



# **SCHOOL BASED VIOLENCE IN TURKEY**

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# School Based Violence in Turkey

- Although limited, research directly related to violence in schools and areas of public interest can be grouped under the following headings:
- peer violence in schools,
- violence against teachers;
- teacher's violence against students;
- parental violence and/or abuse;
- bullying and cyber bullying,
- violence employed by delinquent children,
- and TV violence.

# School Based Violence in Turkey

- National Assembly of Turkey has initiated a research committee on 2005 to study school based violence through out Turkey. The result of this study was reported at 2007.
- According to this survey , during (the last three months of) 2006/2007 academic years, it was detected that
- 22% of the students attending secondary schools were faced with physical,
- 58% were faced with verbal,
- 26.3% with emotional and
- 15.8% with sexual violence.

# School Based Violence in Turkey

- In addition, it was found that
- 35.5% of the students resorted to physical,
- 48.7% resorted to verbal,
- 27.6% resorted to emotional and
- 11.7% resorted to sexual violence ( TBMM Araştırma Komisyonu Raporu, 2007).

# School Based Violence in Turkey

- Based on the other research done on school violence in Turkey, the most observed aggressive behaviors in schools are
- individual or collective participation in fight,
- carrying of knife (pocket knife or a similar cutting tool at least once),
- pushing a friend,
- name calling, teasing, saying bad words, insulting, cursing, arguing,
- vandalism and
- threatening someone or some people

(Ogulmus, 1995; Uysal, 2003; Kapcı, 2004; Durmus and Gurgan, 2005; Eke and Ogel, 2006; Kepenekci and Cinkır, 2006; Yavuzer et al., 2009).

# School Based Violence in Turkey

- **Violence against teachers**
- Contrary to the Western literature, violence directed toward teachers does not appear to be a major area of research concern.
- Turkish society is extremely sensitive that students show respect to teachers and does not tolerate students being rude or disobedient to teachers (Sisman, 2006: 213).

However, there had been reports of violent behavior towards teachers in Turkey but they are not common occurrences (Ogulmus, 1995; Yavuzer et al., 2009; Turkum, 2011).

# School Based Violence in Turkey

- **Teachers' violence against students**
- Teachers have been found to resort to violence in disciplining students, even though there is a formal ban against it (Yıldırım and Celebi, 1999; Gozutok et al., 2006; Siyez, 2009; Yıldız et al., 2009). Corporal punishment employed by teachers appears to be the most prominent type of violence directed toward school children starting from the elementary school, even in kindergarten years.
- The authoritarian cultural heritage encourages the use of corporal punishment as a part of education. Its roots can be traced back to the Ottoman period when *falaka* (spanking children's feet with a rod) had long been the part of formal education.
- However, any form of corporal punishment has been forbidden by law (The primary schools regulation, article 123) and the one who uses brutal force and jeopardizes individuals' health is sentenced to up to 18 months in prison (Konanç, 1991).

# School Based Violence in Turkey

- In practice, it has always remained the most prevailing form of child rearing practice in Turkey. Gözütok (1993) assessed the students', teachers' and prospective teachers' attitudes toward corporal punishment.
- The results also revealed that, 25.66% of teachers participated in this study applied corporal punishment at least once a week.
- Emotional abuse directed toward students appears to be rather common among Turkish teachers as well. In Turkey, Kozcu and Zeytinoglu (1987) found that teachers were responsible for 1/3 of emotionally abused students(cited in Erkman, 1991).

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# School Based Violence in Turkey

- **Parental violence and abuse**
- There seems to be a common agreement between teachers and parents to treat children in rather harsh ways.
- In an interview study with 16,000,000 children's mothers, Bilir et al. (1991), found that 40.7% of children between 4–6 years of age, 35.5% of children between 7–10 years of age, and 25.8% of children between 11–12 years of age were physically abused by their parents.
- Results also revealed that girls were subjected to corporal punishment more often than were the boys. Zeytinoğlu and Kozcu (1991), however, reported controversial results in that boys were physically abused more often than were the girls.

# School Based Violence in Turkey

- A research had been conducted by Yavuzer et al. (2009) to determine elementary and secondary teachers' views on the types and frequency of violence they face and the causes and prevention of it in Nigde, Turkey.
- According to the findings of this study, teachers defined violence as “all verbally or physically harmful behavior”. They attributed familial causes as the main reason for violence.
- They recommend school guidance services to work more effectively and school discipline rules to function better as measures to be taken.
- Most of teachers did not mention the measures they could take in their own classrooms. The researchers interpreted these findings as teachers ascribing responsibility to others and for this reason they would not aware of their responsibilities or they would be running from them.

# Legislation and policies

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- National action plans were developed in Turkey to prevent violence in educational settings (2006-2011) and to combat domestic violence (2007-2010). In addition, national strategies on child rights, child protection and interagency coordination were adopted in 2011.

# Legislation and policies

- There are several laws in Turkey which include provisions related to the protection of children and which are used by service providers to perform the functions required as part of the overall child protection system, namely to identify, report, and refer cases of violence against children.
- The most commonly used are the Child Protection Law (2005), which regulates procedures and principles with regard to protecting juveniles who are in need of protection or who commit crimes;
- the Law on Social Services, which regulates the social services provided to families, children, the disabled, the elderly and other individuals in need of protection or assistance.

# Legislation and policies

- The Turkish Criminal Code (2005) defines the basic principles for criminal responsibility and types of crimes, punishments and security precautions to be taken in this respect.
- The law includes special provisions concerning sexual abuse of children and sexual intercourse with minors.
- Physical violence against children, on the other hand, is not regulated separately but the punishment to be imposed is increased if the crime of physical violence, including injury and homicide, is committed against a child.

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# Legislation and policies

- The Turkish Ministry of National Education had put the five-year **“Prevention and Reduction of Violence in Education Environments Strategy Action Plan”** into effect, starting in 2006 (TMNE, 2006).

# Legislation and policies

- For the years between 2008 and 2011, annual in-service training courses were given to school administrators, teachers and school counselors on a regular basis (TMNE In-Service Training Plans, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011).

# Legislation and policies

- Since 2006, the Ministry of Education had implemented several strategies in educational environments and their surroundings with the objective of preventing violence and promoting a culture of peace.
- Some of the efforts taken are as follows:
  - **Projects for teachers (Child Friendly Schools,**
  - **Psychosocial School, 7 to 9 Years Effective Parent**
  - **Education, Life Skills Training for Children and**
  - **Adolescents)** had been carried out (Turkish Ministry of
  - National Education /TMNE, 2006).

# Legislation and policies

- Guidance programs for elementary and secondary school guidance classes that are based on personal development were prepared. (TMNE, 2006)
- A circular called “Preventing Violence in Schools” was issued to schools (TMNE 2006).

# Legislation and policies

- In 2009 **“Environments to Ensure Safe schools Cooperation Protocol”** was signed with the Interior Ministry and within the framework of **“Safe Schools, Safe Education Project”** **“school police”** practice was introduced (Sabah Newspaper, 2009).

# Legislation and policies

- Despite promising legislation and planning however, ministry of education still struggles with implementation issues.