



# Violence seen on Facebook and YouTube videos; A qualitative study

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## Introduction

Facebook and YouTube are popular specially among young adults in Sri Lanka. In the recent past violent and graphic content have been seen circulating on social media. Also electronic aggression has become an emerging public health problem in the world (David- Ferdon,C., & Hertz, 2007).

## Objective

To describe the violence published on social media (Facebook and YouTube) videos from November 2019 to January 2020.

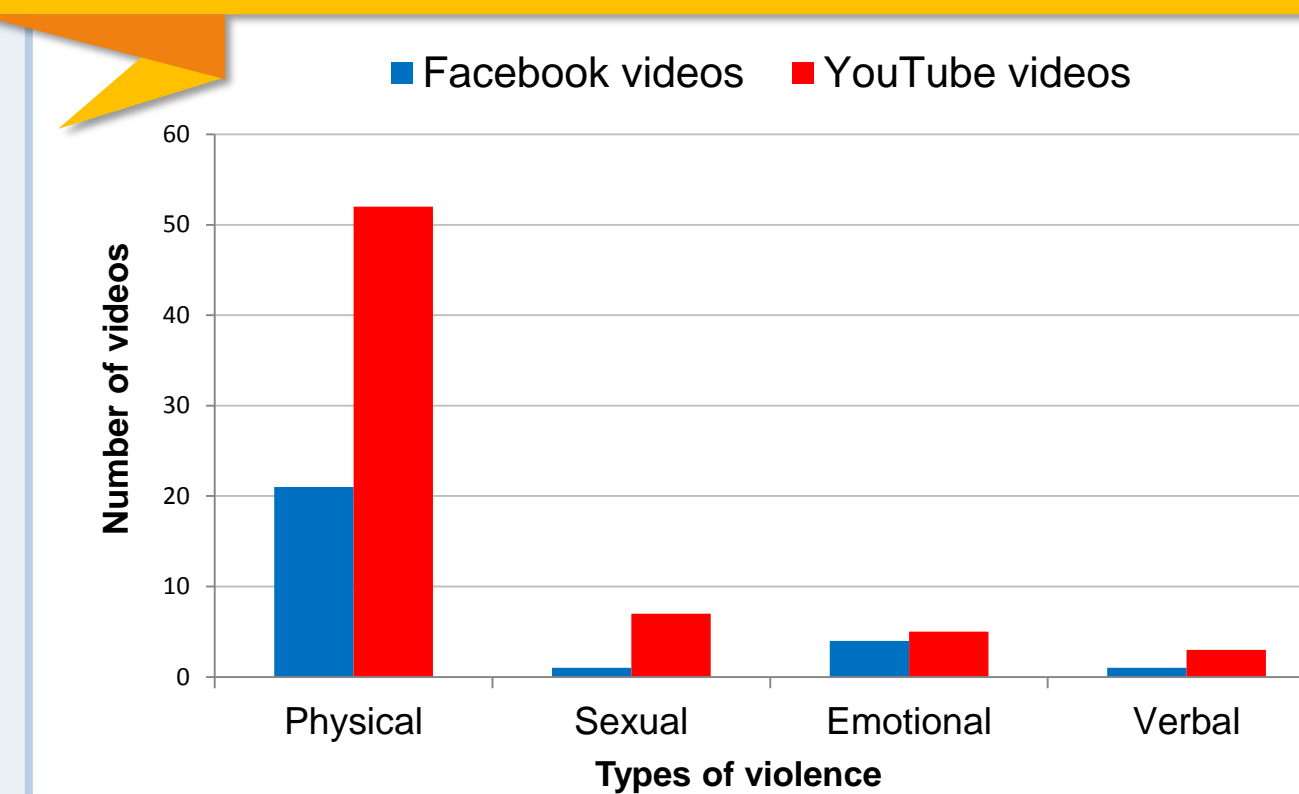
## Methodology

- Study design** - A descriptive observational study
- Study setting** - Facebook and YouTube accessed through local IP and personal accounts
- Study period** - 1st of November 2019 to 30th of January 2020
- Study population** - Violence related publicly shared videos in Facebook and YouTube
- Sample size** - All videos reached using search criteria within the study period
- Sample technique** - Purposive sampling
- Study instrument** - Pre designed data extraction sheets
- Data collection** - Keywords were searched on the search bar and result videos that matched with inclusion criteria were collected. Duplication of videos was avoided.
- Data analysis** - Brief quantitative analysis of videos was done according to key words, types of violence, subjects of videos, reactions and views. Content of the videos was observed and interpreted using a description. The data summarized into themes which were built by repeated discussions within the group and with supervisor to recognize the patterns of violence.

