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Mohamad JABARIN[1]

Abstract

School violence is a severe phenomenon that endangers pupils in the school environment. For the purpose that pupils will tell about the violence that they experience or they are witnesses of it, good climate in the school is necessary. When pupils have no trust of teachers and the school staff, they will not tell about violence, even if they are victims of it. A lot of studies have shown that optimal climate in the school can reduce the violence in the school. Good climate creates a good environment and encourages violence prevention. Although the importance of this issue, there is no one unequivocal definitions for the school climate and even there are some definitions of school violence. A sustainable, positive school climate nurtures youth development and learning. It is necessary for productive, contributive and satisfying life in a democratic society.

Keywords: school violence, school climate, learning, influence, pupil, prevention.

Introduction

What is school climate? How to reduce violence through optimal education climate? The (U.S.) National School Climate Council (2007) speaks about school climate in these terms. A sustainable, positive school climate nurtures youth development and learning. It is necessary for productive, contributive and satisfying life in a democratic society. This climate includes norms, values and expectations that support people feeling socially, emotionally and physically safe. People are engaged and respected. Pupils, families and educators work together in order to develop, to live and to contribute to a shared school vision, the education model and cultivation of an attitude that emphasizes the benefits of learning and satisfaction from learning. Each person contributes to the operations of the school as well as the care of the physical environment (Thapa *et al.,* 2013). Extensive research shows that school climate has a profound influence on pupils' mental and physical health. School climate's importance lies, according to the relevant studies, in a variety of overlapping ways, including social, emotional, intellectual and physical safety; positive youth development, mental health and healthy relationships; higher graduation rates; school connectedness and engagement; educational achievement;

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social, emotional and civic learning; teacher; and effective school reform (Thapa *et al.,* 2013).

When pupils' perceived teacher-pupil support and pupil-pupil support, these perceptions were positively associated with self-esteem and grade point average and negatively associated with depressive symptoms. Likewise, when teachers support and interact positively with pupils, pupils are then more likely to be engaged and behave appropriately, i.e. non-violently (Thapa *et al.,* 2013). The same is applicable regarding violence against teacher. Both structure which was measured by pupil-and-teacher reported clarity of school rules, and support which is measured by teacher-reported help speaking, were associated with less teacher victimization (Thapa *et al.,* 2013). It has been proved that social support could be view as a protective factor, for example, a higher level of social support can improve the capacity to face the stressful life events and a lack of social support could lead to isolate themselves, feel loneliness and depression (Tudorel & Vintila, 2018).

Definition of School Climate

There is a broad consensus among researchers that school climate is an important factor that warrants further investigation with regard to violence. However, the lack of clear definitions, taxonomies and empirically validated measures of school climate has resulted in a multitude of findings that are often difficult to interpret. The lack of quantitative reviews on the connection between school climate and violence may, in part, be due to the conceptual uncertainty regarding the definition of school climate (Steffen, Recchia, & Viechtbauer, 2013). There is no one universally agreed-upon definition of school climate. Practitioners and researchers use range of terms such as atmosphere, feelings, tone, setting or milieu of the school. Some writers have focused on the subjective nature of school climate and others have suggested that it is an "objective" facet of school life (Cohen, Mccabe, Michelli, & Pickeral, 2009).

Continual attempts have been undertaken in order to identify key components of school climate. Therefore, existing school climate taxonomies offer different opportunities to categorize various dimensions. Some categorization are defining, climate variable as effective, if they are related to interpersonal and social relation, e.g. school belonging or pupil participation, as cognitive or effective, when psychological processes are involved, e.g., school attachment, school fear, and as organizational when it refers to school specific variables, e.g., school security, school management (Steffen, Recchia, & Viechtbauer, 2013). School climate consists of the related factors of attitude, feeling and behavior of individuals within the school system. Dorsey (2000) views school climate as involving four key relationships: the relationship of a pupil to him or herself; a pupil to his or her peers; a pupil to his or her parents and community; and a pupil to his or her school workers, including teachers, principals and all staff. While focusing on interrelationships, Welsh (2000) also included cognitions in his definition; the unwritten beliefs, values and attitudes that become the style of interaction between pupils, teachers and principals. School climate sets the parameters of acceptable behavior among school actors, and it assigns individual responsibility for school

safety (Hernandez & Seem, 2004). The significance of human actions is reflected in how they interact one with each other. To create a good relationship is to choose from the range of possible behaviors, those who provide harmony with the other person (Goian, Vintila, & Bucur, 2012).

