linked to a variety of unfavorable effects, including increased risk include elevated risks of harm or death, elevated chances of running afoul of the law, and detrimental effects on mental health and general well-being (Laursen and Collins, 2021). Children and young people in general might suffer detrimental impacts from exposure to violence, which can increase their level of aggression and increase their propensity to act violently.

Youths, as posited by Umukoro, Irori, Ivwithren, and Ugbome (2018), are persons between the ages of 15 and 35 years old who are full of strength, passion, zeal, and inquisitiveness. Youthful inquisitiveness, zeal, and strength are often interlinked and can be described as the embodiment of the vibrancy and energy of youth (Kwon, 2021). Young individuals often approach life with a feeling of amazement, drive, and vitality thanks to their youthful inquisitiveness, fervor, and vigor. Numerous studies have discovered a connection between increased aggressiveness and violent conduct and exposure to violent media, such as television shows, movies, video games, and music (Bushman & Cruz, 2020). The media can present people with guidelines and role models for violent conduct, increasing the likelihood that they would act violently even though the relationship between exposure to violent media and violent behaviour is complex and multifaceted (Bushman, Huesmann, and Elson, 2019; Elson, Ferguson, and Barak, 2021).

## Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of this study include to;

1. theoretically establish the link between exposure to mass media

content and violent behaviour among youths

2. examine ways cultivation and social learning theories are linked as catalysts of violent behaviour among youths
3. identify the growing concern and media responsibilities on violent behaviour among youths.

### Research Hypothesis

1. There is no correlation between exposure to mass media content and involvement in violent behaviour among youths.
2. There is no correlation between the effect of media content and involvement in violent behaviour among youths.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

In rationalizing the menace of violent behaviour, the literature review for this study is focused on two theories to show the link between exposure to mass media content and violent behaviour among youths. These are the Cultivation Theory and The Social Learning Theory.

#### Cultivation Theory

According to Anaeto et al. (2008), George Gerbner and Signorie's 1976 hypothesis of "cultivation" is a useful one based on the hypothesis that people who watch television tend to extend that picture of reality to those who play video games and people who use all other forms of entertainment and communication media. According to Professor Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School of Communication at the University of Pennsylvania (Asemah, Nwammuo, and Nkwam-Uwaoma, 2017), people, especially young people, tend to believe social or anti-social realities depicted on television the more exposure they receive. According to the "cultivation theory," exposure to violent media, particularly through television and video games, can foster aggressive

behaviour in young people using the principles below:

**Cognitive Priming:** Cultivation theory suggests that media exposure can activate cognitive constructs and beliefs that influence subsequent behavior. When individuals are consistently exposed to violent media content, it can prime aggressive thoughts and scripts, making aggressive behavior more accessible in their cognitive repertoire. This cognitive priming can facilitate the translation of aggressive thoughts into actual violent actions [Bermeitinger \(2014\)](#). Over time, repeated exposure to violent media can lead to desensitization to violence, making it seem more acceptable and less shocking (Lindell, Olofsson, & Jonsson, 2020).

**Desensitization and Normalization:** Cultivation theory suggests that repeated exposure to violent media content can desensitize individuals to violence, making it appear more normal or acceptable. Over time, individuals may become less emotionally responsive to violent stimuli, leading to a reduction in aversion to aggressive behavior. This desensitization process can lower inhibitions and increase the likelihood of engaging in violent acts (Van den Bulck, 2020). By normalizing violence as an acceptable means of conflict resolution and creating a perception of a bad and violent world, media violence can influence youth attitudes and beliefs about violence. However, other factors such as personal and environmental influences also play a role in the development of violent behavior among youth. However, it is important to note that the relationship between media exposure and violent behavior is complex and multifaceted. Other factors such as personal and environmental influences may also play a role in the development of violent behavior among youth. Harris and Sanbor (2014) that people's

experiences with media influence how they acquire knowledge about the world and how that knowledge affects their attitudes and behaviours.

The theory opines that the more time youths spend watching violent media, the more likely they are to perceive the world as a dangerous and violent place. This perception can lead to a "mean world syndrome" where individuals believe that violence is a common and unavoidable part of life. Combined, these effects of cultivation theory can contribute to the development of violent behavior among youths (Park, Na, & Kim, 2019). If the world is perceived as violent and it is believed that violence is an acceptable means of resolving conflicts, they may be more likely to engage in violent behaviour themselves. Cultivation theory also suggests that media content can influence people's perceptions of social norms and values. When violent behavior is portrayed in media as a common and accepted behavior, it can lead to the perception that violence is a normative behavior. This can lead to the acceptance of violence as a normal part of everyday life, making it more likely that youths will engage in violent behavior (Wang, Skoric, & Shen, 2021;).