## Results

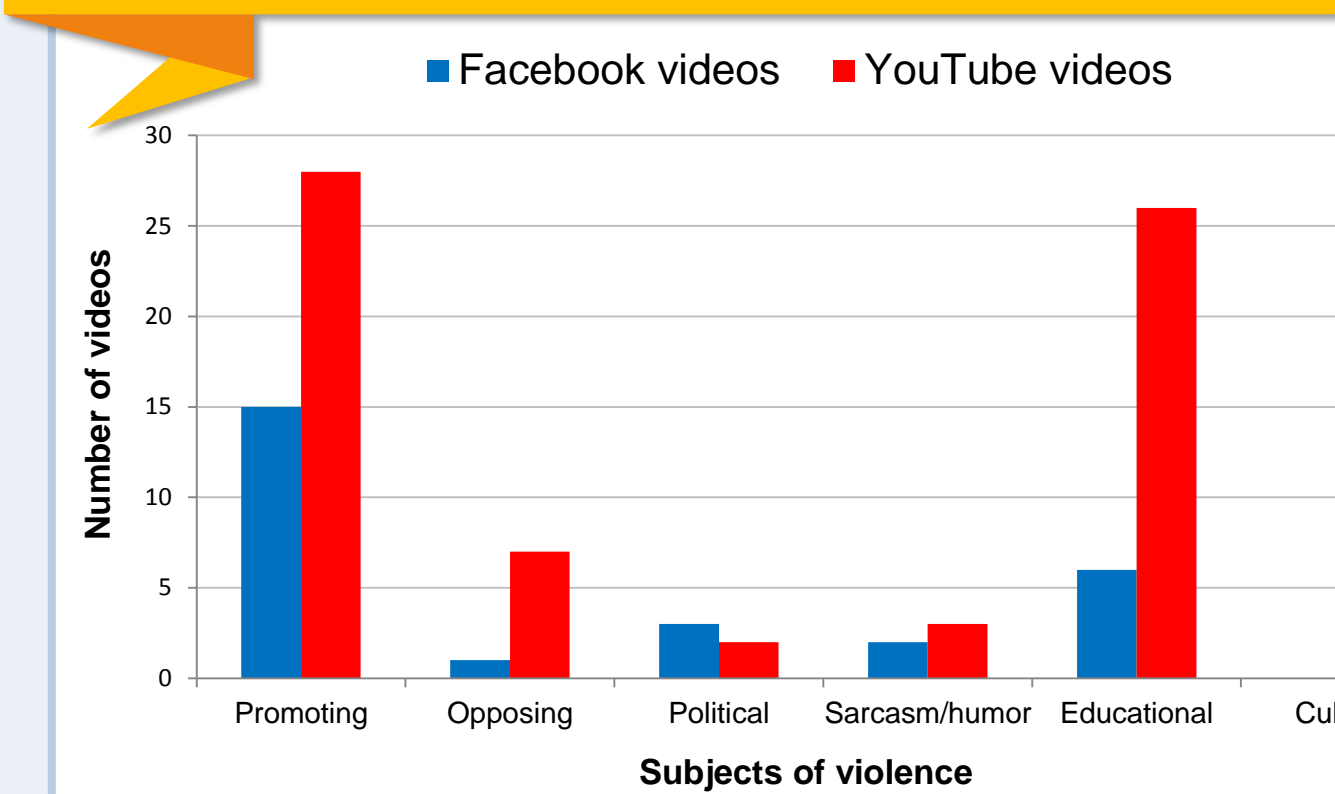
- This study found total 94 videos including 27 Facebook videos and 67 YouTube videos. Out of them, 33 were Sinhala videos and 61 were English videos.
- In these videos different items were used to depict violence such as guns, bombs, knives, fire, batons, ropes etc.

