Student violence in the schools

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Abstract
Acts of student violence in the schools are increasing (Chance, 1990; Crosby, 1993; Rich, 1992; Urben, 1986), especially in the larger cities in the United States (Hellman & Beaton, 1986). These acts of violence include violence toward other students as well as toward the school personnel and property. In this paper I will discuss selected aspects of violence in the schools. More specifically, I discuss the prevalence of violence in the schools, school based interventions and implications for the practice of school psychologists.
Student Violence in the Schools

Research Paper
Submitted
In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts in Education

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University of Northern Iowa
July 1995
THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT

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\( \times \) Satisfactorily completed the comprehensive oral examination

- Did not satisfactorily complete the comprehensive oral examination

Master of Arts in Education: General Educational Psychology
Department of Educational Psychology & Foundations
University of Northern Iowa
Cedar Falls, Iowa 50614
on
July 11, 1995

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# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definition</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevalence</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Theories of Causation</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Interventions</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Intervention</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Intervention</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary Intervention</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Involvement</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Security</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intervention through Positive Education</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. Implications for School Psychologists</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. Conclusion</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. References</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Student Violence in the Schools

Introduction

Acts of student violence in the schools are increasing (Chance, 1990; Crosby, 1993; Rich, 1992; Urben, 1986), especially in the larger cities in the United States (Hellman & Beaton, 1986). These acts of violence include violence toward other students as well as toward the school personnel and property. In this paper I will discuss selected aspects of violence in the schools. More specifically, I discuss the prevalence of violence in the schools, school based interventions and implications for the practice of school psychologists.

Definition

The literature on violence has conceptual and operational difficulties because many types and levels of violence have been lumped together in research studies. Because violence occurs in different contexts and settings with varying motivation and causes, operational definitions are needed to in clarify and understand the issue of violence in the school. Morrison, Furlong & Morrison (1994) cites that
Webster's Dictionary defines violence as a "physical force used to injure or damage." A second definition states that violence is "an unjust use of force or power, as in deprivation of rights." Therefore, according to Webster's definition violence can entail more than just physical force resulting in physical injury. For the purpose of this paper, violence is defined as follows:

A sudden and extremely forceful act, which causes physical harm or suffering to persons or animals. In addition, the definition is extended to include the unauthorized harm or destruction of property (Rich, 1981, 1992, p.35).

This definition includes behaviors such as theft, vandalism, weapon carrying, harassment, or threats as well as assaults and murders, all of which have occurred in schools (Hranitz & Eddowes, 1990; Batsche & Knoff, 1994).

**Prevalence**

Many reviewers cite violence as a problem that occurs in most schools at some point in time. The National Association of School Security Directors
estimates that "each year there are 9,000 rapes; 12,000 armed robberies; 270,000 burglaries; and 204,000 aggravated assaults in schools" (Rich, 1992, p. 35). According to the National Crime Survey, about 3 million crimes were committed on United States' school grounds each year. This resulted in 183,590 people injured in 1987. During that same year an estimated 100,000 students were believed to carry guns to school on a daily basis ("Preventing School Violence", 1990). Furlong and Morrison (1994) found that 8% of some 2,700 Illinois high school students reported being "cut" during the 1989-1990 school year; and 4% of some 2,700 Illinois high school students reported being "shot at" during the 1989-1990 school year. These events took place at school functions or traveling to/from school.

Teachers are often the intended victims of the violence in schools. In 1990, the National School Safety Center reported that in a one month period of time, of the nation's one million secondary school teachers, approximately 5,200 were physically attacked at a school (Hranitz & Eddowes, 1990).

Violence in the form of vandalism resulting in property damage to schools was "estimated at between
$50 to $600 million with an estimated cost of yearly replacement and repair of about $200 million" (Hranitz & Eddowes, 1990, p. 4). These statistics lead the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta to study the problem of violence as an epidemic in 1990 (Crosby, 1993; Hranitz & Eddowes, 1990).

