URBAN VIOLENCE IN ZARQA

October 24, 2024

Authors
Stefanie Rometsch, Mindset
Sumantra Ghosh, Mindset
Sophie Louwersheimer, DIGNITY
Ane Kirstine Viller Hansen, DIGNITY

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

This report presents the results of the study on urban violence in Zarqa conducted by Mindset on behalf of and in collaboration with The Danish Institute Against Torture DIGNITY and NAYA Community Network.

Zarqa Governorate, located in northeastern Jordan, is one of the country's most densely populated regions and faces various social and economic challenges. The region struggles with high poverty levels, unemployment, and limited public services, creating a challenging environment for many of its residents. According to the World Population Review, the population of Zarqa city, the governorate's capital, has tripled between 2000 and 2024.[1] The influx of refugees, mainly from Syria, has placed immense pressure on housing, healthcare, and educational services, exacerbating social issues.

Despite being one of Jordan's largest and most densely populated cities, little is known about the extent of urban violence in Zarqa. Much of the available research tends to focus on broader national trends, with little emphasis on the local dynamics. This lack of focused research creates a knowledge gap, hindering efforts to design targeted interventions to address the unique challenges faced by the city.

This study aims to provide in-depth knowledge of violence trends, root causes, and risk factors, as well as both victims and perpetrators. It has sought to understand better the challenges related to violence, to create interventions to reduce it, and promote a peaceful, violence-free community.

Study Design and Methodology

The study relied on a mixed method approach involving a literature review and a qualitative and quantitative component. The qualitative data was collected using key informant interviews and focus group discussions while the quantitative data was collected using a survey tool, with data collection in June/July 2024. The survey was pre-tested and piloted, obtaining 36 responses. The population of interest comprises Zarqa residents aged 18 and above. Finally, 526 analyzable responses were received for the quantitative component, while 6 focus group discussions (FGDs) and 5 key informant interviews (KIIs) were done for the qualitative component. Quantitative data was analyzed through descriptive and inferential statistics using MS Excel, SPSS and STATA. Qualitative data was analyzed by means of MAXQDA using thematic coding.

Key Findings

Experience of Violence

Based on survey results, 10% of males and 6% of females experienced violence in the past six months, primarily in the form of threats, intimidation, and emotional abuse. Figures in sum point at different patterns of violence, with women more frequently being victims of family violence while men are more frequently exposed to forms of community violence. Females reported their spouse to be the most common perpetrator of violence (41%), followed by other family members (35%), showing the prevalence of intra-family violence with a total of 76% of responses. In contrast, males reported their neighbors to be the most common perpetrators (30%), followed by strangers (22%) and other family members (22%), accounting for 74% of responses. Psychological consequences were the most common, with 48% of males and 36% of females reporting mental health issues resulting from the violence. Assistance was often sought from family, though 36% received no help. About 11% of respondents noted a family member had also experienced violence, with sons and fathers being the most affected. The majority reported no childhood exposure to violence.

Safety

The survey reveals that over 95% of respondents feel safe in their homes, with only 1% feeling unsafe; however, feelings of safety decline significantly when asked about the community, where 63% of males and 70% of females report feeling completely safe. Notably, 47% of those feeling unsafe or moderately safe in their communities have considered relocating. Many respondents feel most unsafe on Thursdays and Fridays, likely due to increased outdoor activity, and 38% express discomfort during evening hours. Interviewees and FGD participants highlighted several hotspots of violence, usually very crowded and low-income areas. Women expressed fear about navigating these areas, especially at night, and shared concerns for their children's safety.

Types of Violence:

The survey results indicate that youth violence is the most prevalent type of community violence in the community, with 64% of respondents identifying it, followed by resource-based violence (17%) and gang-related violence (12%). Other forms, such as ethnic and political violence, received minimal mentions. Notably, qualitative findings from FGD and interviews showed limited exploration of youth violence, as participants were not directly asked about it, resulting in a lack of detailed understanding of its manifestations. Additionally, in household settings, physical violence was perceived as the most common form (54%), followed by verbal violence (23%), child abuse (11%), and psychological violence (10%), with sexual violence reported by less than 1%. Qualitative data reveal acknowledgment of sexual violence in the community, with participants noting instances of fathers verbally or sexually violating their daughters and highlighting its commonality. There is a perception that sexual abuse remains hidden due to societal and religious taboos. Additionally, physical violence, including gender-based violence, is prevalent, often exacerbated by men's stress

Perpetrators and Victims of Violence

Children are identified as the primary victims of violence in the community, followed by women. The survey indicated that parents are the most common perpetrators of physical violence, followed by siblings, peers, and teachers. Qualitative findings emphasize children's vulnerability, describing them as *"the weakest link"* without protection from organizations, leading to a culture where parents can use violence without fear of accountability.

Cause and Risk Factors

When survey respondents were asked about the causes of problems and conflicts in the community, approximately one-third identified poverty and unemployment as significant factors, indicating a strong consensus on their relevance. Cultural and traditional norms were mentioned by around 14% of respondents, while the community-level drug trade was cited by about 16%. In family contexts, poverty emerged as the leading cause of conflicts, reported by 37%, with marital issues following at 22%. Cultural norms were mentioned by 12%, while gender norms and specific social norms like the acceptance of violence were noted by only 1% and 5%, respectively. However, qualitative data highlighted these factors as essential themes, pointing at the relevance of patriarchal structures.

Reporting Violence and Help-Seeking Behavior

In Zarqa, only 24% of men and 13% of women indicated that they reported violence they witnessed, indicating significant under-reporting. Among those who did report, 79% contacted the police, while others reached out to family or miscellaneous parties, but none reported to local NGOs, friends, health facilities, or religious leaders. In 66% of reported cases, action was taken, although 28% of respondents noted no action was taken, and 7% were unsure. Additionally, a majority did not seek help after experiencing violence, with 53% of women and 63% of men opting not to seek assistance, reflecting a notable gender gap.

Vigilante Behavior

About 29% of females and 22% of males in Zarqa believe it's justified for individuals to take justice into their own hands. Among those who support vigilante justice, 34% of males and 49% of females cite assault as a justifiable circumstance where they believe such actions are warranted.

Qualitative data revealed that perceptions of inefficacy in law enforcement along with a lack of trust in state institutions are common. Informants highlighted among other issues such as corruption, unresponsiveness, and bureaucratic inefficiencies. This erosion of trust, coupled with frustration over complex legal procedures may contribute to individuals seeing extrajudicial actions in certain cases justified.

Preventative Factors

Key themes for addressing community violence include tackling economic challenges like unemployment, enhancing law enforcement through stricter laws, and improving family upbringing through moral education and positive role models. Participants highlighted the weak enforcement of laws as a critical issue, noting the lack of consequences for violent behavior. Corruption within law enforcement was also identified as a barrier to accountability. Additionally, the importance of empowering women through supportive family dynamics was emphasized. Respondents also called for increased awareness campaigns in underserved areas like Zarqa, indicating a need for more educational initiatives to address violence effectively.

Recommendations

To reduce violence in the community, survey respondents frequently recommended increasing awareness (33%) and addressing unemployment and poverty (31%). Key informants and focus group participants additionally emphasized the need for legal education, understanding different forms of violence, and encouraging reporting. Involving children and community leaders and sharing success stories were seen as crucial strategies. Media coverage of violence and the role of civil society organizations in awareness-raising were also highlighted. Additionally, sustainable youth engagement programs, such as safe spaces for educational activities, were recommended to provide positive outlets and prevent negative behaviors.

INTRODUCTION

I. INTRODUCTION

I.I Background

In Jordan, violence emerges as a critical issue impacting development, mirroring global understandings that it significantly hinders macroeconomic growth and societal empowerment. The rapid urbanization and the resultant urban sprawl have exacerbated security and public health challenges. Violence in these urban settings not only undermines economic investments but also erodes social cohesion, causing trauma, injuries, and loss of life and property.[2]

Zarqa Governorate, located in northeastern Jordan, is one of the country's most densely populated regions and faces various social and economic challenges. The region struggles with high poverty levels, unemployment, and limited public services, creating a challenging environment for many of its residents. According to the World Population Review, the population of Zarqa city, the governorate's capital, has tripled between 2000 and 2024.[3]   The influx of refugees, mainly from Syria, has placed immense pressure on housing, healthcare, and educational services, exacerbating social issues.

Despite being one of Jordan's largest and most densely populated cities, not much is known about the full extent of violence in Zarqa. Much of the available research tends to focus on broader national trends, with little emphasis on the local dynamics of violence within Zarqa itself. This lack of focused research creates a knowledge gap, hindering efforts to design targeted interventions to address the unique challenges faced by the city. Addressing this gap, this report presents the findings of the in-depth study on urban violence in Zarqa, conducted by Mindset on behalf of and in collaboration with DIGNITY – the Danish Institute Against Torture – and support from NAYA for Training and Community Development.

DIGNITY is a human rights organization based in Denmark that focuses on the prevention of torture and the rehabilitation of torture survivors. Operating at the intersection of health, human rights, and justice, DIGNITY has become a leading organization in the fight against torture worldwide. DIGNITY works in more than 20 countries across Africa, the Middle East, Asia, and Latin America. Its partnerships with local and international organizations enable it to implement programs that are tailored to the specific needs and challenges of different regions.

NAYA for Training and Community Development is a Jordan-based non-governmental organization focused on empowering marginalized communities, particularly women and youth. Established to foster sustainable development and enhance local capacities, NAYA implements various programs in education, livelihood skills training, and community engagement.

I.2 Study Objective

This study has aimed to provide in-depth knowledge by examining violence trends and identifying the root causes that contribute to these issues. By focusing on the risk factors associated with individuals becoming victims or perpetrators of violence, the study aspires to inform effective violence prevention programs tailored to Zarqa's unique challenges. Ultimately, the goal is to foster a safer and more resilient environment for the residents, providing local authorities and organizations with the insights needed for targeted interventions.

STUDY DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

2. STUDY DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

A mixed-method approach was used to comprehensively understand the phenomenon of violence in Zarqa. The study included the following:

1. Desk study: A desk study was conducted reviewing and synthesizing available reports, statistics, and other secondary sources relevant to violence in Jordan and Zarqa. The desk study was used as a tool to help establish foundational knowledge, reveal gaps, and provide a basis for comparison.

1. Household survey: Quantitative data was collected through a survey with 526 adult residents of Zarqa.

1. Key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs): Qualitative data was collected through six gender-separated FGDs and five key informants.

The following details the primary data collection methods.

2.1. Quantitative Component

Questionnaire Design and Scripting

The study relied on a survey tool provided by DIGNITY. The technical team reviewed the tool's relevance and ability to capture data accurately and reliably. The survey tool is presented in Annex 1. Due to the topic's sensitivity and allowing for a Ministry of Interior permit, an open-ended format was selected for many questions. In detail, predefined response options were removed when applying for the permit but re-inserted for data collection, supporting enumerators to categorize responses. Mindset used Survey CTO to digitize the questionnaire. The scripts underwent multiple testing on different levels. Most importantly, a final scripting check involved filling in interviews and exporting the data into Excel and SPSS to review the data structure. Using our SPSS syntax script, analyses were run to identify any illogical or missing answers.

Enumerator Training

Mindset trained a team of eight enumerators to collect data. The team was introduced to the research project and its objectives and thoroughly trained on ethical standards in research, conceptual underpinnings and terminology related to the research topic, methodology, how to approach interviewees, data quality control, each survey question, and tablet usage. The training was completed on June 30, 2024, and was attended by key stakeholders from DIGNITY.

Sampling Strategy and Data Collection

The targeted study sample included residents from Zarqa, including all nationalities, aged 18 and above. A simple random sampling technique, a household survey, and face-to-face interviews were employed to collect quantitative data. The sample for this study was based on the frame provided by the General Population and Housing Census 2015. This frame contains data for each primary sampling unit called a cluster (block), in addition to data on the number of residents, the number of buildings and housing, and the number of families within each enumeration area. Mindset used the population in each of Zarqa's three districts to withdraw the residential blocks and select the primary sampling units. The random sample selection followed a four-step process: 1) Random cluster selection, 2) Random selection of residential buildings, 3) Random selection of the apartment, and 3) Random selection of the respondent.

The target was to conduct 500 interviews with a random individual within the household. Mindset made 1,187 attempts to reach the completed 500 interviews within 13 working days, noting that 88 households refused to participate after enumerators were let in.

Data Processing and Quality Control

Mindset follows established rigorous processes to ensure the integrity and quality of data. Data quality was monitored daily. Mindset safeguards data against quality risks by ensuring the integrity of fieldwork, including call-backs and listening to 20% of the sample collected to double-check the quality of the data and ensure enumerators are asking questions correctly, GPS, and duration monitoring. The data quality and processing team closely checked data for, among other things, completeness and accuracy.

Accounting for the difficulties inherent in research on sensitive topics such as violence (see also limitation section), enumerators were instructed to ensure they spoke with randomly selected respondents privately. This was done to avoid potential biases that could arise from the presence of others, which might influence or suppress honest responses. During the analysis phase, we carefully checked the data for plausibility of responses. Enumerators were re-contacted to inquire about interview conditions, confirming that challenges emerged regarding speaking with respondents alone.

2.2. Qualitative Component

For the qualitative data collection, KIIs and FGDs were conducted. Data was collected by an experienced moderator who underwent a dedicated training session organized by DIGNITY and Mindset. The semi-structured format of the interviews enabled the moderator to probe deeper into specific topics or themes as they arose, allowing for a more nuanced understanding of participants' viewpoints and producing rich, contextual data. The FGD and KII guides are provided in Annexes 2 and 3.

In total, six FGDs and five KIIs were conducted between June and July 2024. FGDs included three female and three male groups with youth respondents from Zarqa aged 18-35. For KIIs, purposive sampling ensured that participants were chosen who could provide rich, relevant, and diverse perspectives relevant to the study's objective. Attention was given to selecting stakeholders from different sectors and with diverse backgrounds to ensure inclusiveness. Interviews were conducted with three female and two male governmental and community leaders. Mindset collaborated with NAYA for the qualitative component to support participant selection and logistics. NAYA assisted with securing the venues, recruiting participants, and compensating them.

2.3. Data Analysis and Reporting

Concerning the quantitative component, Microsoft Excel was used for data storage, cleaning, restructuring, descriptive analysis, and visualization. STATA was used for inferential statistics. Acknowledging the gender-specificity of the topic, gender differences were analyzed through respective disaggregation for all survey questions. Data analysis was conducted closely in coordination with DIGNITY, cross-checking results and consulting on optimal analysis options. Attention was paid to upholding research rigor and accurate data representation. The granular analysis often entailed the disaggregation of the miscellaneous category given as a response option, which accounted for some questions for over 20% of responses.

Inferential statistics focused on testing the association between social capital and violence exposure. Social capital was measured using the Adapted Social Capital Assessment Tool (SASCAT), which was validated using psychometric techniques and cognitive validation.[4] Following previous research, and as outlined later, the study focused on two dimensions – cognitive and structural social capital. Individual scores were calculated on the degree to arrive at a binary classification (low versus high). The median of 1.00 was used as the cut-off value for structural social capital, and 2.00 was used for the cognitive structural value. A breakdown of the structural and cognitive social capital questions used to calculate the SASCAT scores can be found in the Annex. Fisher's exact tests were run to determine group differences and calculate odds ratios (OR).

The qualitative data collected was analyzed using MaxQDA and inductive thematic coding to identify and interpret patterns and themes within the data. This approach allowed for the emergence of insights directly from the participants' responses rather than imposing pre-existing categories or frameworks on the data. Finally, the researchers interpreted the findings about the research objectives and questions. This included considering the broader context of the study and reflecting on how the themes contributed to the understanding of the experiences and perspectives shared by participants.

The triangulation of quantitative data with qualitative insights from interviews and FGDs, as well as desk study results, aimed at creating a comprehensive dataset and enhancing the study's rigor and depth. The triangulation and reporting strategy focused on validating and contextualizing findings to provide a holistic and nuanced picture. While the quantitative data provided a broad overview of the prevalence and characteristics of violence, qualitative data enriched the interpretation of these findings through multi-faceted narratives. Attention was paid to revealing alignment as well as conflicting findings, pointing at potential avenues for further research.

2.4. Validation Workshop

Following a participatory approach, DIGNITY and NAYA organized a validation workshop on the 28th of September 2024 with 25 stakeholders from the Zarqa governorate to discuss the study's preliminary findings. The main objective was to jointly review and evaluate the findings and providing stakeholders the opportunity to share their perspectives being included in the study.

2.5. Ethical Considerations

The study on violence in Zarqa was granted ethical approval for Research Involving Human Subjects by The institutional Review Board of Princess Sumaya University for Technology in July 2024 (Annex 5).

The study was conducted according to Mindset's ethical standards in research, evaluation, data collection, and analysis. When designing and conducting the study through face-to-face data collection, we carefully considered all relevant ethical guidelines to ensure participants' and researchers' safety, DIGNITY, and well-being. These measures included, among others, the following: informed consent and clear information about the purpose of the study; confidentiality, anonymity, and ethical use of data; sensitivity to power dynamics and minimizing distress; a participatory approach and community feedback; and a grievance mechanism for participants. Measures are described in more detail in Annex 4.

2.6. Limitations and Challenges

When interpreting study results, the general challenges in obtaining accurate data on the prevalence of violence need to be considered. Violence is often significantly underreported in surveys due to a variety of social, cultural, and psychological factors. Among others, social stigma and shame, especially related to domestic or sexual violence, can prevent victims from reporting their experiences. Cultural and societal norms may also discourage individuals from admitting experiences of violence. Concerning this study, it must also be noted that the data collection mode may have increased the risk of non-reporting as family members were frequently present when enumerators conducted the interview. It is further worth mentioning that the definition and mental framing of violence play crucial roles in shaping how individuals respond to survey questions, which can skew data. If certain acts may be normalized or viewed as acceptable forms of discipline, individuals will not classify them as *"violence"* and fail to report them.

In this study, quantitative and qualitative data often reflect perceptions of violence. These perceptions may be influenced by various factors, such as media coverage or personal experiences, and do not necessarily reflect objective reality. However, they offer valuable insights into community sentiment and concerns. Moreover, perceptions of violence significantly shape community dynamics by influencing behavior. For instance, a widespread belief in the high prevalence of gang violence can heighten fear, leading to social withdrawal and diminished community engagement.

As to analytical challenges, due to the low number of respondents reporting violence, statistical analysis results should be interpreted cautiously.

Findings

3. Findings

3.1. Desk Study Main Findings

The following summarizes available evidence as to different forms of violence in Jordan and, as available, for Zarqa.

Gender-based Spousal Violence

Gender-based spousal violence refers to forms of violence or abuse that occur between marital partners, where the perpetrator's actions are motivated by the victim's gender. Spousal violence can take many forms, such as physical, emotional, psychological, and sexual abuse. It often stems from power imbalances and societal norms regarding gender roles.

According to the Jordan Population and Family Health Survey (2017-2018), gender-based violence has a significant impact on Jordan's social dynamic, revealing that 29.5% of married women between the ages of 15-49 have experienced physical, sexual, or emotional violence from their partner.[5] In the context of Zarqa, the figure rises to 36%, indicating a critical issue that needs to be addressed. According to a 2019 government survey, 69% of men and 46% of women believe wife beating is justifiable under certain circumstances. Only 20% of ever-married women aged 15-49 who have ever experienced any type of physical or sexual violence committed by their husband have sought help. Notably, 67% have neither sought help nor told anyone about the violence.[6]

Honor Killings

Honor killings represent a troubling manifestation of gender-based violence (GBV), with a 94% increase reported in 2022. In 2021, 35 women and children were killed by relatives, primarily by close family members. Honor killings stem from deep-rooted cultural beliefs and attitudes, especially in tribal communities.[7] Addressing this issue is quite hard, considering the need to redefine cultural/social norms but also due to underreporting and misclassification (as many cases are recorded as suicides or accidents). Government and local law enforcement need to play a more proactive and sterner role in protecting those who are the most vulnerable.

Gender-based Sexual Violence

Gender-based sexual violence is underreported, as evidenced by research suggesting that 69% of women experience harassment compared to reports of only 5%. However, 14% of all felonies in 2018 constituted sexual abuse cases.[8] Regardless of these reports, sexual violence in Jordan is still a deeply stigmatized and taboo topic that prevents victims from seeking justice. Addressing these issues requires having supportive environments that promote healthy discussions and reporting.

Violence against Children

Children, comprising over 40% of Jordan's population, face high rates of violence. As per a UNICEF report in 2020, 75% of children aged 8-17 reported experiencing physical violence, with parents, siblings, peers, and teachers being the primary perpetrators. Over 40% of children aged 8-17 reported experiencing some form of physical or psychological while 27% reported facing sexual violence in a familial or educational setting. The study found that caregivers thought their infliction of violence was justifiable under certain circumstances. According to a 2017 UNICEF study in Jordan, children in Jordan face the risk of violence everywhere, including safe spaces such as their homes and schools. The presence of cultural norms where violence is justified as a disciplinary tool aggravates the issue even further.[9]

Violent Crime and Homicide

The Jordanian government has actively addressed violence and threats of extremism, particularly from groups like ISIS, maintaining stability through strategic security measures and social programs to prevent radicalization.[10] Homicide rates have fluctuated over recent years, showing a significant decline of 31% in 2018, but a 27% increase in 2019 brought the rate to 1.14 per 100,000. This was followed by a decrease in 2020 and a slight increase in 2021, highlighting the variability in intentional homicide rates in Jordan during this five-year period.[11]

3.2. Household Survey: Respondent Characteristics

The sample obtained from the household survey comprises 526 respondents. The following reports on the main demographic characteristics.

Gender

The gender composition is balanced, with 51% of the sample representing females and 49% representing males. This mirrors Department of Statistics figures for Zarqa (2023), with 53% male and 47% female residents.[12]
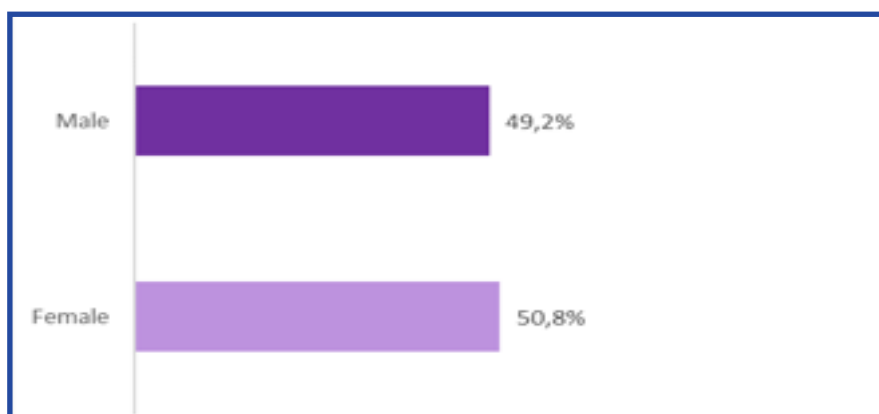
Figure 1:Respondent Distribution by Gender

Age and Marital Status

The mean and median ages were 43.5 and 41, respectively. The age range is 18 to 87 years. Figure 2 details the distribution. About 66% of females and 67% of males were married, without any notable gender differences. The share of male respondents indicating being single (29%) is higher than that of female respondents (15%), while the latter indicated being widowed relatively more frequently. The share of divorced respondents is quite low among males (3%) and females (2%).
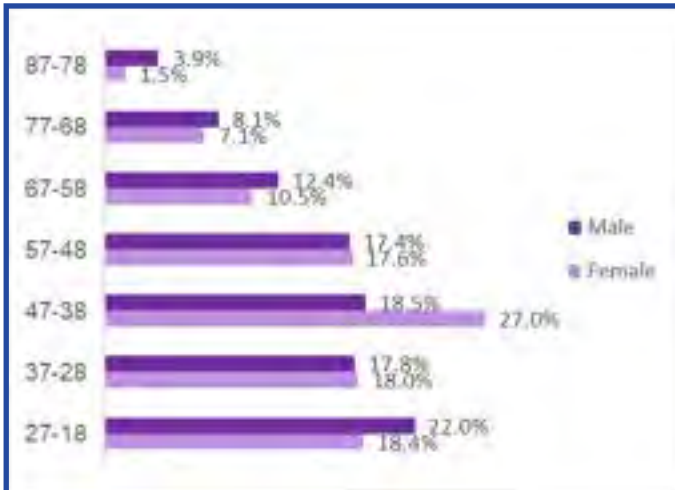
Figure 2: Respondent Distribution by Age
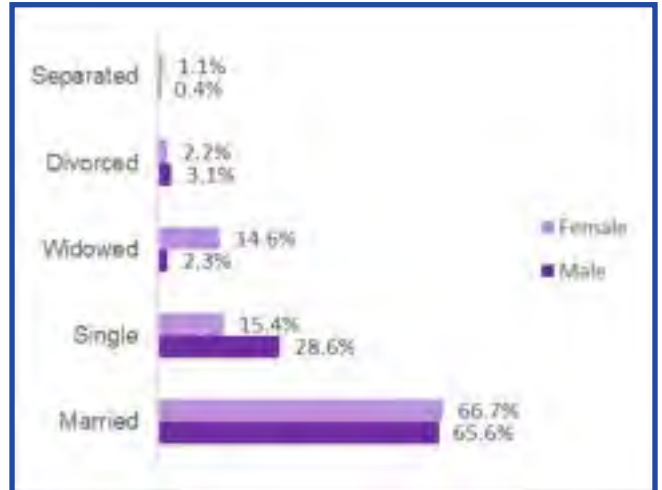
Figure 3: Respondent Distribution by Marital Status

Nationality

From the given sample, 91% are Jordanians, 5% are Syrians, and the remaining are either Egyptian or of other nationalities (see Figure 4 below).