Physical violence was the most prominent type of violence in both media.



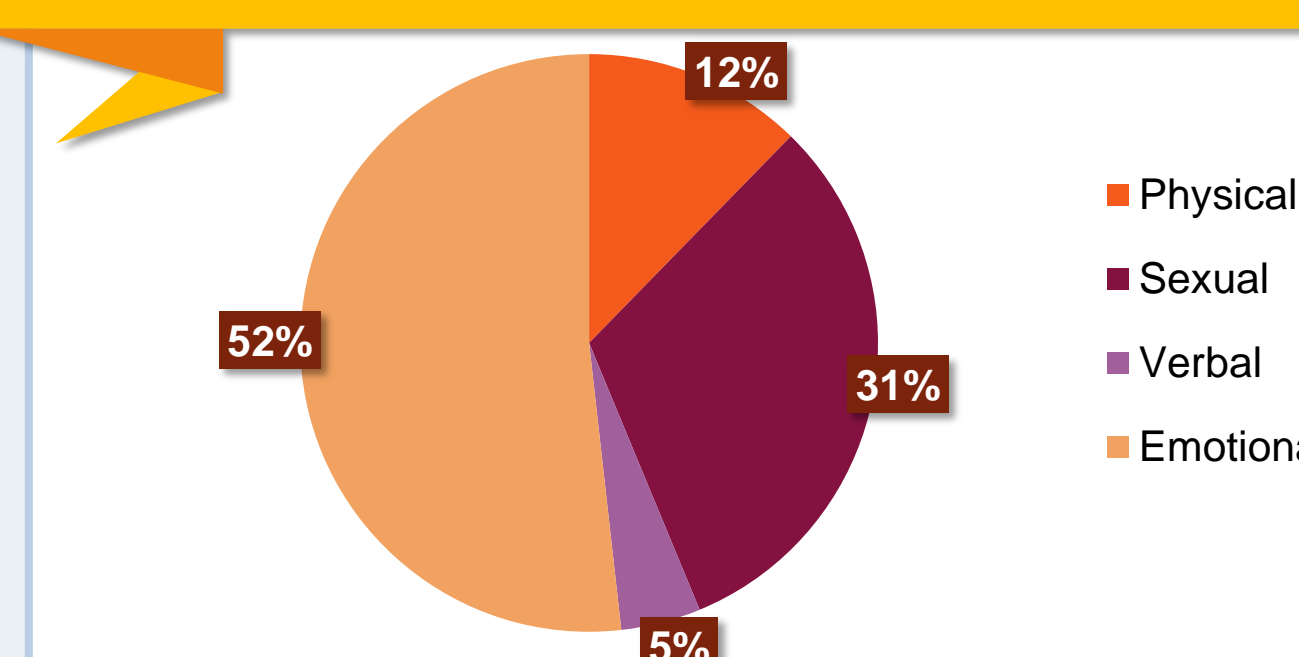
**Figure 1:** Number of videos based on Types of violence

In both media, promoting & educational were the most significant subjects of violence.