**Theories of Causation**

Much of the earlier work on the causes of violence in the schools is based on a pathological/deficit model (Hopps, 1987). Research in this area focused on the youth who were responsible for violent acts and what made them more vulnerable to this type of behavior in comparison to youth who did not commit violent acts. Rich (1992) identified personality factors such as motivation, internal inhibition and habit strength, situational factors that might invite violence, and personality disorders could be causal factors of violent behavior in an individual. Biological and genetic influences, such as levels of testosterone and other body chemicals, also have been studied as possible causes of aggressive behavior that lead to violence (Michael & Zump, 1982). Age, gender, and race have been studied as possible influences on violent
behavior and victimization (Baker, Medrick & Carothers, 1989). The study shows that males reported more victimization than females and Black students have higher rates of violence and victimization than either White or Hispanic students. According to the study by Baker et al. (1989) student age is also statistically significant. Lower rates of violence and victimization were reported for the younger group in the study.

Several criticisms have been made to the pathological/deficit model (Hopps, 1987). First, the cause of violence is assumed to be within the individual as opposed to a response or in interaction with external factors. Second, the research has failed to adequately sort out biological variables from the many environmental variables in an individual's life. Third, the model was largely developed for the individuals studied were usually taken from a population of criminals, such as those in prison, and no control group from a "normal" population were used. Fourth, the results have been used as causation factors instead of being treated as correlational factors, which leads to a "blame the victim" mentality. Finally, not all individuals who possessed the
qualities, that the model predicted would cause violent behavior, behaved in a violent manner. These findings caused researchers to conclude that environmental factors may interact with biological, genetic, or personality factors to cause an individual to behave violently (Baker et al., 1989; Michael & Zump, 1982; Rich, 1992).

Theories that explore cultural and societal issues appear to be more adequate in accounting for the complexity of violence in our schools. Rich (1981, 1992) summarized four theories that could be used to explain school violence: social disorganization, conflict, labeling, and differential association theories. Social disorganization theory suggests that deviant behavior in the form of violence occurs as the result of a state of normlessness or a lack of consensus on norms, which leads to weakened social control and deficits in socialization. For example, Skinner, Elder, Jr. and Conger (1992) reviewed studies involving family structure, violence in the family, and incidents of violence in schools. Skinner's research shows hardship adaptation and the husband's negative behavior are two factors that link economic hardship to
adolescent aggression. Economic hardship which causes the family to make changes in their lifestyle can cause the marital relationship to become strained, thus causing parents to be irritable and less consistent in their day to day discipline situations. Discipline practices that are inconsistent have been shown to increase risk of uncontrolled behavior among boys. The disintegration of the basic structure of the family in the United States could be viewed as leaving family members in a state of normlessness (Rich, 1992). Children are forced to search for other groups, such as gangs, to fill their needs, and this could lead to deficits in socialization. Family violence in the form of child abuse and wife battering can be seen as weakened social control. Violence in schools could be viewed as a carryover from the disintegration of the family (Hellman & Beaton, 1986).

Conflict theory views society as a struggle between opposing groups with each group pursuing its own values and interest (Rich, 1981, 1992). Each group sees the other as being deviant. Violence develops when values of one group are extended to cover the values of the other groups. An example of this theory might be the
subculture theory of criminal behavior which suggests that certain groups, such as Black and Hispanics, are more likely to subscribe to norms that tolerate or even encourage violence as a mechanism to cope in a hostile environment (Baker et al, 1989; Shoemaker & Williams, 1987). The subculture that is formed by this norm is in direct conflict with the dominant culture which only tolerates or allows violence within well-defined parameters.

Labeling theory claims that when people are labeled deviant, they act accordingly and others respond to them in a negative manner (Rich, 1981; 1992). An example of labeling theory as it pertains to violence is suggested by Neapolitan (1987) in his explanation of vigilante behavior using attribution theory. If people attribute or label a young person who has committed a crime as similar to themselves, then violence against that person is viewed as unacceptable. However, if a that same young person had been labeled a trouble-maker or delinquent, then vigilante behavior or violence is viewed as acceptable under most circumstances.
Differential association theory views behavior including violence as learned through a process of social interaction within primary group associations (Rich, 1981; 1992). Whether an individual becomes deviant depends upon the frequency, duration, and priority given to association with law-abiding groups and deviant groups. The more a person associates early in life with groups that value violence the more likely they will be prone to violence. An example of differential association theory was demonstrated in study conducted by Baker et al. (1989). The results of their study indicated that adolescents' choices of social group affiliations and activities do influence their risk of being a victim as well as a victimizer; their primary group association worked to determine the effects of violence in their lives.

