Violence In Secondary Schools Of Odisha: Parental Perception

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Abstract

This study is aimed to find out the level of parental perceptions of the violent acts, actions parents will take when their children perpetrate violence and how violent acts can be solved in school. 240 students from 24 secondary schools, (10 from each) of Dhenkanal district of odisha were chosen randomly and asked to give the questionnaire to their parents in the survey. The results reveal that parents are aware of violent acts that occur in schools and some of the causes are poor supervision by school authorities , peer influence , exposure to violent media and emotional .inculcating the peace education concept in secondary school curriculum ,emphasising Opportunity for sports and other recreational activities, games, debate, excursions, peace club activities, visitation to schools by parents, community involvement establishment of Guidance and Counselling unit and grievances and readdressal centre are some of the strategies suggested for solving violent behaviour of children in schools.

Key Words: School violence, parents, peace education

Odisha Ortaokullarında Şiddet: Ebeveyn Algısı

Özet

Bu çalışmanın amacı şiddet eylemlerine yönelik ebeveynlerin algı düzeyini, çocukları şiddet uyguladığında ebeveynlerin gerçekleştirecekleri eylemleri ve şiddet eyleminin okulda nasıl çözülebileceğini ortaya koymaktır. Odisha'daki Dhenkanal Bölgesinin her birinden 10 adet olmak üzere 24 ortaokuldan toplamda 240 öğrenci rastgele seçilmiş ve öğrencilerden araştırmada kullanan ölçek formunu ebeveynlerine vermeleri istenmiştir. Sonuçlar, ebeveynlerin okullarda ortaya çıkan şiddetin farkında olduklarını ve sebeplerden bazılarının okul yöneticilerinin yetersiz denetimi, akran etkisi, şiddet içerikli medya ve duygulara maruz kalmadan kaynaklandığını göstermektedir. Barış eğitimi kavramının ortaokul müfredatında aşılanması; sporlar ve diğer sosyal aktiviteler, oyunlar, münazaralar, geziler, barış kulübü faaliyetleri, ebeveynlerin okul ziyareti, toplumsal katılım için fırsatların önemini belirtmek; Rehberlik ve Danışma birimi ile şikâyet ve çözüm merkezlerinin kurulması okullarda çocukların şiddet davranışlarını çözmek için tavsiye edilen stratejilerden bazılarıdır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Okullarda şiddet, ebeveynler, barış eğitimi.

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INTRODUCTION

The Concise Oxford Dictionary defines violence as unlawful exercise of physical force. Olweus (1999), also   violence to the use of physical force. He defines violence/violent behavior as aggressive behaviour where the actor or perpetrator uses his or her own body as an object (including a weapon) to inflict (relatively serious) injury or discomfort upon an individual. With such a definition there is an overlap between violence and bullying, where bullying is carried out by physical aggression. The World Health Organization (WHO; 2002) defines 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. According to Blackburn (1993) violence denotes the 'forceful infliction of physical injury'. Violence has been defined in a broader sense to include behaviour by people or against people liable to cause physical or psychological harm (Gulbenkian Foundation, 1995). All the definitions given associate intentionality with the committing of the act itself, irrespective of the outcome it produces. Excluded from the definition are unintentional incidents – such as most road traffic injuries and burns (WHO, 2002). Violence in school has increased a lot in this recent era. School violence is the act done by the students who are having violent attitude. Such kinds of acts include bullying, physical attacks with or without weapons, larceny, vandalism and theft etc.

School violence wears many faces. It includes gang activity, locker thefts, bullying and intimidation, gun use, assault—just about anything that produces a victim. Violence is perpetrated against students, teachers, and staff, and ranges from intentional vendettas to accidental killings of bystanders. Research has shown that a significant relationship exists between exposure to community violence and increases in aggressive behaviour in adolescent   youth .School violence is something that needs to be looked into carefully at the proper time as it is seen that this is increasing in the school students each day. If there is no one to look into the problem, then definitely, it will give you unacceptable outcome. Any act of violent behavior is ought to give you trouble. The possible error behind school violence is not a specific person's error; however it is due to serious problems and the ones who are in any way associated to the child. We all know that school is a sacred place where children go to gain knowledge, education and good etiquettes. So, proper assistance will aid the child to become a better person in future. However, this way of thinking is changing nowadays. The competition these days is so tough amongst the children that many a times, they get frustrated from it. This frustration further leads to the development of non violence. Some believe that the origin of school violence is in the school itself. However this is completely wrong. Roots of school violence may originate from school, but you also cannot neglect the home environment for the same. It is fine that violence, many a times may develop in the child because of the harsh behavior of the teacher or fear of the examinations or effect of the peer group in the school. However our aim where is not to look into its origin, but to find out ways in which it can be cured. This matter is of high concern and it requires assistance from not only the parents, but also the teachers, as well. If both these parties have a proper understanding of the child's problem and they take efforts in interacting with him timely, this will effectively help in curing the problem. Hence, such kind of problems can be easily prevented.