#### **The Social Learning Theory**

Social learning theory is another theory of effects put forward by Albert Bandura. According to this view, learning occurs when people see how others behave. It is a learning theory that can be used in a variety of contexts but is particularly useful when discussing the consequences of television violence (Lftman, Modin & Stberg, 2019; Coyne, Nelson, Graham-Kevan, Tew, Mengo, Olsen & Lee, 2021). Since this theory states that exposure to violence, whether in the family, in the media, or in their social environment, can lead to the formation of aggressive behavior patterns, it can be used to explain violent behavior

among young people. Youth may engage in violent behavior through a variety of mechanisms, such as direct reinforcement that rewards violent behavior or vicarious reinforcement that involves witnessing other people's violent behavior (Bussell & Sheehan, 2022). In addition, individuals may manifest violent behavior by imitating the actions of other people or through cognitive processes where attitudes and thoughts that promote violence are formed. In her work on Bandura's Social Learning Theory (SLT), Raziell (2021) stated that there are three general principles for learning from people, things, or situations which are; **By observation** – This principle of observation was backed by Bandura's experiment known as the Bobo doll experiments to study the pattern of behaviour. It opines that people observing others or things alone may not be seen in what they do and may not result in behaviour change until they apply the second principle. The result of the experiment suggests that children are prone to be effective observational learners using attention, retention, reciprocation, and motivation to model the behaviour they witnessed (Huesmann, 2018; Låftman, Modin, & Östberg, 2019).

**By Imitation** –This is the second principle that grows from observed behaviour. Studies have shown and confirmed by different psychologies that behaviour can partly or be learned by imitation either by direct acting or mimicking a model (Cherry, 2022).

**By Modeling** – In this last learning principle, Bandura (2018) listed four conditions needed in the process of modeling attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation. In this principle, the subject observes the object of observation called the model. This principle states that the observer follows the actions of a particular model by imitating or reproducing what he has learned. This paper

suggests that violent behaviour can be observed, imitated and modeled from television or any other media source and role in real life, either intentionally or unintentionally.

Both cultivation theory and social learning theory can be concluded, in line with Matei [2012], that they are theories that shape attitudes in the hours of television viewing and in the direction of the ideology of content flow. In other words, what is seen, whether social or antisocial, can be spilled into the real world to express attitudes, perceptions, and beliefs.

#### **Ways Cultivation and Social Learning Theories Are Linked as Catalyst of Violence Behaviour**

For this paper, it should be understood that though cultivation and social learning theories are focused on the transmission of attitude majorly from television it is not limited to television as mass media, in general, is viewed as a means and catalyst of violent behaviour. In their study on the links between young people and the rise in violent behaviour, Pinkney And [Robinson-Edwards](#), (2018), pointed out some ways the above theories are the catalyst of violent behaviour to be the following but not limited to them;

#### **Daily Exposure to Violence Video:**

Young people are exposed daily to content that displays or cites serious violence in real life (Van den Bulck, 2020; Wang, Skoric, & Shen, 2021). These videos include movies, skits, adverts, etc with incidences of theft and violence perpetrated against others. Many of such videos display young people being seriously harmed, disrespectful and aggressive. Dominick (2002:497) opined concerning this that a constant dosage of violent behaviour on television harms human character and attitudes.

**Threats and Provocation in Music:** It is becoming a norm and of course, concerns as reported by professionals the musical drills are full of threats,

provocative language, and violent lyrics (Chen, Tyler, & Kohlberg, 2019; Skoric, Cho, & Wang, 2019). Musical content provides a raw reflection of the realities of young people's lives through displays of young people brandishing weapons, incendiary remarks about recent incidents of young people being seriously injured or killed, and explicit threats to stab or shoot specific individuals and members of rival groups. A good example of such is the East/West Coast rivalry beef in the United States which led to the death of the popular music icons Tupac Shakur and Notorious BIG, Lynskey (2011) youths attempt to spill this glorified content into a real-world that raises tension or face-to-face violence.

**Live Broadcast of Violence:** It is common to see international and local news organizations such as CNN, AIT, channels, Aljazeera, BBC, and online bloggers broadcasting live events of violence among young people, school shootings, prison breaks; displays of large quantities of drugs and attacking of individuals of rivalry association. The live broadcast of the Lekki Tollgate shooting on AIT between 8 pm and 9 pm on the 20<sup>th</sup> of October, 2020 during the News hour is one such example. Such videos not only bolstered the perceived status and reputation of people broadcasting them, but may also serve to humiliate and provoke rival groups and counter-reactions (Park, Na, & Kim, 2019; Weitzer, 2020).

**Idealized Social Identities:** Pinkney And [Robinson-Edwards](#), (2018), in their study explained that young men always prefer to hide any form of insecurities or lack of self-confidence with images that convey power and status. This is achieved through photos and videos portraying a lifestyle characterized by large quantities of money, designer clothes, and expensive jewelry. By observation, imitation, and modeling, the

cultivation and social learning theories are expressed by young ones consciously or unconsciously and it can explain some reports of young people's actions that appear to be spilling violence from videos, music, online post, etc into the real world (Lindell, Olofsson, & Jonsson, 2020). Ponnann, Rycker, Fong, and Syed (2018) in their article agreed that films, video games, and music reveals unequivocal evidence that media violence increases the likelihood of aggressive and violent behaviour in both immediate and long-term contexts.