Each of these theories are problematic in explaining violence in some way, as Rich (1981; 1992) discussed in his papers. Social disorganization theory fails to explain white collar crimes and fails to recognize that minority groups do adhere to a set of norms, which are merely different from the dominant group's norms. The former issue does not deal with
violence since white collar crimes are rarely violent in nature, and the latter suggests a conflict, which can be explained by conflict theory. Conflict theory does not explain theft which is not condoned by any society, or why some people become violent against members of their own group. Labeling theory provides an adequate explanation for why violent behavior is perpetuated or aggravated, but it does not explain how the original behavior was created. Differential association theory focuses exclusively on learned behavior without consideration of any biological or genetic influences.

In summary, although the cultural and societal theories have flaws in their explanation of the cause of violence, they appear to provide a more comprehensive understanding of violence in and out of school than the pathological/deficit theories of violence. Cultural and societal theories make it clear that the phenomenon of violence in schools is a complex one. It requires interventions that address both individual's behaviors and education. For intervention measures to be successful, a necessary first step would be understanding the complexity of violence in the
schools. The focus of intervention will be on changes in the external conditions that lead people to violent behavior (Baker et al, 1989; Hellman & Beaton, 1986; Rich, 1992).

**Interventions**

The first step to reducing violence in the lives of students is for educators to admit that violence is indeed a problem in the public school system (Furlong & Morrison, 1994; Morrison et al., 1994). Educators then have the task of identifying the causes of the violence and the types of violence that are most prevalent in their schools. Schools have to consider the social effects that contribute to violence and use these considerations when designing interventions against school violence. These include considerations such as poverty, urban decay, family breakdown, racial conflicts, and moral decay, all of which require much time, resources, and large scale forces (Rich, 1992). The next step is for educators to provide a safe environment for students. Schools have to develop plans for security that are efficient for their community. Schools in communities that have a high
community crime rate will experience more violence than schools that are in areas that have lower crime rates (Hellman & Beaton, 1986). Lastly, educators must work to provide students with enough positive experiences in school to overcome the negative influences of a community that has a high crime rate (Rich, 1992).

The primary, secondary and tertiary intervention model may also serve as a helpful approach to solving the problem of violence in the schools. Primary intervention consists of efforts to prevent the problem of violence before it occurs. Since academic underachievement and antisocial behavior are related, measures taken to provide the student an opportunity for a quality education are expected to prevent school violence. Secondary intervention seeks to identify high risk adolescents to provide them with positive social skills training. It also addresses parent management training for children identified as high risk for continuing undesirable behavior problems. Finally, tertiary intervention methods involve identifying middle and high school students with serious behavior problems to provide them with positive
social skills training (Larson, 1994). Examples of each type of intervention will be provided next.

**Primary Intervention**

Primary intervention of school violence can be broad in scope. There is a connection between low academic and antisocial behavior, therefore a early intervention programs such as Head Start may appear to serve as a viable option (Larson, 1994). Larson (1994) identified two programs designed specifically for the primary prevention of violence in the elementary grades. They are the *Second Step: A Violence Prevention Curriculum* and the *Violence Prevention Curriculum for Adolescents* (Larson, 1994).

The *Second Step: A Violence Prevention Curriculum* (SSVPC) was developed as a "curriculum designed to reduce impulsive and aggressive behavior in young children and increase their level of social competence SSVPC approaches these objectives through direct classroom instruction in a series of skill areas labeled empathy, impulse control and anger management (Larson, 1994)."

Research supporting the SSVPC program effectiveness is very limited. Larson (1994) cited a
pilot study using a pre- and posttest design that did suggest differences between the experimental and the control groups, in favor of the experimental group. A total of 306 students in grades 3 through 8 were taught using the curriculum for one semester. After the program was over, teachers and administrators were surveyed on their perceptions of the program. Teacher and administrator questionnaires at the end of the pilot study yielded high regard for the potential of the curriculum.

The Violence Prevention Curriculum for Adolescents was designed as a school-based health education curriculum for high school students. The curriculum was designed: a) to educate students about the prevalence of violence and homicide; b) provide students with alternatives to fighting; c) help students to use anger positively; d) teach students to recognize situations in which a fight could occur; and e) help students to create a nonviolent atmosphere in the classroom (Larson, 1994).

