School violence: An investigation of existing situation reported by Pakistani adolescents

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ABSTRACT

In Pakistan, studies are yet to be carried out regarding the phenomenon of physical violence. Therefore, the aim of this study was to examine the phenomenon of violence among high school students. A substantial proportion of Pakistani male adolescents are exposed to violence in secondary schools in urban areas and there is an urgent need to implement validated violence prevention programs on a school-wide basis. The main aim of this study was to investigate the actual situation of violence in the form physical, emotional and sexual violence among students in secondary schools in Pakistan. For this purpose, interviews of school educators were conducted as they were at the forefront in dealing with violence in schools. The findings of the study revealed the existing situation of school violence because "solid evidences on school violence are still unavailable and researchable in Pakistan". The study is important in developing strategies to address the violent activities among the students.

Key words: Physical, educators, violence, evidences, Pakistan.

INTRODUCTION

Violence in the context of school is commonly defined in terms of victimization among students or students victimizing teachers (Henry 2000). According to the U.S. Department of Justice, violent victimization at school is defined as “physical attacks or taking property from the student directly by force, weapons, or threats” (US DOJ, 2005). UNESCO (2017) describes the physical, psychological and sexual violence (p.8-9). School violence is a growing concern for students and school staff across the world (Jenson and Howard, 1999). Several studies conducted in Western countries concerning school violence concluded that males are found to be more victims and perpetrators (Kingery et al., 1998).

Prevalent forms of school violence-A general overview

Studies are yet to be conducted on physical victimization at school in developing countries (UNICEF, 2016: 68, 69; Adams and Hunnum, 2016: 1). School victimization is concerned with physical and psychological violent behavior (Longobardi et al., 2017: 254). Several studies have shown more incidents of physical violence in male than in female (Roland and Idsoe, 2001). A study of 9th grade students in Pakistan revealed that parental aggressive attitude is the major factor of physical violent acts in 9th grade students inside schools (Khan, 2015: 223). A number of victims have been found physically week in order to defend themselves (Fleming and Jacobsen, 2010). Victims can become isolated with low self-confidence and self-esteem (Dukes et al., 2009). Physical health problems including sleeping disorder can be in the victim students who are without proper treatment for a long time. Such students may be with academic difficulties including escaping from school (Kowalski and Limber, 2013). According to Lines (2006), fight among students has stages. These stages include pushing, name calling and the rush of children.

Bullying is verbally, physically or emotionally harassment or attack and include imbalance of power and is repetition over time (Olweus, 1993). Bullying as a threat to students has been found over the years in schools (Ross, 2002: 107). In the schools, bullying is widespread and is unfortunately
neglected problem around the world (Swareer et al., 2010: 38). Larson (2005: 2) describes that physical bullying is a threat for the school safety. Lee (2004:9) explains that physical bullying include damaging property. It has been observed that verbal bullying is common in both boys and girls (Lee, 2004: 10).

The all kinds of sexual crimes are said to be sexual violence (USDJ, 2017). Wooffolk (2010: 77) states that sexual abuse happens in the classrooms and affects badly the academic progress of the students. Lotter (2006: 96) concludes low self-esteem in the victims as a result of sexual abuse.

### Contextualizing school violence in Asian countries

In a study conducted on violence in schools in Cambodia, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan and Vietnam, it was concluded that physical violence is the 2nd highest type of violence among students (Bolton, 2017: 12). Nigham (2017) elaborated, in daily “India Today”, that Indian schools have turned into theatre of violence. According to lyengar (2015) in daily “Time” concluded in 7/10 children experienced violence in schools in Asian countries. Khawaja et al. (2015) concluded that physical and verbal abuse were dominant in adolescents in Pakistan (p.146). Similarly, Nishikawa (2008) reported in daily “Reuters” that school violence hit high record in Japan. According to Pillay (2018), 7/10 children had fear of bullying in Malaysia.

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Purposive sampling technique is used in the selection of educators. 15 senior educators teaching at secondary school level in public sector secondary school were consulted in District Jhang, Multan and Sargodha in Punjab province of Pakistan. Unstructured face to face interviews were conducted with the participants. A greater depth of data is possible with unstructured interview (Plessis, 2008: 2; Denzin and Lincoln, 2003).

In this study, thematic content analysis was used to achieve the objectives. According to Janesick (2004), “interviewing is a meeting of two persons to exchange information and ideas through questions and responses, resulting in communication and joint construction of meaning about a particular topic”. Braun and Clarke (2006) framework was used for conducting this type of analysis. This study is exempted by the ethics panel/institutional review board of my native institution.

### Implications and contributions of the study

The study is applicable to the school education system of Pakistan in the sense of revising the policies concerning school violence to overcome the existing violent incidents among the students. The study contributes to the imperial addition in the knowledge of school violence in Pakistan. In this sense, secondary school teacher training program can be revised to decrease violent thinking among the students.

### Conclusion

It can concluded that school violence exists in the form of physical, psychological and sexual violence. Physical violence among the adolescents exists in the form of peer fighting. Psychological violence has been found in the form of physical and verbal bullying. Sexual violence exists in the form of sexual abuse and sexual harassment.

### REFERENCES


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