
SCHOOL-GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN AFRICA: PREVALENCE AND CONSEQUENCES

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ABSTRACT: *This paper reviews some available literature on school violence in African context and illustrates results of an original cross sectional descriptive research conducted in Khartoum State, Sudan. A total of 240 respondents were randomly selected from fifteen primary schools for girls from the main three localities of Khartoum State. The objective of the study were to explore different forms of violence that girls face in schools and at home; to find out the psychological consequences experienced by the girl-child after facing violence; how the girl seeks help; and finally to draw recommendations for educational policy makers. It was found that girls face many forms of violence as they are in young age. The main causes are related to many inter-connected factors. Most common factor is due to socialization and rigid treatment that girls face at home. Girls who experienced extreme violence at home reflect their emotions passively in form of violated behaviour against their peer students at school. Also, the study highlighted the negative physical and psychological impact of violence on young girls, which affect and reduce their educational achievements and normal life. Moreover, the socioeconomic level of girl's parents has not contributed as a significant factor to violence. It is clear from this research that violence against young girls is a reality and it occurs at all class levels and at different settings (home, schools and streets). The first person the girls seek help from is her school friend. However, communication with mother was limited due to educational gap and that mothers in some cases are the actor of harassment. Finally the research recommends to encourage and support men and boys to take an active part in the prevention and elimination of all forms of violence and especially gender based violence and increase awareness of men and boys responsibility in ending the cycle of violence; policy makers should play a great role to promote gender equality especially during the process of socialization.*

KEYWORDS: School Violence, Gender-Based Violence, Primary Schools.

INTRODUCTION

Access to quality education and a safe school environment are fundamental rights for every child, and a prerequisite to socioeconomic development and security. In addition, poverty reduction is an element for improving quality education and increasing levels of literacy in society. The achievement of Education for All (EFA) goals and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are seriously compromised by violence in the educational environment. Many schools in the African region, both private and public, are not safe and well protected for children and adults of school age. Also, there is a causal link between school violence and drop-out rates and absenteeism ratio. Various forms of school based violence are practiced, the most serious implication of sexual harassment is reduction in girls' attendance at school and increasing drop-out rates (UNGEI, 2010).

Children's education and protection rights are still seen as a controversial dilemma facing governments of most African countries. School violence and abuse risk boys and girls physical and psychological well-being. Still much effort need to be put for investigating on the magnitudes and prevalence of the problem; as well as, the causes of various forms of the violence practices should be identified. Accordingly, interventions and mechanisms of preventions have to be specified clearly for policy makers to take promising actions.

The magnitude of violence in both girls and boys primary schools is quite high and the implications are complicated and frightening (Review on African school violence, 2009). This problem in most cases is hidden and not reported by the victims. Also, school teachers and the administration are in many countries are not aware about the extent and the consequences of the problem and its implications on the health and education standard of the students. Moreover, many schools do not have a clear system for the prevention and management of violent practices in and out schools. The patterns and types of violence among peers and between teachers and students are various extended from beating, bullying, sexual harassment, to rape and killing (Review on African school violence, 2009).

The reasons and influences for such practices may relate to many factors; some blame the mass media, particularly films and videogames (Wharton, 2005). Others explain that the structural-function of the society in Africa characterize by violence, disagreement, conflict, and recently, instability and civil war (Badri, A, 1999; Baily, S. &Whittle, 2004). In addition, the socialization processes can encourage gender discrimination, in which males may have a kind of power over females. While females usually are subordinated or abused which usually let females carry negative thoughts about themselves and hence, act as inferior passive persons. In addition, the socioeconomic and socio-psychological background in our African society still perceives gender discrimination and gender based deprivation in the role-gender-relations. One of the most common forms of gender discrimination that is deeply valued in the socialization system is that males should remain dominant and powerful and females should accept and encourage these values. These beliefs manifest in unbalanced relationships based on inequality and injustice in the structural and functional system of family and society (Badri, 2009).

This paper is mapping the progress related to identify the magnitude and the prevalence of the problem in the African region with special reference to Sudan, the causes and forms of the school based violence practices, and, to consider the gaps and challenges that may influence girls' education. The paper, also, will address the consequences and implications of violence on the girls' education. At the end, the paper is introducing recommendations for possible prevention and treatment of gender school based violence which can be adopted in African schools.