The curriculum was implemented with 106 tenth grade students were studied using instruments that measured knowledge and attitudes about anger, violence
and homicide. Significant differences were yielded from a pre-and posttest design. The effects of the curriculum were measured on a subject pool of 347 students in four major urban areas in the United States. The students using the curriculum reported fewer fights than the control group students in all four major urban areas (Larson, 1994).

**Secondary Intervention**

Children at high risk for later adolescent conduct problems, including aggressive behavior, can be reliably predicted from early characteristics such as high rates of aggressive responses to social problems. Secondary prevention efforts seek to identify children at high risk for these later, more serious problems while providing them with the social skills necessary to reduce their risk status, if possible. Secondary prevention includes programs such as Parent Management Training; Anger Coping Intervention with Aggressive Children; and Dealing with Anger: A Violence Prevention Program for African-American Youth (Larson, 1994).

*Parent Management Training* is designed for preschool and kindergarten children who arrive at school with patterns of aggressive behavior. The
The program is designed to help parents change the socialization process used when interacting with those children in order to decrease the children’s aggressive behaviors and conduct disorders. Parents are taught to teach their children reasonable levels of compliance; how to monitor the children’s behavior in and out of school; and to recognize, reinforce, and model prosocial behavior which will reduce aggressive behavior.

The *Anger Coping Intervention with Aggressive Children* program was designed as a group program to work with fourth to sixth grade boys. This is an 18-session program, and the sessions are designed to progress in sequence, lasting about an hour each. The *Anger Coping* was designed to address both the cognitive and the affective processes associated with aggression. It emphasizes remediation of the social skills that the children lack in conflict situations that involve affective arousal. School psychologists in the Milwaukee Public Schools have made extensive use of this program. A study by Lochman, Dunn & Klimes-Dougan (1993) comparing the effects of the *Anger Coping Program* with twenty aggressive boys found that the
program produced higher levels of on task behavior, less parent-rated aggression and it increased levels of general self-worth for the boys at the end of the program. Long term effects for the program are inconclusive.

Another secondary intervention program is the Dealing with Anger: A Violence Prevention Program for African-American Youth program. This program was implemented to address the intensity and frequency of violence among the minority youth group. The program is comprised of the following three video tapes: a) "Givin' It" (expressing anger), b) "Takin' It" (accepting criticism), and c) "Workin' It Out" (learning negotiation). All of the parts are played by African-American adolescents using reality-based conflicts. The program is to the point and it uses culturally sensitive advice. The treatment effects are not supported by research. This program shows great promise, but further research is necessary.

**Tertiary Prevention**

Tertiary prevention is a reactive method used to reduce the occurrence of future aggressive behavior (Larson, 1994). Examples of tertiary prevention
programs are the following: a) Adolescent Anger Control: Cognitive-Behavioral Techniques; b) Aggression Replacement Training: A Comprehensive Intervention for Aggressive Youth; and c) Think First: Anger and Aggression Management for Secondary Level Students.

Adolescent Anger Control: Cognitive Behavioral Techniques is an adolescent adaptive skills training program. The program is a twelve session group intervention and it is designed to reduce the intensity, frequency and duration of aggression as a result of poor anger expression skills. The program is divided into three phases to teach acceptable adaptive social skills. Phase one is the educational/cognitive preparation phase; phase two is the skill acquisition phase, this phase includes cognitive skills training and behavioral component skills training; and phase three is the skill application phase. The program has clear guidelines and it can be modified for individual clients also (Larson, 1994). Further research is necessary to show the effects of this program.

The Aggression Replacement Training: A Comprehensive Intervention for Aggressive Youth combines components from three programs that had been
primarily developed. According to Larson (1994), the Aggression Replacement Training: A comprehensive Intervention for Aggressive Youth combines the anger control work of Fiendler, Ecton, Kingsley, Dubey, Marriott and Iwata (1984); a moral education program adapted from Arbuthnot and Faust (1981); and a structured skills program adapted from Goldstein, Sprafkin, Gershaw, and Klein (1980). The program was developed to teach adolescents more advanced reasoning skills and to help them to develop a more advanced moral reasoning stage (Larson, 1994). The research on this program is limited. The program was evaluated at two juvenile corrections facilities, and the results were favorable. Significant increases in prosocial skills were reported as well as a decrease in acting out behaviors (Goldstein, Glick, Reiner, Zimmermann & Coultry, 1987).