Many schools nowadays fail to take any security measures to protect this kind of events from occurring. It is completely wrong and one needs to take due steps to supervise it. Schools can develop some security arrangements with an aim to avoid such kind of issues from taking place again and again. There should be some arrangement made in the school to supervise the child's bag that contains any weapons. This will largely help in preventing such kind of incidents from taking place. There should be a record maintained to watch all the children who enter the school premises. A register at the entry place of the school should note down the one who enters or leaves the school by signing in it. This can be done with the help of a security guard. All these efforts will pressurize the child's mind psychologically and they will definitely have to give a second thought prior to getting any weapon to the school or indulging themselves into any sort of violent behavior.

Exposure to community violence occurs through various modalities that include the media, observation, hearsay, and direct contact either as perpetrator or victim (Schubiner, Scott & Tzelepis, 1993). Furthermore, the degree to which adolescents are exposed to violence in their homes, neighbourhoods, and schools and the extent to which they have been victims of violence are associated with their own use of violence (Durant, Pendergrast, and Cadenhead, 1994). There is extensive evidence that many adolescents are exposed to high levels of violence and that this exposure is having a significant effect on the increasing violent trends found among this age group. Despite the fact that children spend most of their after school hours with parents, report has shown that most children will not report cases of violence at home (Unicef, 2007). No parent wants their child to live in fear of intimidation or harm. Except for extreme cases that are reported, violence incidences against children are not documented.

Children may not feel able to report acts of violence for the fear of further subjection to punishment by the abuser. Most times both child and abuser may see nothing unusual or wrong in the child being subjected to violence. They may not consider an act of violence actually to be violence t all, perhaps viewing it as justifiable and necessary punishment. The child victim may feel ashamed or guilty, believing that the violence was deserved. This often leads the child to be unwilling to speak about it. Some of the major reasons why learners will not report cases of violence especially for physical and gender based violence were because they felt nothing will be done. Improving the quality of education is difficult without also addressing school violence, since regardless of how good the teachers or curriculum are, violence makes it difficult for students to learn. Children who are victimized in school crime often suffer from decreased selfesteem, truancy, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder and in extreme cases, suicide and violent retaliation. In situations where parents finally become aware of violent acts against or of their children, they react differently. Some parents might take their children to martial arts college in desperation because they are being bullied. Most parents speak to their child's teachers or the bully's parents but often this doesn't solve the problem. Many parents also want their child to fight back but the child is afraid of the bully and also of what the teacher will do if they fight back. In some cases things have gotten so bad that kids actually take their own lives.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are to

1. Study the types of violence common to secondary school students

2. Find out parental awareness on children's violence in schools

3. Suggest measures for preventing children's violence in schools.

Keeping the objectives above, the following research questions are raised

Research Questions

1. What are the types of violent acts common to secondary school students?

2. What are the common causes of violent acts of students in secondary school?

3. What is the level of parental awareness of children violent acts in school?

4. What action will parents take when their children perpetrate violent acts?

5. What are parental views on how violent acts can be solved in school?

METHODS

A survey research design was used in this study. The parents were reached through their children. 10 students were chosen randomly from 24 secondary schools, i.e. 3(one government, one new government and one block grant) from each block of Dhenkanal District (3×8=24) making a sample size of 240. Simple random sampling technique was employed in the selection of the 24 schools out of the 207 secondary schools of Dhenkanal district of Odisha .

