

AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES*

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate strategies for managing school violence, focusing on identifying commonly used violence management strategies and examining the relationship between these strategies and incidents of violence. Using a mixed-methods approach, surveys, interviews and documentary analysis were conducted with 1,430 high school students and 36 teachers for quantitative data, along with 12 teachers for qualitative insights, selected through multistage sampling. The reliability of the questionnaire was high (Cronbach's alpha > 0.90). Data were analyzed using exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis, descriptive statistics, and Pearson correlation. Six key strategies for managing school violence were identified: behavioral management strategy, safety-related strategy, curriculum-based strategy, early identification and intervention strategy, response strategy, and recovery strategy. Teachers predominantly employed response, safety-related, early identification, and behavioral management strategies. A negative correlation was found between school violence perpetration and the use of these strategies, suggesting that greater implementation is linked to reduced violence. This study highlights the importance of a holistic approach to violence management, engaging teachers, students, parents, and the community. It offers valuable insights for educators and policymakers seeking to improve the overall learning experience, create safer school environments and building peaceful society.

Keywords: School violence, School violence management strategies

Introduction

In today's world, the prevalence of violence among students within educational institutions has reached alarming levels, manifesting in varied and often unpredictable ways. Such incidents have profound implications on the well-being, development, and academic success of students. As a unique and transformative platform, education holds the potential to alter violent mindsets and promote non-violent behavior among young people (United Nations [UN], 2014). In Myanmar, the National Education Strategic Plan (NESP) highlights education as a critical force for supporting democratic values and fostering peace (Ministry of Education [MOE], 2016). Schools, as the foundational agencies of education, play an essential role in breaking cycles of violence by equipping students with communication skills, conflict resolution techniques, and values rooted in solidarity, tolerance, and respect. The International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century identified four fundamental pillars of learning: learning to know, learning to be, learning to do, and learning to live together (Delors, 1996). Among these, "learning to live together" is increasingly critical in today's context, where social harmony and conflict resolution skills are essential. Teachers, as leaders and role models for students, have a vital responsibility to guide young people toward constructive conflict management, empowering them to resist peer pressure, resolve interpersonal issues non-violently, and develop as responsible citizens who value human dignity and life (Sinclair, 2004). To fulfill this role effectively, teachers must be well-versed in various strategies for managing school violence, fostering an environment that encourages students to coexist peacefully and safely.

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Significance of the Study

School violence has severe short-term and long-term consequences for students, ranging from physical injuries and mental health issues to academic setbacks and long-term antisocial behavior. Such impacts harm not only student attendance and academic performance but also the broader social and economic stability of communities. Failure to address school violence can result in children facing these harmful consequences throughout their lives. In light of these risks, schools must prioritize creating mentally healthy, resilient children by fostering safe, supportive environments that emphasize constructive, peaceful conflict management. Effectively managing school violence requires a comprehensive approach by schools, educators, and policymakers that recognizes the need for a range of strategies. Skiba et al. (2000) underscore that no single solution can ensure school safety; rather, a combination of strategies is essential to cultivate a positive school climate. This study provides teachers and school leaders with a deeper understanding of diverse violence management strategies, while also contributing to the development of educational policies aimed at creating safer, more inclusive school environments. By promoting insights into practical approaches to violence management, this study aims to support the creation of safer learning spaces and encourage the adoption of policies that protect and nurture all students.

Research Objectives

- (1) To identify the school violence management strategies
- (2) To investigate the violence management strategies mostly used by the teachers
- (3) To investigate the relationship between the perpetration of school violence and the usage of school violence management strategies

Research Questions

- (1) What are the violence management strategies?
- (2) What are the violence management strategies mostly used by the teachers?
- (3) What is the relationship between the perpetration of school violence and the usage of school violence management strategies?

Conceptual Framework

This study based on the two model namely Response to Intervention (RTI) and School Wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS) model, both utilized three-tiered system with Tier 1 focusing on all students, Tier 2 targeting on at risk students and Tier 3 focusing at high risk of conduct disorder and on more intense level of intervention (one-on-one intervention) (Hilt-Panahon et al., 2011, Sprague & Horner, 2007). Osher et al. (1998) categorized the strategies for managing violence and aggression in schools into prevention strategies, intervention strategies and crisis response strategies.