Think First: Anger and Aggression Management for Secondary Level Students is a 14 session program developed specifically to work with aggressive student behaviors at the middle and high school level. A prerecorded video tape is used in which white and African-American students model the anger control
skills in a series of vignettes. The last part of the video tape and manual provides training in a cognitive-behavioral problem-solving model. The program mainly focuses on the role of anger and aggression in school related situations (Larson, 1994).

**Community Involvement**

The influence of the community is a variable that is extremely important in controlling the violence in the public school system. Research has shown that the degree of community influence is less significant in the elementary and junior high schools than it is in the high school in the public school system (Hellman & Beaton, 1986). Hellman and Beaton (1986) did a study to review the correlation between school violence and the community crime rate. This research used the suspension rate of all the public schools in the city of Boston, Massachusetts. The school system consists of about 120 schools with approximately 58,000 students and about 4,000 teachers. The 17 high schools served about 19,000 students, grades 9-12. The middle schools contain about 14,000 students in grades 6-8. The elementary schools serve about 25,000 students. The school population is about 48% black, 30% white and 22%
other racial groups. The data were collected on the number of suspensions within the 1982-1983 school year. Suspensions reflect a variety of student behaviors in the school and at school-related activities.

Neither suspension rates nor community crime rates are significantly associated with income levels, unemployment or racial composition. Rather, they are related to more basic measures of family class and structure, housing quality and population density and stability. School suspension rates and community crime rates are lower in areas characterized as "traditional family, working-class" communities. They are higher in communities with higher percentages of poor quality housing, higher population, and higher rates of population instability (Hellman & Beaton, 1986). According to these researchers suspension rates are higher in districts with indicators of poor or overcrowded housing. Poor or overcrowded housing is characterized by the percentage of occupied units with more than 1.5 persons per room, and the percentage of occupied year-round units without complete plumbing for exclusive use (Hellman & Beaton, 1986).
Menacker, Weldon and Hurwitz (1990) also report that results from their study supports the premise that school crime and violence are higher in lower class neighborhoods than in upper- or middle-class neighborhoods. Furthermore, the schools with the highest percentages of student criminal activity are in neighborhoods with high community crime rates (Baker et al, 1989; Menacker et al., 1990).

This means that controlling community crime, violence and disruption in the schools involves changing the structure of the community, either physically or socially. An example of this change is improved housing. Improved housing can lead to reduced community crime, violence and disruptions in the schools, because it can lead to a more stable community (Hellman & Beaton, 1986).

In addition, schools should strive to empower the community educating it to prevent violence in the lives of the students. Therefore, minority groups could formulate their own norms and sanctions. Consequently, there would be a reduction of conflict and an elimination of alien norms under a community control plan (Rich, 1981).
Physical Security

To obtain secure schools, educators must plan for emergencies, establish rules and regulations, and design security measures that will provide an environment conducive to learning and positive social growth for its students.

To begin, schools should have a written plan to deal with emergencies. The plan should be designed to handle any emergency that may occur in the school, yet flexible enough to adapt to different situations that may arise (Nichols, 1991). For instance, if the school was on fire and the alarm system was not functioning properly, the school administrators should have an alternate plan to alert teachers to evacuate their classrooms. An alternate plan could be a bell or whistle alerting teachers of the need for them to remove the students from the building. Furthermore, if teachers have already been assigned a designated area to relocate their students in the event of an emergency, the process would work more efficiently. Administrators should also include procedures for coordinating with outside officials in this plan (Nichols, 1991). This coordination should include
procedures for command and control, a designated meeting point, and it should also specify the duties of all key personnel. It is important for schools to coordinate with outside officials such as the police department, the fire department and the emergency medical service teams that will be called in the event of emergencies (Nichols, 1991). Lastly, it is important for the school to gather important facts to disseminate accurate information to the media, or let the police department public relations officer talk to the media to make sure that accurate information is disseminated (Nichols, 1991).