Number of Family Members in a Household

The average number of household members is 4,6. About half of the respondents (51%) indicated to live with 4 to 6 family members, and 31% with 1 to 3 people. Only about 17% live with more than 6 persons (see Figure 5).
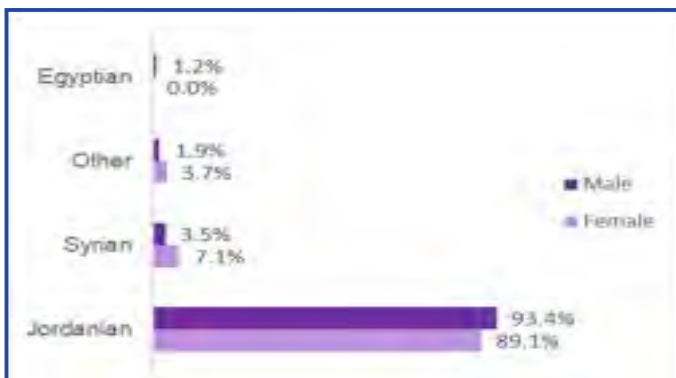
Figure 4: Respondent Distribution by Nationality
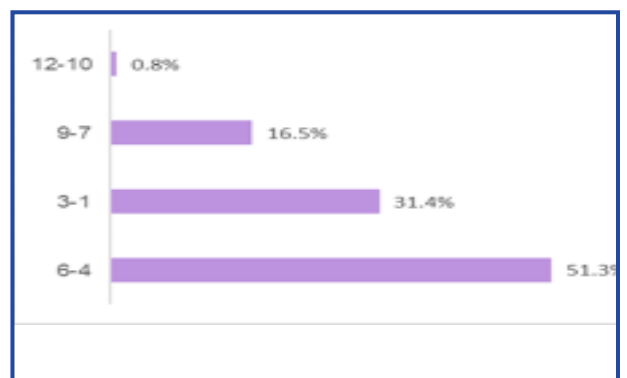
Figure 5: Number of members in a householdStatus

Years of Education

Years of education are detailed in Figure 6 below. On average, male and female respondents completed 11 years of education (median: 12). Only about 22% of respondents completed less than 9 years of schooling. Most respondents completed between 9 and 14 years, totaling 64%. Longer education is relatively infrequent, at 13%. The graph below shows the detailed distribution. Despite the same average education, some gender differences are apparent, with male respondents more likely to show education above 14 years.

Work Status

Approximately 84% of women are homemakers, compared to 0.4% of their male counterparts (see Figure 7). Consistently, the employment rate is considerably higher for male respondents, with 48% employed or self-employed, compared to 4% of women. Broadly aligned with these results, the Jordan Population and Family Health Survey (2017-18) reported that 90% of women aged 15-49 in Zarqa were never employed, compared to 40% of their male counterparts.
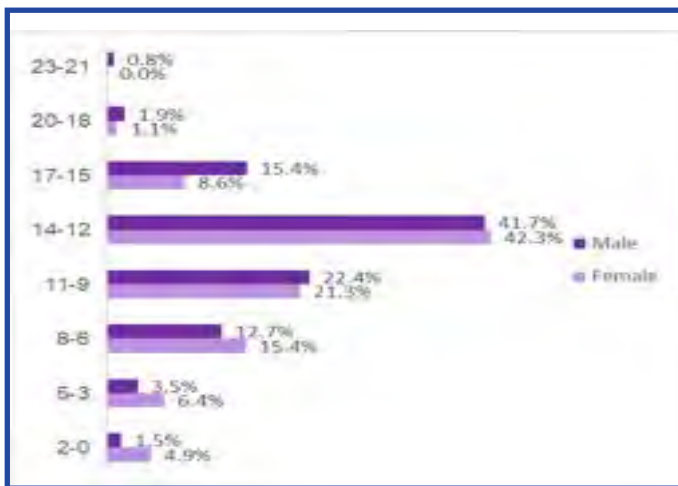
Figure 6:Respondent Distribution by Years of Education

Figure 7:Respondent Distribution by Work Status

3.3. Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

The following reports on the key findings of both the quantitative and qualitative components. It covers the perception of safety, social capital, exposure to violence, types of violence, victims and perpetrators of violence, causes and risk factors, reporting patterns, and preventative measures.

3.3.1. Safety

Most respondents feel safe, both in their house and the community, as shown in the graphs below. However, there are notable differences between home and community safety perceptions. Over 96% of respondents feel safe in their own homes, while about 4% feel moderately safe, and only less than 1% of the respondents feel unsafe (Figure 8). In comparison, only 66% feel safe in their community, 24% feel moderately safe, and 10% feel unsafe (Figure 9). Male respondents, with 63%, are less likely to feel safe in their community compared to their female counterparts (70%).
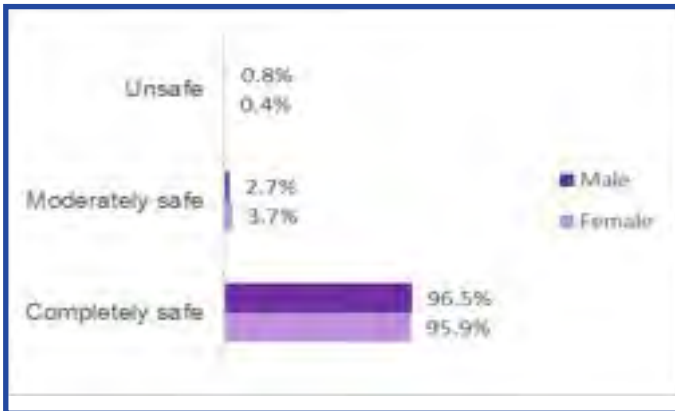
Figure 8: How safe do you feel in your own house?

Figure 9:How safe do you feel in your own community

The concrete area of residence might significantly impact feelings of safety.[13] As one female FGD participant explained, *"Al Zarqa is a big region, and there are different communities and areas where the environment is highly corrupted. For instance, in Al Ghuwairiya, we have drugs and dirty language, and you can see so many bad things in this specific geographic area of Al Zarqa. In other areas, things are less bad."*

The most popular hotspots of violence were described as areas with high population density, crowded conditions, and low income. Another female informant reported the related restrictions to movement: *"We cannot go out at night. I remember when I was attending a night course, and I used to finish around 9:00. To go back home, I had to rely on my friends because taxis are scary. Even the streets are dangerous. I tried to walk home, and some people followed me until I reached the street where I live. Our area has no safety, and you can't go out alone"* (FGD, female). Some participants highlighted the fear related to their children; for instance,
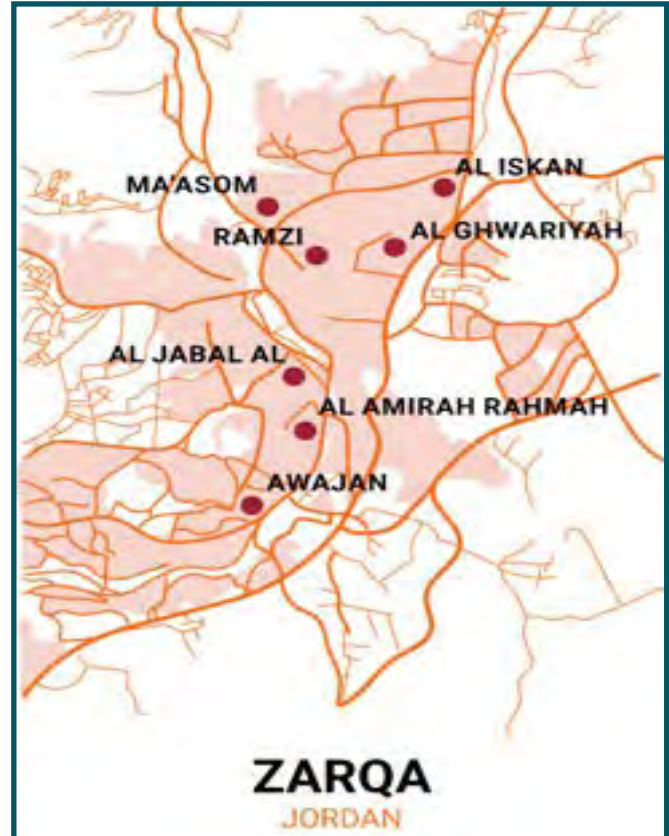
Figure 10. Hotspots of violence in Zarqa

one mother explained, *"My daughter is always scared when she leaves the house or when she leaves school. She is afraid of the young men in the street. Because the young men comment on her clothes or try to hit on her"* (FGD, female).

The survey also revealed that about half of respondents (47%) who felt unsafe/moderately safe in their communities have considered moving to a different community (see Figure 11 below).

Feelings of unsafety are most frequent on Thursdays and Fridays, as indicated by 18% and 22% of respondents, respectively (see Figure 12). This may be because Friday and Saturday are weekend in Jordan, meaning there are more people outdoors during this time, increasing the chances of violence-related occurrences. In addition, the feeling is most prevalent in evenings and nighttime, as indicated by in total 38% of all respondents.
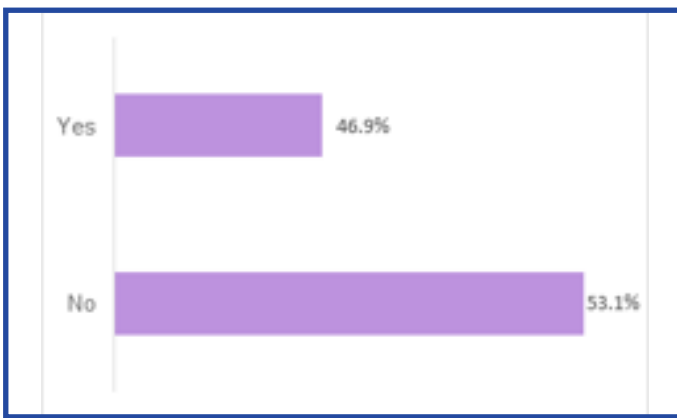
Figure 11: Have you considered moving to another community due to the insecurity or violence experienced in your community?
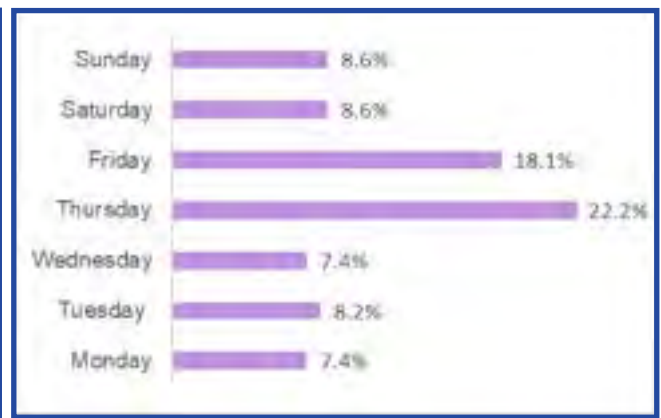
Figure 12: On what day(s) of the week do you feel most unsafe?

Figure 13: At what time(s) of the day do you feel most unsafe?

As detailed in the graph below, most people feel safe in all the locations asked about. Most people feel *"completely safe"* at their workplace, followed by their neighborhood street and university campus. However, less than 12% of respondents feel unsafe in all the locations specified above.
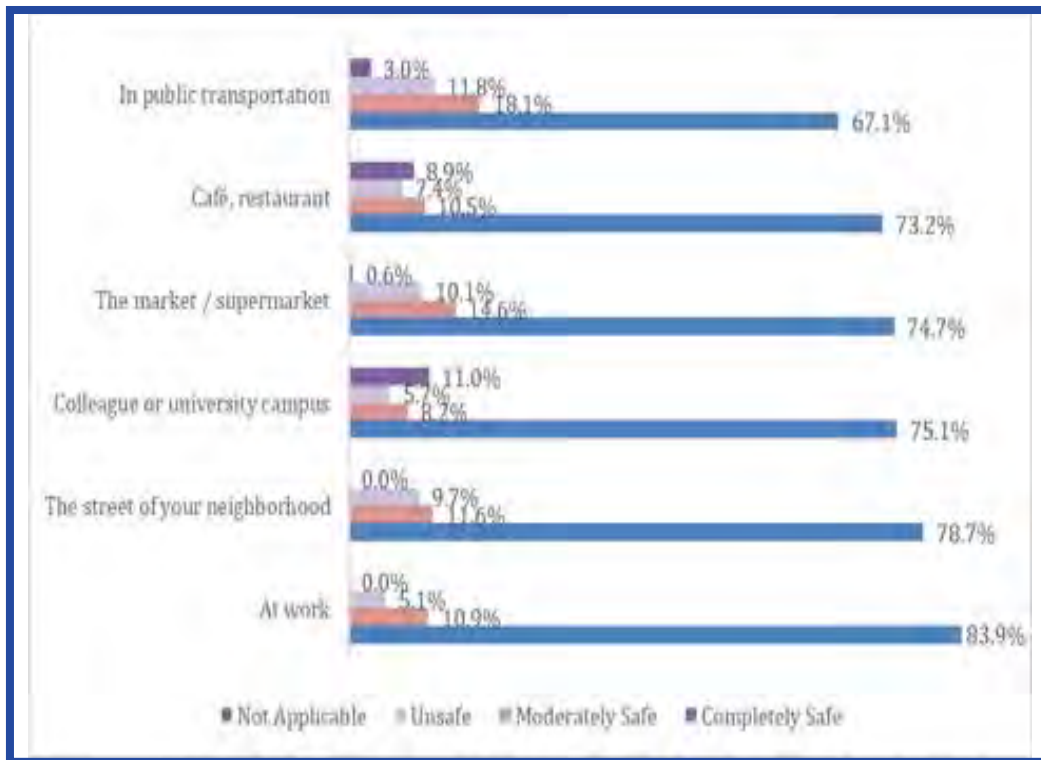
Figure 14: How safe do you feel at the following locations?

3.3.2. Community Trust and Social Capital

Social capital refers to the network of relationships that facilitate cooperation and social cohesion within a community or society. It encompasses trust, mutual understanding, and shared values that enable people to work together effectively. Structural social capital refers to the aspects of social networks, including the connections, relationships, and institutions that facilitate social interactions. Cognitive social capital, on the other hand, relates to the shared norms, values, attitudes, and trust that exist within a community. This study investigated social capital based on the questions of the Adapted Social Capital Assessment Tool (SASCAT), validated by psychometric techniques in addition to cognitive validation (De Silva et al., 2006). [14]

When the survey respondents were asked if they believe they are really a part of the Zarqa community, 88% said yes, while the other 12% said no (see Figure 15 below). In sum, relatively high trust levels with respect to local institutions were found. As shown in the figure below, when respondents were asked if they found their local community actors to be trustworthy, 91% indicated they trusted their local mosque/church, 73% trusted medical doctors, and 59% trusted community leaders and schools. On the other hand, less than half of respondents (47%) trusted international non-governmental organizations (INGOs).
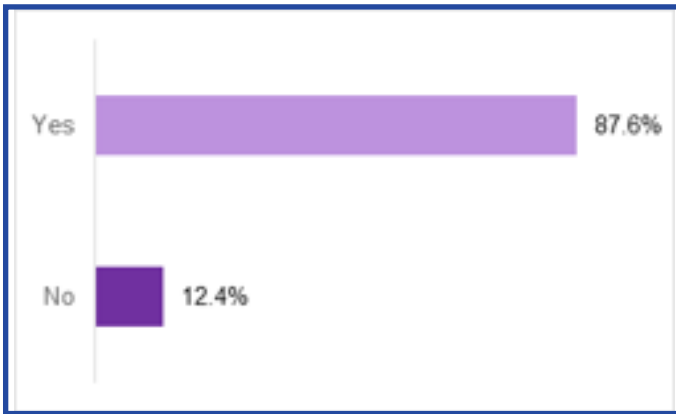
Figure 15: Do you feel as though you are really part of this community?
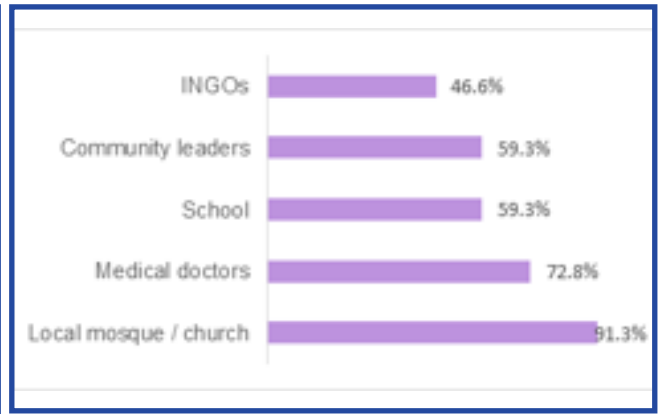
Figure 16: Do you find the following actors trustworthy?

Participation in groups and community engagement was found to be low (see Figure 17 below). When respondents were asked to choose if they were a part of any of the groups specified in the graph above, over 95% indicated no participation. Only 3% were part of a religious group/ community association. This graph captures Zarqa residents being on the lower spectrum of the social capital scale. However, it is important to note that the respondents were not given the option to select groups other than the ones specified in the survey, meaning that their true degree of community engagement may not have been fully captured. Additionally, some of the options provided may not be fully relevant in the Jordanian context.

As detailed in Figure 18, among the groups that provided some form of emotional help/counseling to the respondents, economic help/assistance, the most popular groups are sports groups (9%) and community associations (4%), followed by other miscellaneous groups (2%) and work-related trade unions (1%). As shown in Figure 19, help and assistance appear to come predominantly not from formal groups but from other persons, especially the family. Help or assistance was most frequently indicated as coming from the respondents' family (53%), followed by friends who aren't neighbors (32%) and neighbors (16%).
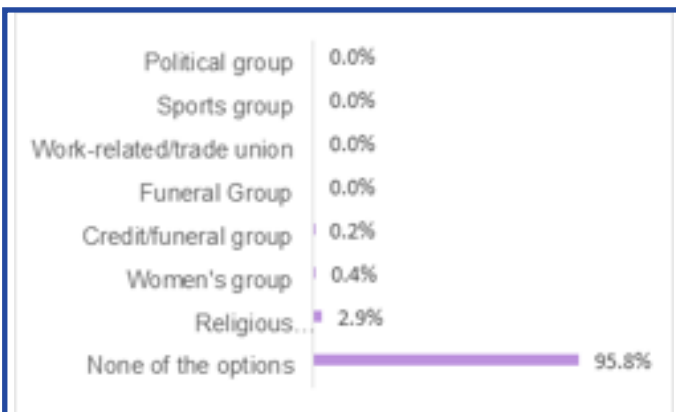
Figure 17: Have you been an active member of any of any group in your community?
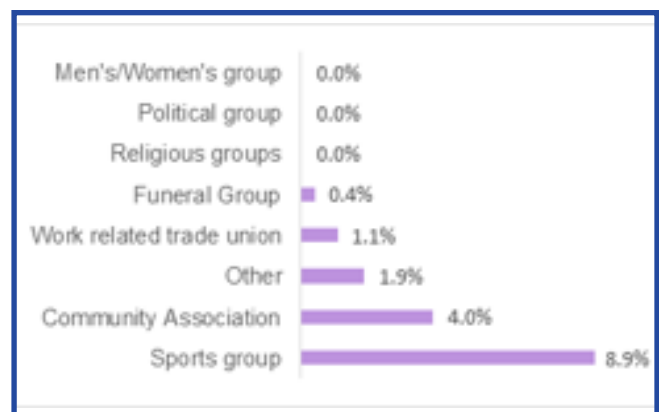
Figure 18:Did you receive from the group any emotional help/counselling, economic help or assistance in helping you know or do things?
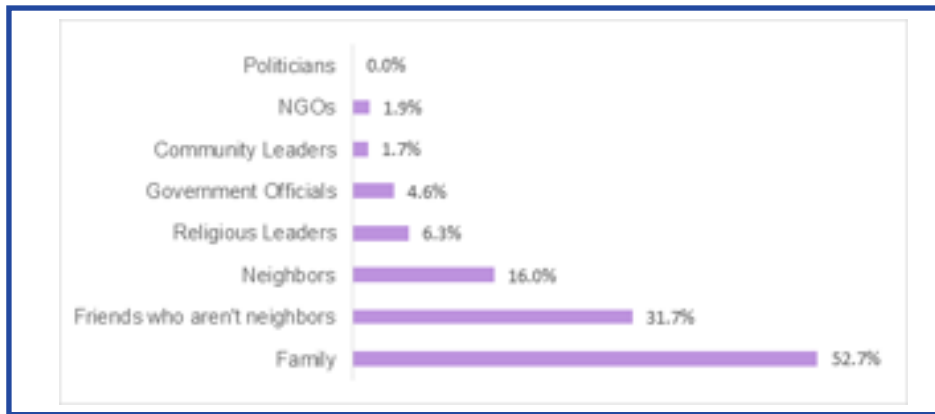
Figure 19: Did you receive any form of help or assistance
(e.g. economic, counseling etc.) in helping you know or do things?
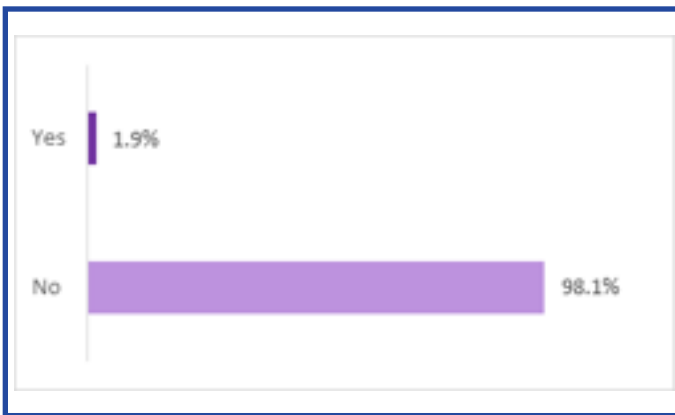
Figure 20: Have you joined together with other community
members to address a problem or common issue?
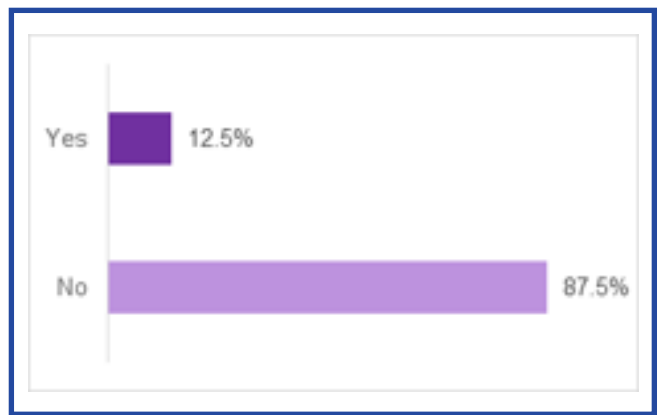
Figure 21:Have you reported a problem or talked with
a local authority or governmental organization about
problems in this community?

