

**Research Article**

## **A STUDY ON EFFECTIVE SOCIAL FACTORS ON VIOLENCE AMONG CITIZENS AND PRESENTING A STRUCTURAL MODEL; CASE STUDY: KHOMEINI SHAHR ISFAHAN**

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### **ABSTRACT**

In this study, effective social factors on the tendency to violence in Khomeini Shahr, Isfahan was studied using a combination of psychological theoretical, social psychological and sociological deviance approaches. The main question in this research is to analyze factors which are effective on the tendency to violent behaviors and the fact that what solutions can be proposed to reduce the effects of this phenomenon. This study is a survey on 384 individuals and necessary data was collected through questionnaire technique and data analysis was done through statistical methods such as variance analysis, t test, Pearson correlation coefficient, and structural equation model. Research findings show that the tendency to violence is different according to demographic variables such as age, gender, marital status and on the other hand, social capital variables and social control enjoy direct and reverse relationship with general violence (physical, oral, mental, economic and sexual) and anomia emotion variables and Relative –Deprivation theory enjoy direct and positive relationship with general violence. The result of structural equation analysis revealed that violence tendency to physical violence was more than other aspects of violence and all independent variables of the research determine 46 percent of variance for tendency to violence.

**Keywords:** *Violence, Social Capital, Anomia, Relative Deprivation, Social Control*

### **INTRODUCTION**

The phenomenon of violence has got an extensive history background in that all societies have been engaged with it. In Iran, like many other societies, various factors such as geographical, political, social, cultural ones which have led to violence occurrence. Violence has been announced as a health priority by WHO and all countries have been requested to design and implement plans to identify and contrast this problem. It happens in all countries and among all social class including economic, religious, and cultural ones. Women are the most frequently-reported victims of violence although women can also violate against men. This behavior occurs in the form of mental and oral, economic, physical, and sexual violence.

Socially speaking, description and determination of effective factors on violence are highly important and it is considered identifiable and regulated in terms of science. In this study, violence is considered as an informed behavior in that its possible results will be physical damage and pain for the individual and it does not only enjoy physical aspect but also does mental, economic, and sexual aspects as well. Generally, violence, in terms of concept and action, is an action in which an individual/s does with awareness in order to damage physically, mentally, or spiritually to others.

### **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

#### ***Research Background***

Studying social issues gained importance from early 20<sup>th</sup> century and in particular from 1940s in the United States and then in other European countries. Merton was the first person who studied sociology plan of social problems. From 1960s onward, most sociologists, psychologists, and other scientists proposed a considerable number of theories (Armaki, 1998). Almost 5.3 million people are annually estimated as victims of violence all around the world. Paying attention to this phenomenon began in 1970s and a noticeable number of researches were conducted in this field.

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The study of Nayak among citizens of India, Japan, Kuwait, and the USA with total number of 1182 samples showed that men agree more about the violence against their wives. The difference in tendency to violence against women in these four mentioned countries can be the reflection of difference in beliefs in such countries in terms of sexual roles (Nayak *et al.*, 2003). Stickley and others in a survey with 1190 samples revealed that men aged 18 to 30 years old know the right of violence against women more than other age groups. Low educated men and women tend to violence more than others (Stickley and others, 2008). Findings of violence national plan in Iran shows that 66 percent of Iranian women have experienced the violence at least one time from their marriage and mental and oral violence have been experienced more than other types of violence (52 percent). The next ranking belongs to violence where 37 percent of Iranian women have experienced it from the beginning of their marriage. Illiterate women scored the top in terms of violence and post-diploma and B.S. ones scored the minimum (Ghazi and others, 2003). Pathology of urban ghettos shows that violence is rooted in ethnicity, races, immigrants and existing ghettos (Nejati, 2010). Research findings show that social capital alone determines 58 percent of variance of domestic violence. Then the woman's level of education is the most important determination factor of domestic violence against women and it is known as the most effective source of social value in women's enabling process (Maleki and Nezhad, 2010).

