

ABSTRACTS

STUDIES AND RESEARCH

Special Issue: **School Violence**

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A national study of school violence in Israel

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This paper examines the findings of a large national study of school violence in Israel. The study examined the prevalence of a wide range of victimization types (moderate and severe physical violence, verbal and indirect social violence, and sexual harassment) and identified groups of students in high risk for victimization.

The study is based on a nationally representative sample of 27,316 students in grades 4–11 in 526 schools across Israel, who completed self anonymous questionnaires during class.

The findings indicate that school violence is a serious problem. Almost every student was exposed to verbal victimization during the last month, about half reported on moderate victimization, and a fifth were victims to at least one severe physical violent act. In general, comparing with our findings in 2002, the overall trend is mostly stable.

We found that boys are victimized more than girls for most of the victimization types, except for indirect social victimization that was reported more by girls. Elementary school students report more than junior high students on victimization; high school students report on the lowest prevalence levels of victimization. Arab students are exposed to more victimization than Jewish students except for verbal victimization. Bedouin student are the most vulnerable group, and are especially susceptible to severe victimization, including the use of weapons, especially knives.

The authors recommend to employ an ecological perspective to deal with violence in schools.

Keywords: school violence, gender, age, ethnic/national group.

Understanding school violence – Context, situations and interactions

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This paper presents theoretical perspectives of the study of school violence. The paper deals first with theories of aggressive behavior such as: a) Modeling, b) Frustration, c) Aggressive Episode and d) Social and Symbolic Interaction. Secondly, the paper deals specifically with different approaches to the study on school violence. School violence is one of the manifestations of aggressive behavior. While the term aggression looks at the phenomenon from the individual point of view, the term violence looks at it from the social point of view. The paper presents five approaches to the study of school violence: the ecological approach, the child welfare approach, the victimization approach, the school effectiveness approach and the radical approach. Israeli research on school violence was influenced at first from the school effectiveness approach and later on from the ecological and the victimization approaches.

Kew words: school violence, frustration, learning, violent situation, violent script, violent cure, safe school, victimization, radical approach, zero tolerance.

Bullying among preschoolers in Israeli kindergartens

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The purpose of this research was to assess the level of bullying among children aged 4–7 attending kindergarten in Israel. We showed 12 pictures of different bullying situations to 302 children attending 18 kindergartens in Northern Israel and asked them to report whether they experienced the shown bullying incident during that day. The results showed that 61.3% of the children were victims of bullying on a daily basis; 46.4% of the children reported experiencing physical bullying and 24.5% of the children reported experiencing four different kinds of bullying the day they were asked. The results of this study indicate an urgent need to intervene in the early ages to reduce the bullying rates.

Keywords: bullying, anti social behavior, preschoolers, verbal, physical and indirect bullying.

Student victimization by educational staff in Israel

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This study examines the issue of student maltreatment by educational staff. This is an important type of victimization that may result in poor developmental outcomes. However, only limited attention by researchers and the public has been paid to this kind of student victimization.

In this study we examine the prevalence of physical, emotional, and sexual victimization of students by educational staff. We also examine the relationship between staff maltreatment and a number of variables describing the student (gender) and the school's contextual factors (school level, socioeconomic status of the students' families, ethnic affiliation, policy and intervention, and teachers' support and student participation).

The study is based on a nationally representative sample of 27,316 students in grades 4–11 in 526 schools across Israel, who completed self anonymous questionnaires in a class setting.

The study shows that students in Israel are exposed to high levels of maltreatment by educational staff. Almost a third of the students reported being emotionally maltreated by school staff, and almost a fifth of students were physically victimized. Sexual harassment was less reported by junior high and high school students. The most vulnerable students were boys, Arab children, especially Bedouin students, and children in schools with high percentage of low SES families. Lower levels of victimization were reported in schools with effective school policy and interventions to deal with school violence.

We conclude that there is a need for a massive and extensive process to deal with these phenomena, especially in Arab schools. Multilevel intervention should be designed and implemented. Teachers and principals should be provided with resources and training to help them deal with conflicts with students in more productive ways.

Keywords: staff violence, socio-economic status, climate and policy, ethnic-cultural affiliation.

Non-violent resistance and school-violence – Program description and preliminary findings

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This paper presents a program of non-violent resistance for dealing with school violence, school vandalism and disruptive behaviors in schools. Teachers were trained to display non-escalating resistant reactions to the negative behaviors of students. The school pledged itself to full openness and transparency, making public every violent event and its disciplinary treatment. The parents were mobilized by the school's decided stance that the children's safety was its top priority. The teachers were mobilized by the program's clear stance, that without an improvement in the teachers' security, in the support provided to the teachers, and in teacher authority, the school could not become a safe environment. The preliminary results show that not only student violence and vandalism, but also the teacher aggressive manifestations were considerably reduced. In addition, teacher burnout was significantly lowered.

Keywords: children's violence, school-violence, non-violent resistance, teachers' burn-out, escalation.

Coping with violence in the Israeli educational system – Policy, goals and actions

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This article describes in detail how the educational system copes with violence in schools. The sources and processes of learning, including a critical analysis of studies done in Israel and other countries, an analysis of reports of committees and the study of schools' successes are presented at length. Guiding principles, goals and a plan of action were adopted from this knowledge base. Some of the main elements of the plan relevant

to prevention and intervention of school violence are presented here. The article deals with the difficulties and dilemmas associated with the educational system's coping with violence and outlines the challenges ahead.

Key Words: school violence, school climate, comprehensive intervention, monitoring, standards of school climate, secondary intervention.