When the respondents were asked if they joined together with other community members to address a common issue, only 2% answered in the affirmative. Similarly, only about 13% reported a problem or talked with local authoties about issues in the community. This lack of community cohesiveness highlights the behavior of those with low social capital.
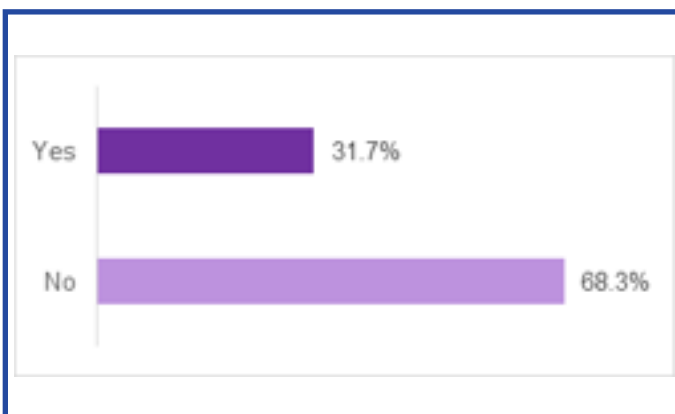
Figure 22:Do the majority of people in this community
generally get along with each other?
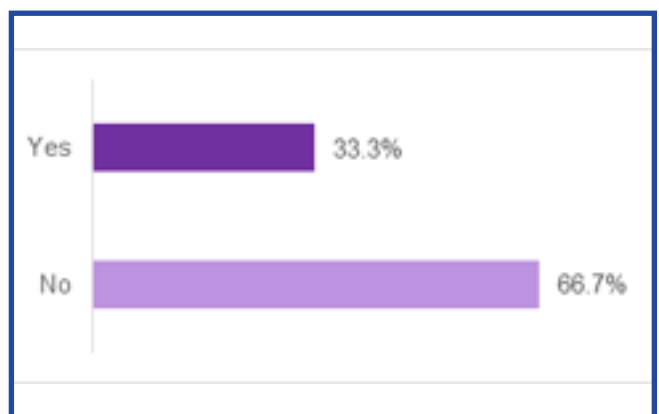
Figure 23:Do you feel that the majority of people in this
community can be trusted?
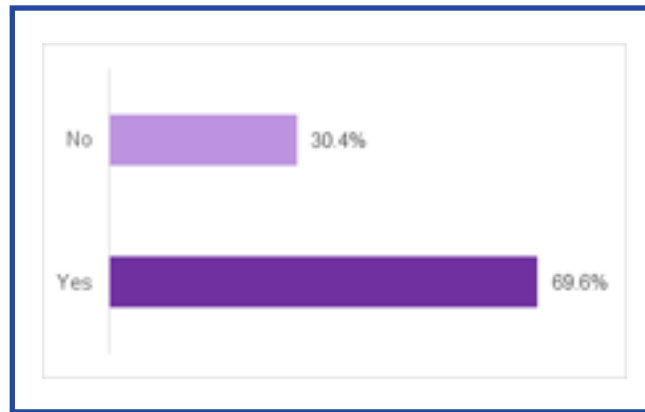
Figure 24:Do you think that the majority of people in this community would try to take advantage of you if they got the chance?

3.3.3. Exposure to Violence

As shown by Figure 25 below, 10% of males and 6% of females reported having suffered from some form of violence in the last six months. Most of these respondents reported having suffered from threats, intimidation, and harassment (45%), followed by emotional/psychological violence such as gaslighting, manipulation, or silent treatment (30%), and verbal (18%). None of the respondents in the survey reported having faced violence related to shooting, or sexual/gender-based violence (see Figure 26).

Figures appear relatively low. This is especially evident for sexual or gender-based violence (SGBV). The initially provided response option of *"gender-based violence"* was selected by less than 2%, which may indicate a limited understanding of the term. As addressed in the limitation section, it cannot be excluded that the survey underreports exposure to violence, and respondents might not have openly disclosed their experiences. As further discussed in later sections, cultural norms may play a significant role.
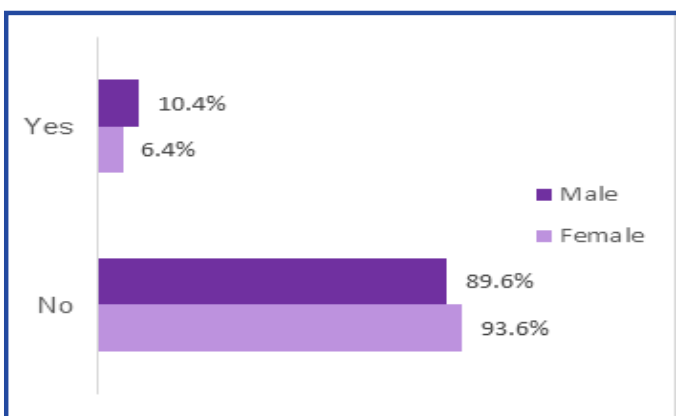
Figure 25: Have you suffered from any form of violence during the last 6 months?
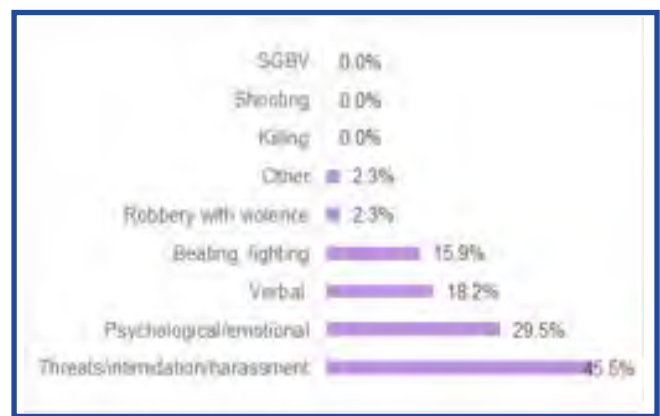
Figure 26:If yes, what form of violence have you experienced in the last 6 months?

Figure 27 shows that, of those respondents who suffered from some form of violence, males reported their neighbors to be the most common perpetrators (30%), followed by strangers, (22%), and other family members (22%), accounting for 74% of responses. On the contrary, females reported their spouse to be the most common perpetrator of violence (41%), followed by other family members (35%), showing the prevalence of intra-family violence with a total of 76% responses.
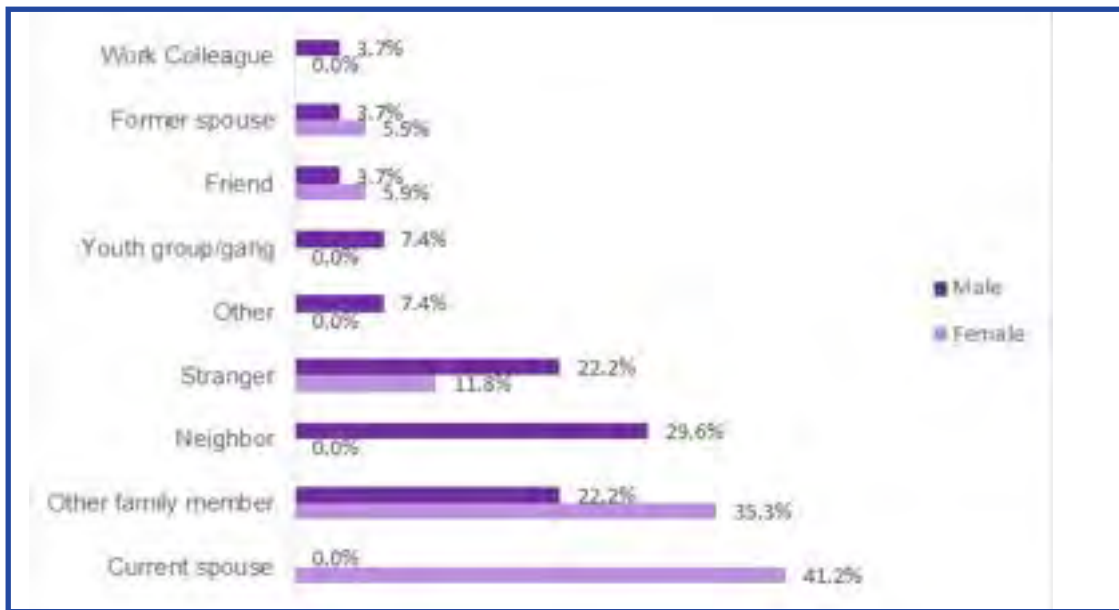
Figure 27: If yes, who were the perpetrators?

As a result of the violence suffered, 48% of males and 36% of females experienced psychological/ mental consequences; consistent with the findings on the types of violence suffered, the share of those having reported physical symptoms is very low.
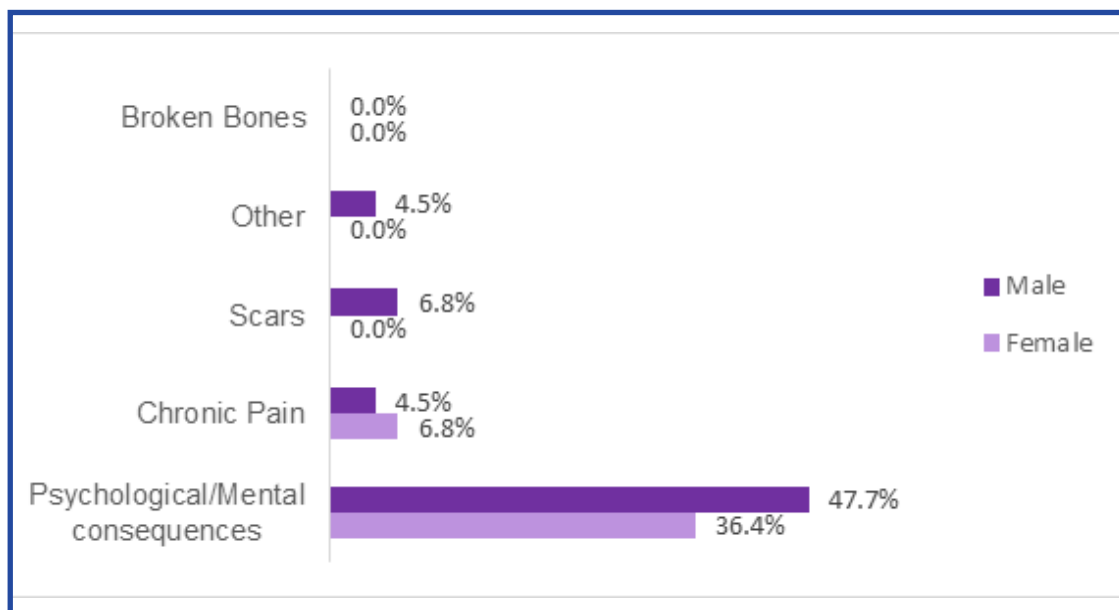
Figure 28: As a result of the violence, what are the consequences/symptoms that you've experienced?

As shown by the right-hand graph below, more than one-third of respondents (36%) reported to have not received any help when facing violence. If help was received, family members most frequently provided this, as reported by 38% of respondents. Religious leaders, local institutions, and police were least often mentioned (see Figure 30). Results seem consistent with the findings of the Jordan Population and Family Health Survey (2017-18), which reports that women who suffered some form of violence, usually tend to seek help from their own family, followed by their husband's family and their friends and neighbors.[15]
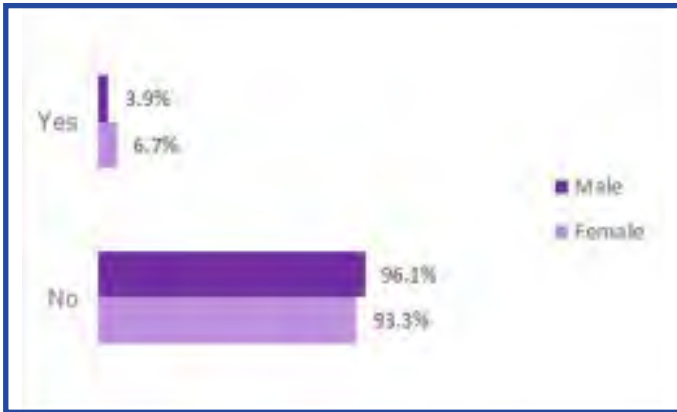
Figure 29: Is there any other member of this household who has suffered any forms of violence during the last 6 months?
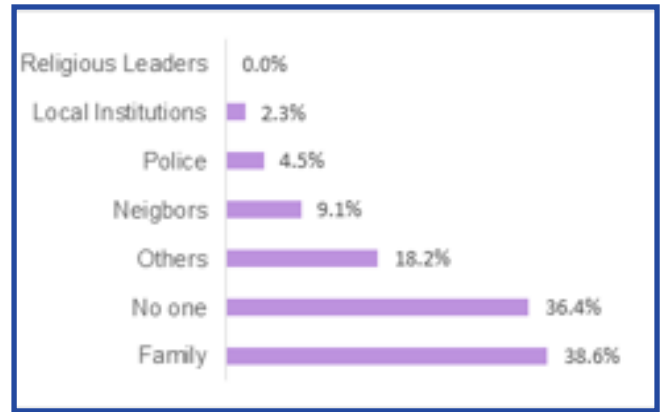
Figure 30: During your experience of violence, did anyone come to your assistance or aid you in any way?

Concerning exposure to violence of other family members in the past six months, only 11% of all respondents reported such incidences figure 29.Slightly more than 60% of respondents indicated that violence was faced by one or two family members; according to 40% of respondents, more than two family members were affected (see Figure 31). Figure 32 shows that sons (34%) and fathers (12%) of the respondents are those who experienced violence most frequently. Notably, 12% also reported all their household members to have experienced violence.
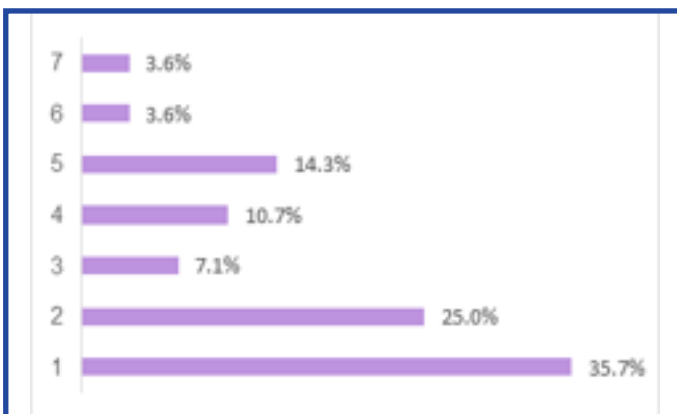
Figure 31: If yes, how many family members suffered from violence?
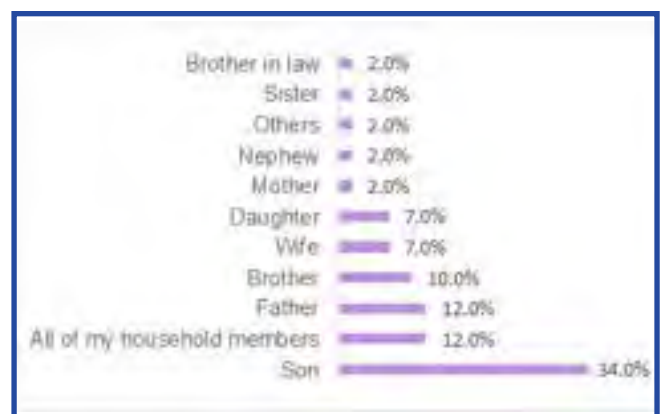
Figure 32: What is their relation to you?

As detailed in Figure 33, the most common perpetrators among family members were other family members (including all family members other than spouse) (29%) and the current spouse (18%) for females. Male counterparts reported neighbors and other family members most frequently. As per the Jordan Population and Family Health Survey (2017), among the ever-married women aged 15-49 who have experienced physical violence since age 15, 71% name their current husband as the perpetrator, and 15% report a former husband as the perpetrator. Over 1 in 10 ever-married women report physical violence by a brother (13%) or by their father (12%) in Jordan.[16]
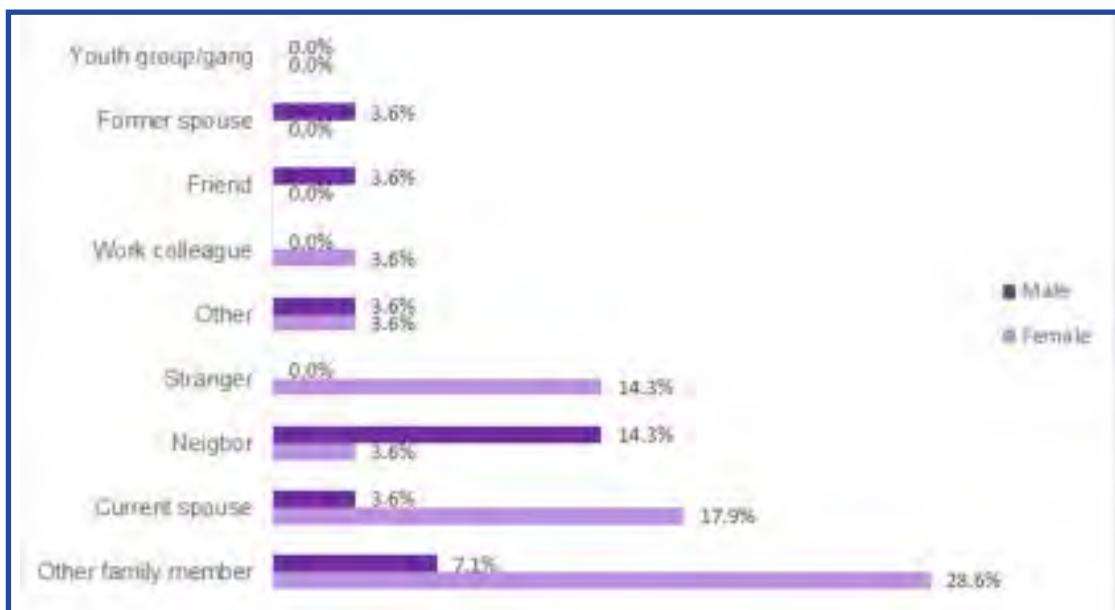
Figure 33: Who was the perpetrator, in relation to your family member suffering violence?

When suffering or witnessing a violent incident, 37% of respondents reported the perpetrators to be using physical strength, followed by hard/blunt objects (31%) and sharp pointed weapons (30%). Only 12% of perpetrators were reported to have used rude language.
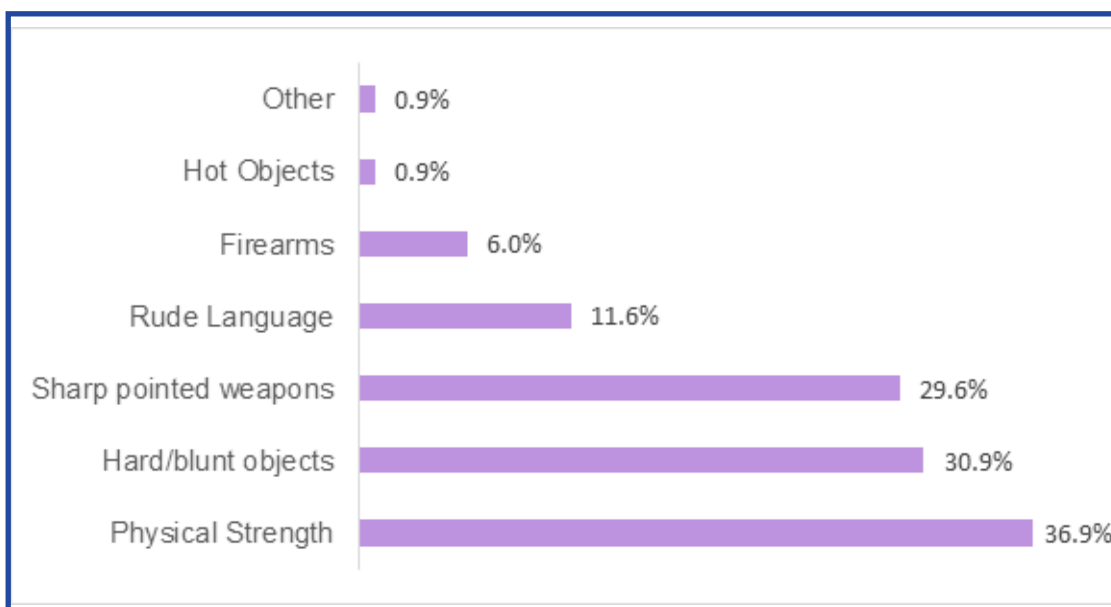
Figure 34: When witnessing or suffering a violent incident, what did the perpetrator use?

As shown in Figure 35, about one-third of all respondents are aware of other people in the community who engage in violence/violent behavior. About 10% of male respondents reported to have been a perpetrator of violence themselves, while 4% of female respondents reported the same.

Figure 36 shows that about 18% of male and 13% of female respondents shared that they had been exposed to some forms of violence in their childhood. Gender disaggregation points to different forms of violence: About 14% of males experienced violence in their childhood from a stranger compared to only 3% of their female counterparts. While 9% of women experienced childhood violence at the hands of family members, only 4% of men did the same.
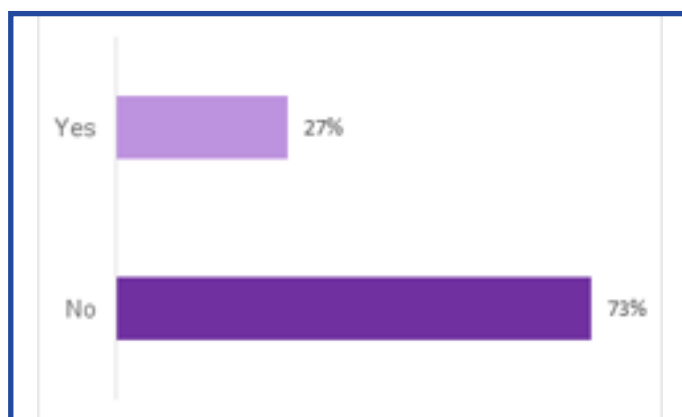
Figure 35: Do you know people in this community that engage in violence/violent behavior towards others?
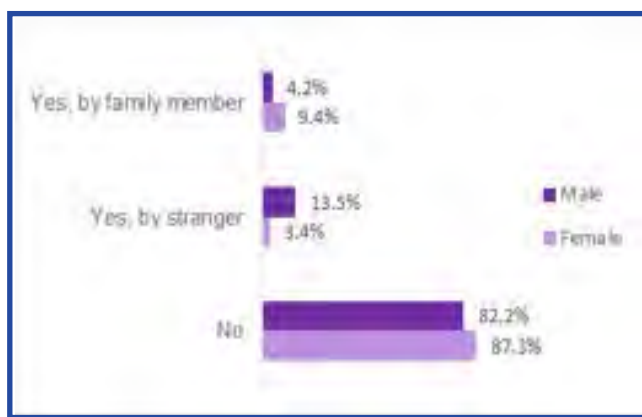
Figure 36:Have you been exposed to any form of violence in your childhood?

The figures appear low compared to the Jordan Population and Family Health Survey (2017-18). Based on a sample of 826 children (aged 1-14) in Zarqa, 8.3% faced non-violent discipline, 85% faced psychological aggression, 64% faced physical punishment, 14% faced severe physical punishment, and 90% faced *"any violent discipline methods"*[5]. As indicated in the limitation section, the presence of family members might have contributed to non-reporting. Further, mental framing and definition of violence, in association with cultural norms, might have affected survey results. As will be further discussed based on qualitative findings in later sections, cultural and societal norms shape the way people perceive violence; in some communities, behaviors that may be viewed as abusive elsewhere might be seen as acceptable or even necessary forms of discipline. Relatedly, how violence is framed in surveys and interviews can also greatly affect reporting. Depending on how violence is framed or defined, respondents may not recognize their own experiences as fitting within the definition of violence. Consequently, the open-response question format not explicitly defining behaviors might have contributed to disparate results and low reporting numbers.