The research problem Statement

Still among African countries and in most Arab World the recognition of the magnitude and implications of the problem is limited and so for setting mechanisms for prevention and treatment. The majority of studies have come from African nations and cited data on the prevalence of gender-based violence, but a few studies emphasize on gender based school violence and the outcomes on girl's education attainment.

More studies are needed for documentation of unsafe, hostile school environments for girls and for analyzing their impact on the education and health of girls. Other gaps in the existing research include an absence of research on gender-based violence affecting boys in school, including homophobia as a source of this violence. There are also few studies that consider the broader issues of gender inequality, limited economic opportunities, and the dynamics of the local contexts in their analysis of the issue of girls' education.

School-related gender-based violence is a widespread barrier to girls' attaining educational equity, which also brings with it many health risks. Addressing power imbalances between male and female is central to preventing gender violence, and this process must be deeply rooted in schools. Successful efforts must include both boys and girls. The lives of girls/women and boys/men are intimately interwoven, and working only with girls is, at best, only half a solution. Working with girls and boys—sometimes together and sometimes separately depending on the social context—is the only way to implement approaches that can truly reshape the construction of gender roles and relations. This transformative approach is a key to long-term success.

In Sudan a few studies covered the issues of school related gender based violence. Also a little has been searching and focusing on primary school related gender based violence. Primary education in Sudan engages pupils of age group 7 to 15/16 years old. This critical age group which includes both childish and early adolescents mixed in one school playing-yard and exposed to various practices of discrimination and violation relationship. In addition, Social mobility in Sudan brought about mix of cultural practices, and different ethno-religious groups. The implication of these reflected in many violations, and social disintegration. Preventive measures and interventions in term of media programs for awareness raising, and training programs for school personnel and teachers are quite rare to address this issue. Also, still in Sudan the Ministry of Education has not put serious efforts to employ specialized social workers and psychology/counseling officers for schools. These cadres will help greatly in the management and control of the problem, and can easily help both teachers and parents to deal with unordinary cases and minimize the risk factors of such SRGBV practices.

Definitions and Terminology of Violence

It is crucial to differentiate between some relevant patterns of violence that practiced by penetrator and the victim. The definitions provided and agreed upon by the United Nations and other international organizations are respected and taken as a foundation for further debate and research that are conducted by academia and scholars. The following are some basic definitions:

World Health Organization (WHO's) definition of violence: "the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal development or deprivation (WHO Global Consultation on Violence and Health, 1996). This definition is considered by researchers to be too abstract, too broad, and too complex.

The meaning of violence as reported by some researchers varies from culture to culture and sometimes within the same culture (e.g., Barton, 1969; Cohen & Vandello, 1998; Gelles, 1990; Harris, 2001; Krohn-Hansen, 1994; Miller, 1993; KRAUSS, 2006).

Moreover, Gender-based violence is defined as: "Is violence inflicted or suffered on the basis of gender differences. It is an experience of violence that prevents young girls from developing and fully exercising their rights. Examples of gender-based violence are female infanticide, honor killing, female genital mutilation, humiliation, degrading treatment, sexual abuse, forced pregnancy, acid attacks, forced abortion, early marriage, and among others (United Nations, Commission on the status of women, General Secretary report, 1994).

School based violence: It refers to the varied forms of violence found in schools. There are three major types of SRGBV: sexual, physical and psychological. Sexual violence involves violence or abuse by an adult or another child through any form of forced or unwanted sexual activity where there is no consent, consent is not possible, or power and/ or intimidation is used to coerce a sexual assault .It has dual impact on children increasing both their risk of educational failure and negative health consequences such as physical injure, early pregnancy sexually transmitted infection (Barker, 2002; UNESCO, 2002).

The context of school-based violence

The levels and patterns of violence in schools often reflect the levels and patterns of violence in countries, communities and families. These in turn, reflect prevailing political and socio-economic conditions, social attitudes, cultural traditions and values, and laws.