TOOLS

The self made questionnaire used in the study was tagged parents' attitude to children violent acts. The questionnaire was divided into three sections. Section A consists of personal data of the respondents. Section B and C consists of items on parents' attitude to children violent acts and how children violent acts can be solved in schools. The reviews by the experts were incorporated. The reliability of the instrument was determined using test retest method. A reliability coefficient of 0.73 was obtained and deemed adequate for data collection. The questionnaires were then given to students to take home to their parents for their responses. Students were cautioned on attempting to complete the questionnaire themselves. Items in the questionnaire were close ended questions, with three options of Agree ,Disagree and Undecided .

RESULTS

A total no of 240 parents were involved in the study. Out of 240 parent's 138 fathers' and 102 were mother, about the age group of the respondents 172 were belongs to the above 40 year and next of it i.e. 68 were below 40 years .Regarding the qualification of the parents 73% were graduate and above, 18% parents were in between Matriculation and Graduate and next to it i.e 9% parents were undermatric .the section Band C of the tools were analysed below on the basis of the research questions

Research Question 1: What are the types of violent acts common to secondary school students?

Table 1: Percentile table showing types of violent acts common to senior secondary school students

Items	Agree		Disagree		Undecided	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Fighting with classmates	187	77.91	32	13.34	21	9.65
Stealing	179	74.58	42	17.50	9	7.92
Damaging of school properties	72	30.0	143	59.58	25	10.42
Seizing other students food	53	22.08	165	68.75	22	9.17
Bullying other Children	132	55	74	30,84	34	14.16
Rape	62	25.84	132	55	46	19.16
Throwing chalks pins etc to the front benchers	42	17.50	148	57.50	60	25
Abuses	154	64.16	48	20	38	15.84
Blackmailing	174	72.5	53	22	23	5.5
Extortion	162	67.5	62	25.8	16	6.7
Truancy	167	69.6	57	23.7	16	6.7
Commenting to the teachers	53	24.08	123	51.25	64	24.67
Corporal punishment by teacher	135	56	74	31	31	13
Stigmatisation	69	28.7	157	65.5	14	5.8
Creation of disturbance	134	56	75	31	31	13
Slapping, poking, pushing	156	65	43	18	41	17
Smoking in the school campus	45	19	132	55	63	26
Commenting	189	79.25	21	8.75	29	12
Molestation	54	23	176	73	10	4
Chewing gum	197	82	23	10	20	8
Making noise	207	86	12	6	21	8
Dress code Violations	35	14.67	179	74.5	26	10.83

From the above table it is found that a large no of respondents i.e. 77.91% agreed that the violence occurs in secondary school is due to fighting with peer members, while 13.34% disagree with the statement and rest were undecided. Stealing is a factor of secondary school violence, 74.58% of respondents agreed with the statement where as 17.5% disagree with the statement .in response to damaging school property 30% parents are agreed and 60% parents are disagree with the statement ,that it is a cause of school violence ,violence occur during lunch hour i.e seizing other food is disagree by 68.75% of parents ,while 55% parents were agreed that bullying is a cause of violence in secondary schools .also 55% parents were disagree rape is a major cause of violence in secondary schools of odisha. Commenting is a major factor of violence in secondary school which was agreed by 79.25% of parents ,where as 64.16 % parents opined that abusing is the main cause of violence in secondary school. In

response to black mailing 72.5% parents were agreed that this is a cause of violence in secondary school..in response to truancy and extortion 69.6%and 67.5% parents agreed that this is a cause of secondary school violence where as commenting to the teachers , corporal punishment stigmatization ,slapping ,poking ,pushing smoking ,molestation chewing gums are the common causes of violence in secondary schools the percentage are reflected n the above table.

Research Question 2: What are the common causes of violent acts of students in secondary schools?

Table 2: Common causes of children violent acts

Sl.No	Items	Agree No	(%)	Disagree No	(%)	Undecided No	(%)
1	Poor supervision by school authorities	182	76	28	12	30	12
2	Peer group Influence	193	80	38	16	9	4
3	Lack of interest in School	65	27	156	65	19	8
4	Students dislike of teachers	146	61	86	36	8	3
5	Teachers attitude to work	132	55	79	33	29	12
6	Home background of students	96	40	102	43	42	17
7	Parental Influence	187	78	50	21	3	01
8	Day dreaming	97	40	112	47	31	13
9	Emotional instability	89	37	123	51	28	11
10	Adolescence period	176	73	43	22	11	05
11	Exposure to violent Media	189	79	23	09	28	12
12	Lack of recreational facilities	152	63	76	32	12	05
13	Strike actions of teachers	143	60	68	28	29	12
14	Too many free periods	96	40	102	42	42	18
15	Absence of teachers from classrooms	174	72	43	18	23	10
16	Partiality nature of teachers to students	185	77	29	12	26	11
17	Dislike of subject	109	45	75	31	56	24
18	Lack of guidance and counselling	197	82	20	08	23	10
19	Excess of school timing	132	55	75	31	37	16
20	Castesim	139	58	77	32	24	10
21	Lack of Dedication of teachers	123	51	86	40	21	09