This study examined the association between violence exposure and social capital in Zarqa. The collective efficacy theory states that trust and cohesion among residents of a community are likely to reduce violence. *"Associations of concentrated disadvantage and residential instability with violence are largely mediated by collective efficacy."*[17]Following previous research, the structural and cognitive dimensions were treated separately. The scoring method and testing procedure have been outlined in the method section.

Table 1 shows the test results[18] concerning violence exposure and the structural social capital level. It indicates that the risk of being exposed to violence is four times more likely for individuals with a high level of structural social capital compared to those with a low level of structural social capital (OR = 4.34). The statistical significance at p <.05 level is also to be noted (p = .0012).

	Low Structural Capital	High Structural Capital	p-value	Odds Ratio (confidence interval)
Violence Exposure: NO	146 (30.29%)	336 (69.71%)	0.0012	4.34 (1.53-16.99)
Violence Exposure: YES	4 (9.09%)	40 (90.91%)		

Table 1: Association between 'exposure to violence' and structural social capital

However, the results are to be interpreted cautiously as the confidence interval range is approximately 15, and the number of people exposed to violence was relatively low compared to the sample size. Additionally, the groups exposed to violence were disproportionate primarily to those who were not exposed. These factors can affect the validity of the results.

Table 2 shows the test results for exposure to violence and the level of cognitive social capital. Results show a reverse pattern. The risk of being exposed to violence is approximately 58% lower among people who have high cognitive social capital compared to those who have low cognitive social capital (OR=0.42). The results are statistically significant at the p < .05 level (p= .0056). Similar to Table 1, these results are to be interpreted with caution.

	Low Cognitive Capital	High Cognitive Capital	p-value	Odds Ratio (confidence interval)
Violence Exposure: NO	**205 (42.53%)**	**277 (57.47%)**	**0.0056**	**0.42 (0.21 -0.84)**
Violence Exposure: YES	**28 (63.64%)**	**16 (36.36%)**		

Table 2: Association between 'exposure to violence' and cognitive social capital

Despite the mentioned potential limitations, it is noteworthy that the results are aligned with study findings from other cultural contexts that show that cognitive and structural social capital are inversely related to the risk of exposure to violence. In particular, the study of Hansen-Nord et al. (2014)[19]. using the SASCAT scale in Honduras, similarly found that high cognitive social capital was associated with a lower risk of exposure, while high structural social capital was associated with a higher risk. In general, it has to be mentioned that social capital is a complex construct (ibid); it needs to be taken into consideration to separate cognitive and social capital, to work with context-sensitive scales, and that both dimensions might have to be seen as both causes and consequences, fostered or eroded by violence. In short, double causality cannot be ruled out. Indeed, findings might suggest that cognitive social capital, especially trust, might serve as a protective factor against violence, associated with mutual protection and a strengthened sense of solidarity. On the other hand, the level of cognitive social capital might also be affected by exposure to violence, with victims feeling less secure and trusting. The negative association between structural social capital contradicts the general hypothesis of social organization as a protective factor. One possible explanation is that the risk of exposure increases with extended time in urban spaces through social organization. As indicated before, structural scale items might also not be adequately aligned with realities in Jordan, pointing at promising avenues for further research. [20]

3.3.4. Types of Violence

According to the survey results, youth violence was overwhelmingly identified as the most common form of **violence in the community,** with approximately 64% of respondents citing it. This is followed by resource-based violence at 17%, and gang-related violence at 12%. Much smaller percentages reported other forms of violence, such as ethnic violence (3%), political violence (less than 1%), and state-authority violence (less than 1%).
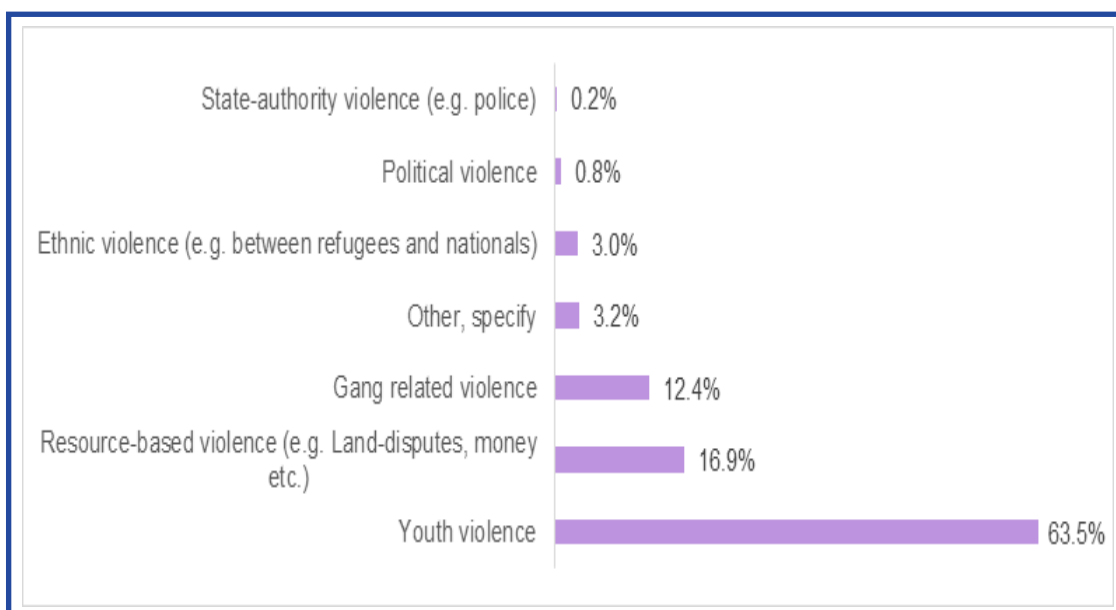
Figure 37:What type of violence is the most common in your community?[21]

When comparing survey results with qualitative findings, it has to be noted that the cited community-level types only received relatively little attention in FGDs and interviews compared to other aspects of the violence phenomenon in Zarqa. Putting these findings into perspective, it has to be considered that participants were not explicitly asked about 'youth violence,' and the survey did not follow up with questions that would provide more detailed questions, such that the knowledge of the actual manifestations or the community understanding of *"youth violence"* has remained limited. Concerning other community-level violence, participants provided some anecdotal reports and isolated incidents of violence related to the intention to steal and gang violence but fall short of providing a complete picture of the issue of youth violence that appears dominant based on community perceptions.

As to household settings (see graph below), the survey results indicate that physical violence is perceived as the most prevalent form of violence, mentioned by about 54% of respondents, followed by verbal violence at around 23%, child abuse (11%), and psychological violence (10%). Sexual violence was reported by less than 1% of respondents.
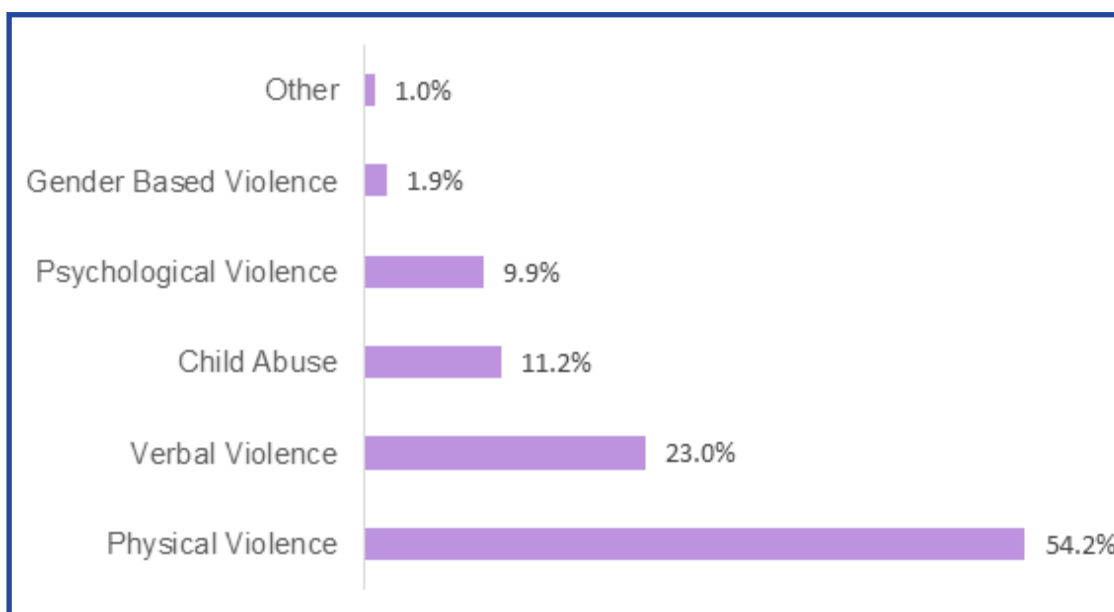
Figure 38: What type of violence is the most highly occurring in a household setting

It has been noted that the distribution was derived from disaggregating the offered 'other' category - which initially made up 33%, leading to the new categories of verbal violence and psychological violence, as shown in the chart. The initially provided response option 'gender-based violence' (GBV) was selected by less than 2%, which may indicate a limited understanding of the term. When interpreting the chart, it must also be considered that response categories partially overlap. GBV can take many forms, such as physical, emotional, psychological, and sexual abuse. This may explain why survey results could be considered not aligned with extant research suggesting its prevalence, as outlined in the desk review. For instance, the Jordan Population and Family Health Survey (2017-2018) indicated that more than one-third of married women in Zarqa between the ages of 15-49 have experienced physical, sexual, or emotional violence from their partner.[22]

As further discussed in the limitation section, several potential biases can influence the results: media coverage, personal experiences, or cultural narratives, and social desirability can disproportionately shape perceptions. It is to be noted that sexual violence has been categorized under other since there were only 2 cases.

It is further noteworthy that the presence of sexual violence was acknowledged in the qualitative data. This type of violence was discussed across several interviews and FGDs. For instance, one participant noted, *"We have heard a lot of fathers verbally or sexually violating their daughters."* A key informant furthermore mentioned, *"Sexual abuse is common there, whether caused from a man to a girl or a man to a man. A while ago, a case appeared, but there is no media attention to such cases"* (KII, female). Supporting the potential presence of perceptual biases as mentioned above, one informant explained, *"Sexual abuse is not visible because society and religion are against it. But I cannot say that it is not present; it is evident in what society says, courthouses, centers, police stations, and family protection"* (KII, male).

Aligned with quantitative results, FGDs and interviews suggest that physical violence is common, which also includes gender-based violence. One key informant stated, *"Physical abuse would be the most common because of the pressure that men face, so they release this anger unto their wives or sons. This is out of his control"* (KII, female). Another said, *"The abuser in the family is the head of the family, the father against the mother and children. In the Zarqa area, the highest rates of abuse take place in areas we call slums"* (KII, female). Hitting was reported as the most common form of exerting physical violence: "*You know, if the husband wants to hit his wife, if he comes home and he is angry, he will hit her for no reason. Also, the father, any problem, regardless of how big or small, even without asking, would hit her. Also, if they have control over their nieces and nephews, her uncle or uncles"* (KII, female).

As more detailed later, hitting children was also noted as a common form of domestic violence.

3.3.5. Perpetrators of Violence

Consistent with results on the perceived prevalence of youth and gang violence, these are perceived as the most common perpetrators by more than half of respondents (51%). Family members were only reported by about 23% (current spouse and other family members). As the question was not differentiating between community-based and family violence, respective information cannot be taken from the graph. While figures might be interpreted as suggesting that domestic violence would be far less prevalent, it has to be considered that respondents might have framed the question differently based on the distinction between community and family-level violence in previous questions.
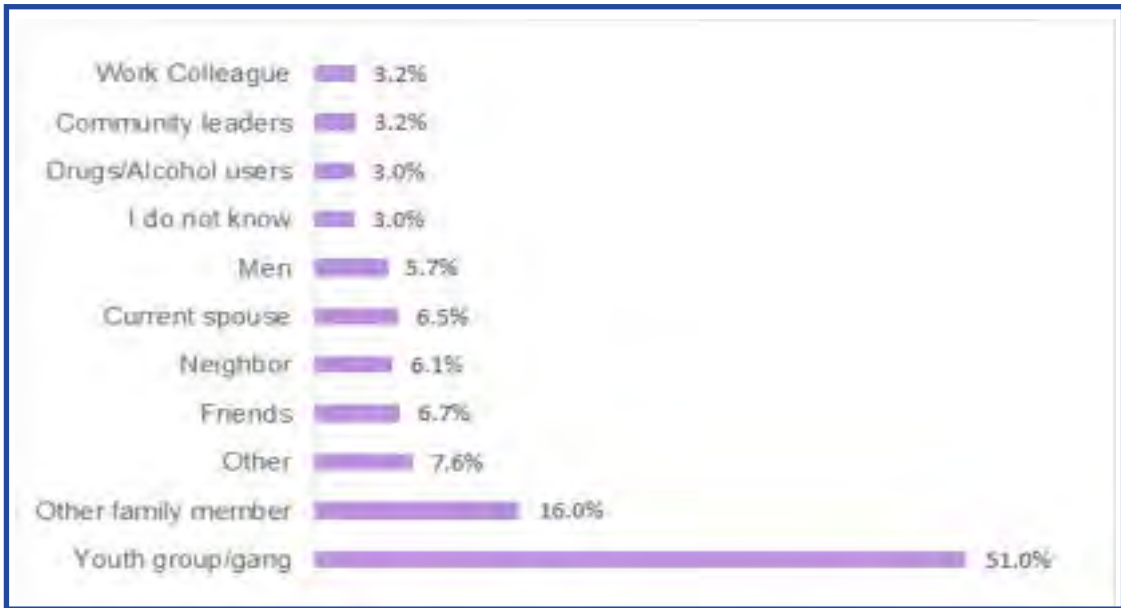
Figure 39: In your opinion, who are the most common perpetrators of violence?

3.3.6. Victims of Violence

Children are considered the most common victims of violence in the community. These findings appear aligned with the high prevalence of violence against children in Jordan. According to a representative UNICEF survey, about 75% of children aged 8 to 17 have experienced at least one form of physical violence in their lifetime, and about 58% have at least one form of psychological violence.[23]In addition, 27% have experienced one form of sexual violence. While this survey did not explicitly inquire about the forms of violence against children and perpetrators, the UNICEF survey revealed that about 47% of children reported parents as perpetrators of physical violence, followed by siblings (44%), peers (40%), and teachers (27%).
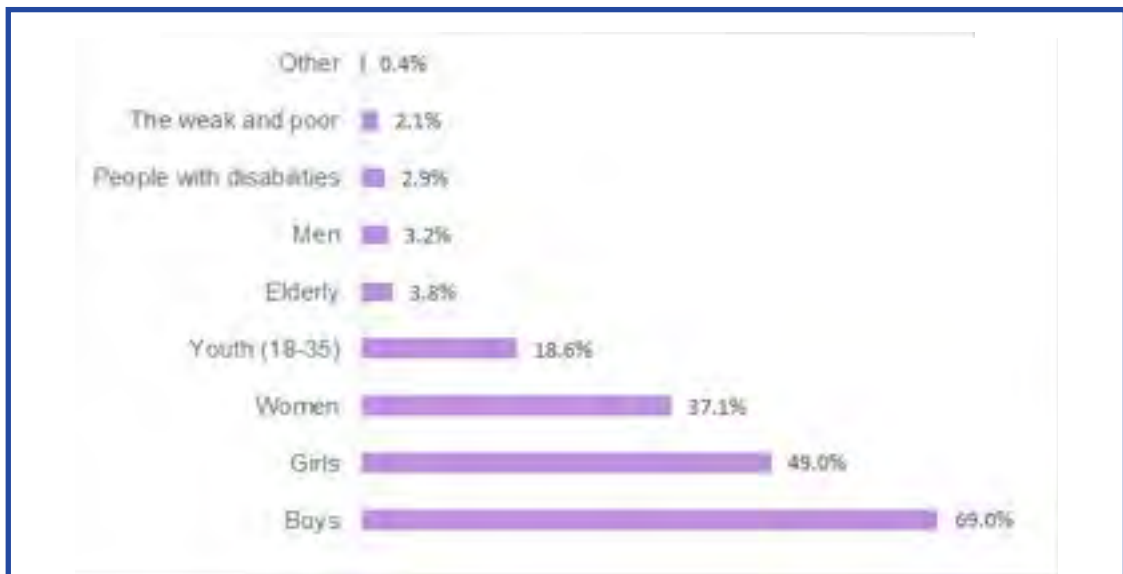
Figure 40: Who are the most common victims of violence in your community?

Based on qualitative findings, the high prevalence of violence against children was often attributed to their inherent vulnerability. Children are seen as *"the weakest link. They cannot defend themselves, and no organizations or centers protect the children. The mother or the father can use violence without fear of accountability"* (KII, female). Underscoring the lack of ability to protect themselves, another

male FGD participant noted, *"How is a kid supposed to complain if he is grounded in a room and being hit? How is a girl locked in a room supposed to do that? Her father is standing in front of her door and locking it?"*

Note: From: Simple Pleasures of Running Around [Photograph], by USAID/Jordan, 2014, Flickr (https://www.flickr.com/photos/usaid_ images/14970396956/in/photostream/).CC BY 4.0.

Furthermore, as discussed later, traditional norms and cultural practices may contribute to the problem. As noted in interviews in FGDs, some parents might not even recognize their actions as violent; they may believe that using physical punishment or other forms of aggression is part of proper child-rearing, leading to the normalization of harmful practices in the name of discipline or education. As one male interviewee explained, *"Parents also think that raising their kids means hitting. This is physical abuse. We see them sometimes in the streets. The mother would scream at her kids to obey. She would hit her kid in the face."* While the UNICEF survey also indicated violence from teachers as a problem, one key informant from the educational sector commented, *"In Zarqa, it is not common a lot, but we cannot say it is not present at all. Because it can happen at a school when teachers hit students. Although it has become rare, it still happens"* (KII, male). On the other hand, as elaborated more in one of the following sections, there was broad consensus on the problem of bullying.

Discussing the vulnerability of children, in one female focus group, the role of parents and the family environment was emphasized: *"When the parents are not on good terms, and they always fight, the children are psychologically affected. Children are exposed to bad things in school and on the street. Sometimes, the children cannot talk to their parents because the parents are not understanding."* One participant elaborated on the societal expectations around gender and how they impact boys and girls differently in the context of violence. The respondent suggested that boys would often feel pressured to handle the situation independently. Boys would be expected to *"hit back"* or confront their aggressors, leading to fear of judgment or disappointment from their parents: *"I witnessed a situation where a boy was beaten, and he was scared of telling his father because his father would say to him, why didn't you hit him back? So, boys won't be getting any support or any understanding."*

In interviews and FGDs, participants highlighted the vulnerability of females becoming victims, with narratives predominantly pointing at violence exerted by parents or husbands. As discussed in a later section, cultural and societal norms are considered relevant in perpetuating violence. As one female FGD participant explained, *"There is a category of women who cannot defend themselves. Again, this is due to the environment in which the girl was raised. She was raised in fear, fear of claiming her rights, fear of talking, fear of going to the Family Protection because she is afraid that her husband would divorce her. She can't defend herself, and she endures violence, persecution, and repression. On the other hand, women who are aware enough can defend themselves and claim their rights."*

Some participants highlighted the vulnerability of people with disabilities in association with their marginalization in society: *"Also, people with disabilities face a lot of injustice. Many think they should die. They leave them at home. A lot of people have children with disabilities who are now adults with disabilities, but no one knows about them – even the neighbors"* (KII1, female).

The following sections complement information by reporting on interviewees' and FGD participants' narratives on distinct manifestations of violence. These forms of violence were either raised directly by the enumerator and then validated by the participants as occurring or raised unprompted by participants.

3.3.7. Bullying

The problem of bullying in Jordan has,up to now, received only limited attention in the scientific community ,consequently only fragmentary evidence on prevalence, correlates, and experiences is available.[24][25]As one of the few studies relying on a nationally representative sample across the three regions in Jordan, Shahrour et al. (2020) found that bullying among Jordanian adolescents was consistent with international studies: 7% reported their involvement in bullying as a victim, 7.6% as a bully, and 1.7% as both. Adolescent students who came from low socioeconomic status or whose fathers were illiterate reported more victimization experiences.
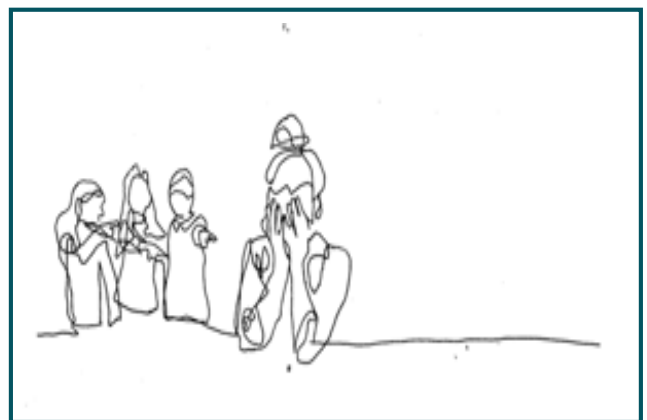
Across many FGDs and interviews, bullying was identified as a major problem in Zarqa. One female FGD participant emphasized this by stating *"Over the last period, we were working on initiatives with school students aged 14-17. We asked them what topics they would like to start an initiative about, and every student we asked said they wanted to work on the topic of bullying. Bullying is a major problem in our region. We asked them about bullying in school, and they said people ridicule their clothes or say bad things about someone. For them, this is bullying."* As highlighted by several informants, bullying would have increased, with one male participant stating: *"It used to be just harmless teasing among friends. However, over time, this teasing spread and evolved into more serious bullying, with people now often talking about anyone they meet."* Also, social media was identified as a major platform for bullying.

When asked about specific victims, respondents pointed out that girls, students with disabilities, and those from different ethnic backgrounds or nationalities would be particularly targeted. Appearance was highlighted as a key factor in female bullying. FGD participants and interviewees also stressed the severe impact of bullying, leading to depression and even suicide. One person shared: *"They start saying, 'look at this girl, her lips aren't inflatable,' so the other girl starts facing bullying and develops a complex that no one will want to marry her. She might not talk to her parents and, using the money she saves, apply filler without their knowledge or change her appearance. Now, if there's a fat girl, they bully her so much that she starts doing lots of things to her body and begins hating herself. Some girls can't resist bullying and head towards suicide"* (FGD, female).

In one female focus group, participants suggested a cycle of violence, where victims of bullying may become bullies themselves or where domestic violence would contribute to this behavior: *"There are some girls that are bullies, or you feel that they are isolated, but when you get to know her more, you will notice that her life is hell, and it is full of domestic violence."* Family dynamics and upbringing were seen as crucial factors: *"Or the family might be the reason behind the psychological problems that the child has, so she spends her energy by assaulting other kids."* Similarly, a male FGD participant noted: *"Often, the reason for this violence is related to family dynamics. For example, if a father is abusive, this can create a cycle of violence where the father abuses the mother, the mother abuses the child, and the child then abuses their siblings or peers. This behavior can manifest in various ways, including through interactions with others. If the child doesn't have toys, they might direct their aggression toward their peers."*

3.3.8. Child Marriage

Jordan is considered one of the low-to-middle countries concerning child marriage rates. [26]While considerable underreporting has to be considered, the national statistical report of 2020 issued by the Supreme Judge Department in Jordan documented 7,964 marriages of girls under the age of 18 and 194 of males.[27] Consequently, child marriages made up 12% of all marriages in Jordan.