### **Growing Concerns on Violent Behaviour and Media Regulating Responsibilities**

In Gerbner's view according to Asemah et al (2016), heavy viewers of television are exposed to more violence and as a result, are affected by the mean world syndrome thereby creating a homogeneous and fearful populace. This view is very disturbing when related to statistics of crime reports in Nigeria today. World Health Organization (WHO) report (2002) on violence states that young people aged 10-29 years are dying as a result of interpersonal violence. Youths are said to be the future of nations but what becomes of a nation whose youths get killed at their prime or who end up behind bars for the best part of their lives as a consequence of being involved in violent behaviour that led to injury, destruction of property or even death of another? Violent behaviour remains a growing concern in many societies around the world because the outcome affects all and sundry. While the factors contributing to violence are complex and multifaceted, several key aspects highlight the ongoing concern:

**Public Safety:** Violent behavior poses a threat to public safety and security. Acts of violence, ranging from individual acts of aggression to

organized violence, can lead to physical harm, injury, and loss of life. This concern extends to both interpersonal violence within communities and larger-scale acts of violence, such as terrorism or mass shootings, which have devastating impacts on individuals and society as a whole ( Haruna, 2021; Schweig, 2014). **Psychological and Emotional Well-being:** Violent behavior often stems from deep-seated psychological and emotional issues. Individuals who engage in violent acts may have experienced trauma, abuse, or neglect, leading to a cycle of aggression. The consequences of violence extend beyond physical harm, impacting the mental health and well-being of both victims and perpetrators. Addressing violent behavior is essential for promoting healthier communities and improving individuals' overall quality of life (Jain, 2018).

**Social Disruption:** Violence disrupts social harmony and cohesion. Communities affected by violence may experience fear, mistrust, and division among residents. High levels of violence can erode the social fabric, undermine community development, and hinder economic progress. There is a growing recognition that violence is not only a personal or individual issue but also a social problem that requires collective efforts to address effectively (Lockwood, 2020).

**Long-term Consequences:** Violent behaviour can have long-lasting consequences for individuals and society. It can perpetuate cycles of violence across generations, leading to a vicious cycle that is difficult to break. Furthermore, violence can have intergenerational effects, with children growing up in violent environments being more likely to exhibit aggressive behavior themselves, perpetuating the cycle.

**Impact on Vulnerable Populations:** Certain groups, such as women, children, marginalized communities,

and minority groups, are disproportionately affected by violence. Addressing violent behavior is crucial for protecting the rights and well-being of these vulnerable populations, ensuring equal opportunities, and promoting social justice. In the case of 21 years old Chidinma Ojukwu and 20 years old Uduak Akpan, there is no doubt they will be in prison for probably the rest of their lives if they by chance escaped the death penalty. In truth, no research has been carried out to ascertain what they have been exposed to previously but following Gerbner (1994) and his associate's analysis on the cultivation theory where they stated that television has long-term effects which are small, gradual, indirect, but cumulative, and significant, it may not be far fetch to conclude that the violence carried out by Chidinma, Uduak and many other youths has been building up gradually and indirectly from learning violence in the past.

In other to curb the menace of young people perpetrating violence that destroys life and property and even hinders them from achieving their potential, [Anyaegbunam](#), (2018); Adjeketa, (2022), and Raji, Owuml, & Aliyu, (2014), have the following suggestions:

**Ethical Guidelines:** Media organizations should establish and follow ethical guidelines that outline their responsibility in handling violent content. These guidelines should emphasize the importance of avoiding unnecessary sensationalism and gratuitous violence, while still providing accurate and comprehensive news coverage.

**Age Ratings and Warnings:** Media outlets should employ appropriate age ratings, content warnings, and parental controls to restrict the access of violent content to vulnerable audiences, such as children. Clear and prominent warnings should be

displayed before and during the broadcast or publication of violent content.

**Contextual Reporting:** When reporting on violent incidents, media outlets should provide context and avoid amplifying or glorifying violence. They should strive to present balanced and accurate information, focusing on the broader issues, causes, and consequences of the violence rather than solely on graphic details or shock value.

**Responsible Editing and Censorship:** Media outlets should exercise responsible editing and censorship to ensure that violent content is not presented in a manner that encourages or normalizes violence. They should consider the potential psychological impact on viewers or readers and make informed decisions regarding the appropriateness of the content.

**Collaboration with Regulatory Bodies:** Media outlets should cooperate with regulatory bodies, such as media councils or government agencies, to develop and adhere to industry standards for handling violent content. This collaboration can help establish consistent guidelines and ensure accountability within the media industry.

**Public Education and Awareness:** Media organizations should actively participate in public education campaigns that promote media literacy and responsible consumption of violent content. By providing guidance and raising awareness about the potential impact of violent media, they can help individuals make informed choices and develop critical thinking skills.

**Feedback Mechanisms:** Media outlets should establish mechanisms for receiving feedback from the public regarding their content, including violent material. This feedback can help media organizations gauge public

sentiment and make necessary adjustments to their practices.

### **Empirical Studies on Violence Behaviour Among Youths**

Bushman, & Huesmann, (2019). Twenty-five years of research on violence in digital games and aggression: Empirical evidence, perspectives, and a debate gone astray. In this review article, the authors analyzed a large number of studies on the link between violent video games and aggression. They concluded that there is a clear and consistent relationship between playing violent video games and increases in aggression and violent behaviour.

Haruna, (2021) Youth Violence and Public Safety in Nigeria a Study of Sara-suka Gang in Bauchi Local Government Area. The study spotlighted the worrisome activities of the Sara-Suka gang in Bauchi State. The gang was known for persistent intimidation, harassment, and threat to the lives and properties of the people of Bauchi. The study used a survey design and a questionnaire, interview, focused group discussion, observation, and documentary reports were then used to collect data. Findings revealed unemployment, corruption, illiteracy, poverty, and lack of skills as the factors triggering violence among the youths.

