Addressing Violence in School: Experiences from Jamaica and Morocco

Ideaborn Foundation and Development Connections

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School Violence

Title

Understanding School Violence in Morocco: Public Middle Schools as a Case Study

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Research Statement

- The aim of the research is to raise concerns about school violence in Morocco, explore its different types in middle schools, understand its causes and suggest some effective ways of prevention.
Research Questions

- Has school violence increased in Moroccan public schools?
- What are the main causes of school violence in Moroccan public middle schools?
- What are the different types of violence in Moroccan public middle schools?
- What are some of the effective ways to prevent school violence?
Rationale

- School violence has alarmingly become a pressing issue in Moroccan schools.
- Promoting civic behavior is a pressing demand in today’s world. Schools should reflect such behavior and transform it into concrete reality.
- The first step in preventing school violence is to understand the extent and nature of the problem.
- To implement some effective measures in collaboration with the school partners.
Justification

Why is this issue worth investigating?

- A conceptual and empirical research documenting the issue of school violence is highly needed.
- To gauge the extent of violence in Moroccan schools and understand its nature.
- To help put administrators, teachers and students on the right track of non-violent behaviour so that the civic mission of school would be achieved.
- To share this research recommendations with the Ministry of Education and the school stakeholders.
What does the literature say about School Violence?

The World Health Organisation (WHO) 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” (Council of Europe, 2006, p. 13).
Hernandez and Seem 2004 (cited in Yavuzer and Gundogdu 2012, p 1) state that “Violence is regarded not only as fighting and harassment; any action that impairs the school climate is considered within the scope of violence.”
“there is the need to confront uncivic behaviour by fighting all forms of violence, deceit, corruption, improper conduct and immoral practices” (Moroccan Higher Council for Education’s Point of View about Civic Conduct) P.9
Akiba and associates 2002 (cited in Benbenishty and Astor 2008, p.60) describes school violence as “a global phenomenon that affects one of the core institutions of modern society to some degree in virtually all nation-states”
"The school context should be a central focus of school violence and safety theory because it is the milieu where the complex social dynamics of school preparation and victimization occur ". (Astor et al. 2010, p. 69)
"Violence casts a web of harm that captures the victims, the offenders and their communities. This web creates cycles of fear and distrust to all who befall its trap, perpetuating antisocial and self-critical cycles of behavior". (Morrison 2011) p. 1
Ministry of Education has issued a memorandum in January 2013 to all educational institutions to collect information about school violence and establish observatories. Yet, it is not enough because it is not research based.
Methodology

This small scale research, which is a case study, comprised 500 subjects. The questionnaires were distributed to 50 teachers, 50 administrators and 400 students from a sample of 18 state middle schools representing four regions in Morocco.
Methodology

The questionnaires were divided into six main sections. The first section sought to get personal information such as age and gender of the subject and also data about their institution. Concerning the age, most of the school students are aged between 13 and 18 years. 84% are aged 15. The questionnaires were trialled in Casablanca before they were administered to the target population in other regions.
Key findings

Forms of Violence

- **Physical Violence**
  - Students: 44%
  - Teachers: 62%
  - Administrators: 48%

- **Verbal Violence**
  - Students: 82%
  - Teachers: 41%
  - Administrators: 53%

- **Threats**
  - Students: 22%
  - Teachers: 18%
  - Administrators: 35%
### Key findings

#### The multiple locations of violence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Administrators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Yard</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Bathrooms</td>
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<td>Corridors</td>
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<td>School gate</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Stairs</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>During school activities</td>
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<td>At the end of school activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>At home</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Key findings

The causes behind school violence

- Poverty
- Drug
- Family disintegration
- Extracurricular activities
- The psychological state
- The lack of families' involvement
- Violence in video games and movies
- School failure

Bar chart showing the percentage of students and teachers' perceptions of causes of school violence.
Conclusions

- School violence has become a growing concern in Morocco. Different types of violence have mushroomed.

- This social phenomenon seriously affects the country’s educational achievement and performance and also threatens educational reforms that are being implemented by the Ministry of Education and its stakeholders. Teachers and administrators need training as how to deal with school violence.
Conclusions

- There is a need to implement programs and activities and to strengthen the teachers’ capacities as how to cope with school violence.
- Extracurricular activities and involvement of and the community has become a must.
- Violence is significant and present. Only a follow-up study conducted the same way could really show an increase.
Recommendations

- Enabling the schools to partner with civil society organizations where each partner considers its mission as a national commitment.

- Integrating real and community life and in teacher training programs and activities in order to connect classrooms to its environment.

- Spreading the concepts of right, duty and active participation inside the school.
Recommendations

- Enabling students to be aware that being a student is a profession like all other professions, requiring commitment and social responsibilities.

- Integrating effective, active and participatory pedagogical approaches that motivate students into productivity instead of the informational consumption. (Center for Civic Education “Preventing School Violence” curriculum is a good tool to be implemented.)
References


References

Thank you for your attention

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