Dynamics of Gender Based Violence:
Investigating the Effects of Violence in Pakistani School on School Dropout and Loss of Creativity among Students

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Abstract

Punishments and violence from teachers causes delinquency and deviancy among students. This paper investigated Students' perception of violence at school as how violence is received by students. Two alternatives were assumed in construction of this variable: students' preference to leave schools and result into dropouts or they learn violence to inflict on others at schools and loss of creativity, argumentation skills or otherwise. The third possibility is that they sustain violence and remain in school getting immune to the threat of violence and punishments. For data collection, a sample size of 522 respondents (54.6% boys and 45.4% girls) was randomly selected on proportional allocation basis from Grade 10 students. Frequency and percentage distribution along with Chi-square test was carried out at uni-variate and bi-variate levels. The findings of the study showed that almost all of the respondents (95.59%) agreed that violence at school is the major cause of dropout from school; only 4.41% did not perceive violence as a reason to high dropout having no significant relation established with (p=0.346), majority of 73.47% respondents agreed that harsh treatment of teacher is ineffective in making student to complete homework, but it create poor performance and student lose creativity skills. 10.34% respondents disagreed to this view and 16.28% were uncertain in this respect again, no significant relation was established with gender (p=0.311). The study concludes that school punishment is the main reason for school dropout, loss of creativity, delinquency and deviancy among students.

Keywords

Gender Based Violence, School Violence, Dropout and Loss of Creativity

Introduction

The effects of violence at school could be ascertained by unearthing students' perception, for example, through asking about whether they consider violence as normal or consider it inimical to their development and education. Research by Everett and Price (1995) suggests that if violence is observed or sustained for a longer period of time, students start perceiving violence as normal behavior. Moreover, from psychological perspective , more the occurrence of violence at school, more is the students vulnerability to start practicing various forms of violence (Nuwer, 1990). A number of studies have demonstrated that students exposed to violence are suffering from loss motivation and loss of engagement in academics. Negative self-image (Potgieter, 2000) and non-participation in school in classroom activities (Flannery and Singer, 1999) are commonly identified

problems. Similarly, the culture of violence operates as vicious cycle in that the more a child is engaged in violence the more he/she loses interest in academics thereby making him/her more vulnerable to be more violent.

Whether tolerated for his/her social status or relationships with teachers, students engaged in violence if prolong their violent practices consistently, they become immune to the threat of punishment or violence by others. Similarly, boys' violence tolerated under socially constructed myth that 'boys will always be boys' mean that they would not deter from committing violence. In circumstances such as these the practice of violence get deeper and deeper becoming part of actor's personality. Moreover, it has also been observed that the use of violence to prevent violence – for example, in the form of teachers administering corporal punishment to deter violent students – translates into behavioral sturdiness in violent students so that they become more frequently violent.

Teachers' use of corrective mechanisms, such as bullying, ridiculing, corporal punishment etc. though is forms of violence but they sometimes might affect students in observing and strengthening their academic behavior. This could be gauged by comparatively asking about students' hard work in school activities and their grades and juxtaposing it with their views on punishment as means for compelling them towards such activities.

Research Objective

The current research is to investigate effects of violence in schools on students' attitude toward dropout and loss of creativity among students.

Literature Review

Existence of gender-based violence in schools leads to low or poor educational output. For instance, in their research on the impacts of gender-based school experiences on enrolment-retention and achievement outcomes in Ghana and Botswana, Dunne(2006) found that sexual harassment, physical assault, verbal abuse etc. significantly contributed towards irregularity in attendance and lower grades among girls (Dunne, Humphreys & Leach, 2006). The experiences of violence at school could also introduce truancy thereby undermining learners' ability to learn with a consequent negative impact on their academic output (Pereznietoet al., 2010).

Coercive discipline strategies are associated with decreased confidence, assertiveness which enhance feelings of humiliation and helplessness (Baumrind & Black, 1967). Corporal punishment contributes to delinquent behaviors such as theft, running away, and truancy and as a factor in antisocial behaviors such as cheating and lying (Straus, Hamby, Finkelhor, Moore, & Runyan, 1998). When teachers and parents use corporal punishment as an attempt to reduce antisocial

behaviors in their child, the long-term effect tends to be a further increase in antisocial behaviors(Straus, Sugarman, & Giles-Sims, 1997). Usually excessive physical punishment and aggression leads to molding of students' behavior towards aggression and wrath (Naz, Khan, Daraz, Hussain, & Khan, 2011).