Violent behaviors in the school are categorized into vandalic actions and interpersonal violence (Estevez et al., 2007). Vandalic actions include breaking desks or door, painting names, messages and graffities on the school walls. Interpersonal violence in the school may be students to students, students to staff members, staff members to students, staff members to staff members and parents to staff members (Cowie & Jennifer, 2007), and it may take the many specific forms including verbal violence; physical violence, sexual violence, emotional violence and psychological violence.

Definition of Key Term

School Violence

School violence can be defined as a phenomenon in which a member of the school community (teacher, student, other education workers, parent or visitor) is intimidated, bullied,

abused, threatened or assaulted; or their property is deliberately damaged by another member of that community or the public (Cowie & Jennifer, 2007).

Operational Definition

Violence Management Strategies

Violence management strategies are operationally defined as approaches used by the class teachers in managing violence among the students. Teachers' practices on violence management strategies are measured by the percentages calculated from the weighted frequencies. The greater the percentages, the higher the teachers' practices on violence management strategies.

Methodology

Research Method

This study used a mixed methods approach in which both quantitative and qualitative data are collected and analyzed within the single study. This study used the sequential explanatory mixed method approach where quantitative phase (numbers) followed by the qualitative phase (personal experience).

Sampling

The target population of this study was students and teachers from Yangon Region. For quantitative purpose, this study used multistage sampling to select the required participants. Total 1430 high school students and 36 class teachers were involved in this study. In the qualitative study, interviews also employed multistage sampling. Total 12 teachers were participated in the interview section.

Instrumentation

To collect the required quantitative data, a set of questionnaire was developed. The questionnaire consists of three parts; demographic data, school violence perpetration questionnaire and strategies for managing school violence questionnaire. The internal consistencies (Cronbach's alpha) were 0.91 for school violence perpetration questionnaire, and 0.96 for strategies for managing violence questionnaire respectively. In a qualitative study, semi-structure interview was conducted with teachers relating to the experience of school violence and strategies used for managing school violence.

Data Analysis

In this study, violence management strategies were identified by conducting the exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis. Types of violence management strategies mostly used by the teachers were investigated with the descriptive statistics. The relationships between violence perpetration and various violence management strategies were investigated with Pearson Correlation analysis.

Findings

Exploring the School Violence Management Strategies

EFA and CFA were used to identify strategies for managing school violence. This study included 1430 participants and EFA was run with 620 participants and CFA was run with 810 participants, providing a ratio of over 10 cases per parameter in both EFA and CFA.

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

Exploratory factor analysis was used to discover dimensions of the scale and the number of items. Before running EFA, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's test were utilized. EFA would be run when KMO coefficient was greater than 0.60 and the Bartlett's test was significant (Byukozturk, 2005, as cited Oguz, 2016). Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (.95) indicated that the sample size of the study was quite appropriate for the factor analysis. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was also significant at 0.01 level ($p=0.000$). Factors that have eigenvalues greater than one were retained.

Table 1 School Violence Management Strategies Showing Eigenvalues of Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings

Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
Strategies	Eigenvalues	% of Variance
Factor 1	6.03	16.29%
Factor 2	3.85	10.40%
Factor 3	3.57	9.64%
Factor 4	3.32	8.97%
Factor 5	3.31	8.95%
Factor 6	2.51	6.79%

Eigenvalues of the six components were 6.03, 3.85, 3.57, 3.32, 3.31 and 2.51 respectively. These six factors explained 61.04 % of the total variance. Table 2 presents Factor Loadings and Communalities Based on Principal Component Analysis with Varimax Rotation for School Violence Management Strategies.

Table 2 Factor Loadings and Communalities Based on Principal Component Analysis with Varimax Rotation for School Violence Management Strategies (N=620)