It is worth understanding the traditional cultural context and value system of Sudanese communities. Children in most parts of the country are socially and economically valued. They are provided status, respect, and potentially labor and income. In rural areas the children are born into large extended families which operate in a hierarchical manner allocating power and status by age and gender. Complex power relations in the family can include mother-in-law and mother relationships or co-wives. Polygamy is wide spread practice, especially in rural settings. Cohesion and solidarity are main features of the society particularly in rural areas where children learn and are educated in a discriminatory pattern based on gender segregation, males are socialized as being superior and have to practice power and patriarchal, where females act as subordinate and dependent with little power (Badri, 2010). This structural value system in Sudanese society encourage one group of human, males, class/clan entity to extend practices of power discrimination and inequality in the daily life at all levels and social settings. However, women of a certain class and socioeconomic position can practice the same attitude and behavior to other subordinated women who are classified as in low position by class, ethnicity or clan (Badri, 2008 & 1999). In this social environment, children are disciplined by adults with different levels of authority, interest, and principles of socialization. The level of tension within households and the prevalence of domestic violence in particular influence how children are disciplined. Thus boys and girls are socialized differently, depending mainly on gender discrimination and inequality norms and practices.

In Sudan, as in many other African societies, it is considered acceptable for men to control women, the wealthy to control the poor, parents control children through violence and threat of violence, hence considered normal and even commendable for both adults and children to use similar attitudes and methods in school settings. By being victims, perpetrators and witnesses of violence, children learn that violence is an acceptable way for the strong and aggressive to get what they want from the comparatively weak, passive or peaceful (Abagi, 2003).

For the past fifteen years, since the Beijing Conference, there has been enormous progress in awareness of the multiple forms of gender based violence, and action research took places focusing on and attempting to prohibit violence in school setting. School-related gender-based violence in developing countries takes place in a context of gender inequality and specific cultural beliefs and attitudes about gender roles, especially those concerning male and female sexuality, a pattern of economic inequality, and in some instances significant political unrest and violent conflict (Beijing+ 5 Platform, 2005).

Most of studies in school based violence have been revealed that while there is increasing recognition of the prevalence of school gender-based violence and negative health and educational outcomes, only a limited number of analyses on the linkage between this violence and the implications for health and education were available, particularly within school-based settings in developing countries. The majority of studies have come from African nations and cited data on the prevalence of gender-based violence, but a few studies provided quantitative data on educational outcomes for girls. (Abagi, 2003)

The Human Rights Watch, 2001 mentioned that School-related gender-based violence is a widespread barrier to girls' attaining educational equity, which also brings with it many health risks. Addressing power imbalances between males and females is central to preventing gender violence, and this process must be deeply concerned in schools. Successful efforts must address both boys and girls. The lives of girls/women and boys/men are intimately interwoven, and working only with girls is, at best, only half a solution. Framing the issue in the polarizing language of girls versus boys, victims versus perpetrators, only exacerbates an already difficult situation and masks the complexity of the dynamics of gender and power. This means working with girls and boys—sometimes together and sometimes separately depending on the social context—is the only way to implement approaches that can truly reshape the construction of gender roles and relations. This transformative approach is a key to long-term success.

Furthermore, some literatures have revealed that school-based violence is a serious problem affect the children performance in school and at home (Abrahams, 2003). It focused that SBV is directly disturb the psychological feelings and social capacity of the children which all these influence the child personality and degree of participation positively in his/her community, school, and family (UNGEI, 2010). Therefore, it is essential for researchers and advocators to understand the forms and causes of SGB, address the problem from a wider cultural, socio-political and economic environment of each country. Though some similarities in these context between most of African countries, but, showing disparity, extent of the problem consequences, and learning good lessons from each country is crucial and enrich the knowledge.

The magnitude and the prevalence

Little work has been done so far on the issues of school based violence in Africa, in the Arab World, and in Sudan in particular. The investigation on such problem must not only focus to reflect on the prevalence, its causes and consequences of the phenomena from wide perspective and its long term impact on the development of human resources. But, researchers need to provide with practical and action policies in respect of treatment, counseling and preventions measures.

