

REVIEW**VIOLENCE IN TEACHING SETTINGS: SCHOOL VIOLENCE****Fuaad Ali Alshehri**

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Submitted on: 27.09.17; Revised on: 19.10.17; Accepted on: 20.10.17**ABSTRACT:**

The aim of the present review is to explore the literature about violence in teaching settings, and school violence was taken as an example. School violence is prevalent across the globe. School violence has severe impacts on both academic achievements and health variables. Violence is associated with family problems and peers. Other factors are also associated with violence including age, gender, and racism. During this review, we reviewed the definitions and forms of violence as well as where it occurs. Taken together, the present study reviewed the literature for violence in schools. School violence is a problem that affects academic achievement and impacts the health of children.

KEYWORDS: School, Children, Violence, Age, Gender, Family.

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INTRODUCTION:

Bullying and Violence

While there are some similarities in the definition of bullying and violence, studies have defined them differently. According to a study of Roland and Idsøe¹, bullying includes a wide range of repeated physical or mental violence, carried out by an individual against another person who lacks the ability to defend him/herself. The feeling of being a victim has a great impact that could create a great amount of distress in a child, and children involved in bullying which can be shown in a large number of psychosomatic symptoms and health problems². On the other hand, the World Health Organization³ put a definition of violence as “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, mal-development or deprivation”.

Violence can be very harmful and lead to negative consequences. In their study, Ewart and Suchday⁴ put the emphasis on the sequences of exposure to violence as generating stress and bad health. In another study conducted by Ozer and Weinstein⁵, exposure to violence was correlated with more self-reported symptoms of Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), and depression in young adolescents in both boys and girls. The negative health consequences of violence can include Coronary Heart Disease (CHD) and obesity as well^{6, 7}. Peterson et al⁸ examined school violence at schools in the US and found that 52% of teachers and administrators reported that violence has increased in middle and high schools. They observe certain behaviors such as incivility, rumors, verbal intimidation and threats, pushing and shoving by students, as well as sexual harassment.

School violence overview

School violence is a very complicated situation and its definition is not an easy mission due to the involvement of various parameters including the location of violence, which can be a school building, school grounds, or a school bus⁹. Another term describing school violence has been introduced “school associated violence”, which usually occurs in

places associated with schools such as grounds, routes of school either to school or from it¹⁰.

In the light of school context, studies on violence have targeted students victimizing other students or teachers⁹. In 1998, the U.S. Department of Justice put a definition of violent victimization at school as the “physical attacks or taking property from the student directly by force, weapons, or threats,” on school property or on the way to or from school¹¹⁻¹³. School violence was also defined by Elliott et al¹⁴ as “the threat or use of physical force with the intent to cause physical injury, damage or intimidation of another person at school, excluding the use of physical force among friends (i.e. hitting or shoving in “good fun”). It has been realized that school violence can be defined in broad terms to include abuses of power and psychological trauma^{9, 15}.

Violence in schools has been realized as a public health problem since it mainly influences children and young adults, and its negative impacts impede the prime reason for education¹⁶. Several studies put emphasis that the school violence significantly inhibits teaching and learning¹⁶⁻¹⁹.

Reviewing literature showed the multi-level occurrence of violence, the individual, peer, family, school, and national levels²⁰⁻²². It has been recommended not to study the violence on individual level, but to study the context of school violence as a whole or in a comprehensive view^{9, 23}. It has been indicated through studies conducted on school violence that the prime focus was put on the individual, student or teacher level, while few studies have targeted the relationship between macro-level characteristics of communities and school violence¹⁴.

Other authors realized the importance of taking into consideration the influence of structural inequalities that affect the level of violence within schools^{10, 23, 24}. The study of Akiba et al²⁵ found that the inequalities in achievement scores were predicting higher levels of school violence cross-nationally.

Definition of school violence

According to Henry⁹, school violence implies the location of the violence on a school building, on school grounds, or a school bus. Moreover, “school-

associated" violence occurs on school grounds, in route to or from school, or during school-sponsored events¹⁰. In general terms, violence can be defined as "the use of force that results in harm". Interpersonal violence is viewed as behavior by persons against other persons with the intent to harm, including threats to cause harm²⁶. Taking the school context into the account, violence is mainly studied in terms of students victimizing other students or teachers⁹.

According to the U.S. Department of Justice, violent victimization at school was defined as "physical attacks or taking property from the student directly by force, weapons, or threats," on school property or on the way to or from school²⁷⁻²⁹. This definition clearly ignores forms of violence against teachers and administrators.

According to a report by the UNICEF³⁰, a significant ratio of 3.5 million children in Jordan report experiencing verbal, emotional, physical, and sexual violence in homes, schools and communities. The study of Elayyan³¹ showed that at school, children were subjected to both mild (53%) and moderate punishment (52%) by school principals, teachers and other staff. The author also showed that children were also perpetrators of mild punishment (13%) and moderate punishment (7%). The authors also pointed that school workers including janitors and maintenance workers were responsible for 4% of mild cases and 2% of moderate cases. The most frequent source of verbal abuse was teachers (71%), who were also responsible for nonverbal abuse (29%). Schoolmates were shown to be as a source of violence with children subjecting their schoolmates to both verbal abuse (45%) and nonverbal abuse (34%). As for sexual abuse, 7% had been exposed to sexual harassment by teachers and administrative staff, while 1% had been exposed to moderate sexual abuse. Sexual violence was also directed against children by schoolmates, who were responsible for cases of sexual harassment (28%), moderate sexual abuse (5%) and severe sexual abuse (1%). 1% of children were subjected to sexual harassment by janitors and maintenance workers, and another 1% suffered severe sexual abuse. Children in Jordan who reported violence and abuse were found to be exposed to violence at school on an average of ten times per month.

Violence is considered as rude and abusive behavior, and may occur in so many forms and different institutions, such as schools and universities. Among university students, violence still growing up in our society and becoming a common problem which developing more load on students themselves, families and community as a whole, and this according to published master thesis³² which included 1560 undergraduate students from three different Jordanian university, two of them were public universities and one private university. This study showed that the prevalence rate of violence among students at three universities was 11.9%. Around 16.5% of students who participated in this research said that their families complaining from dysfunction. Students who participated in the study ordered the institutions that contributed to gaining of violent behavior as to: family was the first, then the surrounding community, media, school, and lastly university.

Predictors of School Violence

There have been many factors that could cause and/or increase tendency of school violence. Several studies of school violence in developed countries have indicated that males are more likely to be both victims and perpetrators of school violence as compared with their counterpart females³³⁻³⁸. On the other hand, other studies reported that girls are more exposed to sexual harassment victimization as compared to boys³⁹⁻⁴¹.

Other studies reported that age is a predictor of school violence, which decreases with age^{36, 42, 43}. Another predictor of school violence is racism as reported by several studies^{40, 44, 45}. Classroom-related extracurricular activities have also shown as a predictor of school violence⁴⁶.

Other studies pointed out other predictors of school violence including family conflict, lower levels of parental monitoring, a higher likelihood of having experienced prior abuse in their homes¹⁸, and finally peers' influence⁴⁷.

CONCLUSION: The present study reviewed the literature for violence in schools. School violence is a problem that affects academic achievement and impacts the health of children.

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