

Perpetrators Of School Violence

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Introduction

School is the environment where students go to gain experiences in basic sciences, literature, mathematics, and many other subjects and disciplines without fear for their security. There is a high expectation from the community and the school students on the level of security in the school environment, and the teachers, on the other hand, have been trying their level best to ensure maximum security within the school environs. This attempt, however, has not yielded a total absence of cases of violence, as many violence cases have been witnessed in many schools. The concerned stakeholders and teachers have sensitized the need for a peaceful environment in schools through various means, such as introducing syllabi addressing the issues of violence in schools and their effects, but still, violence finds its way into school environs even in greater numbers than before. Safety, therefore, has been a major concern in various schools all over the world (Furlong & Morrison, 2000). A typical example of school violence that has been recently witnessed and which has brought major concerns includes the killing that occurred at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in the year 2007, where a student murdered thirty-three students, including himself. Another school shooting also occurred in the year 1999 at Columbine High School (Furlong & Morrison, 2000).

The main aim of this review is to examine the victims associated with violence in school, what drives them to commit the act, and the effects of these acts on their fellow students or the entire education system. An article on the shooting that occurred at Columbine High School is examined and analyzed for this review (Furlong & Morrison, 2000). The act happened at around eleven o'clock, April 20, 1999, in which Eric Harris and one of his friends, Dylan, carrying with them a propane bomb, entered the student cafeteria and left their bomb, which was set to explode after a few minutes. It is, therefore, even clear from this article review that most people who are majorly involved in committing these acts are students. The study also shows that male students are more affected by committing school violence as compared to their male counterparts. Social differences also contribute immensely to this problem of school violence, as many cases have been reported of female students complaining of physical harassment from their boyfriends in the form of either a slap or a serious beating (Furlong & Morrison, 2000). Female students also have been complaining of sexual violence from their male counterparts through rape cases and other forms.

Methodology

The research study for this review, as chosen by the reviewer, majorly focused on the causes of violence in school and the individuals or those associated with these acts. The study also focused on

the chances, occurrences, and effects that this violence has left in the academic system and also the conditions of the school, which might have led to the students deciding to be involved in such crimes (Furlong & Morrison, 2000). This research study was done by The Federal Bureau of Investigation. The study took a total span of two years. Some of the individuals who participated in this study included Mary Ellen O'Toole, a member of The Federal Bureau of Investigation. Some of the online databases that were used for the review include *A Threat Assessment Perspective (1999, <https://www.fbi.gov/publications/scool/school2.pdf>)*. In this study, Ellen's intention, however, was to enable the school organization and administration to be aware of the planned violence and threats, thus preventing them from occurring (Furlong & Morrison, 2000).

In this study, Ellen employs a four-area approach while assessing the facts of the event. These areas of study included student personality, family dynamics, school dynamics, and social dynamics. She states that; "if an act of violence occurs at a school, the school becomes the scene of the crime (Furlong & Morrison, 2000). As in any violent crime, it is necessary to understand what it is about the school which might have influenced the student's decision to offend there rather than someplace else."

Findings of the Review

From the study of the research concerning the perpetrators of the school violence, under the scope of study which included, student's personality, family dynamics, school dynamics and social dynamics (Furlong & Morrison, 2000). The following findings were obtained based on the student's personality:

1. The level of students' "closeness" or personal attachment to school. Under this, it was found out that many students who participated in these criminal activities of violence sometimes feel left out of school activities and, for this reason, may find it easy to get involved in these violent acts as a result of a lack of love for the school.

Under the scope of school dynamics, the following findings were obtained:

1. A lot of freedom for indiscipline students. Many students who are not disciplined are most likely to continue their evil acts of violence in school as long as the school does not take it seriously to inflict serious punishment on such individuals. It was also found that in many schools, certain modes of punishment have been banned, and students are exposed to high tolerance of indiscipline characters (Furlong & Morrison, 2000). Also, the research found that some of the teachers or staff members were too soft on these bad-behaved students, thus perpetuating this habit.

Secondly, for schools in which the culture is static, the culture does not change, and the school majorly depends on its tradition, which has proven unproductive and unyielding to the students, a violent act may arise. For instance, the research showed that if an occurrence has been happening in a school as a tradition, and the students are not well pleased with the act, then there is a high chance of violence erupting as a result of indifference between the students and the administration. Also, under the scope of the school dynamics, the other chance that may make students become victims of violence in school is unmonitored school computer access (Furlong & Morrison, 2000). Most often, cases where school students are allowed into the computer laboratory rooms unaccompanied by their teachers or lab attendance to some extent have led to an increased rate of violent cases in schools. This has been

witnessed in many cases where the students have been found involved in a physical bodily fight either with their fellow students or with their teachers. This access to school computers by the students has made it easy for these students to access certain computer games that are violent. Normally the mind of a human being works in such a way that any information getting in is stored and analyzed, later when the information is invoked from the brain, the student will tend to actualize what he had been watching. Again, certain internet sites may be inappropriate for students, like pornographic sites, which may make the students involved in rape cases (Furlong & Morrison, 2000).

Some of the findings that were obtained under social dynamics include the act of pecking among the students and miscommunication between the students and the administration. For instance, most students are not comfortable sharing with their teachers or administrators about their challenges. This is allegedly attributed to the fact that little trust exists between teachers and their students (Furlong & Morrison, 2000). Again, some students feel that others are more highly respected by their teachers than others, perhaps due to a difference in social class, and this has made some students feel less important in school. As a result, they tend to get revenge in other ways, which leads to violent acts in school, like the one that occurred in the year 1999 at Columbine High School. The research also found that in an attempt to reduce violence in schools, victimization also reduced significantly among the students (Furlong & Morrison, 2000).

Discussions And Implications

It is very true that the research provided facts and findings that focused on the causes and individuals who are most often associated with such crimes; however, the research failed to provide detailed information on violent acts that do exist in schools between staff alone. The research only focuses on students as the main group of individuals who commit such crimes, forgetting that violence also exists even between teachers and their fellow teachers. This is overlooked in this study, and only students are victimized by these violent acts in school. A good example is given in cases where teachers have been caught abusing their students sexually through rape or other forms of sexual harassment (Furlong & Morrison, 2000). Conflicts have also risen between staff as a result of differences in opinions. From the research, it is evident that male students have been victimized as the major participants in these acts compared to their female counterparts. This is very true and can be supported by the various reported cases, including actual fights, verbal abuse, and rape cases. Also, bullying cases have recorded higher indices in boys' schools than in girls' schools. Also, these bullying acts are more rampant in gents than in ladies.

Implication And Conclusion

Most of the data for this research was obtained through quantitative data collection, such as using various questionnaires. Some had an open-ended format, and others had a closed-ended format (Furlong & Morrison, 2000). The list provided a variety of causes and the individuals who were

affected by these violent acts. The data was found to be very accurate. However, a suggestion for further research on this topic should be considered to cover the unrepresented areas like the staff and staff and what can lead to conflicts in that capacity.

Reference

Furlong, M., & Morrison, G. (2000). The school in school violence: Definitions and facts. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, 8(2), 71-82.