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THE IMPACT OF MEDIA ON HEALTH BELIEFS, VIOLENCE AND RELATED PROBLEM BEHAVIOURS: COVID-19 PANDEMIC EVIDENCE FROM AN EMPIRICAL STUDY IN CROATIA

Dr. Goran Livazović, Associate Professor,
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences,
University of J. J. Strossmayer in Osijek



9:00-10:15

Panel 1, Chair: Goran Livazović

- 1 Igor Vuletić
- 2 Lucija Sokanović
- 3 Petra Šprem
- 4 Reana Bezić

10:30-11:45

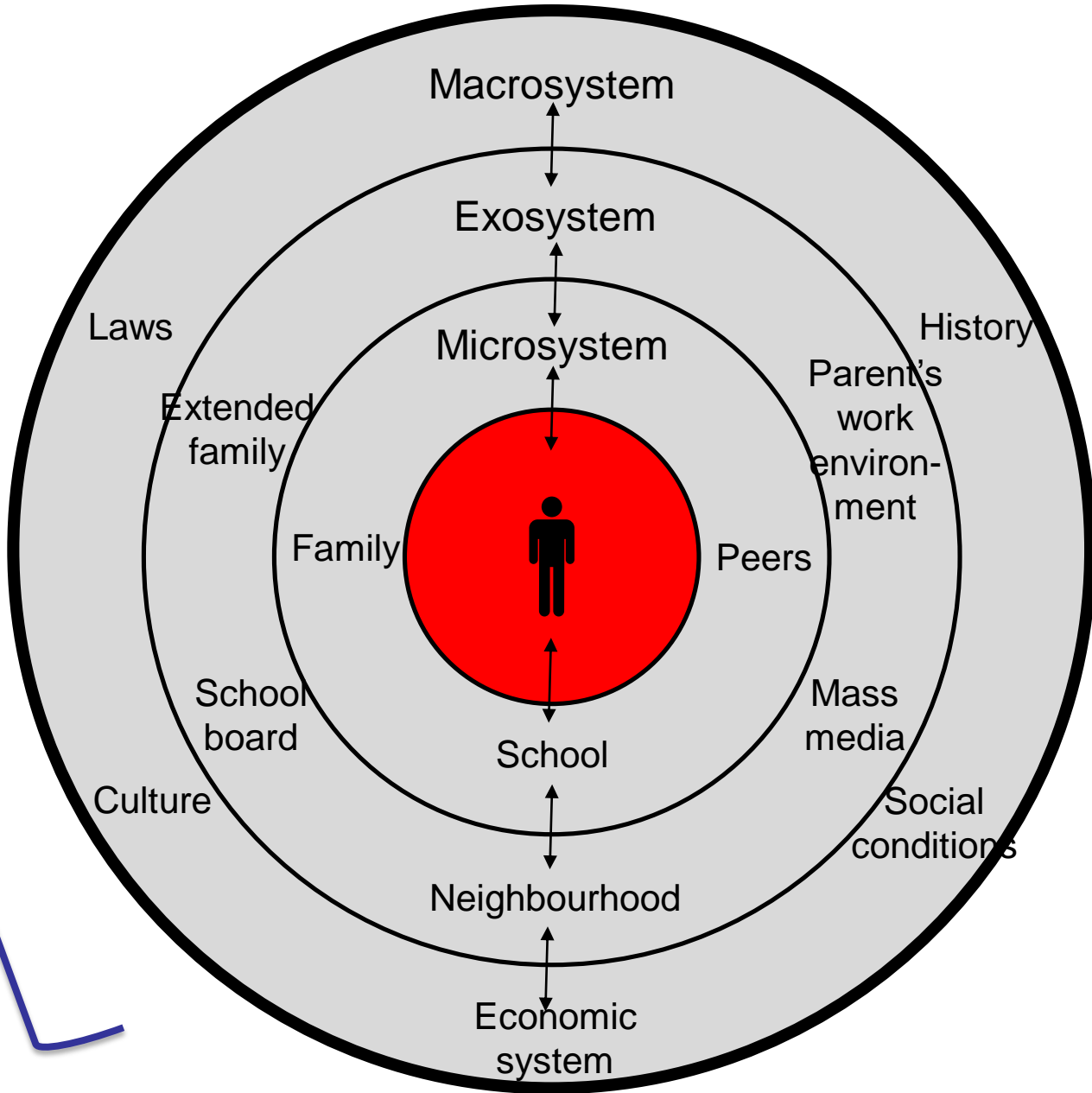
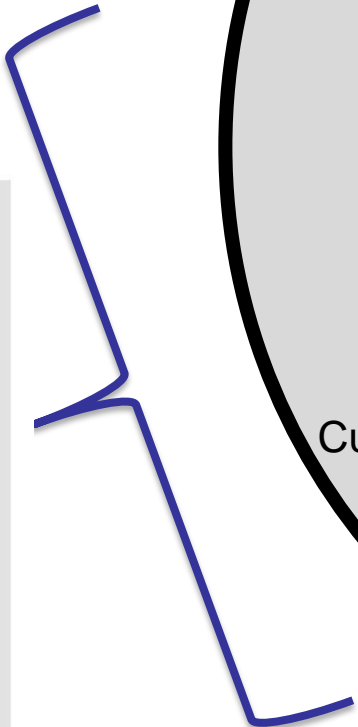
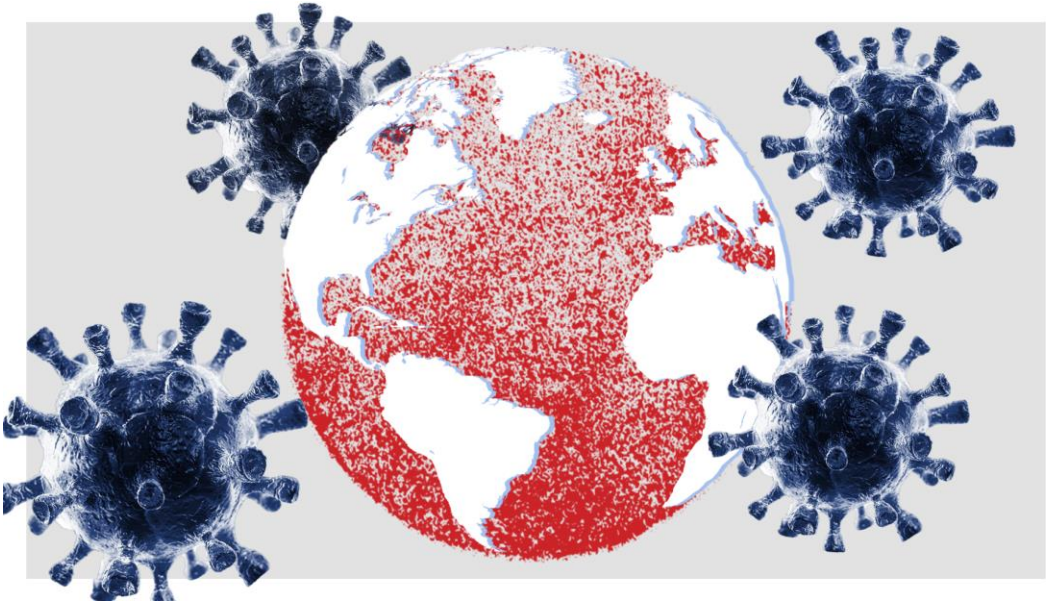
Panel 2, Chair: Lucija Sokanović