The results of conducted studies, along with the confirmation of violence generality, have revealed that the intensity of this issue exists among all individual and family dimensions and structural factors are effective ones and if they are paid attention in the form of structural model, they will identify factors and the relationship among them.

### **Theoretical Framework**

To study violence scientifically and experimentally, it is necessary that all social, mental, cultural, biological, and economic factors and variables be considered in mutual relationship with each other. Studying the violence from different points of view provides the possibility to discover dimensions which have never been taken in to account. The reality of violence needs to be determined and theories and existing theoretical approaches in this regard needs to be described using sociological, psychological, psychiatric, biological theories as well as the medicine of deviance. Some sociological theories and classifications will initially be discussed.

Harro llambous divides deviance theories in to functionalism, structure, subculture, and ecology of deviance of Chicago school. In the first group, the theories of Durkheim, Parsons, and Merton can be raised. In the second group, some sociologists and authorities such as Albert Cohen, Walter Miller, Richard Coward, and Ohlin exist. Highlighted authorities of ecology field of Chicago school deviance include McKay, and Shaw. Leslie and Horton, providing similar classifications, divided social deviance in to three classes including Differential association, group tension, and subculture of criminal.

Some others have discussed these theories in theoretical aspects of social نظم and social criticism. Theory of discipline focuses on maintaining the current situation while the theory of social criticism believes in basic and fundamental alteration of discipline (Ashraf, 1976). In the following, different determinations of deviance will be studied by taking the violence issue in to account.

### **Biological Determinations**

These determinations know physical and biological variables as the creation factor of deviance. In terms of psychologists' points of view, the phenomenon of violence is as a result of lack of individual's personality complete growth. They create relationship between deviance and personality. Most psychology theories believe in the fact that individual becomes deviant in socialization process and there is a mistake in child-mother relationship. This disadvantage includes emotional sadness, leading to deviance features.

Dolard, Doub, Miller, and Sears believed that failure always leads to aggregation and aggregation is a kind of failure.

### **Social Psychological Determinations**

In this determination, deviance is a phenomenon learnt during mutual social actions and this learning is resulted from processes such as conditional learning, strengthening, observation, modeling, and social

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labeling. Violence is, like other criminal forms, a result of lack of social supervision and control. These deviance theories are considered the learning products which are learnt during identical learning processes in general society condition and in one form to its members.

### **Sociology Determinations**

These determinations have known violence as result of cause and product of social and cultural structures and it is considered “the result of existing failures in culture and social structure of society“. A condition which have sometimes been interpreted as the gap and yield between accessible tools and acceptable social goals (Kohn, 1993). Thus, deviance is considered as social issue and taken from the social structure (Mohseni, 1991). When anomia happens, individual is not able to follow norm and social rules and he is confused among social rules of behavior. Therefore, the tendency to violence increases for him. Kohn knows low class of society as a group dealing with failure of achieving social esteem. Although the society encourages them to achieve esteem, the possibility to reach it is not provided and this social class reaches esteem through committing crimes which are against esteem (Momtaz, 2002). Sazerland, with the help of differential association, tries to show that backgrounds for advent of behaviors such as violence in violent subculture which is more than other types of deviant culture. This type of subculture is seen in regions where individuals have little opportunity to access unlawful opportunity structures and organized crime of adults is not such a way that individuals can achieve success by illegal ladder through learning criminal methods and techniques. The possibility of sustainable criminal subculture growth does not exist in this type of situation and accessibility path through legal and illegal opportunities is a blocked structure. To this end, reaction to such condition is violence and quarrel which is considered a reaction against deprivation and failure. Miller, in the theory of criminal subculture, knows deviance as extreme reaction related to cultural rituals of low classification of the society and it has continued during the years (Harollambous, 1991).