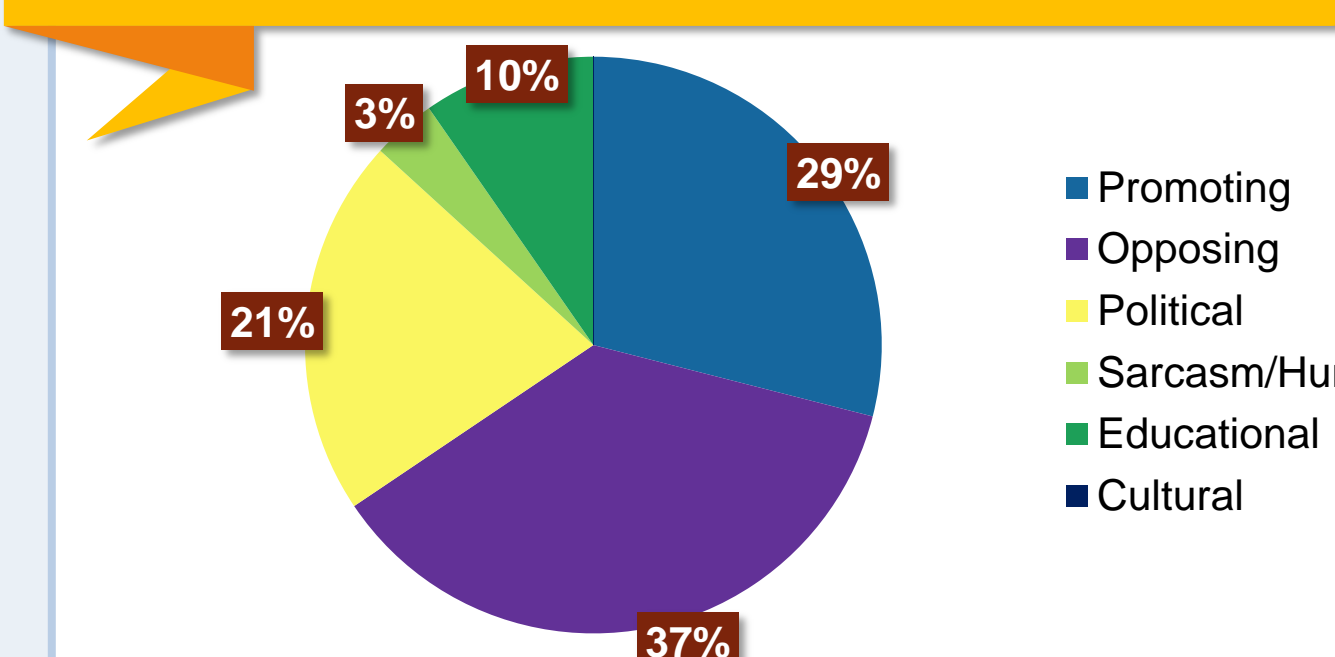
**Figure 2:** Number of videos based on Subjects of videos

Emotional violence got the highest. Average views for sexual violence was also significant.