- 1 Marko Mrakovčić
- 2 Goran Livazović
- 3 Dalia Pribisalić, Anna-Maria Getoš Kalac
- 4 Karlo Bojčić



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Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory



(Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 2006; Orpinas, Horne, 2005; Velki, 2012)



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Risk factors for perpetration of violent victimization? (National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Division of Violence Prevention, USA)

• Individual Risk Factors

- History of violent victimization
- Attention deficits, hyperactivity, or learning disorders
- History of early aggressive behavior
- Involvement with drugs, alcohol, or tobacco
- Low IQ
- Poor behavioral control
- Deficits in social cognitive or information-processing abilities
- High emotional distress
- History of treatment for emotional problems
- Antisocial beliefs and attitudes
- Exposure to violence and conflict in the family

Peer and Social Risk Factors

Association with delinquent peers
Involvement in gangs
Social rejection by peers
Lack of involvement in conventional activities
Poor academic performance
Low commitment to school and school failure

Family Risk Factors

Authoritarian childrearing attitudes
Harsh, lax, or inconsistent disciplinary practices
Low parental involvement
Low emotional attachment to parents or caregivers
Low parental education and income
Parental substance abuse or criminality
Poor family functioning
Poor monitoring and supervision of children

Community Risk Factors

Diminished economic opportunities
High concentrations of poor residents
High level of transiency
High level of family disruption
Low levels of community participation
Socially disorganized neighborhoods



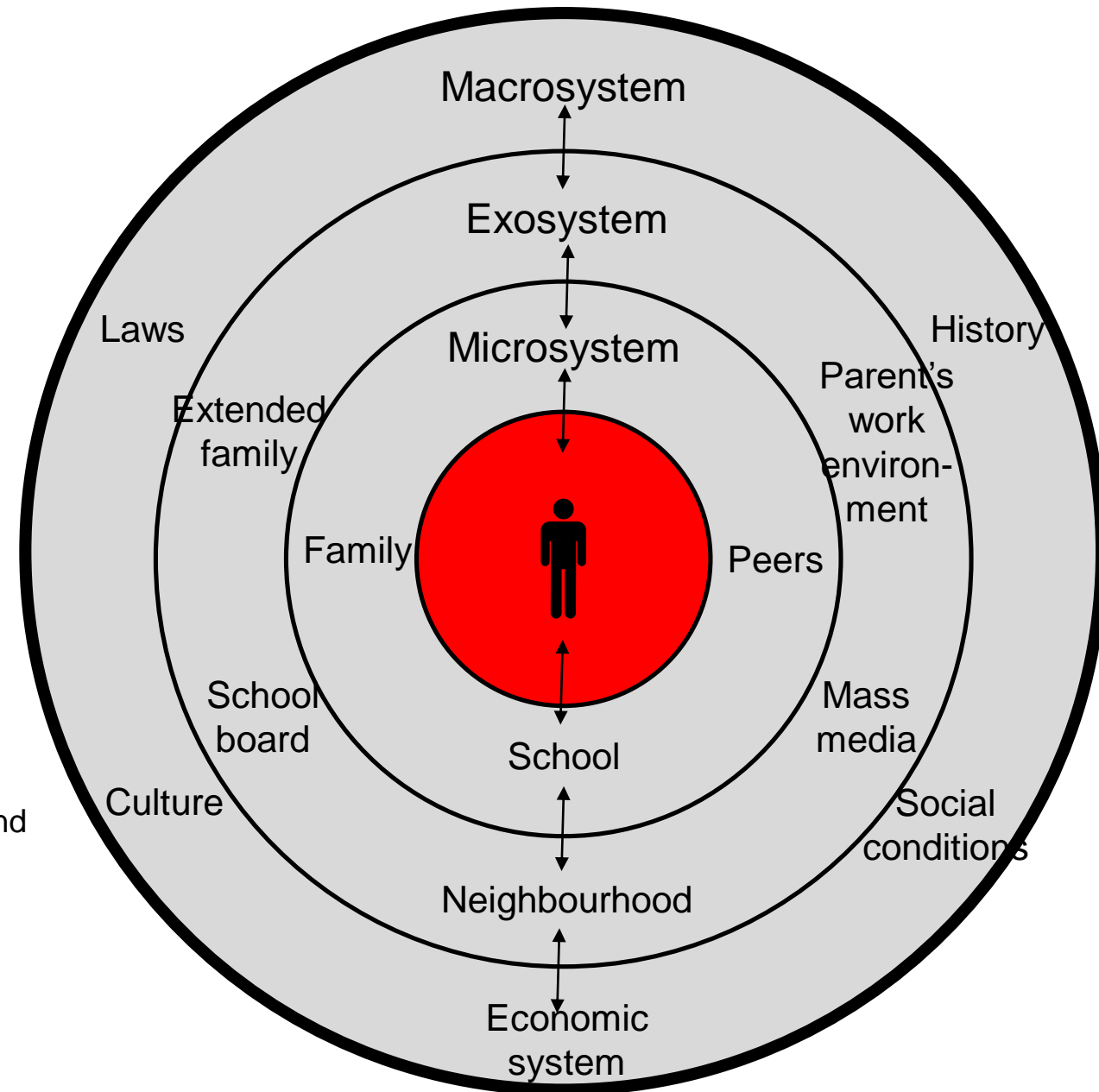


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Media impact theories:

These would include effects relating to (Buckingham et al., 2007: 9):

- a) **violent content, desensitisation and fear;**
- b) **sexual content**—including promiscuous or unsafe practices;
- c) **advertising**—in relation to misleading claims;
- d) **inappropriate or unwanted contact** with others—for example, ‘stranger danger’ or bullying;
- e) **health issues;**
- f) **eating behaviour**—in relation to eating disorders;
- g) **general personality disorders**, such as low self-esteem, ‘identity confusion’ or alienation;
- h) **physical effects of excessive use**—for example, RSI-type conditions and eyesight problems relating to computers;
- i) **the undermining of children’s imagination and free play**, as well as passivisation;
- j) **the physical development of the brain**, and disorders;
- k) **sleeping problems;**
- l) **reduced time for family and peer** interactions;
- m) **reduced levels of educational achievement;**
- n) **mistaken values, attitudes or beliefs**—for example, in relation to gender or ethnic stereotyping.





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Method and study design

- **Goal:** research on the impact of media on risky behaviour during COVID lockdown pandemic
- **Timeframe:** March- April 2020 (during the COVID-19 lockdown in Croatia)
- **Sample:** 461 participants (Nw=391, 84,8%)
- **Instrument:** on-line survey with 5 parts
 - 1) *Sociodemographic traits* (gender, age, academic success, education, parent education and work status, family structure, sexual orientation, etc.)
 - 2) *Quality of personal, family, professional, school and leisure time relationships*
 - 3) *Health beliefs, self-perception, fears (mean-world syndrome), anxiety and depression*
 - 4) *Media interests, use and related attitudes (trust vs mistrust and manipulation)*
 - 5) *Risky behaviour* (violence, drug and alcohol abuse, criminal activity, property destruction, etc.)



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Table 1 Sample by gender

Variable	N	%
MALE	70	15,2
FEMALE	391	84,8
Total	461	100

Table 2 Sample by age

N	461
Mean	26,42
Median	23
Mode	23
Std. Deviation	8,67
Min	15
Max	62

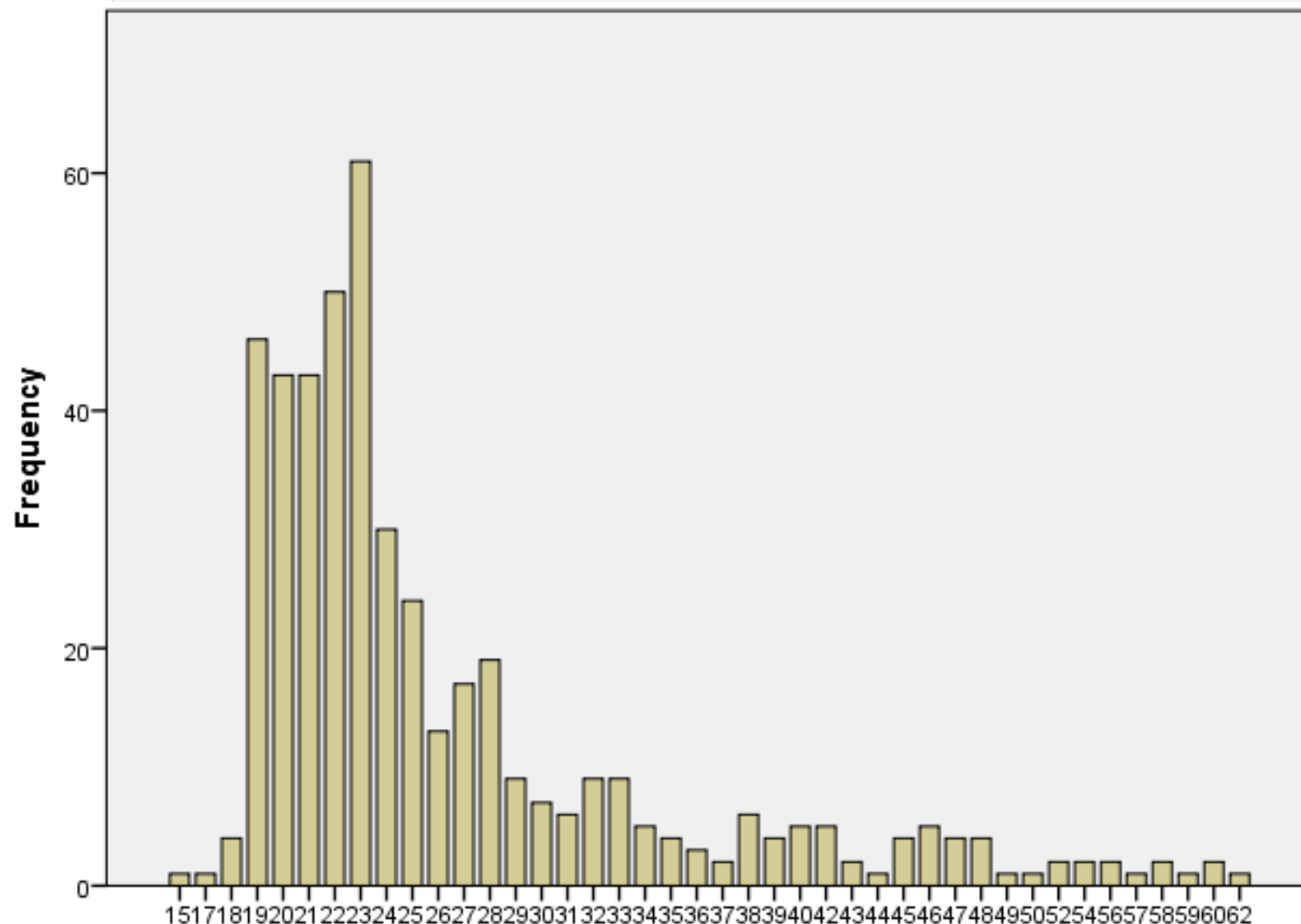
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Sample characteristics