Prot, Anderson, Gentile, Brown, & Swing, (2021). Effects of playing violent video games on Chinese adolescents' aggression: A two-year longitudinal study. Researchers in this study tracked a group of Chinese teenagers over two years to assess their exposure to violent video games and aggressive behavior. They discovered no evidence of a causal link between playing violent video games and aggressiveness, and that exposure to such games did not predict increases in aggression over time.

Bushman, & Cruz, (2020). The effects of violent media on aggression: A meta-analysis. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 55, 101468. In this meta-analysis, the authors analyzed a large number of studies on the link between exposure to violent media (including movies and music) and aggressive behavior. They found that exposure to violent media was consistently related to increases in aggression.

### **METHODS**

The population of the study is the entire residents of Abraka as enumerated by the National Population Commission during the 2006 Census. The Sampling technique adopted is the purposive sampling method whereby the respondents were selected based on their possessing certain common characteristics of being classified as youths. Three public secondary schools and three private secondary schools in Abraka were chosen for this study. In each school, senior class students between the ages of 15 and 19 years were administered the structured questionnaire containing demographic and thematic questions intended to provide answers to the research to achieve the objectives of the study. The sample size is thus 180 respondents. The responses of the 180 purposively selected respondents provided the data analyzed for the study. The data were examined and the hypothesis was tested using Spearman Rank on Stata 0.15 statistical tool. The decision rule was anchored on the P-Value of 0.05 to reject or fail to reject the hypothesis respectively.

This brief literature review is on Media Content as a Catalyst of Violent Behaviour Among Youths. An exhaustive search of the literature was not covered so creates a limit to the generalization of the finding of this work. Therefore, there is need for a more robust research on mass media content and its risk to trigger



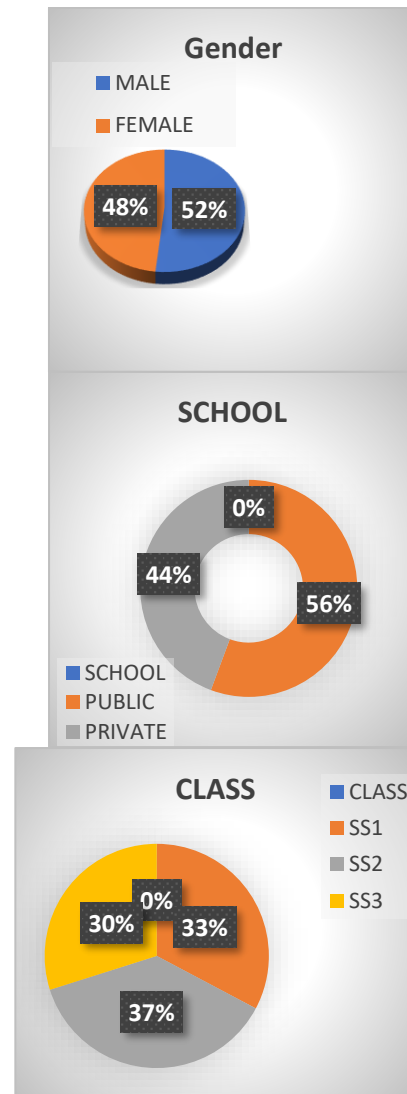
behaviour leading to violence and crime among youths.

**RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

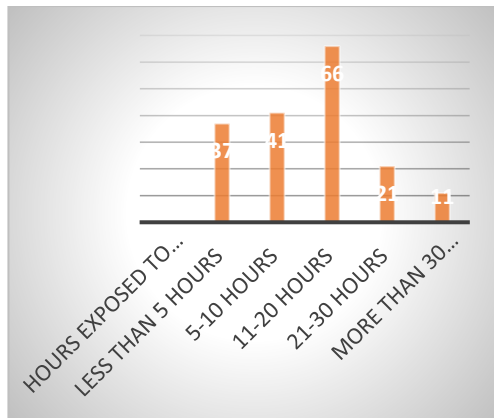
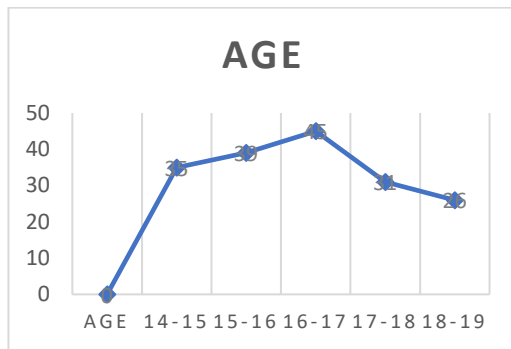
**Demographic Variables of Respondents**

Copies of the Questionnaire Distributed	180
Copies of the Questionnaire Usable	176
Difference	4
Percentage Difference	2%

Table 1: As seen in the table above, 180 copies of the questionnaire were administered, of which 176 were properly filled, retrieve, and found usable. The demographics of the respondents in the study were represented as gender, age, school, class, hours of consuming media content per week, involvement in violent behaviour, and perception of violent behaviour in the schoolor community.