Items	Components						Communalities
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Setting the fair and clear rules prohibiting bullying and harassment.	.77						.76
Teaching systematically school behavior expectations to the students.	.77						.76
Recognizing and reinforcing the desirable behavior.	.79						.80
Actively supervising and monitoring the students' behavior.	.80						.81
Teaching and sharing the experiences of conflict resolution and violence prevention lesson.	.65						.76
Punishing the school violence according to the school rules and sanctions consistently.	.61						.66
Sharing the knowledge of early warning signs displayed by the students to parents and community.		.69					.76
Encouraging the parents and community to watch out the early warning signs displayed by the students.		.66					.76
Encouraging the parents and community to report the school if they occur any early warning signs.		.71					.73
Announcing the parents and community how to report and contact to school.		.51					.64
Assigning a pupil or pupils as a buddy who is actively listen to other peers' difficulties, problems and feeling.		.52					.63
Asking the students to find out a mutually acceptable solution of the peer problem by identifying and discussing the problems and causes of the problem.		.51					.64

Items	Components						Communalities
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Asking the students to identify the routes to repairing damaged relations after violent incidents.		.50					.68
Checking the school environment with a group of teachers for safety.			.51				.62
Giving the phone number of teacher to contact if there are any problems on the way back to home.			.54				.63
Checking the toilets and other students gathering places to violate the school rules.			.55				.67
Announcing the behavior expectations and rules in the formal student gathering places.			.56				.76
Monitoring the students' behavior in formal student gathering places.			.76				.81
Training the anger management and practice mediation.				.71			.59
Developing individual behavioral plan for student who perpetrate the school violence.				.61			.69
Allowing the school council and other students leaders to decide solution about the incidents of school violence.				.68			.64
Asking the violent students to participate in community welfare programs.				.66			.66
Teaching about the violence and types of violence.					.65		.62
Teaching the safe behaviors.					.63		.64
Teaching the speaking skill, problem solving skills and share the knowledge about drugs and sexual education.					.51		.63
Teaching the child rights and responsibilities.					.50		.63
Using the restitution strategy.						.65	.65
Using in-school disciplinary alternatives.						.51	.53
Cooperating with the school management team to suspend and expulse students who perpetrate the school violence.						.74	.57

Note: Loading < 0.50 are suppressed.

Extraction method: Principal Component Analysis
Rotation method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization

Table 2 displayed the items and factor loading for the rotated factors. According to Hair et al. (2014), the items with the factor loading values of 0.3 to 0.4 are minimally accepted and items with factor loadings below 0.3 should be eliminated. Buyukozturk (2005) argued that if the factor loading value of the item is 0.45 or higher, it is an indicator of a good result (as cited in Oguz, 2016). Thus, the rotated factor loadings less than 0.5 was omitted and items with the rotated factor loading greater than 0.5 were retained.

Factor one included six items with factor loadings ranging from 0.61 to 0.80, **factor two** involved seven items with factor loadings ranging from 0.50 to 0.71, **factor three** consisted of five items with factor loading ranging from 0.51 to 0.76, **factor four** included four items with

factor loading ranging from 0.61 to 0.71, **factor five** involved four items with factor loading ranging from 0.50 to 0.65, and **factor six** included three items with factor loading ranging from 0.51 to 0.74.

Table 3 stated the names of the violence management strategies proposed by the researcher in order to accommodate the extracted factors with descriptive statistics.

Table 3 Descriptive Statistics of the School Violence Management Strategies (N=620)

No.	Strategies	No. of Items	Mean	SD
1.	Behavioral Management Strategies	6	2.71	0.87
2.	Early Identification and Intervention Strategies	7	2.48	0.81
3.	Safety Related Strategies	5	2.76	0.79
4.	Recovery Strategies	4	2.06	0.76
5.	Curriculum Related strategies	4	2.26	0.79
6.	Response Strategies	3	2.75	0.71

The names of the strategies were validated by the well experienced teacher educators and expert retired educators from the Department of Educational Theory and Management, Yangon University of Education. After discussing violence management strategies with them, the names of factors were labeled with the meaning of items and their advice. Validated factors for violence management strategies were behavioral management strategies, early identification and intervention strategies, safety related strategies, recovery strategies, curriculum-based strategies and response strategies.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

After performing the EFA, CFA was conducted to test how well the obtained factor model fit. CFA is a technique that seeks to confirm if the number of factors (or constructs) and the loadings of observed (indicator) variables on them conform to what is expected on the basis of theory” (Costa & Sarmento, 2019). A CFA was performed using maximum-likelihood estimation to test the fit of the obtained factor model to the data. There are various indicators of the goodness of fit for a specific model. Model fit indices such as Normed Fit Index (NFI) of Bentler and Bonnett, Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), Bentler’s Compared Fit Index (CFI) and the root mean square error (RMSEA) of misfit measure, were used in this study. The model fit indices of the violence management strategies were shown in Table 4.

