BAR-ILAN UNIVERSITY

Teacher's Identification of Violent Students in Schools:

The contribution of the violence characteristics and School

Climate

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Summary

School violence is a major concern for the education system in Israel and around the world . It includes anti-social behaviors that affect the victim, the aggressor and the school as a whole .Previous studies show that many teachers are unaware of the extent of violence in their classroom and cannot identify all or even the most violent students in their classroom (Yablon, 2017). Locating violent students by the teaching staff is an important component in preventing violence, an early detection allows for an optimal response to both victims and violent students in their classroom.

The aim of this study was to examine the existing differences between teachers' and students' reports of the degree of violence, focusing on examining teachers' ability to identify the violent students in their classroom . In order to explain the degree of the identification, differences were examined according to the type of violence (physical, verbal and social) as well as the contribution of the school climate which was found in previous studies as a variable of great importance in explaining violent occurrences (Astor &Benbenishty, 2019).

The study included 29 teachers and 481 students, 293 Boys and 186 girls (2 participants didn't mark their gender). The participants were students from ninth to twelfth grades from four different schools in the country . After receiving the appropriate approvals from the Ministry of Education, schools, parents and students, self-report questionnaires were handed out to students and teachers .Students were requested to answer questionnaires about school climate, victims of violence, and violent behavior .Teachers were requested to answer questionnaires in which they were asked to report the involvement of each and every one of their students in incidents of violence.

The findings indicate that teachers identified 49% of the students that reported about themselves that they acted in violence against others in their class. This illustrates that teachers do not identify one in two students who engage in any form of violence in their classroom .It was also found that the degree of identification varies with respect to the type of violence, and

that teachers identify on average 46% of all violent students in the case of verbal violence, 29% in the case of physical violence, and 11% in the case of social violence .That is, teachers identify at a higher rate students who engage in verbal violence and at a rather low rate, students who use social violence.

As for the school climate, contrary to the research hypothesis, no significant relationship was found between the school climate and the teachers׳ degree of identification of violent students in their classroom .Furthermore, analysis of the data revealed that boys reported more about violent behavior than girls (68% vs. 38%), and that in classes where anti-violence activities took place, higher levels of violence were found compared to classes where there was no violence prevention program.

It was also found that class size is a predictor of the teachers׳ ability to identify the incidents of violence in their classroom and that the larger the class, the less the teacher identify the violent students in his class .

In practical terms, the findings of this study are pointing to teachers׳ difficulty in identifying violent students and to factors that may promote higher-levels of identification which may help to reduce school violence.