Following *verstehend* method, Matza concluded that process of becoming a criminal is, in terms of human, is little understood without perception of internal life of behavior factor (Ashraf, 1975). William Goud believed that any disorganization in family unit and its structure will be effective on occurrence of development and creation of criminal personality. Clarck and Maihio, providing the theory of intellectual selection, emphasized on the assumption that individuals are not directed toward felonious activities, but they make informed and active selection for these actions. Exchange theory of Homans, pointing out to the role of this factor, believes that individual always calculates, while committing any type of actions, about the loss and gains and if the gains outweigh loss, he will do it (Tavasoli, 1990).

Three resources of violence, mentioned above, do not enjoy equal determination strength and related concepts. Society members react to complex and vast cultural collection of symbols which might be inhibitors or creator of level of violence. This reaction is obviously different from individual's biological violence. In contrast, the role of symbols is highly limited in most animal communities. It seems that hopelessness and learning are two important factors in violent behavior but these factors are included in limited concepts of violence, only determining the individual's learning ability, maturity, or his previous experience. Culture provides goals for society members who wish to achieve them as well as tools to reach such goals. When these goals are acceptable for the society and while legal tools are not accessible, some society members will be hopeless leading to use illegal tools such as violence under pressure of this hopelessness.

### **Theoretical Principles of Research Variables**

The understanding from theoretical analysis of Putnam in terms of social capital in that domestic violence is resulted from lack of trust and contribution between husband and wife and consequently lack of social capital in the family (Putnam, 2000). Trust is one aspect of social capital. In Fukayama's point of view “it is an expectation in a society from strict, responsible, and cooperative behavior of part of other society members which are based on public shared norm (Fukayama, 2000). Philosophers such as Hobbes and Tocqueville know trust as social order base which can be classified in three levels including interpersonal, social and civil ones. Lack of trust can increase the tensions. Income inequality in society can lead to erosion of social capital and then increased deviance in society (Hollander, 1999). Strong commitment to

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normative order is along with vast trust of society members. In places where people enjoy less moral order, social trust decreases among them and violence increases. In non- normative conditions and when the society loses its moral management, individuals become confused and consequently, the possibility of deviance and tendency to violence increases (Rosenfeld, 2001). When the sense of mutual responsibility among some people or some groups with awareness and social will is lost in a society, it will lead to increased violence. Control pattern knows deviance occurrence as a result of correlation weakness among social groups and institutions as well as weak existing beliefs in society. Hiresi states four elements including dependence, commitment, involvement, and belief as main factors of link between individual and society (Momtaz, 2001).

### **Tendency to Violence**

Violence is an action in which the doer is deliberately trying to damage another physically (Bercoitz, 1986). Violence is determined by behavior, action, and applying violent, damaging, and anomalous physical force. It can also be considered as emotional or oral extreme and intense anger. Aggression forms as natural element of violence which can be considered as voluntary action of an individual or group, providing pain and aches for others. This is done in the form of humiliation, offense, curse, and physical damage.