Table 4 Model Fit Indices of the Model of Violence Management Strategies

Fit Indexes	Ideal Standards	Observed Values	Remark
RMSEA	< 0.1	0.07	Good fit
TLI	> 0.9	0.87	Acceptable
CFI	> 0.9	0.89	Acceptable
NFI	>0.9	0.87	Acceptable

According to Table 4, it was found that TLI, CFI and NFI were nearly 0.9 and RMSEA was within the acceptable limit of 0.08 (Hu & Bentler, 1999, as cited in Xia & Yang, 2018). According to criteria for a good model fit recommended by Wijanto (2008), RMSEA value of < .08 was a good fit and all TLI, CFI and NFI values were a marginal fit (acceptable). The results of confirmatory factor analysis were presented in figure 1.

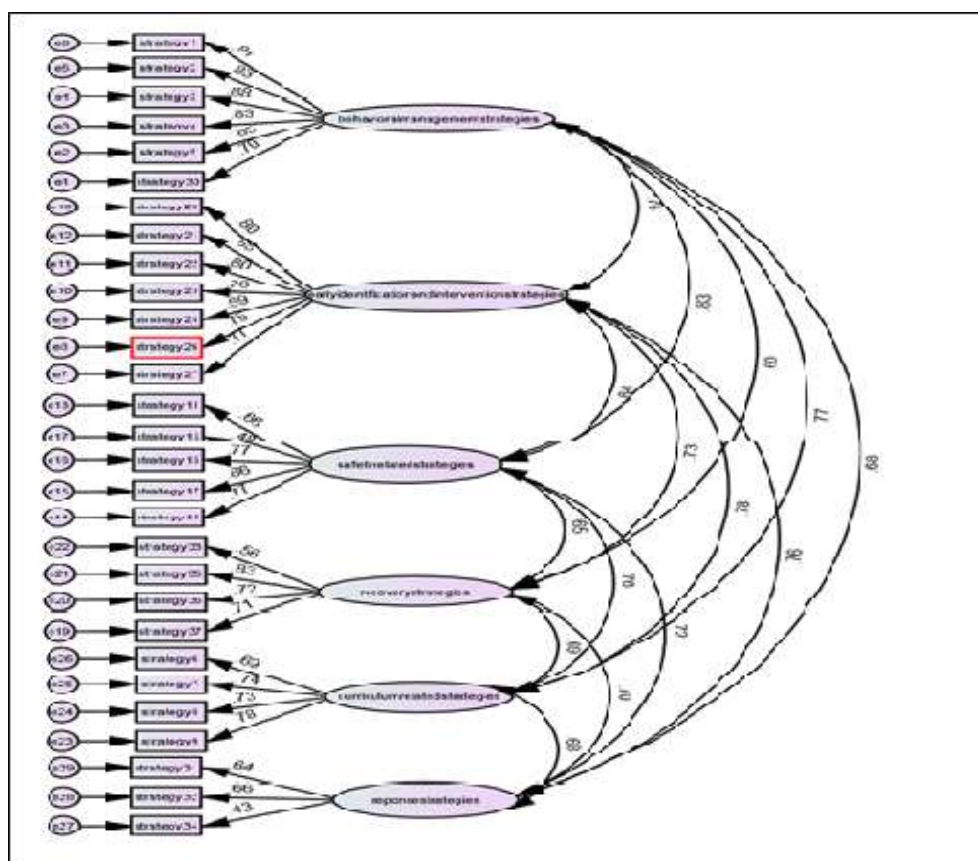


Figure 1 Confirmed Model of School Violence Management Strategies

Investigating the Violence Management Strategies Mostly used by Teachers

After identifying the violence management strategies by factor analysis, violence management strategies mostly use by the teachers were explored based on the students' responses and teachers' responses.

Investigating the Violence Management Strategies Mostly used by Teachers according to Students' Responses

The weighted frequency and percentage of the usage of each violence management strategy was calculated. The following Table 5 showed the weighted frequencies and percentages of violence management strategies.

