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# News coverage of school violence in China

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## **Abstract**

In China, the news coverage of school violence is seldom seen because of the news blackout before 1990s. However, more and more news coverage of school violence has appeared in the media in recent years. From 1990 to 2004, the coverage was related to the act of hitting only. After 2004, the coverage began to include the act of killing.

It seems that the reporters in today's China have the freedom to cover the events of school violence. In fact, what reporters can do is still limited. Sometimes the reporters will be told to abandon the coverage of school violence by the government for some reasons. Sometimes it is very difficult to gather information, because the eyewitnesses in the school have been told to keep silence, or the reporters are forbidden to be close to the spot. Some reporters complain that the limitation goes against the news freedom. However, looking this problem from another angle, the limitation decreases the amount of coverage of school violence and also the negative effects of the coverage.

The research examines the representation of school violence in the news media in China. This article shows that only a minority of the coverage of school violence includes the details of the violence or bloody images, and the majority of the coverage focuses on the reasons for the violence and the students' mental health. The article analyses the reasons for that and concludes that some necessary limitation on coverage of school violence can decrease the public fear effectively.