Graph 1
Sample age characteristics





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Media use intensity / Media COVID-19 sources

Table 3 Media use and exposure intensity

<i>Please, choose the value you think best describes your media habits.</i>	1- never (0)	2- rarely 1-2 a month	3- sometimes once a week	4- often several times a week	5- always every day
Internet sites and newsrooms	1	2	3	4	5
Youtube	1	2	3	4	5
Movies	1	2	3	4	5
TV- shows	1	2	3	4	5
Television	1	2	3	4	5
Pornographic sites	1	2	3	4	5
Instagram	1	2	3	4	5
Facebook	1	2	3	4	5
Music and music videos	1	2	3	4	5
Specialised magazines and weekly editions	1	2	3	4	5
Video-games	1	2	3	4	5
Viber and other apps (Snapchat, WhatsApp, Twitter etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
Daily newspapers	1	2	3	4	5
Daily	1	2	3	4	5

10	Variable	Gender	N	M	SD	T
	Use of violence	Male	70	9,1571	1,31475	,14
		Female	391	9,1407	,80266	
	Alcohol and drugs	Male	70	7,9000	1,94973	-,04
		Female	391	7,9105	1,98705	
	Family relations quality	Male	70	51,1714	10,04911	-,42
		Female	391	51,7161	9,95419	
	School relations quality	Male	41	57,9268	12,04448	-1,38
		Female	270	60,1296	9,09153	
	Mean world syndrome	Male	70	53,6571	12,47361	-,26
		Female	390	54,1026	13,17295	
	Risky behaviour	Male	70	33,9143	4,72042	-,55
		Female	391	34,2174	4,12948	
	Media mistrust and manipulation attitudes	Male	70	18,9714	5,70017	-,26
		Female	390	19,1846	6,30230	
	Media use intensity	Male	70	52,14	7,52443	2,03*
		Female	391	50,48	6,08477	
	COVID media source exposure	Male	70	41,5714	7,75638	,48
		Female	391	41,1432	6,79441	
	COVID media search intensity	Male	70	28,5429	8,85419	,29
		Female	391	28,2097	8,66600	