Table 5 Weighted Frequencies and Percentages of School Violence Management Strategies used by Teachers According to Students' Responses (N=1430)

No.	Violence Management Strategies	Weighted Frequencies	Percentages
1.	Response Strategies	11091	95%
2.	Safety-related Strategies	18107	94%
3.	Early Identification and Early Intervention Strategies	21854	91%
4.	Curriculum-related Strategies	11142	85%
5.	Behavioral Management Strategies	7331	80%
6.	Recovery Strategies	9714	78%

According to Table 5, it was found that teachers mostly used response strategies, safety-related strategies, early Identification and Early Intervention with 95%, 94% and 91 % respectively. It can be seen clearly in Figure 2.

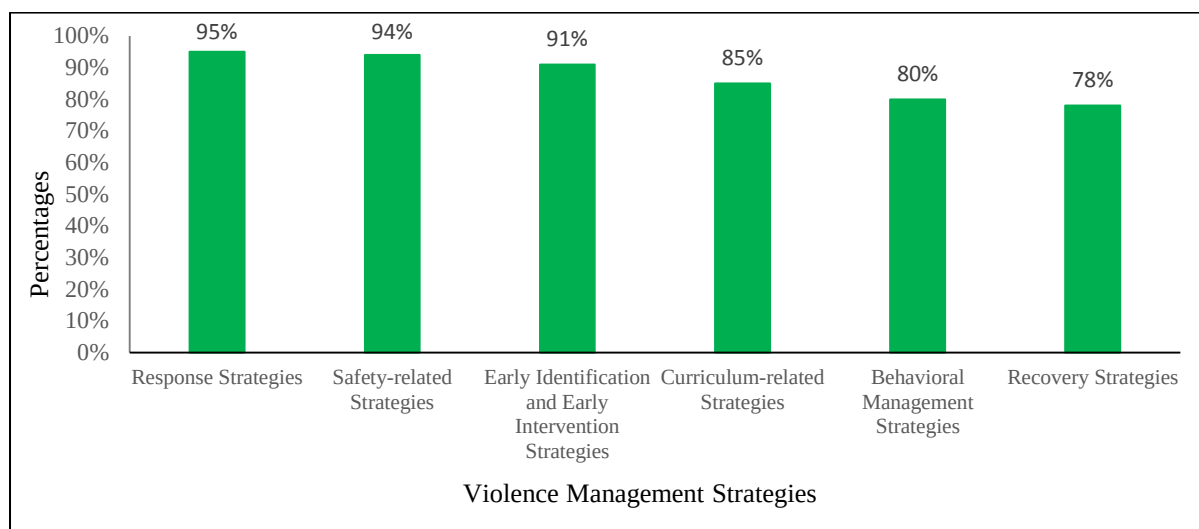


Figure 2 Percentages of School Violence Management Strategies used by Teachers According to Students' Response

Investigating the Violence Management Strategies Mostly used by Teachers according to Their Responses

The weighted frequency and percentage of the usage of each violence management strategy was calculated. The following Table 6 showed the weighted frequencies and percentages of violence management strategies.

Table 6 Weighted Frequencies and Percentages of School Violence Management Strategies used by Teachers According to Their Responses (N=36)

No.	Violence Management Strategies	Weighted Frequencies	Percentages
1.	Early Identification and Early Intervention Strategies	773	99%
2.	Safety-related Strategies	621	99%
3.	Behavioral Management Strategies	656	98%
4.	Curriculum-related Strategies	405	98%
5.	Response Strategies	344	97%
6.	Recovery Strategies	341	92%

According to Table 6, class teachers responded that they mostly used early identification and intervention strategies, safety-related strategies, behavioral management strategies with 99%, 99% and 98 % respectively. It could be seen clearly in Figure 3.