After schools develop plans for dealing with emergencies, administrators have to work toward preventing the occurrence of emergencies. This process starts with the assessment of the school and the community. The schools should fill out reports of each act of violence that is reported by either students, teachers are other school staff. The reports should classify incidents based on their severity and the person that is victimized (Blauvelt, 1981). For example, if a teacher is attacked, the incident report should be classified with other incidents that involve
violence against teachers, and it should also state whether the teacher was unharmed, injured, or required hospitalization. Another consideration is where the incidents take place in the school and the approximate time that they occurred. This information is helpful in determining which areas should cause administrators the most concern. Areas that are isolated should either be blocked off or patrolled periodically by school security personnel (Blauvelt, 1981).

Since public schools are essentially open to any one, it is difficult to control the access of the schools to undesired elements, elements such as drug dealers, gangs, and other persons of wrongful intent. Some schools have adopted policies that make each student wear identification badges that must be visible at all times to show that they are students in the school ("Preventing School Violence", 1990). Whereas, other schools allow parents and other members of the community to sit in the schools and monitor the people that are going in and out of the schools ("Preventing School Violence", 1990). Allowing parents and others to sit in the schools helps to deter unwanted elements
from the schools, but it also serves to empower them in the education of their children.

Another measure to deal with the problem of school violence is a school dress code. For instance, Glenbard East High School in Lombard, Illinois recently implemented a no hats policy to combat the gang problem. In this community, the way that the brim of a baseball cap is tilted is a sign of gang affiliation, and gang members view this as a challenge to other gangs. Therefore the school administration decided to ban the wearing of hats to prevent any unnecessary violence (Sarmiento, 1989). Other dress code policies that are enforced in schools include prohibiting students from wearing baggy clothing that will allow students to conceal weapons or drugs, and some schools prohibit book bags or require book bags that can not conceal weapons ("Preventing School Violence", 1990).

Schools have to develop policies that are fair to all students when they are making rules and regulations (Yonker, 1983). If rules are going to work, they cannot show favoritism. Thus, schools cannot seek to make an example out of some groups and pardon the same activities of other students because they are more
socially acceptable. Educators must really work on the equality of treatment for all students. This equality has to spill over into the society that these students live in. If educators cannot give students all the love that they deserve, then it is not feasible to think that the problem of violence will ever be solved (Yonker, 1983).

**Intervention Through Positive Education**

Once educators implement physical security measures, they have to focus on interventions through the use of positive education. After all, much of a child's socialization takes place in the schools. Schools have to provide the child with enough positive experiences to overcome the negative elements in the community. One example is the strong influence of gangs in the lives of the youth, especially in large cities. Youths that receive little positive socialization from their families tend to join gangs to find the security and continuity that they don't receive at home. Hence, educators can divert youths from joining gangs by creating an organized atmosphere for learning and living in schools. They should create a positive set of norms and values for students to
follow, help students develop clear goals, means of achieving them, and improve techniques of positive socialization (Rich, 1992).

The education system has to mold the character and the personality of the youth as well as provide knowledge. Schools must provide opportunities for children to develop the process through the positive motives, attitudes, knowledge, skills, and ways in which they live. Violence is a learned behavior - thus a behavior that is learned is a behavior that can be changed and/or altered through positive education (Yonker, 1983). But, if a behavior is going to be changed, one must first get changing the factors that account for that behavior (Yonker, 1983).

Educators who have had positive results are those that assigned and graded homework regularly. They also displayed students' work on the walls, encouraged students to use the library regularly. The educators that experienced positive school outcomes also emphasized rewards as opposed to punishments. This good school process was also negatively correlated to delinquency (Yonker, 1983).
Concerned educators must work to provide students with a positive socialization outside of the classroom as well as in the classroom. Educators can provide programs to aid prospective parents in preparing for parenthood, to further parents knowledge about family life and child rearing practice, to help parents change their own negative behaviors toward their children and reduce the chances of child abuse and neglect, and to teach parents techniques for changing their children's attitudes and behaviors (Rich, 1992). Lastly, educators and parents can work together to select television programs that are suitable for students to watch until networks start changing their programming.