Education systems in African region have been shaped by historical events, cultural and political agendas, community and economic realities. Poverty of most African countries has influenced and shaped the magnitude of the problem in the society and at schools. Children are socialized in different environment: at home, in the community and at school with diverse socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds (Abagi, 2003). They experience different forms and degrees of violence in each environment and some practice the same forms that experienced at home and on the way while coming to school (Abraham, 2003).

Many studies have referred SBV to some causes that are out of control to school systems and others caused by the school environment (Dunne and Leach et al, 2005; Dunne and Leach, 2006). The causes are classified into two patterns: endogenous and exogenous factors. The exogenous are external factors that include any external influences to school and education system. For example, social norms encourage children at school age to practice violation with peers as to show authority and power over certain group. In addition, poverty and lack of resources are affecting the standard of school environment which may enforce some children to react negatively and asserting violation in school; whereas, endogenous factors are internal to the school environment and education systems. These include issues of teachers' quality, the curriculum, and, school governance (World Report on VAC, 2006, 2008).

The prevalence frequency and intensity of violence are yet to be comprehensively documented in most parts of the region, whether occur within or outside educational settings.

In Nigeria for instance, a study reveals that only 4% of incidents of sexual violence at school setting while 40% of physical violence was reported by the victims themselves or their friends. Most forms of violence in schools intersect with each other and have common root causes (Abramovay et al, 2002). In Sudan, a study conducted in five secondary schools at Khartoum State, from which a sample of 483 girls were selected (Abdelgani, M 2008). The research results show that 49.9% experienced violence at home, in school, and, on their way to and from school. While 50.1% have not faced any forms of violence at any settings. Those who were victims, 28% mentioned that beating from teachers usually practiced against them. 10% faced insults from their peers; 11% face expulsion; whereas, 9% feel neglect and discrimination from peers. Moreover, the same study revealed that 59% of the girls were faced harassment on their way to school from men, shopkeepers, and boys. In general the study evident that school girls were victims of violence at home mentioned by 52% of them; 29% faced harassment at street, and, 19% at school environment.

Furthermore, I would like to reflect on some data, cases, and examples of the most three common practices of SBV in some of central, southern, west and east Africa. The following cases are reviewed from different secondary resources.

Corporal and degrading punishment

Corporal punishment is defined as “any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort. It encompasses the use of sticks, whips, belts or any other objects, blows to the head, slaps, boxing, or enforcing of uncomfortable positions such as kneeling. Also, degrading punishment include verbal insults and threats.

“When the school year started, my father refused to provide my school dues. Since I did not have textbooks, I was beaten in front of others and driven away from school for one week. I was ashamed and thought of leaving school.” (Girl, 10 years old, Cameron). (Dunne, et al, 2006).

“The African child is brought up in a culture that uses canes as a form of discipline for child to learn and follow instruction. If we do not enforce punishment, our schools will gain low standards” (A Ghanaian teacher) (Development Technology Report, 2004c).

“When the teacher hit me, everything immediately goes from my mind. Even if I had lots of ideas before, the moment he hits me, I lose everything, I can't think” (primary school pupil, Tog) (Durrant, 2005).

Statistics show the prevalence of SBV in some Central and West Africa:

- In Benin, 54.8% of children had been victims of corporal punishment in schools.
- In Senegal, 55% of students are reported as victims.
- In the Central Africa Republic, 52% of primary schools teachers inflict corporal punishment every day (Durrant, 2005).
- In Gambia, boys are reported to be punished in schools more often than girls (World report on VAC, 2006). The same study shows that 36% of female teachers are quite often beating students comparing to 22% do male teachers.
- Both girls and boys are affected, however all studies indicated that some students are more particularly at risk those are the displaced and refugees, the disabled, and the poor children (Development Technology, 2008).

Sexual abuse and exploitation

Three forms of sexual violence are reported in most African countries, including sexual abuse, sexual violence, and sexual exploitation (African child policy forum, 2006; Action Aid International, 2004; Burton, 2005). In Sudan, these practices are not yet documented in school settings. However, Abdelgani study mentioned harassment which indicated a sort of verbal sexual imitation. Usually, sexual violence is referred to any sexual act using correction, harassment, force. All types of sexual violence can involve verbal or physical harassment with sexual connotations, inappropriate touching, sexual assault or rape. The action of sexual abuse usually followed by threats aimed at preventing the victim from reporting the incident. Studies showed that perpetrators of sexual abuse are males of all ages, known or unknown to the victim, within schools, are most commonly male students or teachers and other staff.