When asked about child marriage, interviewees and FGD participants confirmed its existence. One key informant expressed concerns about the growing prevalence: *"Yes, nowadays. By the way, it was common for a while, but then it stopped, and now it's spreading again."* Although child marriages are illegal, the law provides insufficient protection. Interviewees explained that marriages are often registered with Sheikhs until the girl reaches the legal marriage age of 16.

Economic hardship plays a significant role in parents' decisions to marry off their daughters: *"To get rid of her. Especially if they have 4, 5, or 6 girls, they let them get married. If the groom's financial situation is good, they think getting married is better regardless of anything (...)."* The reported increase in child marriages and the relation to poverty is also supported by statistics showing the increase since COVID-19, having increased the vulnerability of girls.

One survivor recounted her experience: *"I got married at 14. My parents married me off. I was literally a child. They fixed my hair and dressed me up, and I didn't realize it was a wedding. He was more than 20 years older than me. After our first night, I was hospitalized and received four units of blood. Everyone at the hospital was asking about the non-Jordanian girl who married young.' I will never forgive my parents because they knew what it meant. When I gave birth, the doctor said my pelvis wasn't ready for childbirth."*[28] This testimony highlights the severe physical and emotional toll of child marriage, driven by economic desperation and insufficient legal protection.

3.3.9. Tribal Violence

According to the information obtained during one male FGD, tribal violence was widespread in the past but would have decreased considerably. Reference was made to the two influential tribes Bani Hasan and Bani Sakhr.[29] Tribal violence was discussed by a male focus group, emphasizing the destructive potential of retaliatory violence and its capacity to escalate into tribal-level and community-level conflicts:

"For example, if my child is harmed by a neighbor's child, I might retaliate by harming the neighbor's child. This retaliation can escalate the conflict: when I strike the neighbor's child, the neighbor might retaliate against me, leading me to seek support from my own tribe while the neighbor does the same with theirs. This can quickly escalate into a larger conflict between families or groups. There was a time when a minor dispute between two children led to a major conflict between two families, which eventually required intervention to resolve. Similarly, in our university, a verbal altercation between two individuals escalated when each brought in their extended family members. This led to a significant conflict between the two tribes, with the police being called in to control the situation, which lasted an entire week."

Across several FGDs and interviews, tribal conflicts at universities were noted.

3.3.10. Honor Killings

Respondents were of the perception that honor killings do occur in Zarqa, however, as put by one respondent, *"They are hidden. No one talks about it."* The hidden nature highlighted by respondents aligns with the lack of a reliable statistical basis. While available statistics indicate that around 15 to 20 women are killed annually due to honor-related violence, some reports suggest that the actual number may be higher as many such cases are misreported or go unreported. [30]

One male FGD discussant explained, *"The concept of honor crimes is quite severe. Unfortunately, we still have many such cases, and it seems like these issues are becoming more prominent."* The deep-rooted concept of honor was reported as often leading to violence: *"Family traditions and cultural norms often influence responses to conflict. For instance, if a person encounters an issue with his daughter, such as cyber blackmailing, they only care about honor and go to kill"* (FGD, male).

As reported by interviewees and FGD participants, instances that lead to honor killings could range from simple acts like girls or wives talking to a man, raising suspicion on such behavior, or actual cheating. With respect to the latter, one woman explained, *"When those crimes happen, the husband does not say a word because he won't declare that his wife was cheating on him; his pride won't allow it. So, he hides it"* (FGD, female).

Respondents highlighted how respective laws would promote killings. As explained by a respondent, "There are no strict rules" that would deter such forms of violence. *"A man kills his daughter or wife and only gets jailed for six months! He believes he became a reputable man because it was an honor killing."*

The concept of honor would pressure girls and women strongly: *"Consider a situation where a girl ran away with her lover or left her family home. According to traditions and customs, there is often a strong emphasis on preserving her honor. Any issues she faces can become significant problems due to societal expectations. Many of these problems stem from intense internal conflicts and the immense pressure some families place on their daughters. For instance, some families impose extreme control and pressure on their daughters, even to the point of what they eat, treating them as if they were their property out of fear for their safety. They do not realize they are hurting their daughters"* (FGD, male).

One female participant also reasoned that there might be a cycle of violence due to missing protection of girls and women: *"We hear a lot about the girls who are running away from their parents' houses due to the violence they are facing. (...) The girl is being exposed to domestic violence. When out to the streets, she will be exposed to sexual violence, and after she is exposed to sexual violence, her parents will reach her, and then she will be exposed to the honor killings. So, violence will create more violence"* (FGD, female).

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3.3.11. Causes and Risk Factors of Violence

One of the primary objectives of this study was to explore the causes and risk factors associated with violence. Placing the findings into perspective, the following shows the factors identified through both qualitative and quantitative data, organized within the ecological model for violence to highlight the various influences at different levels. The ecological model highlights the complex interplay of individual, relational, community, and societal factors that contribute to violent behaviors. It suggests that violence is not caused by a single factor but results from a combination of influences across multiple levels.
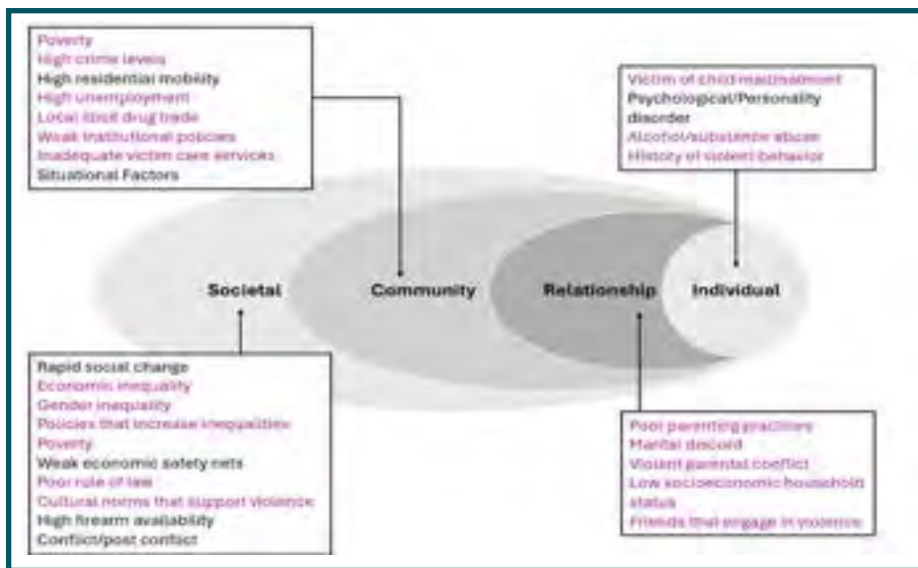
Figure 41: Ecological model for violence highlighting the various influences at different levels

The following sections detail results as to causes of violence at the community-level and within families. When asked about the causes of problems and conflicts in the community, poverty and unemployment were frequently mentioned by about one-third of survey respondents, showing relatively high agreement concerning the relevance of respective community-level factors. As the next most frequently mentioned reasons, cultural and traditional norms as society-level factors were reported by 14% followed by community-level drug trade (16%).
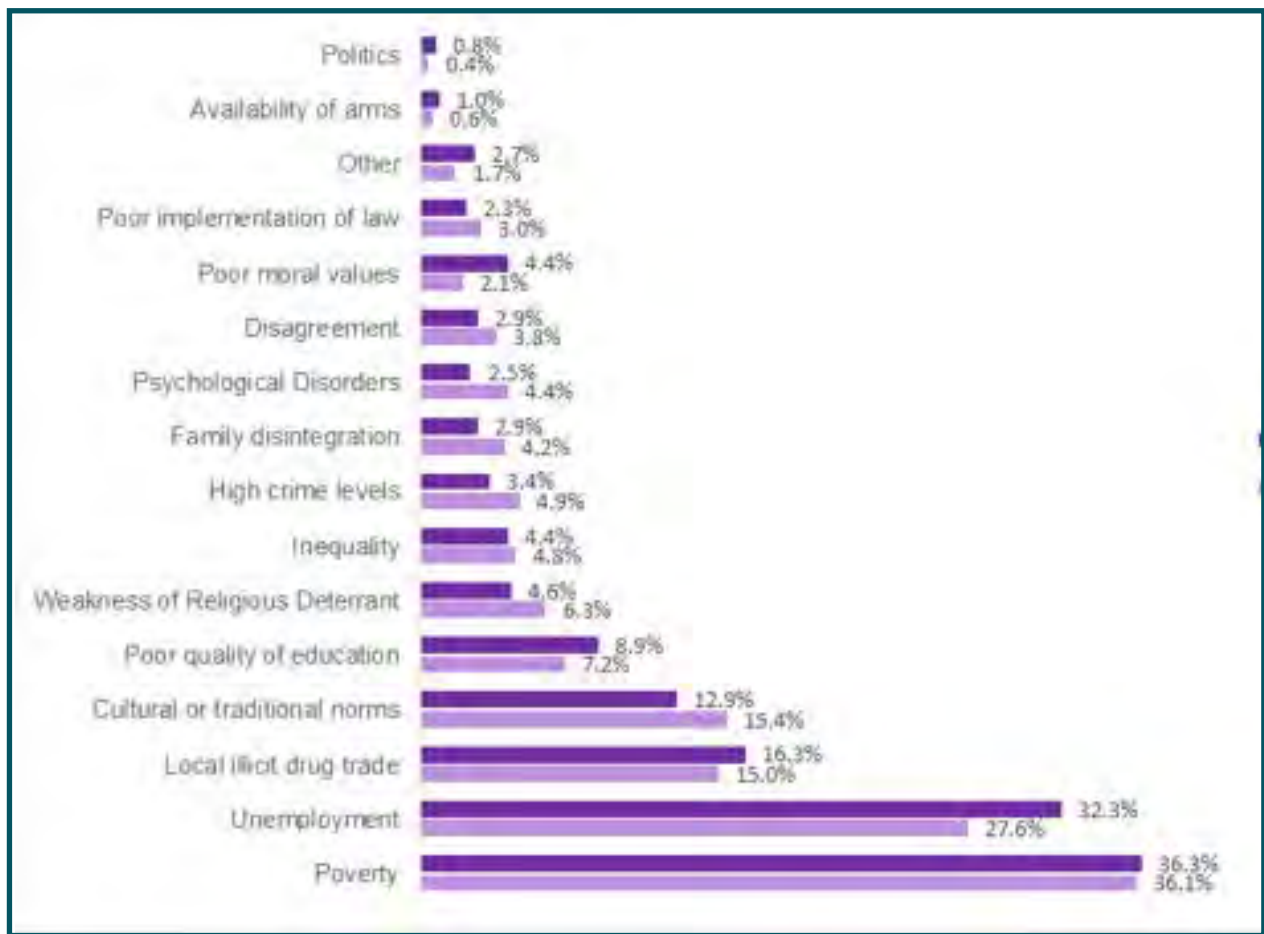
Figure 42: In your opinion, what causes problems and conflicts in this community?

Aligned with these results, poverty, reported by 37%, was also the most frequently mentioned factor causing family problems and conflicts, as shown by the graph below. Concerning other factors, only marital issues were reported by more than 22% of respondents. It is noteworthy that cultural norms, in general, were reported by 12%, while gender norms only by about 1%, and social norms, which were specified by the example *"such as acceptance of slapping/beating,"* by also only 5%. As outlined in the following section, these factors emerged as relevant themes from qualitative data. Gender differences are most pronounced for parenting practices (male: 9%, female: 14%), cultural norms (male: 15%, female: 10%), and psychological/personality disorders (male: 6%; female: 9%).
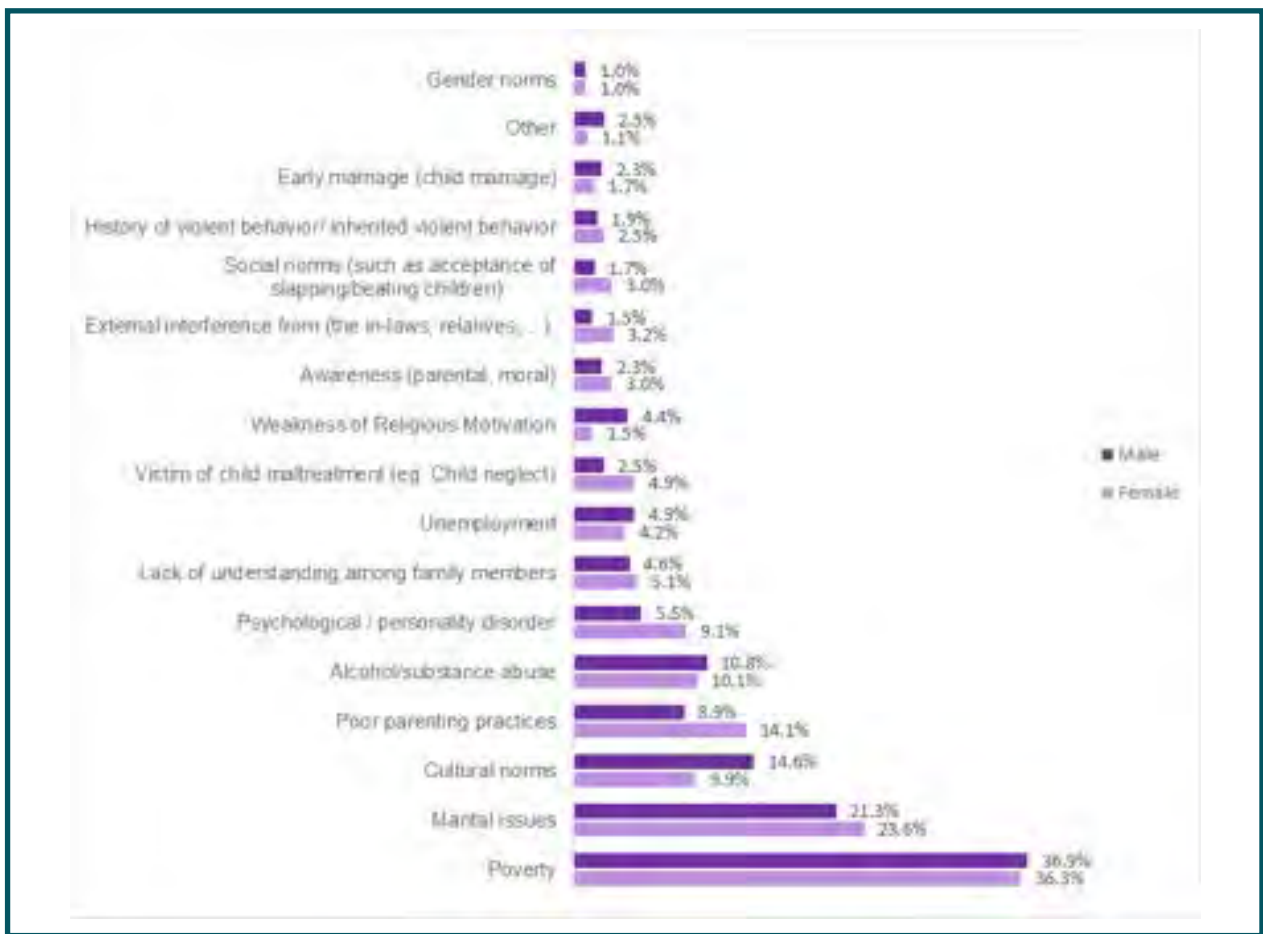
Figure 43: In your opinion, what causes problems within families?

The following sections provide context and nuances to the findings, highlighting key factors discussed during FGDs and interviews.

Unemployment and Poverty

Supporting the quantitative data, economic hardship and unemployment emerged as dominant themes in discussions about the causes of violence.[32] Indicating the relevance, the association between economic situation and violence was discussed in all interviews and FGDs; unemployment, specifically, was brought up in eight of the eleven qualitative data collection exercises. Several interviewees and FGDs noted that financial struggles can lead to aggressive and criminal behavior. Additionally, respondents attributed changes in violence patterns and their increase to the deteriorating economic situation.

Poverty was especially recognized in FGDs and interviews as one of the primary causes of within-family violence, often directed by male household members toward their families. One participant explained, *"Because of the pressure that men face, they release this anger onto their wives or sons. Because the husband cannot buy them bread, he directs his anger towards his wife."* Other key informants noted how mothers could be abused by their sons. One narrative highlighted this dynamic: *"He would be unemployed and ask his mother for money, and if she didn't give it to him, he would hit her. She feels ashamed to say that her son hit her, so she stays silent to protect him. She makes excuses, saying he didn't mean it. How can this be real? You have bruises all over your face, and you say he didn't mean it? (...) The boy wasn't raised with good manners."*

FGD participants discussed new manifestations of violence arising from economic hardship. For instance, one male participant noted, *"When a 20- or 30-year-old man cannot meet his family's needs, for his wife and children, he will use different methods. And for your information, some guys are blackmailing women. The guy talks with a girl, and she sends him suggestive or sexual photos, and he blackmails her. Either she gives him money, or he publishes the photos online."* Relatedly, sexual violence and honor killings were brought in association with economic issues. As one respondent pointed out, *"Honor killings are also associated with the economic factor. There is a connection. When a man cannot get married, he will find other ways. It doesn't have to be rape or anything like that; he could do things electronically, like using photos."*

One interviewee highlighted how unemployment could cause youth to turn violent or extremist: *"As a family, if I have three unemployed boys, they will eventually go through dark paths. They will go out with bad people and learn bad behavior, so they will abuse their families. They will rebel against their family and the society as well. (...) Many people joined ISIS, and many of them came from Zarqa. I don't know if you heard about them"* (KII, female).

Parenting Practices, Upbringing, and Education

Poor education quality, coupled with a lack of parental awareness and proper child-rearing practices, was further emphasized as a major cause of violence, including child neglect. The lack of education and ignorance was discussed even in 10 of the 11 discussions/interviews.

One respondent stated, *"There is a significant lack of attention and action within homes. Parents often neglect their responsibilities to monitor and spend time with their children. This neglect is exacerbated when financial pressures force individuals to work excessively, leaving children unsupervised and stressed. (...) Although the government and schools can enforce laws and policies, and teachers educate students about safety, harassment, violence, cigarettes, drugs, and other concerns, these measures are less effective if the home environment is lacking in support and attention"* (FDG, male). Similarly, a female FGD participant noted, *"Yes, The environment and the upbringing of the husband and wife. Sometimes, they were raised in a bad way, and this is why the husband uses violence. And it's the same for the girl. If she doesn't come from a good background, there is no good communication at home, and they cannot raise their children in a healthy environment."*

One respondent emphasized the combination of financial and societal pressures: *"In Zarqa, for instance, parents are under immense pressure from societal and financial stressors. Low wages, lack of safe spaces, and a scarcity of greenery exacerbate these issues. Parents often return home from work feeling overwhelmed and carry this negative energy with them. (...) Consequently, this negative energy is transferred to the children, who may pass it on to each other. As a result, the entire family becomes trapped in a cycle of negative energy and conflict"* (FGD, male).

In relation to children, the connection between education and financial capability was emphasized. Comparing West Amman and Zarqa, one interviewee explained, *"The financial situation is the main reason. We have cases in Zarqa where people are educated. People who don't use violence and know how to raise their kids. (...) When I put my kids in an international school like West Amman, the teachers wear formal attire and speak to the students respectfully and in English. (...) We want to be realistic. If I put a boy from Zarqa in Shuweifat School or Kings Academy, he will definitely be different (...). The financial situation is the main reason, along with parental awareness."*

Drug Use

Drug use and trafficking were highlighted very frequently in FGDs and interviews as one of the most pressing problems Zarqa is facing. However, compared to other factors, they were relatively rarely associated directly with violence. In comparison, according to the household data, 16,3 % of males responded that local illicit drug trade was a leading cause to conflicts in the community of Zarqa, pointing at avenues for further research on the perceived association and actual prevalence. Participants explained that drug use would be spreading among youth. Concerning the reasons, participants highlighted several aspects that combine to the vulnerability of youth, including lacking opportunities, unemployment, frustration, emptiness, and oppression, in combination with lacking parental education and awareness. For example, as put by one participant: *"Emptiness, they don't have anything to fill their free time with or have fun with, and it might be because there was a lack of awareness from the parents, for example, the child might know a person that is into this stuff, and he won't have parents that might prohibit him from these things, so the blame is on the parents."* (FGD, female) Male participants expressed their fears related to drug use and violence by explaining, *"It is the most dangerous issue because people who are under the effect of drugs could kill someone or commit another crime."*

Societal, Cultural and Gender Norms

Interview and FGD contributions shed light on the critical role of social and cultural norms in perpetuating violence. These were especially frequently thematized with respect to gender norms, with lack of women's rights discussed in seven interviews, general social norms in nine.

Qualitative data highlights significant gender-based inequality starting from childhood, affecting both upbringing and future opportunities in education and work. In upbringing, societal norms reinforce the idea that boys are granted freedoms denied to girls, with boys being able to *"do everything and anything without any consequences while girls face restrictions purely because of their gender"* (FGD, female).

In terms of education and job opportunities, some narratives suggest deeply entrenched attitudes that devalue education for girls. One quote illustrating these beliefs states, *"My husband always tells me to forget about the girls' education because they will end up at home. Don't make an effort with them, don't waste your time educating them"* (FGD, female). One female FGD participant described her husband's attitude: *"Even if you (a girl) study, you won't achieve anything because, in the end, you are going to get married."* Additionally, the challenges for women in the Zarqa appear particularly stark. Another participant noted, *"It is scarce in Zarqa to find successful women who feel comfortable. This starts with the family."* According to some participants, the social stigma around women working outside the home is strong: *"Girls are not allowed to go out and work because it is shameful."* One female FGD summarized her husband's opinion as follows: *"He says that this is what he was taught, and this is how he was raised. A woman's place is at home."* Discrimination was also highlighted in the job market: *"We do not have equal opportunities here either; they always say there is equality in the workforce here, and they give equal job opportunities for both genders when that is not true! If you, as a woman, get a job, they make you work late; they give you less of a salary than a man."*

On the opposite, some key informants and participants also pointed out the effect of gender norms leading to conflict or family disintegration; according to one female key informant, many people would get divorced because their wife's salary would be higher: *"Males want to be stronger. They want to have a higher salary (...). because, in his thinking, salaries are linked to masculinity"* (KII, female)

FGDs and interview contributions also shed light on male dominance within families and marriages. One quote explains, *"A husband could abuse his power to pressure his wife into sex; this is part of sexual violence. This has to do with the fact that she is a woman"* (FGD, male). This societal acceptance of male dominance was also expressed as follows by one female interviewee: *"We are in a male-dominated world, and we only see women's mistakes."* Women would be constantly blamed for any perceived wrong, often facing physical punishment for trivial matters. For instance, if a woman *"cooks a meal that her husband doesn't want to, he will punish her."* This reinforces a system where women are subjected to control and punishment simply because of their gender. In addition, the following extreme example was shared: *"He (the brother) held a pencil and stuck it in her eye! Imagine, because she was standing on her balcony, and he said this is shameful."* Despite the violence, *"Her family said that the boy was innocent and blamed the girl"* (KII, female). This highlights a cultural norm where *"girls are always at fault. Men cannot be at fault,"* reinforcing the gender bias.

One female key informant working for a charity highlighted the strong control husbands would have over women, drawing on her experience: *"For example, she is not allowed to drink coffee with her friend. To control, some men do not allow their women to open the door to anyone if they are outside the house, whoever is asking. (...) When I asked some women who came to our center to give me their phone numbers, they would say they didn't have one and would take her husband's number instead. They told me they were forbidden from using a mobile phone. (...) This is very common. I saw more than 15 women like this."*

As another manifestation of unequal norms, one female FGD participant also mentioned, *"Women are not supposed to be like men; they are supposed to make sacrifices. It's ok for men to cheat on their wives because they are men. We see many women who complain about the lack of attention and care."* Moreover, social norms were also cited by a female interviewee with respect to arranged marriages: *"When you force me to marry a relative of mine. What if I didn't want him? In my opinion, he is not suitable for me. Isn't this because of social norms? Isn't this abuse? Have you been fair? This is the first thing. Social norms, for example, don't allow divorce. Social norms mean it's okay that girls get abused. It's ok for my daughter to be hit so she can behave."*

Violence within the home, particularly against women, was reported to be often rooted in deeply ingrained patriarchal attitudes and resistance to gender equality. As one female participant reported, *"At home, anything such as honor killings, sexual violence, and violence against the gender can be present because of an unmodern mindset that is holding tight to a gap that should have been covered a l time ago concerning the woman's right or the man's rights."*

On the other hand, one female participant suggested that a shift in gender dynamics within marriages might cause conflict. As explained by her, in the past, women were expected to respect and obey their husbands out of fear, even tolerating conditions of poverty. Divorce was considered a scandal, reinforcing the dominance of men: *"Fear was dominating women, and they would never contradict their husbands. So, this was the reason why there were fewer problems."* However, *"Today, women are more demanding and more straightforward with their demands; there is more awareness."* This change reflects a decline in patriarchal control as women demand greater respect and equality in their relationships.