11	Variable	Gender	N	M	SD	t						
	I use more physical violence than before	Male	70	1,01	,12		I have changed sexual partners more	Male	70	1,04	,266	2,37*
		Female	391	1,03	,21			Female	391	1,00	,088	
	I had more problems with crime (theft, fight etc.) than before	Male	70	1,01	,12		I avoided using protection during sex more	Male	70	1,03	,168	
		Female	391	1,01	,19			Female	391	1,04	,367	
	I used more prescription drugs than before to keep calm and relaxed	Male	70	1,13	,53		I had more STDs than before the pandemic	Male	70	1,01	,120	
		Female	391	1,12	,55			Female	391	1,07	,441	
	I had problems with my behaviour (leaving home, evading school, problems at work)	Male	70	1,23	,59		I had sex under the influence of drugs or alcohol more	Male	70	1,01	,120	
		Female	391	1,34	,80			Female	391	1,02	,267	
	I left my family and home more often without a justifiable reason	Male	70	1,03	,16		I violently entered a school, shop, someone's house to steal money or valuable possessions more often than before	Male	70	1,11	,120	1,97*
		Female	391	1,05	,37			Female	391	1,00	,051	
	I smoked cigarettes more than before	Male	70	1,29	,91		I had stolen and engaged in criminal activities with my friends more often than before	Male	70	1,11	,120	1,97*
		Female	391	1,37	,96			Female	391	1,00	,051	
	I drank alcohol more than before	Male	70	1,37	,87		I stole parts off cars, bikes or other property more often	Male	70	1,11	,120	1,97*
		Female	391	1,24	,71			Female	391	1,00	,051	
	I consumed more marijuana / ecstasy / LSD / speed	Male	70	1,04	,26		I stole valuable merchandise in shops	Male	70	1,11	,120	1,97*
		Female	391	1,08	,46			Female	391	1,00	,051	
	I had sexual partners and unprotected sex more than before	Male	70	1,04	,20	2,38*	I broke into cars to steal money and other valuables more often	Male	70	1,01	,120	
		Female	391	1,01	,10			Female	391	1,00	,072	
	I deliberately avoided commitments (school/workplace)	Male	70	1,34	,74	-2,01*	I sniffed glue or other substances more	Male	70	1,01	,120	
		Female	391	1,62	1,09			Female	391	1,00	,088	
	I deliberately destroyed property more than before	Male	70	1,01	,12		I smoked hash or marijuana more than before	Male	70	1,04	,266	
		Female	391	1,01	,12			Female	391	1,08	,476	
	I stole more than before during the pandemic	Male	70	1,01	,120		I sent inappropriate contents via mobile or PC phone more than before	Male	70	1,01	,120	
		Female	391	1,00	,072			Female	391	1,02	,231	

Variable	Gender	N	M	SD	t
I trolled and insulted others in internet chatrooms or forums more than before	Male	70	1,01	,120	
	Female	391	1,09	,460	
I was intoxicated or under the influence of drugs in public more often than before	Male	70	1,01	,120	
	Female	391	1,01	,196	
I sold more drugs during the pandemic	Male	70	1,01	,120	
	Female	391	1,01	,134	
I destroyed public property (lamps, stores, trash-cans, benches) more than before	Male	70	1,01	,120	1,97*
	Female	391	1,00	,051	
I destroyed and scratched paint or flattened tyres on automobiles more than before	Male	70	1,01	,120	1,97*
	Female	391	1,00	,051	
I drew graffiti without permission in public places (buildings, walls, houses, trains, stations) more than before	Male	70	1,01	,120	
	Female	391	1,00	,113	
I was involved in physical altercations in public places(caffees, parks, streets) more often than before	Male	70	1,03	,239	
	Female	391	1,01	,124	
I used a weapon that caused or could have caused a serious injury (brick, knife, bat, bottle, gun) more than before	Male	70	1,03	,239	
	Female	391	1,01	,124	



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Table 7 Correlation matrix

Variable		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
COVID media search intensity	r	-	,286***	,003	-,113*	,145**	,154**	,001	,000	,076
	N	461	461	461	460	461	460	461	461	461
COVID media source exposure	r	,286***	-	,312***	,072	,030	,068	,005	,010	,054
	N	461	461	461	460	461	460	461	461	461
Media use intensity	r	,003	,312***	-	,101*	-,012	-,033	-,053	-,004	-,098*
	N	461	461	461	460	461	460	461	461	461
Mistrust and media manipulation	r	-,113*	,072	,101*	-	,080	,113*	,084	,084	,033
	N	460	460	460	460	460	460	460	460	460
Anxious sensibility	r	,145**	,030	-,012	,080	-	,647***	,219***	,105*	,114*
	N	461	461	461	460	461	460	461	461	461
Mean world syndrome	r	,154**	,068	-,033	,113*	,647***	-	,172***	,114*	,045
	N	460	460	460	460	460	460	460	460	460
Risky behaviour	r	,001	,005	-,053	,084	,219***	,172***	-	,787***	,646***
	N	461	461	461	460	461	460	461	461	461
Alcohol and drugs	r	,000	,010	-,004	,084	,105*	,114*	,787***	-	,292***
	N	461	461	461	460	461	460	461	461	461
Use of violence	r	,076	,054	-,098*	,033	,114*	,045	,646***	,292***	-
	N	461	461	461	460	461	460	461	461	461