Statistical evidence from different countries indicates that the practice is wide spread in schools particularly secondary schools. For examples, in Ghana, a study shows that 82, 1% of school boys are reported as perpetrators of sexual abuse in schools. In Cameroon, a study found that 30% of sexual violence is experienced by girls where attackers are school boys. In the Central African Republic 14% of rape cases committed to girls the perpetrators are their fellows; while 24% of boys have raped a girl or take part in collective rape (Burton, 2005). Moreover, in Niger a study indicated that 47% of students had observed teachers expressing feelings of love for students, and 88% of teachers confirmed that there are sexual abuse and acts performed between students and teachers in their schools. Similar studies in Senegal assured that school teachers are identified as main actors of sexual harassment and violence, at 42.2% (African Child Policy Forum, 2006).

Some studies found that sexual violence in all its forms occur in school and around schools. Children reported that they faced sexual assaults on the road to and from school. It also, takes

place around school gates where strangers and young men met in toilets, in empty classrooms, staff offices, teachers' houses, and in boarding houses (Birch, 2006).

Pinheiro, 2006, suggested that the causes of sexual violence at schools are many; gender relations are extremely important where female passivity and male violence is accepted as normal behavior. Also, the role of poverty is greatly evident where poor girls engage in transactional sex with teachers, school staff or any men to support financially their education. In some cases parents may turn blind eyes in their girl/s sexual relations in order to mitigate lack of cash to support their daughter education. In addition, school environment in most cases facilitate sexual violence to occur. For instance, location of toilets mixed or having unsecured lockers may contribute to likelihood of sexual violence and abuse against girls and young teachers.

The consequences of school gender based violence

It is believed that children who are physically punished are less likely than other children to internalize moral values. They are less inclined to resist temptation, to engage in altruistic behaviour, to empathize with others or to exercise moral judgment of any kind. They are more disposed to engage in disorderly and aggressive conduct such as slapping their siblings, parents, schoolmates and boyfriends or girlfriends. And they may become adults who use corporal punishment against their own children, and so pass on the habits of violence (Lopez NL et al. 2001). They are more inclined to engage in disorderly and aggressive conduct such as hitting their siblings, parents, schoolmates and boyfriends or girlfriends (Durant 2005). And they may become adults who use corporal punishment against their own children, and so pass on the habits of violence (Gershoff, 2002). North American and European studies suggest that school bullying, whether the children are victims or perpetrators or both, can be a predictor of future anti-social and criminal behaviour, including intimate partner violence, involvement in fights and self-destructive behaviour such as smoking and drinking to excess (Farrington, 1993 and Alexander et al. 2004).

Children and adolescents exposed to violence also may experience trauma and emotional harm such as depression, behavioral problems, fear and uncertainty relationship problem, and in some cases post-traumatic stress disorder (Buka et al, 2001; Baily & Whittle, 2004).

Furthermore, the impact of violence is immeasurable and includes loss of self-esteem, depression, anger, risk of suicide, unwanted pregnancy, HIV infection and fear of victimization. Combination of these factors causes many girls to drop out of schools. Physical and psychological punishment, verbal abuse, bullying and sexual violence in schools were repeatedly reported as reasons for absenteeism, dropping-out and lack of motivation for academic achievement (Chawani and Kadzamira, 2004). Also, gender violence impacts both the health and educational status of students, withstand they are affected directly as victims or indirectly as bystanders. The consequences of school related gender based violence include a lack of motivation among students, failing grades, absenteeism and increased numbers of drop out. Research indicates that SRGBV also demoralize students, affecting their ability to achieve their educational goals (Olweus, 1978; Dake, 2003; Boyle et al, 2002).

A study in Cameroon found that corporal punishment blocked the development of social skills, and that victims feared giving free expression to their ideas (EMIDA, 2000). Repeated verbal abuse has also been shown to undermine self-esteem (Mlamlali et al. 2001). Girls in one study in South Africa said they felt "exploited, worthless, alone, scared, sick, powerless, and guilty," after experiencing psychological violence in school (Haffejee, 2006). Low self-

esteem can cause life-long problems, which may include eating disorders, substance abuse, compulsive behaviors, and sexual risk taking. Fear and low self-esteem may not only lead to ill health, but may also impact children's ability to live normal peaceful life and flourish as they grow older.