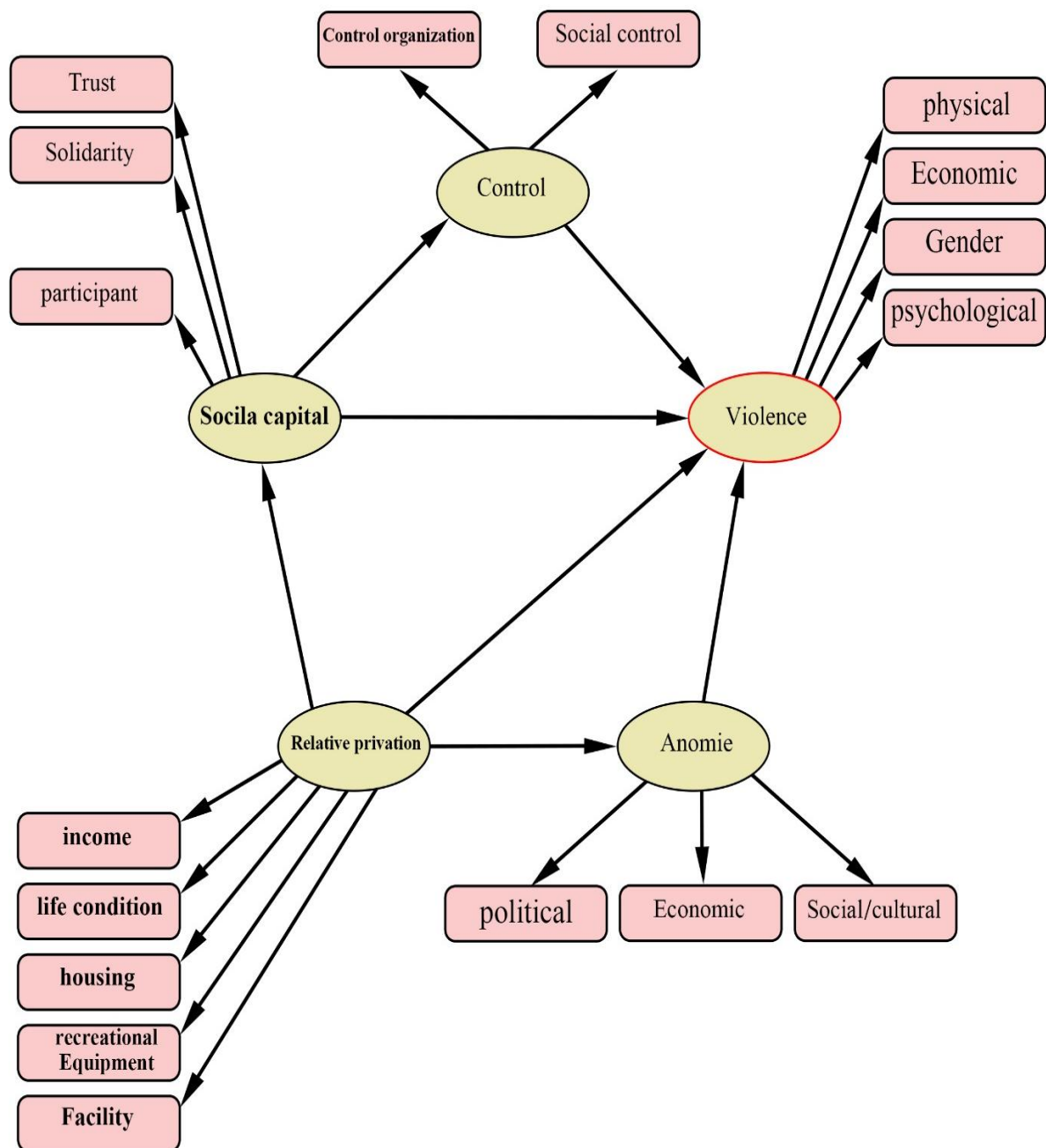
When it comes to the concept of violence, it is an action individuals do deliberately in order to damage physically and mentally to others (Sedigh, 2008) and it might include physical, sexual, emotional, or financial violence (Stanley, 2006).

**Table 1: Variables and their theoretical principles**

<b>Research variable</b>	<b>Authorities</b>
Anomia	Durkheim, Merten
Aggression	Dolard, Miller, Doub, Mourer, Sears, Leonard Berquitz
Relative Deprivation	Ger, Saterland, Hollander
Media	Chakotin, Roukij, Bandoura
Social-economic base	Marx, Weber, Kohen, Miller, Matza, Mohseni
Social control	Hiresi, Relex, Fridy, Hick, William Goud
Coherence	Durkheim, Agbern, Rafi Pour, Chalabi, Saroukhani
Social participation	Azkia, Ghafari, Akbari, and researcher
Social trust	Fokoyama, Gidenz, Share Pour, and author
Concrete experience of aggression	Bandoura, Leonard Berquitz, Shaw and Maky and researcher
Tendency to violence	Gelz, Straws, Sedigh Sarvestani, Azazi, Tabatabee, Mohseni Tabrizi

Violence is a collection of many variables which can be organized in five fields including biological, mental, social, cultural, and environmental ones. Each field is a collection of information, being important in assessing the causes of violence occurrence. Variables of each field are in constant mutual interaction with variables of other fields in that each variable in each field affects change in other fields. Finally, we focus on the fact that violence is a multidimensional phenomenon. Mixing determinations and various mentioned models, the following modified model is obtained to define multidimensional attitude of violence.