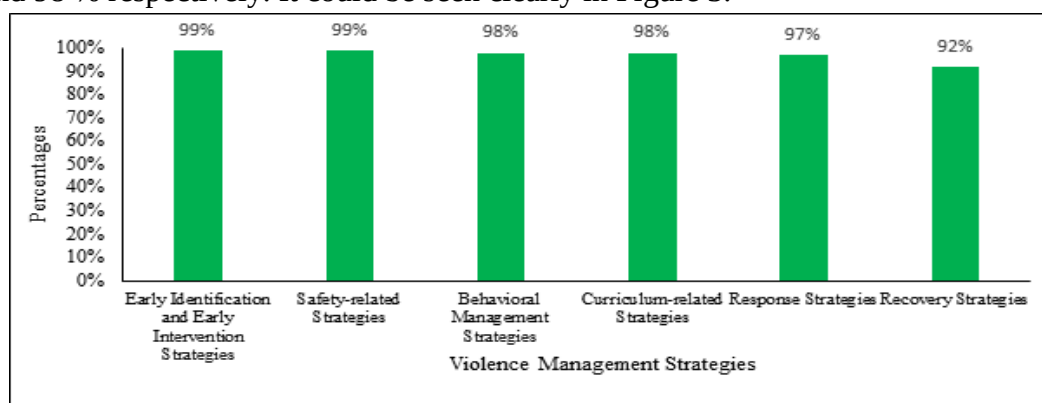


Figure 3 Percentage of School Violence Management Strategies used by Teachers According to Their Responses

Investigating the Relationship between School Violence and Violence Management Strategies according to Students' Response

In order to explore how different school violence management strategies effect the school violence, the relationship between school violence management strategies and school violence were explored with Pearson Product-Moment Correlation.

Table 7 Correlation Matrix between School Violence and Violence Management Strategies (N=1430)

	Violence perpetration	Behavioral management strategies	Early identification and intervention	Safety related strategies	Curriculu m related strategies	Response strategies	Recovery strategies
Violence perpetration	1	-.606**	-.536**	-.491**	-.345**	-.216**	-.246**
Behavioral management strategies		1	.732**	.757**	.696**	.512**	.529**
Early identification and intervention			1	.737**	.681**	.550**	.611**
Safety- related strategies				1	.634**	.497**	.494**
Curriculum- related strategies					1	.475**	.546**
Response strategies						1	.429**
Recovery strategies							1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

According to the Table 7, it was found that there was significant negative correlation between school violence perpetration and violence management strategies. It was found that there were significant negative correlations between school violence perpetration and behavioral management strategies ($r = -0.606$, $p = 0.000$), early identification and intervention strategies ($r = -0.536$, $p = 0.000$), safety-related strategies ($r = -0.491$, $p = 0.000$), curriculum-related strategies ($r = -0.345$, $p = 0.000$), response strategies ($r = -0.216$, $p = 0.000$), and recovery strategies ($r = -0.246$, $p = 0.000$). It can be concluded that the more the teachers used violence management strategies, the lower the perpetration of violence by the students. The effect size ranged from small than typical to larger than typical in social science.

Responses for the open-ended questions

In teacher questionnaire, 36 class teachers from the selected Basic Education High Schools were asked the three open-ended questions. First question concerned with types of school violence experienced by teachers, second question concerned how they manage school violence in their schools. Their responses to these open-ended questions were presented as the qualitative findings.

1. What types of school violence are occurred in your schools?

Teachers' responses to the types of school violence experienced in their schools were;

- Physical Violence (n=26)
- Verbal Violence (n=26)
- Psychological Violence (n=6)
- No experience of school violence (n=6)

2. How do you manage school violence in your school?

Teachers' response on how they manage school violence were:

- Verbally warning students by class teachers (n=7)
- Informing to school disciplinary board, recording the incidence in the report book and ask the students to sign on covenant letter (n=7)
- Sending disciplinary letter to Parents and ask for consultation about their children's violent behavior (n=9)
- Suspending and dismissing in accordance with the decision of school disciplinary board (n=6)
- Using in-school disciplinary activities such as cleaning, glass cutting (n= 2)
- Participating in community welfare activities (n=1)
- Asking to participate in music, physical exercise and other activities in school (n=1)
- Counselling the victimized students (n=2)
- Counselling the problem child to reduce their violent behavior (n=2)

Results of Interview

Based on the quantitative findings, schools were classified into two groups; high rate of school violence and low rate of school violence. Group I included six teachers from township with the highest rate of school violence perpetration. Group II included six teachers from township with the lowest rate of school violence perpetration were selected for interview. Semi-structure interview format was used.

Teachers' Responses

Class teachers and teachers who are members of school disciplinary board were selected for interview. Teacher participants were asked a series of opening about the strategies that they used for managing school violence.