According to some participants, religious justifications around gender norms appear to perpetuate inequality. As one participant stated, *"They use religion to explain and reason that men are above women. They believe that they are above us, they have the power, and they use religion as a weapon."*

One key informant described the impact of traditional upbringing on girls, leading to internalized guilt and feelings of shame: *"Because, as I told you, many abuse cases are around. So someone might touch you when you want to walk around narrow streets. (...) In school, we used to face this; many of my classmates told me they used to face this kind of harassment. They would be walking around the bus and then feel the touch of a hand. They would feel disgusted that this happened to them; they feel disgusted with themselves. I tell them it's not their fault. They would say they shouldn't have walked there. This is the way we think. (...) You see? This is a problem we face, that we blame ourselves instead of protecting ourselves"* (KII, female).

As indicated by interviewees, some tribal customs further undermine justice, particularly for women. One female interviewee noted, *"The tribe would go and drink coffee with the other family, then the girl would lose her right. (...). Isn't this injustice? When there is a rape, the case ends with a cup of coffee?"* Such practices reduce serious crimes, like rape, to matters settled by informal agreements, effectively denying victims justice and perpetuating a cycle of violence.

With respect to violence against children, qualitative data indicated that physical punishment may be seen as an acceptable way to correct a child's behavior, leading to an environment where punishment is normalized. As one statement of a male FGD participant emphasizes, there is a belief that *"physical punishment should not be used as a means of intimidation or inflicting pain but rather as a tool for teaching and guiding children in a constructive manner."* This mindset, however, opens the door to abuse when the line between discipline and violence becomes blurred, often leaving children vulnerable.

Traditional views also may discourage reporting and interference. For instance, one interviewee explained, *"Sometimes it is a matter of tradition. Even if your father is violent, how would you report your father? He is your father at the end of the day."* This illustrates how deeply ingrained respect for authority, especially parental authority, makes it difficult for victims to seek help. The reluctance to interfere in domestic matters is further emphasized: *"We used to hear a man assaulting and beating his wife; we'd hear her screaming, and our dads would tell us to ignore it since it is not our business. (…) They would say, they don't need this kind of hassle, it's our habit and traditions"* (FGD, male).

Loss of Religious Adherence

Some interviewees saw the lack of religion as a major reason for violence, as expressed by the following male interviewee: *"The reason behind violence is only one, no awareness, and not being religious. Thank God we are in an Islamic country. (...) We have our Islamic law that we are proud of. We have Islamic rules; we have to follow them. We will then live in peace and harmony. But as I say, if we are far removed from religion and our social norms, here we fall into a life of crime, whether in Zarqa or elsewhere."*

As more elaborated on, in the following section, the limited reporting of violent incidents was also seen as a contributing factor to the perpetuation of violence.

3.3.12. Reporting Patterns and Help-Seeking Behavior

The reporting rate is relatively low, with men more likely reporting cases. Only 24% of male and 13% of female respondents reported violent incidents they witnessed. This suggests that violence is significantly under-reported in Zarqa (see Figure 44). About 79% of the respondents who did report a violent incident, reported it to the police, 7% reported it to their family and 14% reported to other miscellaneous parties such as the school principal. However, no one reported to the local NGO, friends, a health facility or a religious leader (see Figure 45).
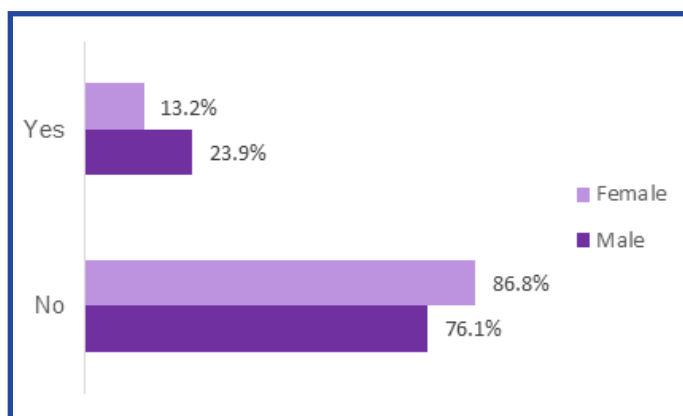
Figure 44: Did you report any of the violent incidents you have witnessed?
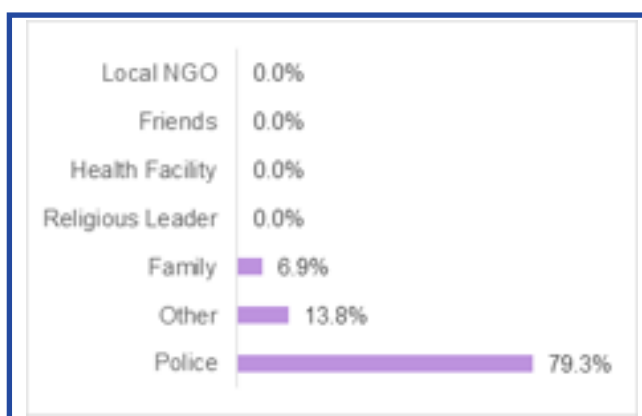
Figure 45: If yes, where did you report?

As shown in Figure 46, in 66% of the cases where a violent incident was reported, some form of action was taken. About 28% of respondents reported no action, and 7% did not know. The majority of respondents did not seek any help after being exposed to violence, with noteworthy gender differences. About 53% of women did not seek any help compared to 63% of men, representing a percentage point difference of 10 (see Figure 47).
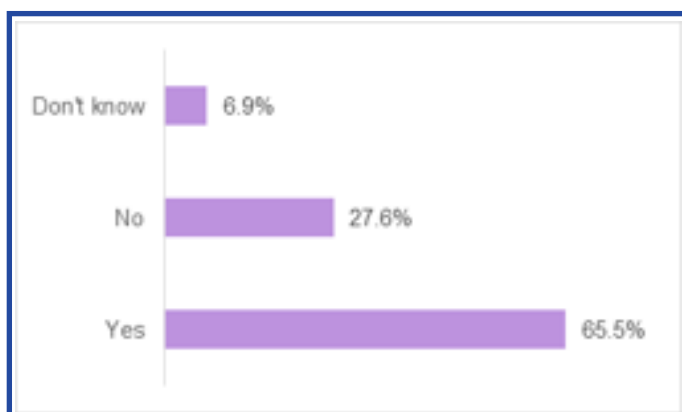
Figure 46: Was any action taken after reporting?
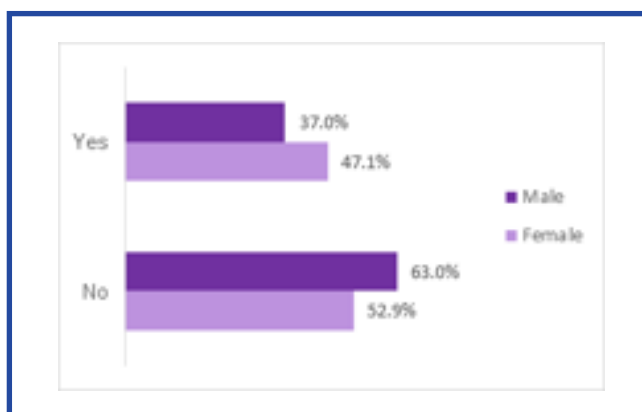
Figure 47: Have you sought any help after being exposed to violence?

Complementing this information, according to the Jordan Population and Family Health Survey (2017-18), only 19% of ever-married women aged 15-49 who have ever experienced any physical or sexual violence committed by their husbands have sought help. Notably, 67% have neither sought help nor told anyone about the violence. Women who have experienced both physical and sexual violence are more likely to have sought help (30%) than women who have experienced only sexual violence (8%) or only physical violence (17%). [33]

The following details information collected from interviews and FGDs regarding the potential drivers of non-reporting and limited help-seeking.

Passiveness, Limited Efficacy of and Trust in State Institutions

Several respondents pointed to the passiveness of people and their reluctance to intrude in the lives of others: *"But as I said, the problem is that people think it's not their business." (*KII, male). This might also be associated with fears of violating social norms as to respecting that respective matters are dealt with within families: *"Let's assume that there was domestic violence and someone knew about it, he will ask himself about what is his business in all of that because in the end, they are a family, I cannot invade their privacy and report about it; since they understand each other in this way so why should I interfere?"* (FGD, female).

Beliefs about the lack of efficacy in institutions contribute to low reporting. Participants noted inefficiencies in handling complaints, often resulting in delayed or inadequate responses. One participant said, *"If you send them a message online that you are being harassed, they don't answer. If you call 911, they tell you to go to the police station, get a paper, and then go to the governor. Where's the security in this?"* (FGD, male) Another participant added, "*When you go to a security center to complain about someone, they tell you to forget about it to avoid trouble. How can you reach a police center only for the police to persuade you not to report it?"* (FGD, male).

The follow-up process for cases was described as lengthy and bureaucratic. One female participant explained: *"I feel that it takes too long, it has 1,000 questions, and until they believe that there is something, the topic will be forgotten, and everything will be ruined."* Corruption was also mentioned as a significant factor affecting the outcome of cases. As one participant stated: *"The bribe plays a role. It is possible that the person we reported about bribed the person handling the case, so no real action will be taken."* This lack of timely and effective intervention appears to erode public trust in the system.

There was no absolute agreement on the effectiveness of the Family Protection services. Some informants highlighted the lack of effectiveness of Family Protection Services, particularly in supporting women. One key informant shared: *"From the cases that I saw, they bring the husband and ask him to sign a commitment letter. And that's it"* (KII, female). Another participant elaborated: *"And those who go to family protection, make sure the husband signs on a commitment letter that he won't hit her again. He would hit her even more"* (KII, female). Others saw the Family Protection Unit as beneficial. For instance, one male FGD participant discussed that the Family Protection Unit provides a structured framework for handling cases. He highlighted that in cases where a public prosecutor would be involved, the wife's testimony would be sufficient. Given that the qualitative data

do not reflect representative community perceptions, this perspective raises important questions about how the broader public, particularly men, view these procedures - whether they see them as genuine empowerment for women or merely symbolic gestures.

Social Norms, Fear, and the Culture of Shame

Cultural norms, especially around shame, also prevent women from reporting violence against them. One FGD participant described the deep-rooted fear among women: *"Some wives say they prefer to get killed than to report their husbands."* Female participants emphasized that young women, in particular, would remain silent out of fear of tarnishing their reputations. One respondent explained: *"A lot of girls go through such things, but they are afraid to talk about it out of fear of a bad reputation. And let's not forget that we live in very conservative areas where those things are taboo. Everyone knows everyone here. All the families know each other in our community, and if something happens to a girl, everyone will know about it"* (FGD, female). Another male interviewee added, *"They cannot do anything and don't want to complain because they will be dragged into courtrooms, and it will be scandalous. Do you see where our problems lie?"*

FGD participants discussed the tendency to *"cover-up"* incidences of sexual and physical violence: *"We talked about honor crimes. Sometimes, the girl is innocent, and sometimes, she is to blame. They would cover it up, and no legal action would be taken against the perpetrator. Instead of punishing the perpetrator and making him pay for his crime, they cover the story up"* (FGD, female). In the same vein, one female FGD participant's experience indicates the underreporting of violence within familial and community contexts. She shared how her daughter lived with relatives who constantly judged her, leading her to run away. Upon returning, her nephew violently assaulted her, causing severe injuries. Despite this, the police investigation was thwarted by a reluctance to acknowledge the abuse, as witnesses falsely attributed her injuries to a fall.

Lacking Awareness and Dependence

Moreover, some informants noted that the lack of awareness about legal rights would further contribute to the underreporting of violence. This underscores the need to empower women with knowledge of their rights and financial independence. One female interviewee stressed: *"We need to raise the awareness of women and children about their rights and to be able to report it. To be able to take care of herself and not completely depend on men. Most people say they cannot divorce their spouses because they are not working. They cannot financially take care of themselves, so they stay."* Financial dependence was also cited as a reason for tolerating sexual harassment at work. One key informant noted: *"When a woman has worked in a factory for 8, 10, or 12 hours when her manager harasses her, she doesn't complain because this is the only source of income she has."* Contextualizing this information, sexual harassment at work is pervasive in Jordan, with 75% of women having indicated in a 2021 ILO survey that they have experienced some form of harassment.[34] According to the same study, most women do not report, with additional reasons of fear of retaliation, lack of awareness, fear of stigma, and lack of trust in the complaint process. On the other hand, the study also found that sexual harassment can lead women to withdraw from the labor market directly, increasing their dependence on spouses and family.

One female FGD also highlighted the problem among Syrian inhabitants: *"But as Syrians, we don't know if we can go to the district governor and file a complaint. As Syrians, there are many things that we can't overcome; we don't know if we're allowed to do them or not. The locals can file complaints, go to court, file a case, or go to the governor. But we don't know if we can do those things or not."*

Fear of Retaliation

Some narratives also pointed to the fear of retaliation and further conflict. One FGD participant (male) provided the following example: *"Honestly, the biggest issue is the barrage of questions that arise. Additionally, if someone lives in a certain neighborhood and reports a particular family, that family might start causing trouble after the issue is resolved. For example, if the court case costs them around 5,000- 6,000 dinars, they might harass the person who reported them, saying, 'You cost us money.' This can lead to further conflicts."* Also lacking anonymity was noted as compounding this issue, exemplified by the following comment: *"Sadly, there are cases of men prostituting their daughters and wife. If you go to report him, he will blame you for ruining his family. One way or the other, he will find out who snitched on him"* (FGD, male).

In sum, cultural and systemic barriers appear to significantly impact the reporting and handling of violence, perpetuating cycles of abuse and leaving victims vulnerable.

3.3.13. Vigilante Behavior

This study shows a repeating pattern of mistrust, often amplified, toward the ability of authorities to deal effectively with cases of violence. Additionally, the study shows low reporting rates, descriptions of a judicial system that favors men, and a tendency to handle cases of violence within the family or in the tribe. This could be related to the fact that approximately 30% of females thought it was justified for people in the community to take justice into their own hands, compared to 22% of their male counterparts.
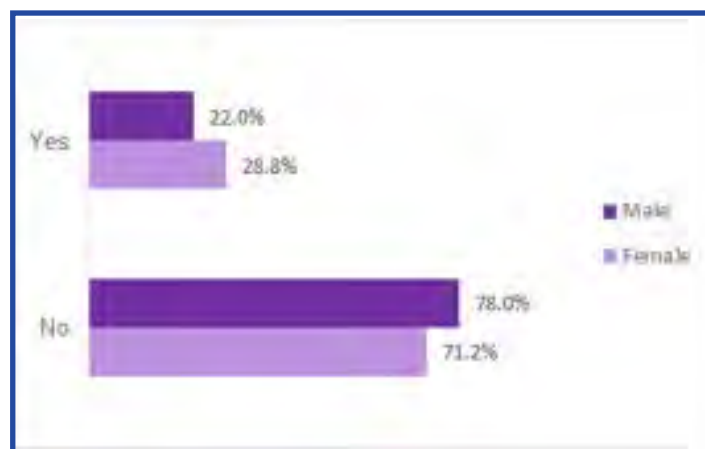
Figure 48: Is it justified for people in this community to
take justice in their own hands? (using violence)

Among the respondents who said it is justified to take justice into their own hands, the chart above displays the circumstances in which they believe it is justified to do so. Assault is the category where most males and females think it is appropriate to take justice into their own hands (42%). All other categories were below 8% for both males and females.
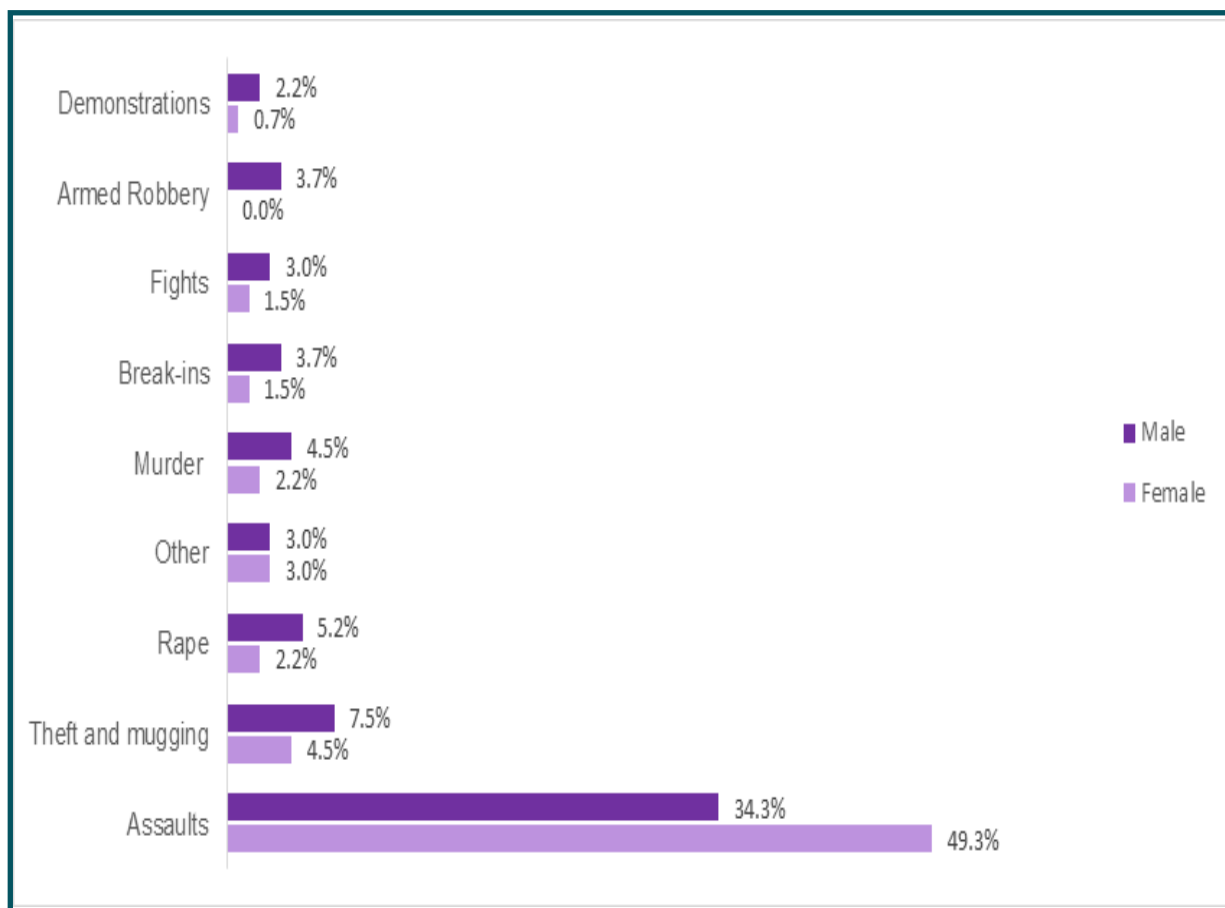
Figure 49: If yes, in which of these circumstances?

<u>**Preventive Factors**</u>

Asked about the factors that would prevent violence within the community, some overarching themes (see graph below) include law enforcement and prevention (such as stricter laws and increased police presence), addressing economic challenges (such as job creation and improving living standards), and factors related to family and upbringing (such as strengthening moral values, education, and positive role modeling). Further, respondents attribute an important role to information materials/campaigns, and especially females, violence prevention interventions. As outlined before, responses received as preventive factors crosscut and complement data collected as to causal factors (also presented in the recommendations section later).
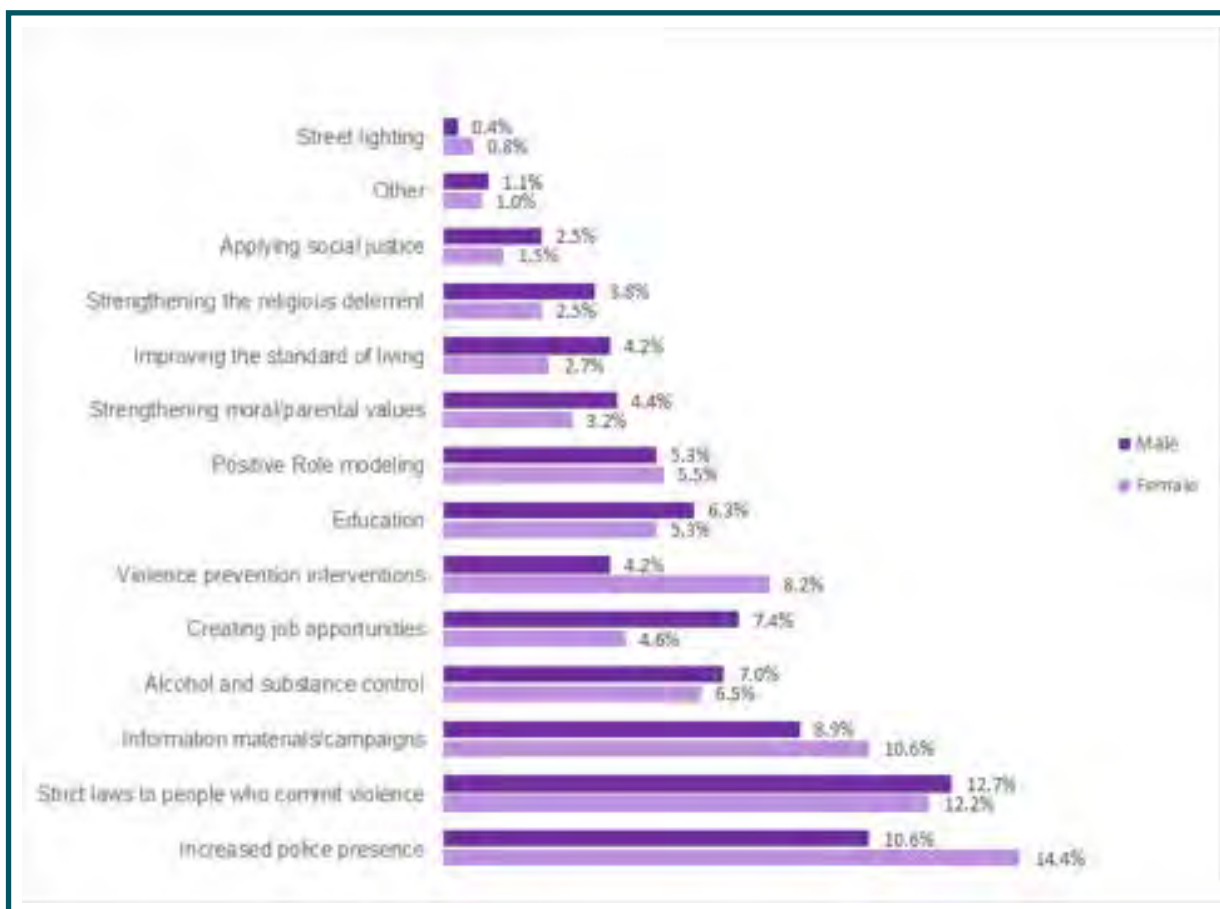
Figure 50: In your opinion, what prevents violence in the community?[35]