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**Figure 1: Intelligible model of research**

### Research Assumptions

- A relationship exists between demographic variables (age, gender, marriage) and tendency to violence.
- A relationship exists between concrete experience of violence and tendency to violence.
- A relationship exists between social capital and tendency to violence.
- A relationship exists between anomia feeling and tendency to violence.
- A relationship exists between social control and tendency to violence.
- A relationship exists between social coherence and tendency to violence.
- A relationship exists between relative deprivation and tendency to violence.



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**Table 2: Alpha value**

Research variable	Alpha value
Anomia	0.78
Relative deprivation	0.72
Social control	0.70
Coherence	0.82
Social contribution	0.82
Social trust 0.74	
Tendency to violence	0.73

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Research Findings

#### Descriptive Findings

Descriptive findings of the research shows that 75.3 and 24.7 of statistical population are men and women, respectively. Distribution percentage of individuals is 32.6 for 15-to-25 year olds and 42.4 for 26-to-36 year olds more than other groups. 79.4 percent of responders are married while 20.6 percent are single. More than 15.6 percent were illiterate, 16.7 percent were with elementary educated, 28.4 percent enjoyed the education of diploma and high school, and more than 20 percent enjoyed higher-than-diploma education. 44 percent of responders investigated their jobs as undervalued occupations, 40.9 percent evaluated their jobs as medium, and 15.1 percent assessed their professions as high level. Almost 34 percent of responders experienced violence for at least two times and 31 percent did for at least one time during the last year. More than 33 percent felt high level of anomia, 70.8 percent did medium social coherence, and 28.6 percent felt high level of social coherence. Nearly 70 percent experienced 50-percent violence in which their experience was medium. As much as 6 percent experienced 75-percent violence which is a high level. More than 26 and 73.4 percent have felt medium and high level of social control, respectively. As much as 27 percent of responders enjoy weak belief in violence control by organizations. 70 and 3 percent believed in medium and high belief in this issue.

#### Tendency to Violence

**Table 3: Frequency distribution of responders according to tendency to violence**

Tendency to Violence				Total	
Dimension and level Range of scores				Number	Percentage
Physical	Low	Mean 13.31	0-21	283	73.7
	Medium		22-43	101	26.3
	High		44-65	-	-
Mental/Oral	Low	Mean 14.74	0-13	137	35.7
	Medium		14-27	233	60.7
	High		28-40	14	3.6
Financial	Low	Mean 7.63	0-8	197	51.3
	Medium		9-17	179	46.6
	High		18-25	8	2.1
Sexual	Low	Mean 7.56	0-9	196	51.0
	Medium		10-19	174	45.3
	High		20-30	14	3.6
Total mean according to spectrum between 0 to 5 for 32 inputs				1.35	
Total				384	

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According to obtained results from dependent variable, almost 73 percent of responders tend to low physical violence and nearly 26 percent does in medium violence. However, mental oral violence scored the top with mean of 14.74 among responders where almost 61 percent of individuals have tended to medium mental and oral violence. Tendency mean to financial violence equals 7.63 and sexual violence accounted the minimum type of violence. In general, tendency to violence was reported 1.35 which is located between low and extremely low.

### Inferential Analysis of Findings

#### First Hypothesis

This hypothesis claims that a difference exists between tendency to violence among men and women as well as married and single ones.

