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LETTER TO THE EDITORS

Early adolescent life-related factors and predictors of violent behavior

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We thank the authors and editor of the *Brazilian Journal of Psychiatry* for publishing "Violent behavior, perceived safety, and assault experiences among adolescents: results from the Brazilian National Adolescent School-based Health Survey," which we read with great interest.[1] In this excellent cross-sectional study, Arcadepani et al. spent more than 2 years investigating important and valuable findings. In their adjusted regression model, male sex (adjusted odds ratio [aOR] 1.75; 95%CI 1.65-1.86), being assaulted by a family member (aOR 1.74; 95%CI 1.59-1.90), and being assaulted in the past year (aOR 1.70; 95%CI 1.57-1.85) all increased the odds of violent behavior by adolescents, while feeling safe on the way to school (aOR 0.82; 95%CI 0.74-0.92) and at school (aOR 0.82; 95%CI 0.73-0.92) reduced the chance of violent behavior.

These findings expand the body of literature on violent behavior among adolescents, demonstrating a correlation between school, domestic, family, or community violence and such behavior, which should provide an important reference to inform public health policies in various countries around the world. We would like to share some thoughts on this article.

First, presenting more objective and concrete evidence of the reliability and validity of the research questionnaire would help the conduct of further research projects seeking to use this or similar instruments.

Second, did the study population exclude children with special needs, such as children or adolescents with medical conditions or in special education?[2]

Third, the key conclusion of the article rightly states that violent behavior is associated with potential consequences,[1,2] but unfortunately the article does not define any category information related to violence. Is there any data on the difference between specific violent behaviors, such as acts of violence, violent language, drug use, etc.? Providing this information would help readers interpret these findings.

Fourth, in Table 2 ("Is it safe on the way to school?"), responses to the main complaints of students on the way to school and information on the specific transportation methods they used to reach school (walking, school buses, being driven or chaperoned by parents, etc.) would provide an important frame of reference; unfortunately, this was not included in the article. Considering descriptions provide in previous research on the theme,[3,4] we politely ask the authors: what does "feeling safe on the way to school" mean?

In conclusion, we thank the authors for conducting this excellent cross-sectional study, which fills a gap in the current literature. However, we believe their findings would be more credible if the above issues were explored further.

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Disclosure

The authors report no conflicts of interest.

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M-JC: Conceptualization, Data curation, Formal analysis, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing.
S-SL: Supervision.
S-HL: Supervision.
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