With respect to the family level, the most frequently reported preventive factors and interventions include parental support (21%) and job creation (19%). Taken together, respondents appear to see high relevance in measures that ensure healthy family dynamics, with parental support (21%), marriage counseling (12%), and strengthening the level of understanding between family members (8%). On the other hand, factors that broadly pertain to increased awareness, such as information on GBV and women's rights, as well as information about violence, are considered relatively rarely as preventive factors.
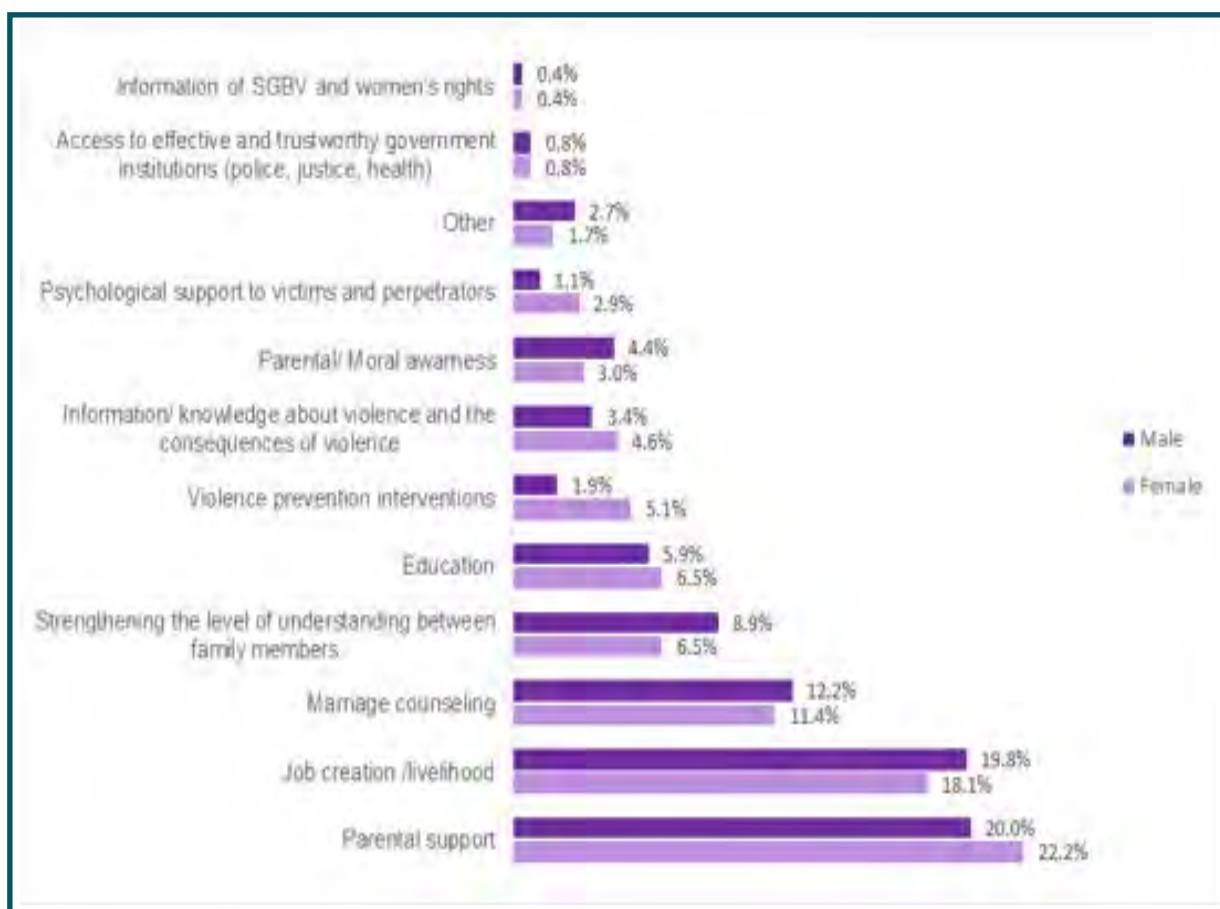
Figure 51: In your opinion, what prevents violence within the family?

As outlined before, interviewees and FGD participants consistently noted unemployment and economic hardship as the root causes of violence. Preventing school dropouts and providing job opportunities were consequently highlighted as preventive measures. Family upbringing was seen as a critical factor in both causing and preventing violence, with some stressing the need for a solid moral foundation and parental guidance.

Aligned with survey responses, several interviewees pointed to the need for strict laws, systematic law enforcement, and deterrents. As expressed by one female key informant, *"There must be strong laws (…). Whenever laws are strong and preventative, this will minimize violence."* This perception is consistent with collected opinions on root causes. As one participant explained, *"Because no matter how strong you were when you know there is persecution, the person would stop. But when they feel there is no punishment, they do what they want."* Others shared similar concerns, noting that fragmented enforcement and inadequate legal frameworks allow violent behaviors to continue unchecked. A male participant stated, *"There are no laws to repress them. The government doesn't take strict measures against them, that's why they can go too far. They will continue to commit acts of violence for as long as they can."*

The absence of strict consequences for crimes like honor killings was seen as creating a culture of impunity, where perpetrators feel they can act without facing serious repercussions. In this context, a male focus group discussed the issue of corruption and the lack of institutional effectiveness. As stated, *"There is huge corruption in the centers of security. The man who killed his wife in an honor killing got only six months of prison for general rights because her father and mother canceled the complaint. Why do we have this disregard? A brother kills his sister, and then the parents drop the case, so he only goes in for six months. We need a deterrent."* Another participant added, *"They don't want to work because they get their salaries both ways, so they try to convince people to cancel their complaints,"* further pointing to institutional corruption.

There were also concerns about the limited reach of law enforcement in certain areas, with one participant highlighting, *"There are places the police are scared to go to."* This suggests that in some regions, the lack of a police presence further enables violence to thrive.

In contrast to a purely punitive approach, one participant advocated for a shift toward rehabilitation. The female respondent expressed concerns about the current system, saying, *"When I want to talk about criminal behavior, this person has entered the prison for the first time, and he was punished, and in the second time he was punished, so when he comes out of prison, he is becoming worse than before"* (FGD, female). Several participants felt that imprisonment and harsh treatment only make offenders more violent, pointing to the need for rehabilitation programs to prevent reoffending.

Based on focus group discussions and interviews, parental support could take various forms. For instance, one interviewee outlined how parents would refuse to let their daughter be caught in a violent marriage and not help her, concerned about what other family members and society would think: *"But what if her parents do not accept her back? No matter where you go, parents have a big role, they either lift their daughter up or put her down"* (KII1, female). Some participants stressed the importance of parental support in raising confident, independent daughters. One respondent shared a positive example about her daughter, *"When she goes out to work, she has her own car by the way, and she is strong. Sometimes she works after 7. He (her husband) would call her and ask, 'Why are you late?' This is not nice. But thank God my daughter is a very strong woman because I support her. I heard her, she told him, 'Why are you controlling me like this on this issue? Do you know that I still live with my parents? You have no power over me."* The participant acknowledged that not all women are empowered to defend themselves in similar situations.

With respect to community-level violence, survey respondents frequently referred to information materials/campaigns, which can be considered aligned with the high importance interviewees and FGD participants attributed to awareness campaigns when asked about recommendations, as presented in the following section. Concerning their presence in Zarqa, one male FG discussed the lack of attention given to Zarqa: *"There isn't a chance for educating people in Zarqa. They directly stop when people aren't responsive, instead of creating awareness initiatives."* As further explained by another participant, *"Most projects are in Amman the capital, and Zarqa is mistreated because ranks the second in number of populations."*

3.4. Recommendations

Survey respondents were asked about possible recommendations to reduce violence in the community (open-response question). The most popular recommendation, supported by 33% of respondents, is increasing awareness. Closely following this is the suggestion to reduce unemployment and poverty (31%). These suggestions are strongly aligned with previous findings, which pointed to unemployment and poverty as major risk factors and underlying causes of violence. One key informant underscored its recommendation: *"Decrease the unemployment rate; if this happens, believe me, violence will decrease to 50%. Imagine. 50%. I conducted studies in a certain directorate. So, I did a study there and imagine that the violence rate is only 4%. 4%? Do you know why? Because the unemployment rate there is zero. Zero. For males and females"* (KII, female).
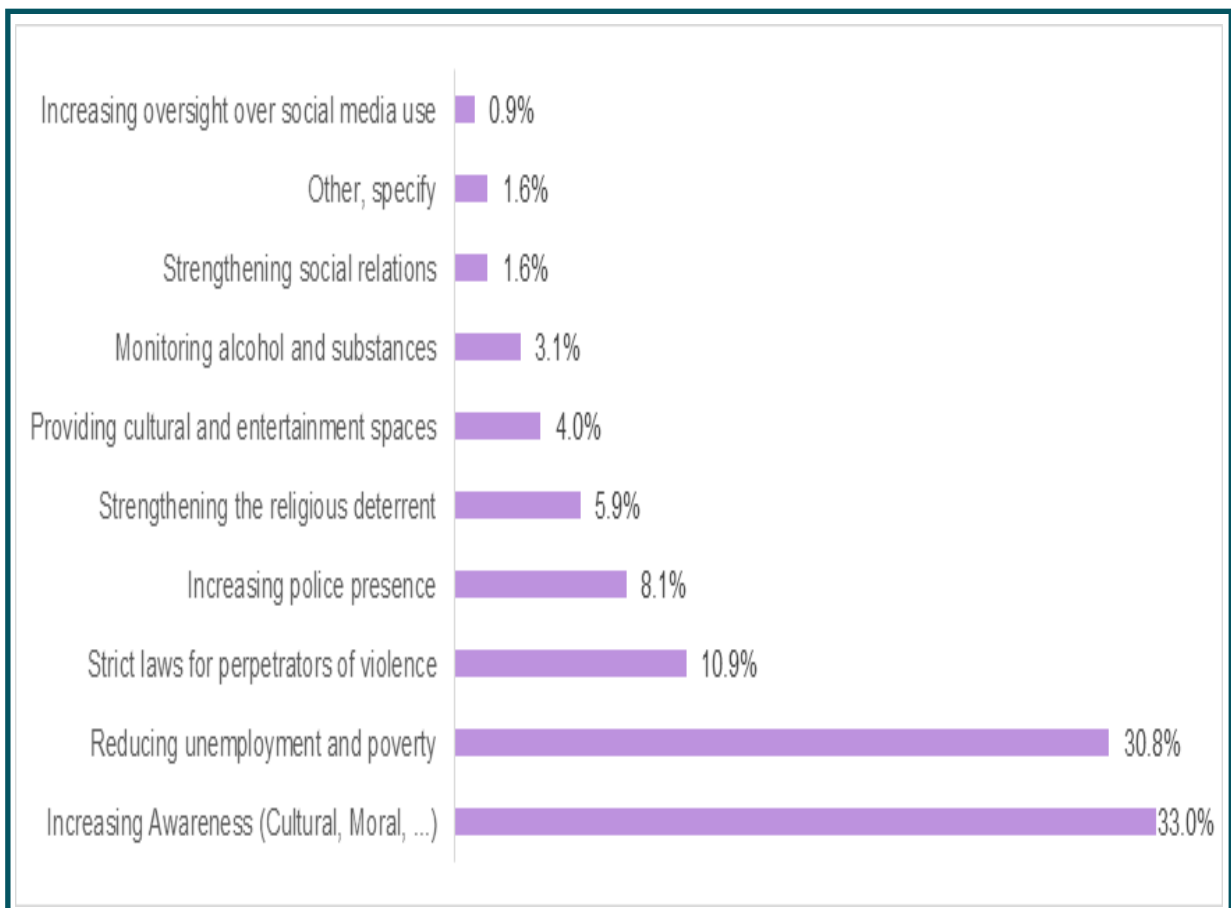
Figure 52:Any suggestions or recommendations on what should/could be done to reduce violence in your community?

In the interviews and FGDs, several nuances of awareness-raising were discussed:

Increasing awareness about laws, rights and increasing reporting

Some respondents emphasized the importance of legal awareness and encouraging people to report and seek help. They highlighted that without knowledge of their rights, individuals may remain silent, underscoring the need for legal education and a transparent approach to addressing violence.

Increasing awareness of what constitutes violence

Participants highlighted the lack of understanding of the concept of violence, particularly gender-based violence. This underscores the importance of educating individuals on recognizing different forms of violence, especially those that may be socially or culturally taboo or difficult to discuss openly.

Increasing awareness among children, involving community leaders and influencers, and sharing success stories

A key strategy discussed in the qualitative data involves educating children and using success stories to inspire them. Participants suggested that youth-led initiatives and influential figures, such as community leaders and religious figures, could raise awareness on issues like school dropouts, violence, and child labor. Sharing stories of victims and successful outcomes was seen as particularly impactful.

Increasing awareness and sharing success stories to increase confidence in institutions

One female FGD participant recommended using success stories to empower individuals, showcasing stories of people who have faced violence, sought governmental support, and received it, to further encourage others to take similar action and seek help when needed. Social media was suggested due to its reach.

Increasing awareness of sexual abuse among children

Educating children on issues such as harassment was also discussed, highlighting the role of early intervention. One respondent noted: *"When the child is learning, they know more about reporting harassment and are encouraged to do so. Do not stay silent. Knowing that there are certain body areas that people are not supposed to touch. This is awareness for children. Previously, parents used to feel shy about this."* Relatedly, also the roles of schools in sexual education were highlighted.

Increasing awareness through media coverage

Across interviews and FGDs, informants frequently highlighted the *"hidden"* nature of violence in Zarqa. The limited media coverage was criticized, as put by one FGD participant: *"We knew from our neighbors that some guys abused a boy sexually. (...) The media does not report it at all. We see most crimes we hear about as posts on Facebook, or we hear about them from someone close to the case, or we would be in the same area when the crime happens. Where is the media? Where is the media? The media does not tell us about these stories; they only mention the big stories that involve tribes. In my opinion, as a young woman, I tell you this is a problem. I have to know that a crime happened in this area."*

Civil society organizations were seen as key players in raising awareness. A respondent mentioned: *"On a societal level, civil society institutions can raise their effectiveness. Through projects on awareness. (...) So, civil society institutions honestly do a lot here in the Zarqa area. I know almost all institutions here, so they do that. (...) If they can do more. To focus more on this topic."* Moreover, participants highlighted the importance of engaging professionals and an inclusive approach: *"Increase awareness for all parents and reach them in their homes. This needs professionals and social workers, police, and institutions with experience"* (KII, female). Respondents also highlighted the importance of reaching out to influential people: *"You have to increase the awareness of the old generation. You have to reach them. Those who have power. Also, Imams. They have power. The community leader. Those who hear about an issue happening in a certain home can talk to them, and they can communicate with the family and decrease this kind of abuse. This works. Because sometimes, as I mentioned, we have strong ties with our tribes, and people listen to their tribe leader"* (KII, female).

Aside from raising awareness, some informants highlighted the importance of sustainable, community-driven programs focusing on youth engagement. According to one male FGD participant, to reduce violence, effective strategies would include creating safe spaces for youth (especially students in grades 7 to 12) where they can participate in healthy, educational activities. These spaces could serve as outlets for frustration and provide alternative opportunities, such as small entrepreneurial projects (e.g., kiosks), which help foster economic self-reliance and community involvement. However, a key issue would be the lack of continuity in such initiatives. Changes in administration or policies often would disrupt the progress of violence prevention efforts.

Similarly, the value of engaging youth in constructive activities was highlighted. One FGD participant (male) reflected on the importance of Quranic centers in their childhood, noting that these centers provided religious education and opportunities for play and socialization. By keeping children occupied and offering positive outlets for their energy, such programs could prevent negative behaviors from developing. The participant suggested that without such engagement, being idle at home under parental pressure could lead to frustration and *"negative energy"* that might otherwise manifest in harmful ways.

Safe spaces

The interviews highlighted the lack of safe spaces in Zarqa, such as parks and green spaces for young people to go to instead of hanging around in the streets. The importance of safe spaces is also highlighted in the INSPIRE report, which states that relatively simple interventions, derived from environmental design, can effectively prevent crime and noticeably improve people's lives. To ensure that parks and green spaces are actually safe, it is important to have proper lightning and surveillance or security guards.

3.5. Validation Workshop Feedback

The feedback from the validation workshop highlighted several key findings. The workshop enriched the study by providing local insights, identifying overlooked areas like violence against teachers, and offering practical suggestions for improving both data collection and the study's focus on vulnerable groups. The feedback is summarized below.

1. Prevalence of Violence and Contributing Factors

Participants acknowledged that various forms of violence are prevalent, particularly in densely populated areas, and emphasized the importance of addressing specific types. Contributions are predominantly aligned with study results, validating the findings besides adding further nuances.

- **Widespread violence:** Violence, including cyber violence which has not received much attention in the study, is a common issue in Zarqa, as confirmed by participants.

- **Population density as a factor:** It was highlighted that high population density, such as in schools, leads to more violence: *"Where there is a high population, there is violence."*

- **Focus on violence against children:** Bullying and violence were flagged as critical issues affecting children's mental health, with a strong emphasis on addressing violence between children.

- **Drug-related violence:** Drugs were identified as one of the main drivers of violence, signaling the need to address substance abuse as part of any intervention.

- **Normalized violence against women:** Violence against women was described as becoming almost culturally ingrained. Women face various forms of inequality, including denial of inheritance. The lack of access to higher education for women due to distance and cultural attitudes was highlighted. Raising awareness was considered highly important. However, it was also critically remarked to pinpoint where data would suggest inequality. Respective sections on cultural and gender norms considered this feedback.

- **Marital stress and violence:** The first year of marriage, extended family pressures, and economic struggles were pointed out as key contributors to domestic violence and the rising divorce rate.

- **High early marriage rates:** Early marriage was flagged as a significant issue that needs to be addressed.

- **Economic exploitation through child labor:** Raising awareness of this issue was deemed crucial.

- **Questions on murder rates:** There was skepticism about the reported murder rates in Zarqa, with participants noting that only one or two cases had been widely known. It has to be noted that quantitative results presented on murder were at 0%; anecdotal reports of KIIs and FGDs participants presented should not be seen as a quantification of this type of violence.

2. Support for Victims and Prevention Measures

Participants advocated for centers to support women affected by violence and the need for stricter laws to prevent child marriage and child labor. Additionally, there was a call to empower children with skills to resist bullying and violence.

3. Violence in Schools

Feedback from stakeholders from respective fields focused on the prevalence of violence in educational settings and the role of school staff in addressing it. These results add to the study findings by shifting the focus to violence dynamics that were only marginally addressed in the study:

- **School violence linked to overcrowding:** Schools with high populations were identified as hotspots for violence due to overcrowding.

- **Teacher-targeted violence:** The study was criticized for not addressing violence against teachers, who also face aggression from students and even school management.

- **Strengthening referral systems:** Participants stressed the need for an effective referral system in schools and better education for school counselors on recognizing and addressing violence.

- **School counselors' role:** The importance of school counselors was highlighted, especially in dealing with violence not only against students but also teachers.

4. Data Comprehensiveness, Interpretation and Methodological Improvements

Suggestions were made to improve how the study collects and interprets its data, ensuring clarity and accuracy:

- **Clarification of questions:** A representative from a local NGO suggested that questions related to the 'community' should be further clarified to ensure participants fully understand them.

- **Yearly fluctuations in data:** Participants noted that violence rates might change year to year due to variables like drug use and poverty, and this should be acknowledged in the report.

- **Exclusion of key areas:** Participants noted that significant areas with high violence, such as the center of Zarqa, Al Zawhareh, and Al Janag, were not included in the research map presented to participants during the workshop. It has to be noted that the map was based on extracting reported hotspots from the KIIs and FGDs, which cannot ensure complete coverage and is subject to the perceptions of involved informants.

- **Insufficient sample size:** The sample size of 526 was criticized as inadequate for accurately assessing the scope of violence in Zarqa, suggesting that a larger sample may be needed for a more reliable analysis.

ANNEXES

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS GUIDE

Greetings. My name is [facilitator name] and I represent Mindset. Mindset is independent research organization that conducts research for DIGNITY and NAYA. DIGNITY is a Danish human rights organization working in Jordan in partnership with NAYA. NAYA is a youth-led organization working with youth programs.

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this focus group discussion on violence in your community. This focus group is part of a larger assessment Mindset and its partner NAYA and DIGNITY are undertaking to establish the extent of violence in Zarqa governorate and how it can be addressed. The information gathered will be used to inform our projects, to conduct research and will be shared with policy makers to support them to develop interventions to prevent violence. The aim of the study is to understand violence dynamics and root causes of violence in Zarqa. By violence we mean both physical, psychological, and sexual violence. Violence can occur within families as violence against children, violence in the marriage or in the larger family. But violence can also occur in society, where some locations are less safe than others, where the perpetrators can be gangs or even state authorities. In the discussion, we encourage you to mention what type of violence you are referring to.

During this focus group we will ask questions and facilitate a conversation on the topic of violence in your area. Please keep in mind that there are no *"right"* or *"wrong"* answers to any of the questions we will ask. The purpose is to stimulate conversation and hear the opinions of everyone in the room. I hope you will be comfortable speaking honestly and sharing your ideas with us.

Please note that this session will be recorded to ensure we capture your ideas during the conversation. The comments from the focus group will remain confidential and your name will not be attached to any comments you make. You have the right not to answer questions and you can withdraw from the interview at any point. Based on this information, do you consent to be part of the FGD?

Yes _____, No _____

Do you have any questions before we begin? (Set ground rules e.g. switch of mobile phones and listen and respect each other's opinions without interruptions)

During the discussion, we will lean against the World Health Organization's definition of violence which says the following: The World Health Organization (WHO) definition of violence: *"The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation."* To qualify as violence the definition stresses the intentionality of the act, while unintentional incidents like traffic accidents are excluded. Interpersonal violence is subdivided into family violence (including child abuse and neglect, intimate partner violence, and elder abuse) and community violence (including youth violence, rape or sexual assault involving strangers, and violence in institutional settings such as schools, workplaces, prisons, and nursing homes).

Let us do a quick round of introductions. (Prayers in case it is seen by participants as necessary).

1. **What is it like living in Zarqa?**

2. **What problems/challenges do residents of Zarqa face? What are the most serious of these problems and why?**

3. **How do you understand violence?**

   a. FOR THE INTERVIEWER – DO NOT READ ALOUD: (Have these types in the back of your heads to probe and broaden the discussion: Violence against children, child neglect, Sexual and gender-based violence, honor killings, Domestic violence, state violence such as police violence, violence in relation to demonstrations, political motivated violence, gang violence, shooting, robbery with violence, tribal violence)

4. **What types of violence is most common?**

   a. FOR THE INTERVIEWER – DO NOT READ ALOUD: (Have these types in the back of your heads to probe and broaden the discussion: Violence against children, child neglect, Sexual and gender-based violence, honor killings, Domestic violence, state violence such as police violence, violence in relation to demonstrations, political motivated violence, gang violence, shooting, robbery with violence, tribal violence)

5. **What are the violence trends in this area/ where does violence happen? and which types of violence do you see? Has violence in your area increased in your opinion?**

   a. Are there known *"hotspots"* for violence in Zarqa, such as certain neighborhoods, public spaces, or during particular events? Have you noticed any changes in the patterns of violence over time? Mention geographical locations such as what type of violence happens at university campus, hotspots of demonstrations in Zarqa, bus station/ train stations etc.).

   b. Does this type of violence occur at particular times? Are there any events that tend to trigger incidents of violence?

6. **What do you think are the root causes of violence?**

   a. Probe: Consider different levels such as personal, family, community, and societal factors. How do these layers interact to perpetuate violence?

   b. Ask respondents to specify the type of violence they are referring to, if they are discussing a specific type.

7. **Who do you think are most often victims of violence and why? What increases the chances of one becoming a victim of violence?**

   a. Are certain groups more vulnerable? How do factors like age, gender, socioeconomic status, or ethnicity play into this?

8. **Who are the most common perpetrators of violence? What increases the probability of one becoming a perpetrator?**

   a. Are there common characteristics or backgrounds among perpetrators? How do societal, economic, and cultural factors contribute?

   b. Do certain events make individuals more likely to be violent or exhibit violent behavior?

9. **How do the families and communities of victims of violence deal with its occurrence?**

   a. Are there traditional or formal mechanisms in place for support and justice? How effective are these responses?

   b. Are there specific reactions that are common after violent incidents?

   c. Do reactions differ for different types of violence?