**Table 4: T test for comparing the men's and women's mean of tendency to violence**

	Groups	Number	Mean	Standard Deviation	t	degree	Level
Gender	Man	289	1.4691	0.76817	5.286	382	0.000
	Woman	95	0.9961	0.72038			
Marital status	Single	79	1.0870	0.76610	-3.423	382	0.001
	Married	305	1.4207	0.77366			

The output of this test reveals that the mean of tendency to violence among men is 1.47 while it is 0.00 for women. (Range of changes is between 0 and 5). Calculated T for the mentioned table was reported 5.286 in which the T value is 5 percent more than error. Thus, considering 95 percent certainty, it is stated that tendency of women to violence differs from that of men. Mean of violence tendency are 1.08 and 1.42. The former is for the single and the latter is for the married. Calculated T for the mentioned table is 3.423 which is more by considering 5 percent error. Therefore, the existence of difference between the single and married was approved in terms of tendency to violence.

#### Second Hypothesis

A relationship exists between age and tendency to violence.

The following table is analysis of variance for showing the effect of age variable on tendency to violence.

**Table 5: Mean of tendency to violence based on age**

Age	Number	Mean of tendency to violence	Standard deviation
15-25	125	1.15	0.739
26-36	163	1.51	0.750
37-47	57	1.46	0.824
Older than 48	39	1.12	0.814
Total	384	1.35	0.782

As it can be seen from above table, the mean of tendency to violence, is higher among 26-to-36 year olds and 37-to-47 year olds in comparison with other age groups. To calculate the tendency to violence according to age more accurately, one-way variance analysis was used.

**Table 6: Test of analysis of variance for comparison of mean of tendency to violence according to age**

Variance Source	Sum of squares	Freedom degree	Mean squares	f	Level of Sig.
Between groups	12.182	3	4.061	6.934	0.000
Inside groups	222.541	380	0.586		
Total	234.724	383			

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According to F value which is 6.93 with level of significance of 0.000, it is clear that at least the difference of two means is significant. Thus, this hypothesis is confirmed.

### Third Hypothesis

A relationship exists between concrete experience of violence and tendency to violence.

To analyze the mentioned hypothesis according to the scale, two variables are placed in interval. Therefore, Pearson correlation test was used. The results are as following:

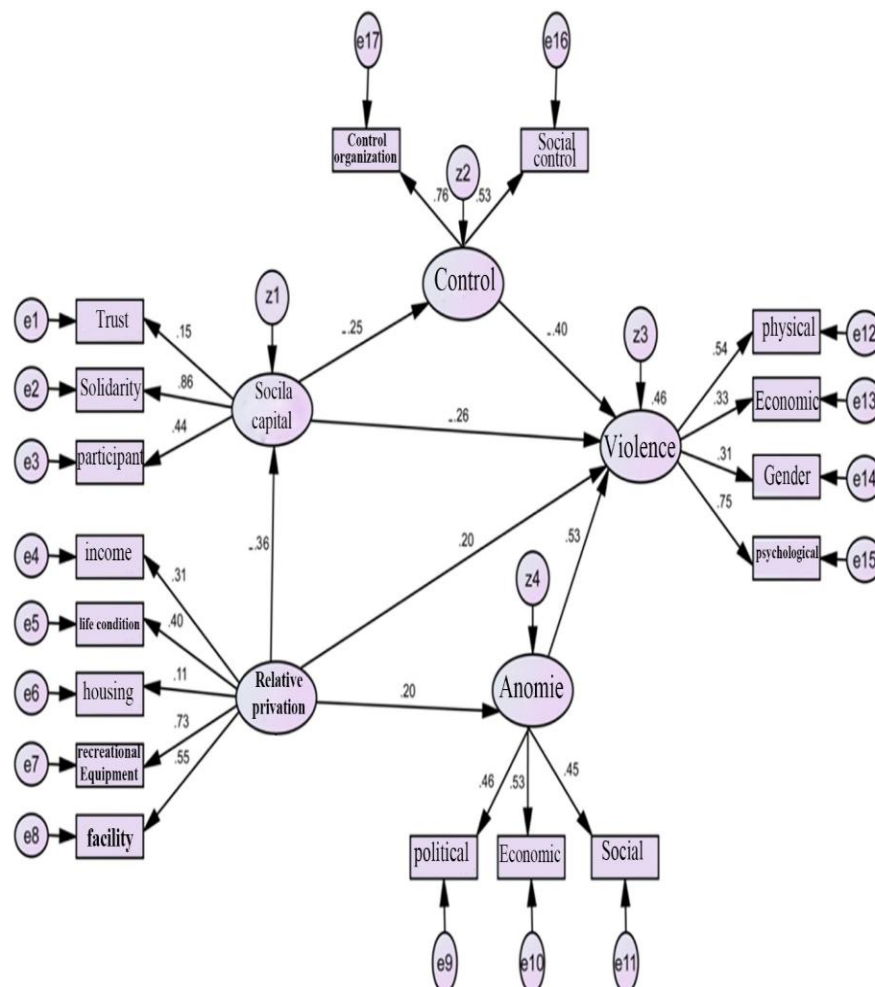
**Table 7: Correlation coefficient test of concrete violence experience and tendency to violence**