School Violence

Any person who behaves in order to protect, promote or maintain their health, regardless of his / her understanding of his health, is considered to have a healthy behavior (Eglite *et al.,* 2012). Throughout their lives, people are confronted with events, different life situations, and challenges that they have to deal with and develop their existence (Tudorel, Macsinga, & Virga, 2013).

School violence still is one of the most important issues faced by the modern school system, in every educational level (Abu Abid *et al.,* 2018). School violence remains a very important social issue world-wide. A large number of pupils in schools are affected negatively by it, in the short term as well as in the long term. In terms of conceptualization, violence at school is very heterogeneous phenomenon. School violence includes a wide range of behaviors that threaten and harm others emotionally and physically: ranging from international physical attacks including the use of weapons, gang violence and sexual assaults, to less serious behaviors like beating and slapping, to relatively harmless kicks and punches. In general, violence in schools as a specific form of risk behavior can be defined as a purposeful damage in form of physiological or psychological action that is directed against the self, other person, i.e. pupil against pupil, pupil against teacher, teacher against teacher, or teacher against pupil, or against objects. In contrast, bullying as a specific form of violence is marked as the systemic and repeated harassment of weaker people. It mostly emerges as group phenomenon (Steffen, Recchia, & Viechtbauer, 2013).

School violence continues to plague the schools. It has been shown that there is a negative correlation between body dissatisfaction and body appreciation. Body appreciation means that the body is accepted and respected as it is, despite the pressures of family, peers or the media toward an ideal look (Swami *et al.*, 2017). Not only does school violence create a climate of fear and emotional unrest in a school, it is also an obstacle to the learning process and to the school's educational mission. While there have been dramatic incidences of school violence such as the school massacre that occurred in Littleton, Colorado, on April 20, 1999, and the Jonesboro, Arkansas, schoolyard shooting on March 24, 1998, violence of much more insidious and subtle nature occurs every school day. School violence is not only overt actions, such as shooting and physical fights, but is also subtly expressed in a school climate that can endanger fear in any pupil. Examples are that a pupil does not speak up in class for fear of being ridiculed, being called a "faggot" because of perceptions of a pupil's sexual orientation, backbiting, verbal teasing and insults, offensive touching such as throws, slaps and pushes and racial, ethnic, and/or sexist comments that are based on a pupil's physical appearance. In fact, Hazler, Hoover and Oliver (1996) reported that three-fourths of the school pupils that they surveyed indicated that they experienced harassment and bullying to such an extent that they suffered academic, personal and social difficulties. Thus

school violence can be both obvious and insidious and profoundly influence the school climate (Hernandez & Seem, 2004).

Effects of School Climate

A growing body of research indicates that positive school climate is a critical dimension which is connected to effective risk prevention and health promotion efforts, as well as teaching and learning. Recent research reviews have shown that effective risk prevention and health promotion efforts are correlated with safe, caring, participatory and responsive school climates (Cohen *et al.*, 2009). Safe, caring, participatory and responsive school climate nurtures greater attachment to school and provides the optimal formation for social, emotional and educational learning. One of the fundamentally important dimensions of school climate is relational and involves how "connected" people feel to one another in school. In fact, school connectedness, or to what extent pupils feel attached to at least one caring and responsible adult at school, has become a field of growing research and attention. School connectedness is powerful predicator of adolescent health and educational outcome and violence prevention and as a protective factor in risky sexual, violence drug use behaviors (Cohen, Mccabe, Michelli, & Pickeral, 2009). During the last 20 years there has been extensive research on identifying risk factor for school violence. The concept of school climate has received particular attention. Most importantly, the social climate in class and in school is assumed to have a significant effect on the prevalence of violence in schools (Steffen, Recchia, & Viechtbauer, 2013).