The culture of using corporal punishment for disciplining children in schools is a global problem. Despite the fact that corporal punishment is just one of the many ways of disciplining children (Sanderson, 2003) it is practiced at large as the only way for behavior correction. Two reasons are often cited as rationale for its practice. Firstly, it is legitimated on the grounds that all children of the same age are similar in their personality attributes and therefore they should be subjected to similar types of discipline strategies (Harber, 2002: 10). Secondly, it is considered necessary and perhaps essential for disciplining (Plan, 2008: 48; Dunne, Humphrey & Leach, 2006: 82) which besides tantamount to a legitimized form of authority (Harber, 2002: 10) also paves way for other forms of violence in schools. Perhaps, that is the reason that despite UNVAC's 2009 calls for ban on corporal punishment in schools; a huge number 90 out of 197 countries still allow its use (Plan, 2008: 12). Corporal punishment is legal in both rich and poor societies such as France, Korea, Australia, a number of states in US, Pakistan and Cambodia (Balaya and Debarbieux, 2008). Even where legal, strict guidelines exists for administering corporal punishment but they are seldom abided by and students are reportedly slapped, hit, or kicked (Youssef et al., 1998; Chianu, 2000; HRW, 1999). This shows the formal and informal institutional fabric of societies where in structure of violence is deeply entrenched. A more ironic fact is that in many countries despite its illegality, corporal punishment is practiced (Durrant, 2005). Part of the reason is that many countries; especially Asian, corporal punishment is practiced under the influence of social value of respecting elders. Children would have to keep silent even if a teacher is using it indiscriminately, which according to Plan (2008: 17) perpetuates an intergenerational cycle of violence and support for children's violent behavior. It is due to such social values that teachers would denounce media reports and would hardly inform authorities regarding such practice (Dubet, 2003). Its practice paves the way for children's socialization into violence by orienting towards the notion that violence should be used when one does not agree with others (De Wet, 2007; White, 2007; Plan, 2008; Gulbenkian Foundation, 1995). Research also demonstrates that the more it is practiced the more a child would exhibit only overt conformity but in reality he/she would be inculcated with feelings of aggression and tendency towards physical aggression against other children (Nazet al., 2011; Gulbenkian Foundation, 1995). And thus the socially created environment of violence triggers a general tendency towards authoritarian attitudes and violence (Harber and Mncube, 2011: 242).To investigate the above mentioned situation, this study was purposefully designed to investigate gender discrimination in punishments at schools in two districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan.

Methodology

This study investigated the gender based discrimination in punishment at schools in KP Pakistan. Using a survey design, a sample size of 522 respondents (54.6% boys and 45.4% girls) was randomly selected on proportional allocation basis from Grade 10 students. Frequency and percentage distribution was carried out at uni-variate and bi-variate levels. Moreover, chi-square test was used to determine the level of association between variables (both independent and dependent). This study was confined to the gender based dynamics of violence in two selected districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, Pakistan namely, Peshawar and Mardan.

Findings and Discussion

The detailed analysis of findings along with discussion on the results of this study is presented below.

Table 6: Punishment at School, Academics and Gender Based Violence

| Violence Type | Exposure | Statistics | Punishment Never Serve Improvement in Academics | | | Statistical Test |
			Agree	Disagree	Don't Know	
Physical	Exposure	# Cases	145	72	39	Chi-Square 20.234 (0.000)
		Percent	27.78	13.79	7.47	
	Never	# Cases	198	51	17	
		Percent	37.93	9.77	3.26	
Psychological	Exposure	# Cases	109	53	33	Chi-Square 17.424 (0.000)
		Percent	20.88	10.15	6.32	
	Never	# Cases	234	70	23	
		Percent	44.83	13.41	4.41	
Sexual	Exposure	# Cases	206	84	47	Chi-Square 12.969 (0.002)
		Percent	39.46	16.09	9	
	Never	# Cases	137	39	9	
		Percent	26.24	7.47	1.72	
Economic	Exposure	# Cases	102	50	30	Chi-Square 14.413 (0.001)
		Percent	19.54	9.58	5.75	
	Never	# Cases	241	73	26	
		Percent	46.17	13.98	4.98	

Source: Field Data

Most of the countries, including Pakistan have debarred punishments from the schooling system and perpetrator and committer have been declared punishable through constitutional amendments. In this capacity, some relationships of physical, psychological, sexual and economic violence were ascertained with relation to punishment never approves academics. A highly significant (p=0.000) was found between punishment never serves improvement in academics with physical violence. Similarly, psychological violence was also found highly significant (p=0.000) with punishment never serves improvement in academics, in addition psychological violence was also found highly significant (p=0.000) and economic violence (p=0.001) with punishment never serve improvement in academics. The results amply indicated the negative effects of violence in all four manifestations and were found never helpful in improving the academics. It is further inferred that high dropout rate, social stigmatization and making students reactive to the situation and inflictor were some of the violent causes associated to punishment, moreover, corporal punishment, though understood to be reconstructive and reformative but in real sense creating hatred and bringing social alienation in the system.

Correlation between Gender Based Violence and School Dropouts

Violence at school causes a number of complications for students and their relative families. Violence in either shape is kept restricted and being replaced through love and affection. However, exercising violence is understood to be an integral part of schooling system and mostly associated to reconstructive and reformative in nature with relation to behavior and personality.