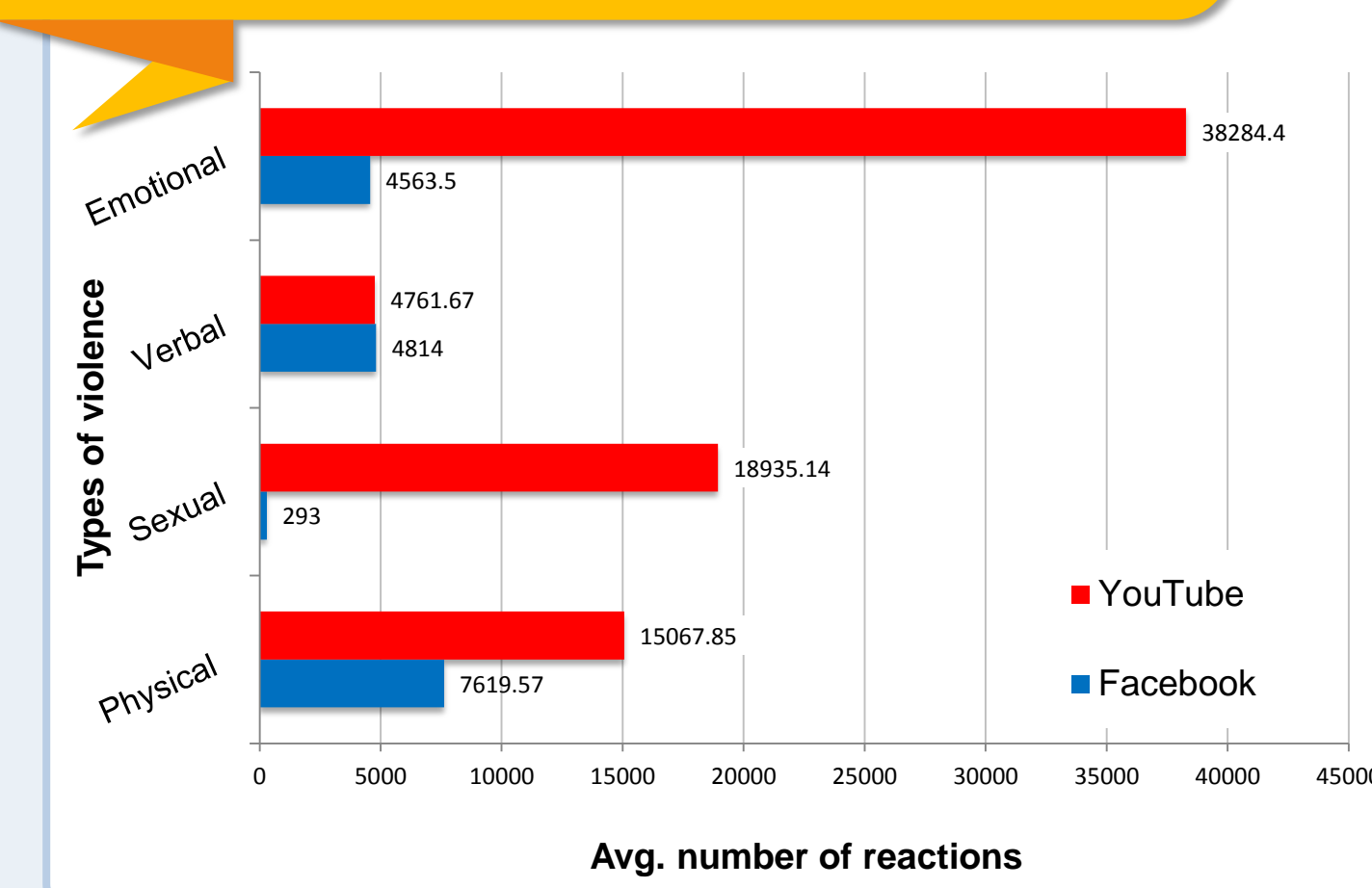
**Figure 3:** Average views of YouTube videos based on Types of violence

Opposing, promoting and political videos got significant average number of views.