22	Uniform discipline Policies	143	60	67	28	30	12
23	Use of Mobile Phones by the students	187	78	34	14	11	08
24	Aggressive nature	198	83	29	12	13	05
25	Attracting to opposite sex	210	88	23	09	7	03
26	Raging	201	84	12	05	27	11
27	Intolerance	195	81	32	13	13	06
28	Learning difficulties and Health Problems	143	60	65	27	32	13
29	School environment	137	57	64	27	39	16
30	Affection seeking	164	68	56	23	20	09
31	Illegal relation between teacher and student	78	32	123	52	39	16
32	Rivalry among the staff	165	69	67	28	8	03
33	Tuition practices by teachers	176	73	34	14	30	13

Data analysed revealed that many things do cause violent behaviour in children among which are poor supervision by school authorities (76%), peer influence (80%),teachers attitude to work(55%),parental influence (78%) exposure to violent Media (79%),partiality

nature of teachers(77%),castesim(55%),use of mobile phones(78%) ,attracting to opposite sex (88%),ragging(84%)and illegal relation between teacher and student (32%) just to mention a few.

Research Question 3: What is the level of parental awareness of children violent acts in schools?

From the Table 3,it is found that 76 % of the parents reported that their children will report to them if they were victims of violence. Meanwhile a lesser percentage 56% believed that their children will report to them if they perpetrate violence in schools. It is however interesting that 89. % of the parents believed that the headmaster or school teacher will tell them if their children perpetrate violence in schools. And 67% of parents agreed that the fried of their children's were report if they commit violence in school and a less percentage of parents use technology (5%)use technology for aware of violence done by the children.

Table 3: Parental awareness of children violent acts in schools

Sl.No	Items	Agree %	Disagree %	Undecided %
1	Do your children report to you whenever they are victims of violence	76%	21%	3%
2	Do your Children report to you whenever they perpetrate violence in schools	56%	43%	1%
3	If they perpetrate violence do you think they will tell you	65%	24%	11%
4	Have the Headmaster or class teacher report you about your wards	89%	9%	2%

| 5 | Have the peer member of your children report you about the violence done by the students | 67% | 26% | 7% |
| 6 | Have you use any type of technology to aware the violent behaviour done by the children | 5% | 76% | 19% |

Table 4: Parental Method of dealing with Child's experience of Violent acts in school

Sl.No	Items	Agree %	Disagree%
1	What did you do when your child reported that they were victims of violence in school Visit the school to access the child Involved	78	22
2	See the school authority or teacher to find out what happened	82	18
3	Send the child back to school to go and retaliate	53	47
4	Counselling the child	65	35
5	Ignoring the problems of child	54	56
6	Promoting/supporting the child	43	67
7	Discipline my child at home	51	49

It is also revealed from the Table 4 that in dealing with cases of violence involving their children, parents would go to schools to approach the child involved (78%) or see the teacher (82%) rather than sending their children to go back to school to retaliate. It is noteworthy however that few parents (53%) would still ask their children to go back to school to retaliate. 54% are ignoring the problem the child and 51% parents are Discipline my child at home.

Table5: Percentile distribution on parental view of how violent acts can be solved in school

Sl.No	Items	Agree		Disagree		Undecided	
		No	%	No	%	No	%
1	Parents should provide basic needs for their children	168	70	62	26	10	4
2	More time given to sports and other recreational activities on the curriculum	172	72	35	14	33	14
3	Helping individual pupils at risk of being violent	169	70	57	24	14	6
4	Games, debate, excursions and club activities should be encouraged	175	73	63	26	2	1
5	Teaching programmes and activities	173	72	43	18	24	10
6	Parents should visit the school of their children from time to time to know their behaviour	175	73	65	27	0	0
5	Guidance and counselling units should be established to help students with behavioural problems	165	69	32	13	43	18
6	Improving the school environment to reduce violence	193	80	42	18	5	2
7	Appointing more Qualified teachers	202	84	22	09	16	7