Table 7: Correlation between Gender Based Violence and School Dropout

Violence Type	Exposure	Statistics	GBV Causes School Dropouts		Statistical Test
			Agree	Disagree	
Physical	Exposure	# Cases	237	19	Chi-Square 10.848 (0.001)
		Percent	45.4	3.64	
	Never	# Cases	262	4	
		Percent	50.19	0.77	
Psychological	Exposure	# Cases	178	17	Chi-Square 13.740 (0.001)
		Percent	34.1	3.26	
	Never	# Cases	321	6	
		Percent	61.49	1.15	
Sexual	Exposure	# Cases	317	20	Chi-Square 5.275 (0.024)
		Percent	60.73	3.83	
	Never	# Cases	182	3	
		Percent	34.86	0.57	
Economic	Exposure	# Cases	169	13	Chi-Square 4.969 (0.041)
		Percent	32.37	2.49	
	Never	# Cases	330	10	
		Percent	63.22	1.916	

Source: Field Data

Putting into consideration the effects of violence it was found that gender based violence causes school dropout significantly with physical violence (p=0.001). Physical punishment indifferent types like beating through stich, bullying and standing the student up on the desk are some of the obvious examples found in the study area. A consistent use of physical violence has been found as contributing factor to an increase in the dropout from the schools as indicated by SPARC (2004). Moreover, a significant relationship was also detected between gender based violence causes school dropout with psychological violence (p=0.001). The density of violence in schooling system is undeniable. In addition a significant relationship was also found between sexual violence (p=0.024) and gender based violence causes school dropout. It is apparent that being culturally restricted and socially stigmatized, pupil cannot afford to go for establishing such immoral liaisons and thus prefer leaving a school for goods. Moreover irregularity in attendance and punishment were also found highly correlating in nature with special inclination to sexual harassment (Boss, 1966 and Dunne et al., 2005). Likewise a significant relationship was detected between gender based violence causes school dropout and economic violence (p=0.041). It is indicative of the fact that violence could not be confined to physical, psychological and sexual aspects rather economic aspect has a greater role to play.

Gender Based Violence (GBV) at Schools and Adaptation of Violence Behavior and Loss of Creativity

Academic institutions have been run through importing formal learning of both genders usually called academics. However, apart from these formal leanings, other dynamics for behavior control and getting it directed are also devised in different methodological strategies for getting maximum success. Punishment is one of the tools which are brought into utility, whenever it seems the system is heading towards a level. This punishment could be both a collective as well as an individual form. However, its philosophy is the reformation of the behavior, making it predictable and forces it to be in conformity to the social values. Structural mechanics and functional attributes amply cover this phenomenon.

Table 8: GBV at Schools and Adaptation of Violence Behavior and Loss of Creativity

Violence Type	Exposure	Statistics	GBV at Schools and Adaptation of Violence Behavior and Loss of Creativity			Statistical Test
			Agree	Disagree	Don't Know	
Physical	Exposure	# Cases	178	32	46	Chi-Square 4.142 (0.126)
		Percent	34.1	6.13	8.81	
	Never	# Cases	205	22	39	
		Percent	39.27	4.21	7.47	
Psychological	Exposure	# Cases	134	23	38	Chi-Square 3.514 (0.173)
		Percent	25.67	4.41	7.28	
	Never	# Cases	249	31	47	
		Percent	47.7	5.94	9	
Sexual	Exposure	# Cases	235	44	58	Chi-Square 8.976 (0.011)
		Percent	45.02	8.43	11.11	
	Never	# Cases	148	10	27	
		Percent	28.35	1.91	5.17	
Economic	Exposure	# Cases	126	23	33	Chi-Square 2.659 (0.265)
		Percent	24.14	4.41	6.32	
	Never	# Cases	257	31	52	
		Percent	49.23	5.94	9.96	

Source: Field Data

The adoption of violent behavior and loss of creativity was found significant with sexual violence (p=0.011). The obvious reason responsible for this inference could be the occurrence of sexual attempts towards the students irrespective of their gender considerations from the teachers and from the mates amongst themselves as well. It could either be due to the cultural endorsement on strong restrictions from culture in the shape of taboo where pupil seldom find any courage to express the occurrence of such events and rather keep these into confidentiality due to the fear of enmity and social stigma. The existence of sexual violence in light of gender based violence at school and loss of creativity was due to heavy mental pressure upon the suppressed where they could not make it public because of social stigmatization associated to it.

Conclusion

The study concluded that school dropout had a high level of association in light of gender based violence, psychological, sexual and economic mode of violence. Likewise, punishment at school had a contributing role in the manifestation of physical, psychological, sexual and economic mode of violence. For example, at uni-variate level, the findings of the study revealed (95.59%) agreement on the part of the respondents towards violence at school. This means that violence at school is the major cause of school dropout among students. Similar, in view of 73.47% respondent harsh treatment of teacher was ineffective in making student to complete homework, but it caused poor performance on the part of students and leads to lossof creative skills. School punishment was the main reason for school dropout, loss of creativity, delinquency and deviancy among students. Furthermore, on the basis of bi-variate analysis, the study concludes that gender based violence causes school dropout. It was shown highly significant for all physical violence (p=0.001), psychological violence (p=0.001), sexual violence (p=0.024) and economic violence (p=0.041). Further, the adoption of violent behavior and loss of creativity was found significant with sexual violence (p=0.011), On the other hand the physical (p=0.126), psychological (p=0.173) and economic violence (p=0.265) had little role in adopting violent behavior and loss of creativity.

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