School climate is complex construct which is used to describe characteristic qualities of interactions among adults and pupils at school. School climate is often measured using pupil perceptions of how pupils get along with one another and are treated by school staff. One of the most frequently used markers of school climate is pupil perceptions of whether teachers and other school staff care about pupils and treat them fairly. Based on the literature care about them, believe in them, and treat them fairly and respectfully. Our measure of supportive climate does not completely encompass the broader domain of school climate, but it represents an important and frequently studied aspect of school climate (Eliot *et al.*, 2010).

Both effects of school climate and conditions that provide increase for them are deeply interconnected, growing out of the shared experience of a dynamic ecological system. School climate has been shown to affect middle school pupils' self-esteem, to mitigate the negative effects of self-critique and affect a wide range of emotional and mental health outcomes. Research has also revealed a direct correlation between school climate and pupil's self-perception. It is relevant a postulation that a positive and sound socio-emotional school's climate, and it contributes to less aggression and violence, less sexual and non-sexual harassment and that it acts as a protective factor learning and positive life development of young people (Thapa *et al.*, 2013). School climate also promotes or complicates meaningful pupil learning. School climate powerfully affects the motivation of the pupil to learn. For example, activities like community service and debates enhance the learning environment by providing pupils opportunities to actively participate in the learning process and construct their own knowledge of social and

government systems. Moreover, when such activities are presented in a supportive, collaborative environment, they encourage pupils to build on one another's ideas on projects. Together, to experience realistically represents the social situation that they may find themselves part of the greater civil society. In an overlapping way, positive school climate promotes cooperative learning, group cohesion, respect and mutual trust. Positive school climate, by definition, is characterized by strong collaborative communities. Research shows that this improves teacher practice through dialogue and collaboration around engaging classroom practice (Cohen *et al.*, 2009).

Pupil perceptions of supportive school climate have been connected to pupil adjustment, commitment to learning and academic achievement, as well as school safety and teacher victimization. However, children become less willing to seek help as they move into adolescence. The influence of support in the environment may not be as strong on older pupils, whose developmental attitudes and strive for independence make them less amenable to help seeking. However, adolescent perceptions of supportive school climate, as measured by perceptions of support from teachers, have been connected to attitudes about help seeking (Eliot *et al.*, 2010).

The ecological development theory enables conceptualizing the influence of school climate on school violence. School violence is defined as a behavior expression which is located in the micro-system, but is strongly influenced by the meso-system, i.e., interpretation of school climate. A distinction is made between school violence as an act or behavior versus school climate (cognitive and emotion interpretation) as the subjective and objective psychological process of school climate interpretation plays an important role in school violence (Steffen, Recchia, & Viechtbauer, 2013).

The critical question is how to go about establishing such positive climate in a given school. In schools without supportive norms, structures and relationships, pupils are more likely to experience violence, peer-victimization and punitive disciplinary actions, often accompanied by high levels of absenteeism and reduced academic achievement. Studies have found that in schools where threat assessment guidelines were followed, pupils reported less bullying, felt more comfortable seeking help and possessed more positive perceptions of school climate. Another study showed that consistent enforcement of school discipline (structure) and availability of caring adults (support) were associated with school safety (Thapa *et al.*, 2013).

The Importance of Optimal Climate

The climate of the school is central to the educational mission of a school. Anderson surveyed recent school safety research and found that altering a school's internal climate can have a significant positive effect on the feeling of safety in the school community. Gottfredson (1989) and Sherman *et al.* (1987) reviewed studies that examined school climate and concluded that how schools are run is directly related to the level of behavioral disruptions in schools. For example, schools in which administration and faculty lack communication and do not work together to problem solve have lower teacher morale and higher pupil disorder, and schools where rules and reward structures are unclear, and where are ambiguous conse-

quences, e.g., lowering of grades due to misbehaviors, experience more disorder, further, schools in which pupils do not believe that they belong and feel uncared for by school personnel, experience higher levels of disorder. Gottfredson (1989) delineated additional specific school climate factors that contribute to unsafe schools: schools that ignore misconduct; schools in which teachers and principals have disagreement about or not know the rules; and schools in which pupils do not believe in the rules. Conversely, factors such as high expectations among school staff, pupils and parents for pupil achievement, orderly school staff and pupils, positive treatment of pupils, active engagement of pupils and positive social relationships among pupils positively influence school climate (Hernandez & Seem, 2004). Educators have recognized the importance of school climate for 100 years. However, it was not until the 1950s that educators began to systematically study school climate. The development of scientifically sound school climate assessment tools spurred a research tradition that grows to this day (Cohen *et al.*, 2009).