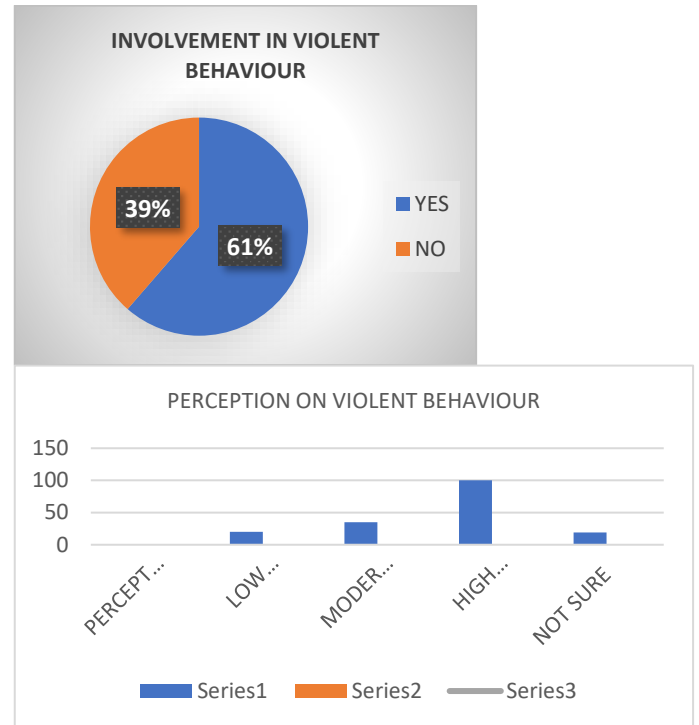


The Pie Charts above show the distribution for gender, type of school, and class of the respondents. Of the 176 respondents, 49(52%) are male, 85(48%) are females. 98(56%) attend public schools while 78(44%) are in private schools. Lastly, 57(33%) of them happen to be in SS1 class. 65(37%) are in SS2 and 52(30%) are in SS3.



The 2-D Line chart depicts the ages of the respondents. It shows that the majority of the respondents are between the ages of 16-17 45 (25%). Followed by 39(22%) between 15-16 years, and 35(19%) of them fall between 14-15. While 31(17%) are between 17-18, just 26(14%) of them are between 18-19. On the right is a bar chart showing respondents' weekly media usage times. From the chart, it is seen that most of the respondents that are 66(37%) are exposed to 11 to 20 hours weekly. 41(23%) have 5-10 hours of exposure

weekly. Closely followed are 37(21%) who get less than 5 hours per week. On the high exposure, 21(12%) claim to get 21-30 hours per week while only 11(6%) said to have above 30 hours of exposure per week.



The pie chart represents the participants involved in violence. It was revealed that 108 (61%) of them were involved in violence in one way or another. The remaining 68 (39%) not. The bar graph represents respondents' perceptions of the level of violence in their school or community. About 100 (56%) respondents were found to have a high perception of violence in their environment, 35 (19%) consider fair. Twenty (11%) people have little knowledge and 19 (10%) are unsure of their knowledge.

**Testing the Hypothesis - Bivariate Analysis**

**Hypotheses one**

H<sub>1</sub>: There is no correlation between exposure to mass media content and involvement in violent behaviour among youths (**spearman hemic ivb, stats(rho obs p)**)

Table 2: A Spearman Rank correlation was run to determine the relationship between exposure to mass media content and involvement in crime. Spearman's rho ( $\rho$ ) is 0.7560 and Prob t = P value of 0. In this case, a P value of 0.0000 indicates that the probability of a very strong correlation of 0.7560 or more is very low, assuming no correlation. Usually the threshold is 0.05 i

Variab les	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev	Min	Max
gender	176	1.488636	.501297	1	2
age	176	2.875	1.320714	1	5
school	176	1.443182	.4981785	1	2
class	176	1.977273	1.7924973	1	3
pvsc	176	2.693182	.812164	1	4

s used to determine significance, that is, if the P value is lower than this threshold, the result is considered significant.

**Hypotheses Two**

H<sub>02</sub>: There is no correlation between the effect of media content and involvement in violent behaviour among youths

**spearman emcb ivb, stats(rho obs p)**

Table 3: The given result suggests that there is a positive correlation between the effect of media content and involvement in violent behavior among youths.

However, further analysis showed that the correlation was not significant. The value of Spearman's rho, which

Output		Decision
Number of obs	176	Reject
Spearman's rho	- 0.7560	
Prob >  t	0.0000	

measures the strength and direction of the correlation, is given as 0.0028. This indicates a weak positive correlation between the variables. The p-value associated with the correlation test is 0.9710, which is greater than the significance level of 0.05. In statistical hypothesis testing, the p-value is used to determine the strength of evidence against the null hypothesis. In this case, the high p-value of 0.9710 suggests that there is a high probability of obtaining these results because it is relevant.

**Table 4: Descriptive Statistics Summarize gender age school class pvsc**

Table 4: The above table is the descriptive statistics to explain the content of the relationship between the variables (kaliyadan & Kulkarni, 2019). The output shows that

Output		Decision
Number of obs	176	Fail to Reject
Spearman's rho	- 0.0028	
Prob >  t	0.9710	

the variables tested are gender, age, school, class, and respondents' perception of violence in school/community (pvsc). For each variable, 176 participants were observed. The mean output shows a positive autocorrelation for gender, school, and class of respondents with a

mean of less than 2. For the respondent's age and their perception of the level of violence in their school or community, autocorrelation was not detected since their mean output is within the accepted range of 2.5. Positive autocorrelation means that at results can be associated with yesterday, used for today, and predicted for the future (Taylor, 2023; Kenton, 2021). Standard deviation values are mostly less than one to show respondents agree (Rumsey, 2021).