8	Opening of Grievance and redrasahl cell	214	89	12	5	14	6
9	School safety and security arrangements	216	90	15	6	9	4
10	School staff training	214	89	16	6	10	5
11	Establishing peace club	216	90	18	7	6	3
12	Collaboration	154	66	72	28	14	6
13	Peace education programme included in school curriculum	215	90	19	7	6	3
14	Restriction of mobile phones in school campus	232	96	8	4	0	0
15	Campaign to learn without fear	234	97	6	3	0	0

Table 5 showed that establishment of more welfare centres to correct violent behaviour, the provision of basic needs for children, opportunity for sports and other recreational activities, games, debate, excursions, club activities, visitation to schools by parents, establishment of Guidance and Counselling units peace education programme included in school curriculum ,training of teachers for peace education establishment of peace clubs and restriction of mobile phones are some of the strategies suggested for solving violence behaviour of children in schools.

DISCUSSION

It is found that the parents of children in government and new government school are aware of violent acts that occur and are common in their children's schools. While the parents of block grant schools were are not aware about the school violence they totally depends on the school administration to check the violence.. A larger percentage of parents believe that exposure to violent Media like TV mobile phones are the main causes of violence in secondary schools of Odisha. This finding also tally with literature evidence that there is consistent evidence that violent imagery in television, film and video, and computer games has substantial short term effects on arousal, thoughts, and emotions, increasing the likelihood of aggressive or fearful behaviour in younger children, especially in boys (Brown and Hamilton-

Giachritsis, 2005). Reviews of literature typically conclude that there is evidence that viewing violent media is associated with aggression (e.g., Donnerstein & Linz, 1995; Huesmann & Miller, 1994; Paik & Comstock, 1994; Wood, Wong, & Chachere, 1991). This study has also revealed that most parents will go to school to see the person involved in perpetrating violence against their children contrary to some beliefs that parents will send a child who had been a victim of violence back to school to retaliate. It is common knowledge that among the educated family it is a trait of that they never wants their children's will never involved with disrupting activities . It is also reported that this vengeful attitude has been carried over for generations in many uneducated parents . This is evident by some parents telling their children to hit back if someone hits them. The fear was that if a child didn't fight back then he or she would continue to be picked on by bullies (Mishra.L). This causes several problems in that it teaches youth to use violence when faced with a conflict. Furthermore, the study has shown the protective nature of parents because if their child perpetrates violence they will discipline such child at home rather than go to school to report their children, they will prefer to discipline their children themselves.. Summarily perceived parental attitudes toward violence may be an important factor in youth developing attitudes of resiliency towards violence.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study has revealed the perception of parents to the types and causes of violent behaviour in children in secondary schools of Odisha. From the study it is obvious that more of the causes of violence are attributed to factors outside the home and parents believed so much in their children that they will tell them if they perpetrate violence in schools. Meanwhile the lack of skills to resolve conflicts in an appropriate manner is considered to be a major precursor to violent behaviour (Mishra.L2010) therefore parents need information that children's adoption of a violence free attitude both at school and at home is not negotiable. In many instances when individuals are faced with various life stressors and do not have the means to resolve the conflict it may often lead to an act of violence against oneself or others. For youth this is a particularly important issue. Therefore parents should look into all these factors to assist youth overcome being victims or being perpetrators of violence. The parents' suggestion that establishment of more welfare centres to correct violent behaviour, inculcating of peace education in school curriculum , the provision of basic needs for children, establishment of peace club, peer mediation programme, opportunity for sports and other recreational activities, games, debate, excursions, club activities, visitation to schools by parents, establishment of Guidance and Counselling units community involvement in the school formation of Parent Teacher Association(PTA) and strictness of using mobile phones in the school premises should be adopted as some of the strategies for solving violence behaviour of children in schools According to Mishra.L (2012), effort to prevent school violence should focus on improving school facilities and environment, peace education to the personalities and needs of the student, improved discipline, and emphasis on teachers' role in providing guidance to students. Prevention also must focus on improving conditions in the family through re-education aimed at improving family juvenile relations. Improved family-school relations also are needed. Finally, communities must organize delinquency prevention programs and liaisons must be established among schools, families, and communities.

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