Ninth grade pupil perceptions of a supportive school climate are important to the willingness of the pupils to seek from adults at school for bullying and threats of violence. Students who perceived their teachers as caring, respectful and interested in them were more likely to assert that they would tell a teacher when they themselves or a classmate were being bullied, if a classmate brought a gun to school, or if a classmate threatened another pupil with violence. These findings are consistent with qualitative studies in which pupils stated that they would be more likely to seek help from adults with supportive qualities. Similarly, social – interactional theories of help seeking posit that pupils' feelings about potential helpers influence their decision to seek assistance. The connection between supportive school climate and help seeking was found at both the individual and school level. At the school level, supportive climate accounted for 44% of the variation among school in levels of help seeking (Eliot *et al.*, 2010).

To say that school climate or complicates pupils' ability to learn and to achieve academically is, on one hand, common sense. To the extent that pupils feel safe, cared for, appropriately supported, and lovingly "pushed" to learn, academic achievement should increase, in fact, this is what a series of studies from the United States and abroad have shown (Cohen *et al.*, 2009). Schools that place an emphasis on creating a supportive school climate will have increased willingness of pupils to seek help for bullying and threats of violence. Low-cost, well-validated prevention programs that target teacher support to pupils already exist. In their review of 40 programs to reduce behavior problems in schools, Freiberg & Lapotine (2006) found that programs that encouraged school connectedness and development of caring and trusting relationships between teachers and pupils were most successful at achieving positive outcomes. Felner & Adan (1988) developed a transition program for ninth-grade pupils provided for each pupil with a teacher mentor. Longitudinal follow-up of this program revealed that pupils in the program not only had better grades and attendance records that pupils in the program, but these pupils also reported more positive school experiences across several dimensions of support (Eliot *et al.*, 2010). Considering a positive climate for citizenship education more globally and comprehensively also raises questions about how schools can most optimally promote these important learning activities even beyond the classroom environment. Encouraging active and collaborative

learning on authentic projects is most effective in an environment that has a civic mission and that encourages trusting relationships among all members of the school community (Cohen *et al.*, 2009).

Witnesses

An important norm is embodied is "witness-related" behavior, such a witness, either being a passive bystander who, knowingly or not, colludes with and supports bully-victim behavior, or being an upstander who, directly or indirectly, says "no" to bully-victim behavior. A recent randomized controlled trial in nine elementary schools in Midwestern city in the USA has found that the teacher-implemented school-wide intervention – one that did not focus on disturbed children – reduced substantially aggression and improved classroom behavior. The bully prevention / pro – up stander effort were also associated with pronounced improvements that affect school pupils' achievement test scores (Thapa *et al.*, 2013).

Violence Prevention

It is clear that comprehensive, ecologically informed violence prevention efforts can provide the essential foundation for improvement. Recent reviews of effective school discipline and bully prevention effort underscore the need to recognize and target individual, peer, school family and community processes. Future research is needed so as to critically examine the complex set of individual, group and organizational factors that shape and predict violent behavior in schools in order to better prevent it (Thapa *et al.,* 2013). The school social worker has a role in violence prevention, by using the resources available in the family and in the community of the beneficiary. (Balauta, Borcovici, Vlaicu, 2017)

Hence, we formulated the following hypotheses:

H1. There is a significant difference between boys and girls in the types of violence.

H2. There is a negative correlation between belonging to the level of physical violence, the higher the level of belonging, the lower the level of physical violence.

H3. There is a negative correlation between belonging and the level of verbal violence. The higher the level of belonging, the lower the level of verbal violence.

H4. There is a significant positive correlation between physical violence and verbal violence, as one of the two qualms increases in the second, respectively.

Methods

Population and Sample

The population is the all youth in Israel. The Sample is Pupils of two high schools: 120 pupils at two high schools, 60 at each school.

The Research Tools

The research tool is valid and reliable that may examine the quality the educational climate in the middle school in Israel is built and validated by the educational psychological service and with the level of reliability of 0.89. The tool is made of four parts and each part has variables that is may examine including, the all parts represent the variable of optimal educational climate. An annotative research will be based on questionnaires. Observation will also be conducted. The data will undergo statistical processing through SPSS software and Excel Sheets. In this study we used the T test for independent variables and r Pearson Test.