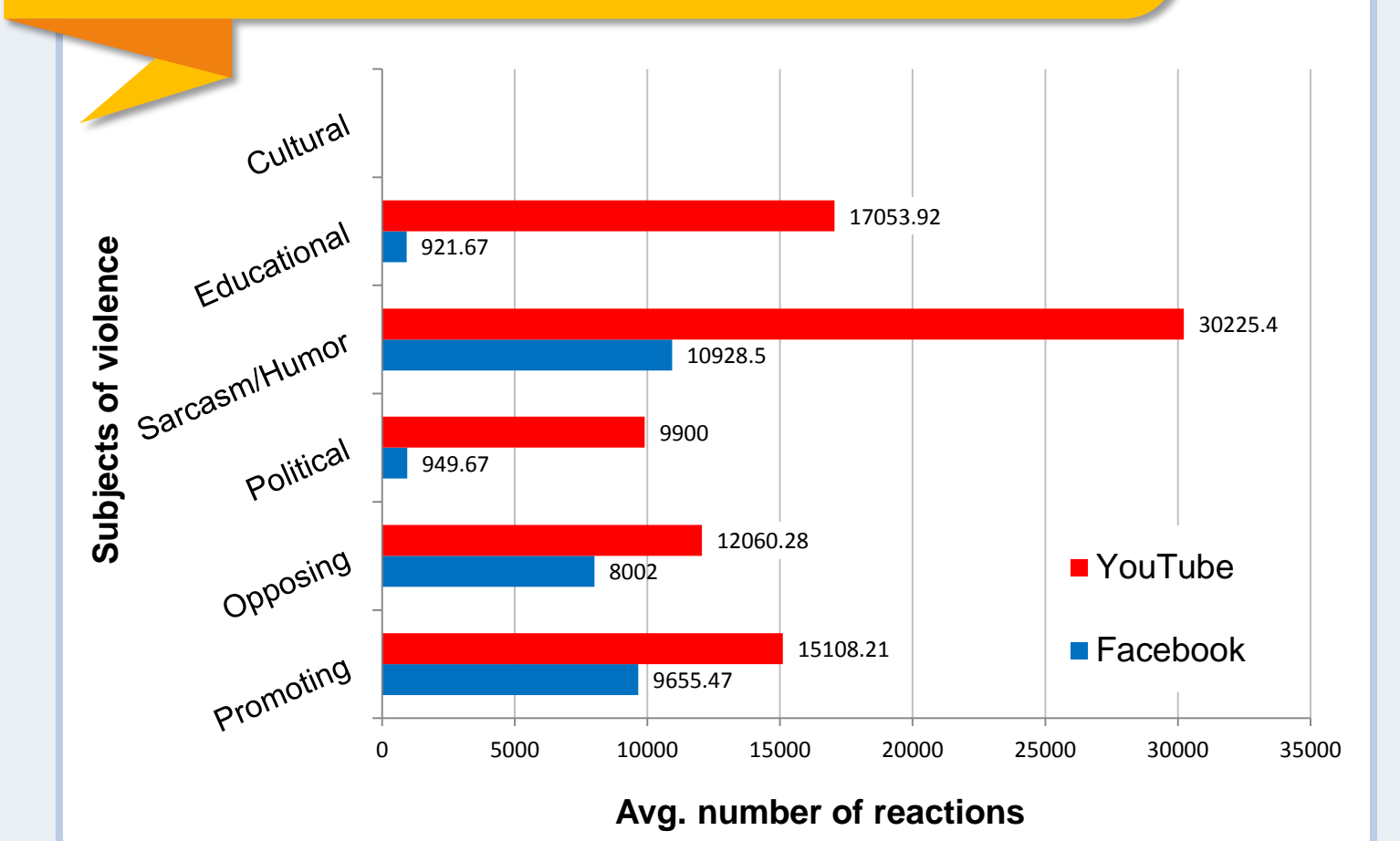
**Figure 4:** Average views of YouTube videos based on Subjects of videos

Physical violence in Facebook and emotional violence in YouTube had the highest. For all types of violence, YouTube videos had higher reactions.



**Figure 5:** Average number of total reactions to videos based on Types of violence

Sarcasm / humor videos had the highest in both media. For all subjects of videos, YouTube videos had higher reactions.



**Figure 6:** Average number of total reactions to videos based on Subjects of videos

- Following themes were identified during the interpretation.

### Violence is newsworthy

- Majority of videos are newsworthy and have been published by both authorized and non-authorized pages which depict violence seen in various social levels.

### Violence is entertaining

- Violence has been depicted indirectly via short films, movie clips, fun games etc. Some contain pranks that can endanger life.

### Response from onlookers

- There are two types of viewers: active and passive. Reactions of onlookers vary according to the place of incident(public/domestic) and gender.

### Violence as a result of misuse of power/law

- All videos include physical violence and seems to happen wherever power imbalance exists. The aim of these videos again seems to be newsworthy.

### Raising awareness about violence

- Most videos raise awareness showing the psychological aspects of violence, showing the impact on the participant of violence, teaching self defense and showing the support that they can get as a victim.

### Violence as a marketing tool/publicity for channels/pages

- Viewers have been asked to subscribe their channels to increase their publicity. Some videos have been used to sell their own products while raising awareness.

### Violence as an experiment

- These look like educational videos about experiments with minimal or no safety measures.

## Conclusion

- During the 3 months period observed, various types of violent content was shared on Facebook and YouTube.
- Physical violence was prominently seen on both media.
- Emotional violence received most reactions on Facebook while physical violence received most reactions on YouTube.
- Sarcasm or humor associated with violence had the highest number of reactions in both media.
- Violence was used to increase views and potentially as marketing tools for commercial interests.

## References

- David-Ferdon, C., & Hertz, M. F. (2007). Electronic media, violence, and adolescents: An emerging public health problem. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 41*, S1–S5.

## Acknowledgement

- Department of Public Health, Faculty of Medicine, University of Kelaniya.