Moreover, it has been said that school gender-based violence may limit children's opportunities to attend school or complete their schooling, to succeed as individuals during their school years, and to take advantage of their schooling throughout their lives (Jejeebhoy and Bott, 2003). In addition, victims of school/gender violence results in being unable to concentrate, not wanting to participate in class, receiving lower grades, losing interest in school, transferring to a different school, or even leaving formal schooling altogether.

The literature analyzed in this paper highlighted many examples of the impact of sexual abuse, and most of the studies discussed its impacts on girls. In Benin, for instance, a study found that 43 percent of primary school students and 80 percent of secondary school students said they knew of girls who had dropped out of school due to sexual abuse (Wible, 2004). Studies of adolescent males have also found an association between being raped and a variety of behaviors including absenteeism from school (WHO, 2002)

"Some teachers are known to harass girls who refuse to have sexual relationships with them in such ways as being refused exit permits, [being] punished for [a] petty offence for no clear reason at all, [or being] ill-treated in class," secondary school student from Malawi (Kadzamira et al. 2001).

Moreover, it is argued that corporal punishment and psychological violence affect school attendance and performance. A study of students in Uganda found that corporal punishment was a major reason for student dropout (UNICEF and Save the Children, 2005). The same study found that many students drop out of school because of the abusive language used by teachers (UNICEF and Save the Children, 2005). In Lesotho, corporal punishment was found to discourage both girls and boys from attending school (Abagi, 2003). A study of Rwandan children in camps found that 68 percent of boys and 58 percent of girls who dropped out of school cited reasons that included harsh treatment (Alexander et al. 2005). In Uganda, female students reported that teachers' use of derogatory language with regard to their physical appearance and intellectual ability resulted in a loss of confidence that affected their concentration and performance in school (Action Aid International Uganda, 2004).

A study in Nigeria reported that many parents felt forced to marry off their underage daughters as a way to protect them from "eve teasing" and any attendant sexual violence (IDHRB, 1996). In Sub-Saharan Africa, parents' fears about their daughters being sexually abused while travelling long distances to school is a key reason why girls drop out (World Bank, 2005). In rural Africa, there is some indication that the fear of sending girls, but not boys, to teachers' homes deprives girls of coaching opportunities that are critical to educational success. Girls in South Africa were found to avoid certain subjects if they were taught by known harassers (Abrahams, 2003).

Furthermore, a study in Sudan primary school found that girls practices aggressive attitudes towards their peers inside and outside class. The same study found that girls who are victims of corporal punishment usually get afraid, felt neglected and shy from their peers in school (Badri, A, 2010). A school girl victim who had experienced violence in school said:

“The punishment and beating in school are really discouraging. It makes one feel less interested in the morning about school. When you enter the gate you wonder, oh, my god! Who is going to make me feel inferior today?” “A primary school girl in Ombbada, Khartoum State (Badri. A, 2010).

It is clear, from the above review, that the consequences and impact of school violence have major serious dimensions includes psychological and emotional disturbance of feelings, life hate and fear. Also these practices, mentioned above, of school based violence have many waves on girls’ education and the reactions of parents are usually negatively impacted on the girls’ deprivation from continuing their education.

The following pages will demonstrate the research results, discussion and recommendations of a research that conducted among primary schools in Khartoum State, Sudan.