It can be seen from Table 4 above that the variables are not significant and the model is equally balanced. The minimum is a consistent 1 and the maximum falls between 2-5. The study came to several conclusions based on the hypothesis's reported outcomes. The first finding unmistakably demonstrated a large positive association between the number of hours spent consuming media and engaging in violent behavior. As a result, the null hypothesis, which supposes there is no link, is disproved. Accordingly, the study's findings confirm the Bushman, Cruz, and Bushman (2020) and Bandura (2018) study's findings that there is a link between these two factors. According to Asemah et al. (2016), it also supports the theories put out by Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, and Signorielli in 1994, who believed that people who watch a lot of television are exposed to greater violence and suffer from the mean world syndrome as a result. This leads to a homogenous and terrified population. It is crucial to remember that correlation does not always indicate causality. This study makes a connection between media exposure and violent behavior, but it does not prove a cause-and-effect relationship. The observed association may be influenced by additional variables and factors that were not taken into account in this investigation.

The researchers can conclude that there is little link between media content and young engagement in violent behaviour due to the high p-value of the second outcome. As a result, rather than reflecting a significant link between the variables, the observed correlation is probably the result of chance. The notion that there is no connection between the influence of media content and violent behaviour among youth is therefore supported. In other words, there is no proof to back up the assertion that media content significantly influences the frequency of violent behaviour among young people. This relates to research by Prot, Anderson, Gentile, Brown, and Swing (2021) that found no proof of a causal connection between playing violent video games and being aggressive, and playing them does not lead to more aggressive behaviour over time. It's crucial to keep in mind that even if this particular research did not discover a significant association, it is only one study, and other elements or investigations may have produced different findings.

## CONCLUSION

Deriving from the earlier insight of cultivation and social learning theories, it was found how easily people begin to observe, imitate and model what they are exposed to, especially from television and other media of entertainment and information transmission. This work was purposely undertaken to raise awareness and contextualize empirical studies that theories of acculturation and social learning effects may be linked as catalysts for violent behavior among youth. On the other hand, work has been done to shed light on the growing concern about violent behavior and its adverse impact on youth and society as a whole.

Using a review of both international and local literature, contributions of related studies without controversy provided a broad view of how and ways the theories are interconnected as a catalyst and trigger of violent behaviour among youth. Young people are vulnerable when it comes to controlling what excites them because the pleasure of crime is sometimes attractive (Burt and Simons, 2013). This lens points to a seemingly seductive and lucrative lifestyle that glamorizes violence and the pursuit of money through illegal activities such as drug distribution, and a gangster lifestyle that further undermines a potentially bright future. The relationship between media content and violent behavior is a complex and debated topic, and it is necessary to consider multiple studies and perspectives to form a comprehensive conclusion.

### Recommendations

Given the above, the following are recommended to the government, Media houses, Institutions of learning, parents, youths, and the general public:

1. There is a need to educate youths on regular bases on how to be selective of what they expose themselves to.
2. There is a need to enforce strict regulatory policy on media houses accompanied by sanctions on any media outfit discovered to be breaching the regulatory policy by airing gloried violent content.
3. Severe and immediate punishment be pronounced on perpetrators of violent behaviour to serve as a deterrent to others and discourage anyone from using the cultivation and social learning theory to rationalize violent behaviour.
4. Lastly, producers of television or other media content should take up the social responsibility of

being considerate of all factors including vulnerable minds when packaging their content. This mindset and approach to life can lead to great accomplishments and achievements, as well as a sense of fulfillment and satisfaction.

5. Further research and studies would be needed to explore the underlying mechanisms and potential causal relationships between mass media exposure and involvement in violent behaviour.

### REFERENCES

- Anaeto, S.G, Onabajo, O.S and Osifeso, J.B (2008) Models and Theories of Communication. Maryland (USA); African Renaissance Books Incorporated
- [Anyaeibunam, E. N., \(2018\) Reducing Organized Violent Behavior in Nigeria Through the Use of Human Needs Paradigm. Middle East Journal of Scientific Research 26\(5\):527-535DOI:10.5829/idosi.mejrs.2018.527.535](#)
- Anderson, C.A, Berkowitz, L., Donnerstein, E., Huesman, L.R., Johnson, J.D., Linz, D., Malamuth, N.M. and Wartella, E. (2003) The Influence of Media Violence on Youth. Sage Journals, PubMed at <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1529-1006.2003.pspi.1433.x> Accessed 12/06/2021
- [Adjeketa, B., \(2022\) Media usage, media violence, and the Nigerian Child. https://www.language-and-society.org/](#)
- Anderson, C. A, Carnagey, N.L and Eubanks J. (2003) Exposure to Violent Media; The Effect