When interviewing about **the strategies used by the teachers for managing school violence**, teachers from both groups stated the various prevention strategies, intervention strategies and response strategies.

Prevention Strategies: Teachers set general rules, fostered positive relationships, and modified physical environments to reduce incidents. Group II schools, with lower violence rates, implemented more structured safety practices, such as frequent monitoring and requiring signed agreements on school rules.

Intervention Strategies: Teachers monitored early warning signs and collaborated with parents and communities. In Group II, students proactively informed teachers of potential issues, allowing for early intervention. Pairing low-engagement students with high achievers was noted as an effective approach in Group II.

Response Strategies: Group I teachers used a step-based discipline system, including suspension, while Group II preferred non-punitive responses like counseling and school duties. Teachers from both groups applied in-school disciplinary tasks, though Group I faced occasional resistance.

Results of Documentary Analysis

According to the documentary analysis, types of violence mostly perpetrated by the students were;

- Verbal violence and mild physical violence such as kicking and beating
- Serious physical violence such as such punching, using dangerous objects to fight and bleeding incidence
- Mild sexual violence such as irrelevant touching to the girl and sending sexual text message
- psychological violence such as threatening by using offensive words or showing fist
- Vandalism, Financial Violence

The violence management strategies mostly used by teachers were;

- Suspending
- Informing to parents and ask to sing on school disciplinary record book
- Being Warned by the teachers, send to principal office

Conclusion

The study highlights the effectiveness of a comprehensive violence management strategies, integrating prevention, intervention, and response strategies to create a safer school environment. Educational leadership plays a pivotal role in fostering a culture of safety and respect, guiding policies and practices that promote consistent implementation across all levels of school operations. Effective leadership also ensures alignment between teacher-student perceptions of violence management, fostering collaboration among stakeholders to enhance school safety and support a positive learning environment. By instituting clear policies and leading, school leaders can inspire a commitment to safe and supportive environments across the school community.

Suggestions

The findings from this study provide valuable insights into strategies for school violence management. Based on these findings, the following suggestions are proposed for Basic Education Schools, educational institutions, and policymakers.

- **Strengthening Prevention and Intervention Policies:** Administrators and teachers should establish and enforce clear, evidence-based policies that prioritize prevention and intervention. Policies should be designed to foster a safe, inclusive environment, with guidelines on managing and addressing violent behavior. Educational leaders should collaborate with teachers to establish rules, promote emotional intelligence, and teach conflict resolution skills, aiming to prevent violence before it occurs.
- **Empowering Teachers and Student Leaders through Training:** Intervention strategies should include structured, policy-backed training programs for both teachers and student leaders. Leaders should implement policies that support training in recognizing warning signs of violence, mentoring, and counseling skills to assist at-risk students. Furthermore, student leaders should receive training in negotiation, communication, and problem-solving strategies to mediate conflicts among peers.
- **Reducing Dependence on Punitive Measures through Policy Innovation:** Findings suggest a need to minimize reliance on punitive measures like suspension and expulsion. Educational leaders should consider policy changes that emphasize alternative, supportive disciplinary strategies, such as restorative justice practices and in-school counseling. Establishing policies that prioritize recovery-focused approaches can help address underlying behavioral issues and support students' social and emotional development.

- **Adopting a Holistic, Community-Centric Approach:** Schools should adopt a holistic policy framework for managing violence, involving educators, students, parents, and community members. Policies should reflect a multi-layered approach to violence management, integrating prevention, intervention, and response strategies to build a safe, collaborative school culture. School leaders should advocate for policies that promote partnerships with families and community organizations to foster a broader support network for students.
- **Encouraging Continuous Policy Research and Development:** Ongoing research and collaboration among educational leaders, researchers, and policymakers are essential for continuously improving school violence management strategies. Policymakers should establish frameworks that facilitate research-driven decision-making, encouraging schools to refine their approaches based on current findings and best practices. By fostering a culture of continuous improvement, schools can stay responsive to emerging needs and contribute to the development of safer learning environments.

These suggestions aim to guide educational leaders, policymakers, and Basic Education Schools in establishing policies and practices that promote a safe, nurturing learning environment. By implementing these strategies and supporting a proactive leadership role, schools can play a vital part in reducing violence, enhancing well-being, and ensuring students have a safe space to learn and grow.

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