	Test	Concrete experience of violence
Violence	Pearson Correlation	0.311
	Sig/(2-tailed)	0.000
	Number	384

Correlation coefficient was reported 0.31. This coefficient is acceptable and level of significance is 0.05. Thus, a direct and positive relationship exists between two variables, meaning that the higher the concrete experience of violence, the higher the tendency to violence.

### Test and Fitness of Theoretical Model of the Research

Hypotheses revealing the relationship between variables including capital, anomia, social control, and relative deprivation with violence were analyzed in theoretical model of the research.



**Figure 2: structural model of tendency to violence**



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Social capital in theoretical model is affected by three indicators including, coherence, involvement, and trust. This structure enjoys 26 percent reverse effect on violence. While determining violence, four dimensions including physical, financial, sexual, and oral violence exist clearly in model and oral violence enjoyed the strongest ability to determine the violence with coefficient of 0.75. Anomia enjoyed the highest positive effect on violence and the control variable, 40 percent, enjoyed reverse effect on structure of violence. Generally, all variables have been able to determine 46 percent of the variance of violence structure.

While studying model fitness, squared Khi values, Goodness of Fit Index, GFI; Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index, AGFI; Comparative Fitness Index, CFI; Normed Fitness Index, NFI; Non-Normed Fitness Index, NNFI; Root Mean Square Error of Approximation, RMSEA indicate the highest fitness. The results of structural model are listed in the table and fitness indicators show appropriate fitness for the research model.

**Table 8: Fitness indicators of model**

Indicators	Value	Indicators	Value	Indicators	Value
CMIN	364.07	GFI	0.899	NFI	0.627
RMSEA	0.077	AGFI	0.862	RFI	0.881
CMIN/DF	3.25	CFI	0.700		

## Conclusion

Referring to ideas and opinions of scientists and authorities of deviance, ten sociology factors including age, gender, level of education, marital status, social capital, relative deprivation, social coherence, concrete experience of violence, anomia were studied and determined as independent variables in relation to tendency to violence and the results of various statistical tests revealed that, among mentioned variables, social capital enjoys 26 percent reverse effect on violence. While determining four dimensional aspects of violence, mental oral section enjoyed the strongest ability, with coefficient of 0.75, to determine the violence structure. Where as in contrast, sexual violence scored the minimum in comparison with other indicators. Among all mentioned variables in the model, anomia enjoying 53 percent and the sense of being deprived enjoying 20 percent had the highest positive effect on violence and the variables of control and capital, enjoying 40 and 20 percent respectively, had reverse effect on violence structure. Generally, all variables were able to determine 46 percent variance of violence structure. The results of studies on demographic variables showed that tendency to violence among men, the married, 26-to-36 year olds and 37-to-47 year olds are higher. More than 70 percent of individuals experienced 50-percent violence. On the other hand, 34 percent of individuals in the statistical population have at least observed violent behaviors for two times in the last year. According to obtained results, it can be stated that tendency to violence increases with increased percentage of violence experience.

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