- of Songs With Violent Lyrics on Aggressive Thoughts and Feelings. *American Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* Vol.84 (5) 960-971 Available at <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.84.5.960> Accessed 28/06/2021
- Asamah, E.S, Nwammuo, A.N and Nkwan-Uwaoma, A.O (2017) *Theories and Model of Communication: Revised Ed.* Jos; Jos University Press.
- Burt, C. H and Simons, R. L (2013) *Self-Control, Thrill Seeking, and Crime Motivation Matters.* *Criminal Justice and Behaviour Journal* Vol. 40 (11): 1326-1348 at <https://doi:10.1177/0093854813485575>. Accessed 02/07/2021
- Bushman, B. J., & Cruz, C. (2020). The effects of violent media on aggression: A meta-analysis. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 55, 101468.
- Bandura, A. (2018). Toward a psychology of human agency: Pathways and reflections. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 13(2), 130-136.
- Bushman, B. J., & Huesmann, L. R. (2019). Twenty-five years of research on violence in digital games and aggression: Empirical evidence, perspectives, and a debate gone astray. *European Psychologist*, 24(2), 123-139. Hogrefe Publishing.
- Blahd, W. H (2019) *Violent Behaviour;* at <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca> Accessed 25/6/2021
- Boxer, P., & Sánchez, V. (2015). Exposure to violent media: The effects of songs with violent lyrics. In *Media and the well-being of children and adolescents* (pp. 111-129). Routledge.
- Bussell, H. E., & Sheehan, M. J. (2022). The relationship between intimate partner violence exposure and adolescent perpetration of physical dating violence: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, 23(1), 75-88.
- Chen, Y. S., Tyler, T. R., & Kohlberg, L. (2019). Violent lyrics, norms, and interpersonal violence: A social psychological perspective. *Journal of Communication*, 69(6), 642-666.
- Coyne, S. M., Nelson, D. A., & Gentile, D. A. (2019). The effects of prosocial media on prosocial behavior: An examination of the underlying mechanisms. *Media Psychology*, 22(2), 310-332. Taylor & Francis.
- Cherry, K., (2022) *How Social Learning Theory Works.* <https://www.verywellmind.com/>
- Coyne, S. M., Nelson, D. A., Graham-Kevan, N., Tew, E., Mengo, C., Olsen, J., & Lee, Y. (2021). Associations between violent media exposure and aggression across development: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 57, 101560.
- Dominick, J.R (2002) *The Dynamics of Mass Communication: Media in The Digital Age.* New York; McGraw-Hill.
- [ Duru, H. N (2020) "Film Theory and Aesthetic" In Okunna C.S (Ed.) *Communication and Media Studies; Multiple Perspectives.* Enugu; New Generation Books Ltd.

- Ferguson, C. J. (2015). Does media violence predict societal violence? It depends on what you look at and when. *Journal of Communication*, 65(1), E1-E22. Wiley-Blackwell.
- Gentile, D. A., Reimer, R. A., & Nathanson, A. I. (2016). Assessment of media violence effects. In *Media Violence and Children* (pp. 11-39). Praeger.
- Gerbner, G., Gross, L., Morgan, M., & Signorielli, N. (1994). Growing up with television: The cultivation perspective. In J. Bryant & D. Zillmann (Eds.), *Media effects: Advances in theory and research* (pp. 17-41). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Huesmann, L. R. (2018). A social-cognitive-ecological framework for understanding the impact of media violence on aggressive behavior. *European Psychologist*, 23(3), 223-233.
- Haruna, N., (2021) Youth Violence and Public Safety in Nigeria a Study of Sara-suka Gang in Bauchi Local Government Area. *Studies in Politics and Society* Volume 9, Number 1&2,  
<https://www.researchgate.net/publication>
- Harris, R.J and Sanborn, F.W (2014) *A Cognitive Psychology of Mass Communication*, 6th Ed. Routledge/Taylor and Francis Group. Accessed 04/07/2021
- Irwin-Rogers, K. and Pinkeny, C. (2017) Social Media as a Catalyst and Trigger for Youth Violence. PDF at <https://www.catch-22.org.uk> Accessed 17/06/2021
- Jain, R., (2018) Effect of Psychological Wellbeing on Violent Behavior among Adolescents In Reference to Parenting Style. *European Journal of Social Sciences*. Volume 1, Issue 3 ISSN 2601-8640 (Online)  
<https://revistia.org/>
- Knobloch-Westerwick, S., & Meng, J. (2017). Violent song lyrics increase negative emotions and thoughts. *Communication Research*, 44(3), 367-391.
- Kenton, W., (2021) Durbin Watson Test: What it is in Statistics, With Examples; Corporatefinanceinvestopedia.com
- Kwon, K. (2021). Inquisitiveness, Zeal, and Self-Efficacy among Adolescents: An Empirical Study. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 50(3), 441-453.
- Kaliyadan, F., & Kulkarni, V., (2019) Types of Variables, Descriptive Statistics, and Sample Size. *Indian Dermatol Online J.* 10(1): 82-86. doi: [10.4103/idoj.IDOJ.46818](https://doi.org/10.4103/idoj.IDOJ.46818)
- Låftman, S. B., Modin, B., & Östberg, V. (2019). Exposure to violence in late adolescence: Violence perpetration and violent victimisation trajectories from age 18 to 25 in a Swedish cohort. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 34(9), 1857-1881.
- Lee, E., Kim, J. H., & Lee, J. (2017). The cultivation effect of watching TV news on adolescents' fear of crime: A longitudinal study. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 61(1), 77-94.