In summary, research has shown that school violence is affected by the level of the community crime rate. Therefore, school environments must be structured to compensate for the negative influence of the community. Results of studies have also indicated that elementary and middle schools problems are a function of the school environment, most significantly the teacher to student ratio. High school administrators have to continue to promote positive interventions that seek to
improve the social environment of the community as a whole.

Though educators have the responsibility of maintaining a safe school environment, they must also be aware of the social factors that contribute to school violence. Educators have to work to remove the sociological factors that cause some groups to be the victims and perpetrators of violence more than others through the use of a positive education. Moreover, educators must strive to create a positive learning experience for each student, so they may in fact break the chain of years of social inequality. In addition to a positive classroom education, schools need to provide the community with the opportunity with the chance to be a part of the decision making process of school policies, because the students reflect the values of the communities in which they live. Finally, students have to be taught values and morals that will help them grow into responsible citizens who strive toward improving their communities.

Implications For School Psychologists
A comprehensive violence prevention program addresses the needs of all students and staff across multiple dimensions and levels of intervention (Larson, 1994; Morrison et al., 1994). School psychologists will need to actively participate in the development, implementation and evaluation of safety interventions in the schools. These interventions consist of both school policies and practices (Miller, 1994). School psychologists involved in the planning and implementation of violence prevention activities will find it practical to discriminate instrumentally driven, or proactive aggression, from affectively driven or reactive aggression. Proactive aggression is developed through the daily interaction of children, their parents, and siblings. The child learns coercive behaviors, as a result of a poor parent model. Poor supervision, inconsistent discipline and negative modeling prevent positive socialization between the parent and the child. These factors result in a child that has been trained to be aggressive upon entering school. Reactive aggression is characterized by angry, out of control displays, usually in retaliation for some perceived threat, and filled with considerable
emotion. Prevention and treatment varies for both (Larson, 1994).

Furlong, Babinski and Poland (1994) conducted a study to determine how school psychologists view violence in the schools, and their level of efficacy in handling a violent situation. Survey questionnaires were sent to a random sample of NASP members. The nonrespondents were then sent a follow-up reminder. Responses were received from 121 field based school psychologists in all major geographical areas of the country. The study found that most of the school psychologists surveyed did not feel that they had a serious problem with violence in their schools. The study stated that most school psychologists did not feel that there was a problem unless someone was physically harmed. This finding implies a perception that violence in the school only consists of severe personal incidents, usually with a weapon. There is a need for school psychologists to reframe the perception of violence to include a more comprehensive view of the term violence. A more comprehensive view would include physical, social and developmental harm. Most of the psychologists reported having a low level of efficacy
in responding to crisis situations. Therefore school psychologists should be provided with training to address school violence (Furlong et al., 1994).

Furlong et al. (1994) advocated that school psychology training programs should provide training in the following areas: a) anger management and conflict resolution intervention programs, b) skills in crisis management and consultation to school staff, c) coordinating with local agencies for crisis management, d) development of prevention and intervention programs based on knowledge about youth risk and resiliency, d) training in individual and systems analysis of violence and safety in schools, and e) knowledge of how to assume the role of groups facilitator to support a school community’s efforts in developing a safe school plan.

School Psychologists must share in the responsibility to enhance the school environment, and help make the school a more inviting place to be. Attention has to be given to the promotion of skill development and building a cohesive, positive school environment to counteract the acts and impact of violence (Miller, 1994).
Conclusions

School violence is a complex issue that can not be explained fully using the pathological/deficit theories or the socio-cultural theories. However, these theories help in understanding what factors contribute to violence in the lives of students and school personnel. Interventions should be developed within the framework of these understandings. Schools seem to be the best starting place for interventions to prevent violence because this is the place where much of a child's socialization occurs. Interventions of physical security have provided a safer environment for students; however, it is not a solution to violence across settings. Interventions that involve the community serve to encourage positive behaviors on the part of all citizens; thus, change can be effected community-wide.

Future research should focus on causation factors as an interrelationship between the pathological/deficit model and socio-cultural influences. More consideration in research needs to be given to students and their socio-economic backgrounds when studying violent behaviors. Methods need to be developed that
can factor out the many environmental factors. Researchers need to develop measurements that are sensitive to the differences among groups as to their norms for violence. In addition, more community-wide projects need to be developed and implemented; then, they need to be studied for their effectiveness in preventing or controlling violence.
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Publishers.