Results

H1. There is a significant difference between boys and girls in the types of violence. According to the results, the hypothesis is confirmed (*Table 1*). The high averages of the three types of violence were significantly observed among boys versus girls.

Table 1: Difference between boys and girls

Variables	F	t	sig
Sabotage	21.81	2.579	.011
Verbal violence	34.31	4.990	.000
Physically violence	.34	.467	.001

p <. 05

Table 2: Comparison of the average types of violence between the sexes

	sex	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
sabotage	M	176	1.5966	1.45083
	F	88	1.1932	1.04890
Verbal violence	M	176	2.7159	.89377
	F	88	1.8864	1.42580
physical violence	M	176	1.9810	1.42537
	F	88	1.5795	1.23848

H2. There is a negative correlation between belonging to the level of physical violence, the higher the level of belonging, the lower the level of physical violence . According to the results, the hypothesis is confirmed (Table 3). The results highlighted that a higher level of belonging and security correlates with a lower level of physical violence ($r = -.45$, $p < .01$).

H3. There is a negative correlation between belonging and the level of verbal violence. According to the results, the hypothesis is confirmed (Table 3). The results highlighted that a higher level of belonging and security correlates with a lower level of physical violence ($r = -.40$, $p < .01$).

H4. There is a significant positive correlation between physical violence and verbal violence. According to the results (Table 1), the hypothesis is confirmed. The results highlighted a positive correlation between physical violence and verbal violence ($r = .52$, $p < .01$).

Table 3. Correlation between variables

Variables	Belonging and security	Physically violence	Verbal violence
Belonging and security	-	-.45**	-.40**
Physically violence	-.45**	-	.52**
Verbal violence	-.40**	.52**	-

** *Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

Discussions

The situation of the climate requires intervention program in all aspects. It is because improvement of the climate can reduce the violence and worse climate can increase the violence.

The climate ranges from 1.84 to 4.45, from low level to almost the highest level. The average is 3.0336 and the standard deviation is 0.46840, it is moderate level, but the diversity shows that some think the climate is almost best and some think that the climate is low. It is a very high range of answers.

The violence ranges from 1.00 to 2.61, this is relatively low level. The average is 1.3486 and the standard deviation is 0.394456. It is relatively low level and this also supports the hypothesis that good educational climate reduces violence.

Other research examined 287 pupils from two middle schools. The first school constituted 139 of both genders 89 boys who constitute 64% and 50 girls who constitute 36%. From the other school participated 147 pupils, 87 of them are boys and they constitute 59.5% and 59% are girls and they constitute 40.4%.

The average respect and self esteem in one school is 2.66 and in the other 2.47. These are also low levels. The average senses of capability are also low are low in one school 2.3 and in the other 2.1. The all values of educational climate are

higher in the first school than in the second.

In both schools the climate in moderately high and the levels of violence are moderately low, but the diversity of the data of violence is low they range between 1.00 and 2.61. And the data of the diversity of the climate is high they range between 1.84 and 4.45. The lowest and the highest values affect the average value strongly. So different conclusions can be done regarding each pupil.

So it correct regarding the all values of the climate the self-expression, the self-realization, capability, respect and value and belonging and security – in all of these the diversity is very high and lowest and the highest values affect strongly the average variable. So different conclusions can be done regarding pupils with minimal values and pupil with maximal values.

Conclusion

The levels of the climate levels of physical violence and verbal violence are higher in the second school in which the climate is slightly higher. Therefore, it does support the hypotheses that better climate reduces the level of violence. But since the values of the climate are moderately high we can conclude this regarding the first school and the difference between the values of the climate are low and the levels of physical violence are moderately low we can conclude that good school climate reduce physical violence, but regarding the verbal violence there are high levels of verbal violence in the school with higher violence levels and therefore regarding this school we cannot conclude that good school climate reduces verbal violence.

The Limits of the Work

Violence harms the reputation of the school and all pupils know that violence is considered as bad thing, and therefore the answers can be false information. The 9th graders are also youth, but the high school population is only 10th – 12th graders. The sample of two schools and 120 pupils cannot be representative for the all population in Israel.

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