- Lynskey, D (2011) A History of R&B and Hip-Hop – Tupac and Biggie die as a Result of East/West Coast Beef. The Guardian News Media; at <https://www.theguardian.com/music/2011/jun13/tupac-biggie-deaths> Accessed 17/06/2021
- Lockwood, A. H., (2020) Violence, Conflict, and Societal Disruption. MIT Press <https://covid-19.mitpress.mit.edu>
- Lindell, A. K., Olofsson, J. K., & Jonsson, L. S. (2020). The impact of sexualized media content on sexually aggressive behavior among adolescents: A meta-analytic review. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 50, 101350.
- Laursen, B., & Collins, W. A. (2021). Social and emotional development in adolescence. *Annual Review of Developmental Psychology*, 3(1), 73-100.
- Matei, S.A. (2012). "Communication Theory and Mass Communication Research from Left to Right" In Asemah, E. S et al *Theories and Model of Communication: Revised Ed.* Jos; Jos University Press.
- Morah, D. N. and Okunna, C.S (2020). *Theories of Communication in Okunna C.S (Ed.) Communication and Media Studies; Multiple Perspectives.* Enugu; New Generation Books Ltd.
- Nabi, R. L., Riddle, K., & Drumhiller, K. (2018). Parental mediation of media effects. In *Media exposure and well-being in adolescence* (pp. 129-144). Springer.
- Pinkney, C., And [Robinson-Edwards, S.](#), (2018) Gangs, music and the mediatization of crime: Expressions, violations and validations, [Safer Communities](#) 17(2) DOI:[10.1108/SC-01-2017-0004](https://doi.org/10.1108/SC-01-2017-0004)
- Ponnan, R., Rycker, A., Fong, Y. L and Syed, M.A (2018) Shared Causal Theories about Film Violence and Violent Behaviour: Finding from Malaysian Indians. *The Journal of the South East Asia Research Centre for Communication and Humanities* Vol.10 No.1 ,2018, pp 25-52 at <https://www.researchgate.net> Accessed 24/06/2021
- Paik, H and Comstock, G (1994) The Effects of Television Violence on Antisocial Behaviour; A Meta-Analysis. *Communication Research*, 21 (4). 516-546 At <https://doi.org/10.1177/009365094021004004> or <https://psycnet.apa.org> Accessed 19/06/2021
- Park, S., Na, E. Y., & Kim, J. H. (2019). Seeing is believing: The cultivation effect of news coverage of terrorism on fear of terrorism among South Korean adolescents. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 31(4), 752-768.
- Potter, W. J., & Schafer, E. F. (2018). Listening to violent lyrics: Testing the catharsis hypothesis. *Journal of Media Psychology*, 30(1), 1-10.
- Prot, S., Anderson, C. A., Gentile, D. A., Brown, S. C., & Swing, E. L. (2021). Effects of playing violent video games on Chinese adolescents' aggression: A two-year longitudinal study. *Aggressive Behavior*, 47(3), 305-318
- Raziel, N. T. (2012) Bandura's Social Learning Theory and Social



- Cognitive Learning Theory; At  
researchgate.net/publication/267750204\_Bandura's\_Social\_Learning\_Theory\_Social\_Cognitive\_Learning\_Theory. Accessed 24/06/2021
- Rumsey, D.J., (2021) How to Interpret Standard Deviation in a Statistical Data Set; From the Book- Statistics for Dummies @dummies.com/articles/academics
- Raji, S. O., Owumi, B., & Aliyu, T. K. (2014) Media violence and its effects on children's health and aggressive behaviour in Osun state, Nigeria; International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention, ISSN (Online): 2319 - 7722, ISSN; www.ijhssi.org || Volume 3|| Issue 6 || June. 2014 || PP.59-73
- Schweig, S., (2014) Healthy Communities May Make Safe Communities: Public Health Approaches to Violence Prevention. NIJ Journal / Issue No. 273; National Institute of Justice | www.NIJ.gov
- Skoric, M. M., Cho, H., & Wang, L. (2019). Video game use and aggression among adolescents: A moderated mediation model. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 92, 177-187.
- Stangor, C., Tarry, H., Jhangiani R (2014) Principles of Social Psychology; Open Library PressBooks; at <https://opentextbc.ca> Accessed 22/06/2021
- Surette, R. (2013) Cause or Catalyst; The Interaction of Real World and Media Crime Model; *Am J crime Just* 38, 392 - 409 at <https://doi.org/10.1007/512103012-9177z> Accessed 03/07/2021
- Taylor, H. S. (2018) "Catalysis" Encyclopedia Britannica; at <https://www.britannica.com/science/catalysis>. Accessed 25/06/2021
- Taylor, S., (2023) *Autocorrelation*; corporatefinanceinstitute.com
- Umukoro, E.S., Irori, O. Q., Ivwithren, H.E. and Ugbome, M. (2018) "Mass Media and Agricultural Development: Perception of Youth in Ugheli South Local Government Area of Delta State" In *Journal of Social and Management Sciences* Vol. 13, No 2, 2018 pp 61-73 Faculty of the Social Sciences, Delta State University, Abraka.
- Van den Bulck, J. (2020). Media and aggression in adolescence. In *The Oxford Handbook of Developmental and Life-Course Criminology* (pp. 231-242). Oxford University Press.
- Wang, L., Skoric, M. M., & Shen, C. (2021). Exposure to in-game violence and aggression among Chinese adolescents: The moderating role of violent norms. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 122, 106853.
- World Health Organization (2002) Report; at [https://int/violence\\_injury\\_prevention](https://int/violence_injury_prevention); Accessed 04/07/2021
- Weitzer, R. (2020). Does media exposure increase police support? Evidence from a national survey of young adults. *Policing: An International Journal*, 43(2), 426-444.
- Mulder, J., & Machell, J. (2017). The effects of violent song lyrics

on aggressive thoughts and feelings. *Psychology of Music*, 45(3), 401-413.

Zillmann, D., & Weaver, J. B. (2019). Escapist entertainment and glamorization of crime. In *Media Entertainment* (pp. 191-209). Routledge.