METHOD OF THE RESEARCH

This research is a descriptive, cross-sectional community based study. The field study for data collection extended for three months, started in March and ended in May, 2010. The Study population and area is Primary schools girls in Khartoum State, including Omdurman and North Khartoum Districts. Primary school system in Sudan is eight years and the age of students enrolled is usually from 7 to 14/15 years old. The sample size included 240 adolescents' girls from fifteen different schools distributed along the three main districts of Khartoum State. The population of the primary girls' pupils is large estimated at 3.284 million Primary female students. The population structure is including different girls from diverse cultural background from all over the States of Sudan. Due to internal emigration of many people of Sudan to the Khartoum since the 1980s make the population of the state constitutes of diverse cultural and educational setting. The original population of this research is those occupying all the professional civic jobs, they scattered in the central, North and West Omdurman. While the emigrants from Kordufan and Darfur are settled in distinct areas in South Omdurman and eastern Khartoum North, they resemble the working class, some are small traders. Recently some people from White Nile and Gazira States came as traders and settled in the local markets of Omdurman and Khartoum. Hence the selection of the sample has considered these variations mainly by area and type of school. It is well distinguished that poor people occupy certain areas and place their daughters in public schools, whereas, mid class and rich people can afford to place their girls in private schools.

In respect of the sample, the schools were chosen randomly from the list of Primary girls’ schools provided by the Directorate of Education in Khartoum State. However, differences in type of schools and location of schools were considered in the selection. However, the researcher preferred to select schools that are located in disadvantage areas. Then the respondents in each level of class were chosen randomly from each of the selected school.

The sample size was 240 girls selected from fifteen schools, five schools from each district, and, an average of 16 girls were elected for interview from each school. The school headmistress and school advisors helped in identifying the sample. The selection was considered girls who are suspected to practice violence in schools and who are victims of violation at home.

Tools of data collection:

Data was collected through a designed questionnaire covering all the objectives of the study. The questionnaire is designed to provide data about the demographic characteristics, forms of violence that are prevailing in home and in school.

A pilot study was carried out to pretest and refine the tool of data collection; about twelve adolescent girls from different secondary high schools were interviewed and accordingly the questionnaire was scrutinized.

THE RESEARCH RESULTS

The general characteristics of the respondent show that 54% of the respondents are in the age group (7-9), (33%) are of the age group (10 – 12) years; and the rest (13%) are of age group (13 – 15) years. The distribution of the respondents to level of class indicates that 38% of the respondents are in 1st years (level 1-3), 32% of them are in middle years (level 4-6), and 30% in last year's (level 7-8).

The analysis illustrated the father's education level that 15% with post graduate studies are working in official professional civic jobs, and 33% are university education. The second category is illiterate workers (21%). The third group with secondary education (31%). Most of the father's occupations are those of the freelance with secondary education (38%) and 22% are illiterate. About 33.4% of those illiterate are working in different combined work such as farmers, sellers, drivers, plumbers, guards. Also, 22.4% of those of secondary education and those of university level (22.3%) combine more than one work such as teachers, drivers, technician, receptionist, and, sellers.

In respect to the mother's occupation in relation with level of education, the analysis shows that the majority of female who are illiterate 90.9% are housewife, a few work as house maid. While 8.1% of those with post graduate degree are working in professional jobs, (34.4%) are teachers in secondary schools or colleges and universities. Whereas those with university and secondary education 14.6% and 8.6% engage in official civic jobs, respectively. While a few (18% and 7%) of those working as teachers are of university and secondary education level, respectively.

In addition, the study considers the size of the family and the number of the children which may affect the extent of violence within home and in school. The analysis found that 22% of the respondents have 1-3 brothers and sisters; while 52% have 3-6 siblings; and, 26% of the respondents have more than six brothers and sisters.

In respect of the results considering the practices of violence that respondents face at home. The analysis found that insult (64%) was the major form of violence that girls face at home. While quarreling constituted 14%, beating and lashing form 9% while each of deprivation and sexual harassment constituted 7%. The deprivation is described as economic one or some view deprivation from going to attend social events, and, denial to go out for entertainments. When the respondents were asked about the source of sexual harassment at home, their answers pointed the major source was the family friend (44%); beside relatives (36%), and others who are non-residence constituted 20% of the sources.

The major reason for violence at home was interpreted by 57% as part of the process of guiding and socializing the girls. Parents use beating as a way to educate and guide their

daughters. It is indicated by the parents as a normal practice to guide and punish their daughters, but the respondents perceive this practice as a form of violence. Also, discrimination treatment against girls at home constituted 13% of the reasons of violence; house environment due to small size of the house indicated by 12% of the respondents in which the respondents struggle from inconvenient and uncomfortable living conditions inside the house. This is reflected usually in sort of quarrels between the siblings and between the parents. Moreover, 3% of respondents felt that father's economic stress increase the tense of violation behaviour from the father against the family members. Other reasons including fathers stress from work or instability of the parents' manner, traditional practices, unacceptable pattern of socialization are all reasons mentioned by 15% of the respondents.