Note: p<,05*; p<,01**; p<,001***.

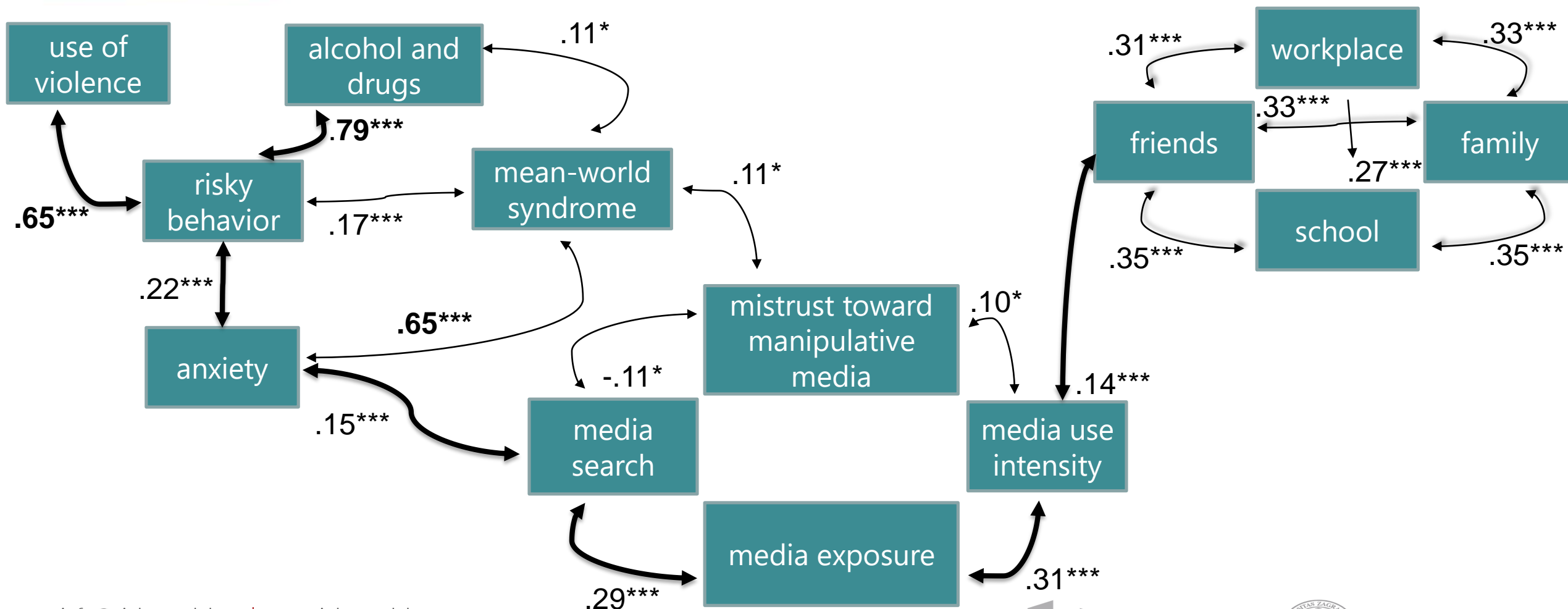
The values presented in bold were significant. The values marked with an * represent a t-test result significant at p<,05 level.

Legend: 1- COVID media search intensity; 2- COVID media source exposure; 3- Media use intensity; 4- Mistrust and media manipulation; 5- Anxious sensibility; 6- Mean world syndrome; 7 - Risky behaviour; 8- Alcohol and drugs; 9- Use of violence



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Conclusions and implications for practice





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