10. **Do people in this area report violence? Where do they report?**

    a. What are the barriers to reporting violence?

    b. What changes might encourage more people to report incidents?

    c. Are specific types of violence more under/overreported?

    11. Do you think people are satisfied with the response to the reported cases? (for instance, to a police station)

11. Are you aware of any interventions that are being used to prevent violence?

    a. What are some of these strategies? Are they working? Do you think they are successful? What in your view makes them successful?? Who are the players in violence prevention? Do different ministries, agencies, NGO's etc. work together to prevent crime?)

    b. Ask respondents to specify the type of violence they are referring to, if they are discussing a specific type.

12. What type of violence prevention would you recommend in this area?

    a. Based on your experiences and observations, what specific actions or programs do you think would be most effective in reducing violence? Who should be involved in these prevention efforts?

    b. Are there specific people, places, or timeframes that should be targeted?

Many thanks for your time!

For the question on root causes of violence, this model can be of inspiration. It shows examples of different types of root causes that exist in different spheres.

ANNEX 2

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW GUIDE

My name is _____ and I represent Mindset (a research institution in Jordan). We are working with the local NGO NAYA and DIGNITY (Danish Institute against Torture) to collect data about local perceptions of violence and experience of violence in Zarqa. We are asking questions regarding forms of crimes and violence, your opinion on the underlying causes, your experience of violence, the perpetrators, victims and risk groups, the patterns of reporting, the level of trust and prevention of violence in Zarqa. The information gathered will be shared with policy makers with a view to supporting them to develop interventions to address violence.

When we say violence, we mean threats or any use of physical force including threats, extorsion, harassment, punishments and psychological violence by family members, relatives, friends, neighbors, strangers, youth, police or local authorities. I want to assure you that all the information you provide will be treated with confidentiality according to Danish and Jordanian law. You have the right to stop the interview at any time or to skip any question that you do not want to answer.

Some topics may be difficult to discuss with us, but many persons have found it useful to have the opportunity to talk about it. Your participation is voluntary, but your experience will increase our understanding of violence, and we hope that the result of the study will serve to prevent violence in your neighborhood. You have the right not to answer and withdraw from the interview at any point. If there is anything unclear to you, we shall be delighted to provide you with more information. The interview will take approximately 30 min. to complete. Do you agree to be interviewed?

<u>Signature of volunteer participant:</u>

Name of organization:

Position/Designation:

Location:

Consent to participate in the research study   1. Yes   2. No

1. **What are the main types of violence in this area? Mentioning from the most common to the least.**

2. **What do you think are the main causes of violence in the area?**

3. **What are the effects/consequences of violence in your area?**

4. **Has the situation of violence changed in the last year, compared to the previous year?**

5. **Do you see an issue of religious motivated violence in your area?**

6. **Who are the main perpetrators of violence in your area?**

7. **Who are the most common victims of violence in this area (listing from the most common victims to the least)**

8. **Are there any existing interventions to prevent violence in your area? Are there any interventions from government, county government, NGOs in your area? How effective are these interventions in stopping violence?**

9. **What could be done to prevent violence in this area? What can be done on an individual, family and community-level to prevent violence?**

10. **What recommendations can you give to tackle violence in your area/ region at large?**

No	Question	Category	Value
	1. Background information The following questions are initial questions about your background. (Please either set a circle around the answer category that applies or write the answer when blank)		
1.1	Gender	Male	1
		Female	2
1.2	How old are you now?	_____ years	NA
1.3	What is your marital status?	Single	1
		Fiancé(e)	2
		Married	3
		Divorced	4
		Widow(er)	5
1.4	What is your nationality?		NA
1.5	How many people do you live with in your household?		NA
1.6	Are all of them family members?	Yes	1
		No	0
1.7	How many years in total did you spend studying in school, college, and university?	_____ years	NA
1.8	What describes your main work status best?	Paid work	1
		Self-employed, such as own your business	2
		Non-paid work such as volunteer	3
		Student	4
		Keeping house/ homemaker	5
		Retired	6
		Unemployed (Health reasons)	7
		Unemployed (other reasons)	8
		Other (specify) _____	

2. SECURITY IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Now I will ask you some questions about how you experience the security situation in your community.

2.1	How safe do you feel in your own house?	Completely safe	1
		Moderately safe	2
		Unsafe	3
2.2	How safe do you feel in your own community?	Completely safe	1
		Moderately safe	2
		Unsafe	3
2.3	Have you considered moving to another community due to the insecurity or violence experienced in your community?	Yes	1
		No	0
2.4	On what day(s) of the week do you feel most unsafe? (you can choose more than one option)	Monday	1
		Tuesday	2
		Wednesday	3
		Thursday	4
		Friday	5
		Saturday	6
		Sunday	7
2.5	At what time(s) of the day do you feel most unsafe? (you can choose more than one option)	Morning	1
		Midday	2
		Afternoon	3
		Evening	4
		Night	5

2.6	How safe do you feel at the following locations?		
	a. Café, restaurant	Safe	1
		Unsafe	2
		Not applicable	3
	b. At work	Safe	1
		Unsafe	2
		Not applicable	3
	c. College or university campus	Safe	1
		Unsafe	2
		Not applicable	3
	d. The street of your neighborhood	Safe	1
		Unsafe	2
		Not applicable	3
	e. The market / supermarket	Safe	1
		Unsafe	2
		Not applicable	3
	f. In public transportation	Safe	1
		Unsafe	2
		Not applicable	3
2.7	Where do you feel most unsafe in your community? And why?		

3. PERCEPTIONS OF VIOLENCE
Now, I will ask you some questions about your perceptions of violence.

3.1	Is it justified for people in this community to take justi in their own hands? (using violence)	Yes	1
		No	0
3.2a	If yes, in which of these circumstances? (DON'T READ OUT A LOUD) a. Murder	Yes	1
		No	0
3.2b	b. Armed robbery	Yes	1
		No	0
3.2c	c. Break-ins	Yes	1
		No	0
3.2d	d. Rape	Yes	1
		No	0
3.2e	e. Assaults	Yes	1
		No	0
3.2f	f. Fights	Yes	1
		No	0
3.2g	g. Demonstrations	Yes	1
		No	0
3.2h	h. Theft and mugging	Yes	1
		No	0

	4. RISK AND PREVENTIVE FACTORS
4.1	In your opinion what causes problems and conflicts in this community? *(please 3-5 things/elements)* 1. Unemployment 2. Poverty 3. Poor implementation of law 4. Cultural or traditional norms 5. High crime levels 6. Local illicit drug trade 7. Availability of arms 8. Inequality (btw. Different groups in the community) 9. Poor quality of education 10. Politics 11. Disagreement btw. Ethnic groups 12. Other (specify)
4.2	In your opinion what causes problems within families? (DON'T READ OUT A LOUD) (*please list 3-5 things/elements*) 1. Poor parenting practices 2. Early marriage (child marriage) 3. Marital issues 4. Cultural norms 5. Poverty 6. Social norms (such as acceptance of slapping/beating children) 7. Gender norms 8. Alcohol/substance abuse 9. Victim of child maltreatment (eg. Child neglect) 10. Psychological / personality disorder 11. History of violent behavior/ inherited violent behavior 12. Other, specify

4.3	In your opinion, what prevents violence in the community?
	    1. Increased police presence
	    2. Violence prevention interventions
	    3. Information materials/campaigns
	    4. Alcohol and substance control
	    5. Positive Role modeling
	    6. Street lighting
	    7. Strict laws to people who commit violence
	    8. Education
	    9. Other, specify

4.4	In your opinion, what prevents violence within the family?
	    1. Education
	    2. Job creation /livelihood
	    3. Parental support
	    4. Information/ knowledge about violence and the consequences of violence
	    5. Information of SGBV and women's rights
	    6. Violence prevention interventions
	    7. Psychological support to victims and perpetrators
	    8. Access to effective and trustworthy government institutions (police, justice, health)
	    9. Marriage counseling
	    10. Other, specify

5. EXPERIENCES AND VIOLENCE DYNAMICS
Now I will ask you about your own experiences (repeat confidentiality – information will only be used for the program and not shared with anyone)

5.1	Have you suffered from any form of violence during the last 6 months?

5.2	If yes, what form of violence have you experienced in the last 6 months?
	    1. Threats/intimidation/harassment
	    2. Psychological/emotional violence (gaslighting, manipulation, silence treatment etc.)
	    3. Beating, fighting
	    4. Sexual and Gender based violence (SGBV)
	    5. Robbery with violence
	    6. Shooting
	    7. Killing
	    8. Other, specify:

5.3	If yes, who were the perpetrator?
5.4	As a result of the violence, what are the consequences/symptoms that you've experienced?
5.5	During your experience of violence, did anyone come to your assistance or aid you in any way?
5.6	Is there any other member of this household who has suffered any forms of violence during the last 6 months?
5.7	Did any other member of your household experience any type of violence during the last 6 months?
5.7.1	If yes, how many family members?
5.7.2	What is their relation to you?

5.7.3	Who was the perpetrator?		
5.8	When witnessing or suffering a violent incident, what did the perpetrator use?		
5.9	Do you know people in this community that engage in violence/violent behavior towards others?		
5.10	Have you been exposed to any form of violence in your childhood?		
5.11	In your opinion, when and where is violence taking place in the public?		

6. VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND COMMUNITY TRUST
In the following section I will ask you questions on violence prevention and community trust
Do you find the following actors trustworthy?

6.1	a. Medical doctors	Trustworthy	1
		Not trustworthy	2
6.2	b. Local mosque / church	Trustworthy	1
		Not trustworthy	2
6.3	c. School	Trustworthy	1
		Not trustworthy	2
6.4	d. Community leaders	Trustworthy	1
		Not trustworthy	2
6.5	e. INGOs	Trustworthy	1
		Not trustworthy	2

	7. Social capital		
7.1	In the last 12 months, have you been an active member of any of any group in your community?	Work-related/ trade union	
		Religious group Community association	
		Credit/funeral group	
		Women's group	
		Sports group	
		Political group	
		Not applicable	
7.2	In the last 12 months, did you receive from the group any emotional help/counselling, economic help or assistance in helping you know or do things?	Yes, please specify	1
		No	2
7.3	In the last 12 months, did you receive any form of help or assistance (e.g. economic, counseling etc.) in helping you know or do things?	Yes, please specify	1
		No	2
7.4	In the last 12 months, have you joined together with other community members to address a problem or common issue?	Yes	1
		No	0
7.5	In the last 12 months, have you reported a problem or talked with a local authority or governmental organization about problems in this community?	Yes	1
		No	0
7.6	In general, do you feel that the majority of people in this community can be trusted?	Yes	1
		No	0
7.7	Do the majority of people in this community generally get along with each other?	Yes	1
		No	0
7.8	Do you feel as though you are really a part of this community?	Yes	1
		No	0
7.9	Do you think that the majority of people in this community would try to take advantage of you if they got the chance?	Yes	1
		No	0

8. perception of perpetrators and victims *Now I will ask you some questions on your perception of perpetrators and victims*	
8.1	Who are the most common victims of violence in your community? 1. Girls 2. Boys 3. Women 4. Men 5. Youth (18-35) 6. Elderly 7. People with disabilities
8.2	What type of violence is the most highly occurring in a household setting? 1. Physical violence (e.g. fight between family members) 2. Gender based violence 3. Child abuse 4. Sexual violence 5. Other, specify
8.3	What type of violence is the most common in your community? 1. Gang related violence 2. Youth violence 3. Political violence 4. Ethnic violence (e.g. between refugees and nationals) 5. Resource-based violence (e.g. Land-disputes, money etc.) 6. State-authority violence (e.g. police) 7. Other, specify
8.4	In your opinion, who are the most common perpetrators?
8.5	Have you ever been a perpetrator of violence?

	9. REPORTING PATTERNS
9.1	Did you report any of the violent incidents you have witnessed?
9.2	If yes, where did you report?
9.3	If yes, was any action taken after reporting?
9.4	Have you sought any help after being exposed to violence?
9.5	Do you have any suggestions or recommendations on what should/could be done to reduce violence in your community?

Short Social Capital Assessment Tool (SASCAT)

Structural Social Capital

1. **In the last 12 months have you been an active member of any of the following types of groups in your community?**   Score between 0 and 6

   Work-related/ trade union

   Religious group Community association/ co-op

   Credit/funeral group

   Women's group

   Sports group

   Political group

2. **In the last 12 months, did you receive from the group any emotional help, economic help, or assistance in helping you know or do things?**   Score between 0 and 6

   Work-related/ trade union

   Religious group/Community association-co-op

   Credit/funeral group

   Women's group

   Sports group

   Political group

3. In the last 12 months, did you receive from the group any emotional help, economic help, or assistance in helping you know or do things?

Score between 0 and 7

Family

Politicians

Neighbors

Government officials/civil service

Charitable organizations/NGO

Friends who are not neighbors

Community leaders/ Religious leaders

4. In the last 12 months, have you joined together with other community members to address a problem or common issue?

0 = No   1 = Yes

5. In the last 12 months, have you talked with a local authority or governmental organization about problems in this community?

0 = No   1 = Yes

Cognitive Social Capital

6. In general, can the majority of people in this community be trusted?

0 = No   1 = Yes

7. Do the majority of people in this community generally get along with each other?

0 = No   1 = Yes

8. Do you feel as though you are really a part of this community?

0 = No   1 = Yes

9. Do you think that the majority of people in this community would try to take advantage of you if they got the chance?

0 = No   1 = Yes

Ethical Safeguarding

- **Informed Consent**

  We ensured that all participants provided informed consent prior to their involvement in the study. Clear and detailed information about the purpose and procedure were provided in simple, non-technical language. Participants were informed that their participation was completely voluntary, and that they could withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences.

- **Confidentiality, Anonymity and Ethical Use of Data**

  Strict confidentiality protocols were established to protect participants' personal information. In addition, enumerators were transparent with participants about how the data would be used and shared. Any reporting reflects the commitment to the ethical use of the data collected in this study. Findings are presented in a manner that respects the DIGNITY of participants, ensures the anonymity, and avoids stigmatizing any group or individual.

- **Sensitivity to Power Dynamics and Minimizing Distress**

  We prioritized creating a safe, non-judgmental environment where participants felt their views and experiences were respected. Questions were structured to be as non-intrusive and respectful as possible, accounting for the sensitivity of the topic.

- **Participatory Approach, Community Feedback, and Data Validation**

  A participatory approach, including a validation workshop with major stakeholders, was emphasized. After the study, we will share the findings with the communities involved, ensuring the results are accessible and understandable. This allows participants and their communities to benefit from the research and contribute to the broader conversation on preventing violence.

- **Grievance Mechanisms**

  Mindset's grievance mechanism provided respondents with a direct and confidential way to communicate any concerns, problems, or discomfort they experienced during or after the interview process. At the end of each interview, respondents were provided with a text message containing the Mindset Inquiry and Complaints number, which allows respondents to hold the research team accountable for any violations of ethical guidelines or misconduct.

Princess Sumaya University for Technology
Institutional Review Board
(PSUT-IRBRESEARCH-P2)

IRB DECISION FORM
(PSUT-IRBRESEARCH-P2)

July 16, 2024
Ane Kirstine Viller Hansen
akvh@dignity.dk
+4525775225
Protocol #: 2024-0009

Dear Ane,

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Princess Sumaya University for Technology (PSUT) is happy to inform you that the **expedited review** process has APPROVED the submission of "**Violence in Zarqa**" on July 16, 2024. You may begin your research.

Please note the following information about your approved research protocol:
Protocol Approval Period: July 16, 2024 – July 15, 2025
Approved Subject Enrollment #: 500 for household survey, 5 for key informant interviews, 60 for focus group discussions.

The PSUT IRB committee is dedicated to ensuring that all studies including human participants follow rigorous ethical and safety guidelines. Upon the review of your protocol, the PSUT IRB committee has found that the project upholds the same standards of participant safety that the committee expects from all submissions.

Please remember to:
- Use your **research protocol number** (2024-0009) on any documents, consent, forms, or correspondence with the IRB concerning your research protocol.
- Review and comply with all requirements on the enclosure.

Please note that the PSUT IRB has the prerogative and authority to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modifications, or monitor the conduct of your research and the consent process. Please be aware that if the scope of work in the grant/project changes, the protocol must be amended and approved by the PSUT IRB before the initiation of the change. We wish you the best as you conduct your research. If you have any questions or need further help, please contact us.

Sincerely,

IRB Board Chair
Prof. Raed Mesleh

Endnotes

1. World Population Review (2023). Zarqa Population. Worldpopulationreview.com, worldpopulationreview.com/world-cities/zarqa-population

2. McIlwaine, Cathy. "Geography and Development: Violence and Crime as Development Issues." *Progress in Human Geography*, vol. 23, no. 3, Sept. 1999, https://doi.org/10.1177/030913259902300309.

3. "Zarqa Population 2023." Worldpopulationreview.com, worldpopulationreview.com/world-cities/zarqa-population

4. De Silva, Mary J, et al. "Psychometric and Cognitive Validation of a Social Capital Measurement Tool in Peru and Vietnam." *Social Science & Medicine*, vol. 62, no. 4, Feb. 2006, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2005.06.050. Accessed 11 Mar. 2022.

5. UNFPA. "Gender-Based Violence and Harmful Practices." UNFPA Jordan, 15 Apr. 2016, jordan.unfpa.org/en/node/22552.

6. Department of Statistics Jordan. (2018). Jordan Population and Family Health Survey 2017-18. Retrieved October 23, 2024, from http://www.dos.gov.jo/dos_home_e/main/linked-html/DHS2017_en.pdf

7. Christou,William. "Familial Homicide in Jordan up by 94% in 2022: Report." Https://Www.newarab.com/, 10 Jan. 2023, www.newarab.com/news/familial-homicide-jordan-94-2022-report.

8. UNICEF. GEOGRAPHIC MULTIDIMENSIONAL VULNERABILITY ANALYSIS. Feb. 2020.

https://www.unicef.org/jordan/media/1916/file/Summary%20English.pdf

9. NATIONAL STUDY on VIOLENCE against CHILDREN in JORDAN. 2019. https://www.unicef.org/jordan/media/9181/file/UNICEF%20VAC%20Report-ENG.pdf

10. "How Vulnerable Is Jordan?" Middle East Institute, 5 Aug. 2014, www.mei.edu/publications/how-vulnerable-jordan. Accessed 23 Oct. 2024.

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12. "Table 1: Estimated Population of the Kingdom by Governorate and Sex (2004-2023)-PX-Web." PX-Web, Jordan Department of Statistics, 2023, jorinfo.dos.gov.jo/Databank/pxweb/en/Demographi_Statistics/-/Table1.px/. Accessed 23 Oct. 2024.

13. Asked about hotspots, following areas were mentioned: Al Ghuwairiya, El Jabal Al Abyad, Awajan, Russiefah, Ramzi district, Al Hussein district, Prince Mohammad districts, Jawad Street, and areas around camps.

14. De Silva, Mary J, et al. "Psychometric and Cognitive Validation of a Social Capital Measurement Tool in Peru and Vietnam." *Social Science & Medicine*, vol. 62, no. 4, Feb. 2006, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2005.06.050. Accessed 11 Mar. 2022.

15. Department of Statistics Jordan. (2018). Jordan Population and Family Health Survey 2017-18. Retrieved October 23, 2024, from http://www.dos.gov.jo/dos_home_e/main/linked-html/DHS2017_en.pdf

16. Department of Statistics Jordan. (2018). Jordan Population and Family Health Survey 2017-18. Retrieved October 23, 2024, from http://www.dos.gov.jo/dos_home_e/main/linked-html/DHS2017_en.pdf.

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18. Fisher's exact tests were conducted due to the low number of respondents exposed to violence.

19. Hansen-Nord, N. S., Skar, M., Kjaerulf, F., Almendarez, J., Bähr, S., Sosa, et al. (2014). Social capital and violence in poor urban areas of Honduras. Aggressio n and Violent Behavior, 19(6), 643–648. doi:10.1016/j.avb.2014.09.013

20. *For a more detailed discussion on interpretation and methodological changes, see:*

Hansen-Nord, N. S., Skar, M., Kjaerulf, F., Almendarez, J., Bähr, S., Sosa, et al. (2014). Social capital and violence in poor urban areas of Honduras. Aggression and Violent Behavior, 19(6), 643–648. doi:10.1016/j.avb.2014.09.013

De Silva, Mary J, et al. "Psychometric and Cognitive Validation of a Social Capital Measurement Tool in Peru and Vietnam." Social Science & Medicine, vol. 62, no. 4, Feb. 2006, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2005.06.050. Accessed 11 Mar. 2022.

21. *Negligible gender difference, hence not shown. "Other" category disaggregated*

22. *UNFPA. "Gender-Based Violence and Harmful Practices." UNFPA Jordan, 15 Apr. 2016, jordan.unfpa.org/en/node/22552.*

23. *UNICEF. NATIONAL STUDY on VIOLENCE against CHILDREN in JORDAN. 2019.*

https://www.unicef.org/jordan/media/9181/file/UNICEF%20VAC%20Report-ENG.pdf

24. *Shahrour, Ghada, et al. "Prevalence, Correlates, and Experiences of School Bullying among Adolescents: A National Study in Jordan." School Psychology International, vol. 41, no. 5, 9 Aug. 2020, pp. 430–453, https://doi.org/10.1177/0143034320943923.*

25. *Al Ali, N. M., Gharaibeh, M., & Masadeh, M. J. (2017). Students' Perceptions of Characteristics of Victims and Perpetrators of Bullying in Public Schools in Jordan. Nursing research, 66(1), 40–48. https://doi.org/10.1097/NNR.0000000000000190*

26. *Children of Jordan. "Child Marriage." Childrenofjordan.org, 2015, www.childrenofjordan.org/en/child-marriage/. Accessed 23 Oct. 2024.*

27. Jordan Department of Satistics 71 العدد العامة الاحصاءات دائرة 2020 الأردني السنوي الإحصائي الكتاب.

28. *For protection of the survivor, the quote has been changed from its original version.*

29. *Tensions between Jordan's Bani Sakhr and Bani Hasan tribes flared up over political and economic issues, with incidents notably occurring in Zarqa in the past. In 2018, members of Bani Sakhr threatened to block major routes and disrupt national infrastructure after Fares al-Fayez, a tribe leader, was arrested for criticizing King Abdullah II. This marked a broader dissatisfaction with government corruption and central authority. Similarly, in Zarqa in 2019, Bani Hasan tribe members protested against economic inequalities, corruption, and the privatization of state assets, calling for DIGNITY and political freedoms. (Source: https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/jordanian-tribe-threatens-shake-country-unless-jailed-figurehead-freed).*

30. *Shang, Ruofei. "Patriarchy Kills: The Phenomenon of Honor Killings in Jordan and Worldwide." International Relations Review, 28 Nov. 2022, www.irreview.org/articles/patriarchy-kills-honor-killings-in-jordan.*

31. *Jordanian law, particularly Article 340 of the penal code, has historically provided reduced sentences for men who commit these crimes, especially if they claim the killing occurred in a "state of rage" or to defend family honor. Although reforms have been made, including harsher penalties ranging from 7 years to life in prison, leniency is still sometimes applied in practice. This has led to calls from activists for more stringent legal reforms to adequately protect women. (https://www.wilsoncenter.org/blog-post/uncovering-honor-crimes-jordan-and-across-mena)*

32. *Size of theme reflects the number of coded sections.*

33. *Department of Statistics Jordan. (2018). Jordan Population and Family Health Survey 2017-18. Retrieved October 23, 2024, from http://www.dos.gov.jo/dos_home_e/main/linked-html/DHS2017_en.pdf*

34. *EuroMed Feminist Initiative (EFI. "HARASSMENT in the WORKPLACE in JORDAN." Efi-Ife.org, 2024, www.efi-ife.org/en/pdf-detail/114019-policy-brief-harassment-in-the-workplace-in-jordan. Accessed 23 Oct. 2024.*

35. *"Other" disaggregated for both Figure 40 and 41*

URBAN VIOLENCE
IN ZARQA