With regards to members involved in the practice of violation at house level; the analysis shows that: (20%) of the respondents are beaten by their brothers, (14%) by fathers, (6%) by their mothers, (4%) by relatives and only (1%) by their elder sisters. In addition, the respondents who are victimized as sexually harassed mentioned that 44% are family friends, 36% mentioned that family relatives, while 20% said that others such as drivers, plumber, carpenter.

In respect to school violence the respondents faced, more than half of the students experienced violence at school (59.8%). Beating was the most prevailing type of violence at school. Beating is mainly performed by the teachers. Other forms include expulsion (11%), neglect (10%) and insult from peers (9%). While 41.1% of the respondents mentioned they have ever experienced any form of violation neither from teachers nor from peer groups. However, the analysis found that the majority which about 62% of the respondents have been experienced such violation at home and/or at school regardless of its type and severity. Whereas 38% expressed that they are rarely victimized to violence. This indicates that young adolescent girls are vulnerable to violence from the surrounding whether family members, the school, or the neighborhood.

Moreover, the data show that 46.3% of the respondents who experienced violence are from level three which in age group 9-10 years, while the second group 39.8% is those from level two age 8-9 years. This indicates that youngsters are the most victimized groups from the high level age groups who are ranged between 12-15 years.

Also, the analysis indicates that victims of school violence are the same of those have experienced punishment at home. This means that vulnerability to violation and humiliation may extend through place and time regardless of socioeconomic background. However, the research identified that a few (13%) of the penetrators at school are victims of family violence at home. This indicates that gender based violence has impacted negatively on the girls behavior against their school peers.

When the respondents were asked about their feelings as result of such violated experience; the analysis illustrates that 39% of the girls feel depressed; 17% of them feel frustrated and 14% feel isolated. While 13% of them become aggressive and sad and 12% feel ashamed. Furthermore, the data show that girls are facing some kind of harassment on their way to and from school, especially those who go and come back from school on foot. This is indicated by the majority of girls (59%). The sources of harassment are pedestrians (25%), shopkeepers (16%), and neighbors (13%). while the least majority (41%) have not faced any sort of street abuse.

DISCUSSION

Numbers of interesting findings regarding primary girl's experiences with violence are illustrated in this study. Violence is found to be a normal experience for the majority of the respondents. And no difference in violence practice with regard to levels of education and professional occupation of parents. This suggests that violence is determined by culture and norms in Sudanese societies rather than the socio-economic status of people as the case of other African countries where the gender relations are marked by socio-cultural norms of male domination over and discrimination against women" (Vlacoboud and Biason, 2005). And also this result is in accord with the findings of others who indicated that all forms of violence against women occur in all classes of societies (Badri, A., 2001). Considering the types of violence at home (see annex Table 1) insult; quarreling, beating, depravation, neglect and sexual harassment were the prevailing ones. While the main reason for it, is as part of punishment (Table 2). Other reasons included bias treatment against girls; as part of home system or due to father's economic stress and also other unspecified reasons were stated by the respondents. The present study indicated that the source of sexual harassment at home was the family friends; beside relatives, and non-residence persons.

Majority of our respondents mentioned that brothers and fathers are the persons from whom they are facing violence at the family level. This reflects the clear idea about the male dominance at our society and the patriarchal ideologies that determine girl's behaviour and hinder them from having freedom in their life. Also the result showed clear bias treatment against girls at the home level and as reported by Walker (1999) "in the range of family relationship the importance of culture and its influence on how male/ female relationship are structured, well established, that culture influences extended to domestic violence as well, resulting in a wide range of experiences for women".

Therefore, the patriarchal system works to strengthen and reproduce itself, that women brought up to be more obedient and to be in less position comparing to men, and men commonly tend to treat women in a harsh way. Moreover, to challenge this ideology you may face by patriarchal pressure. This collection of patriarchal ideas gave men more chances to create different forms of violence that to make women more obedient and dependent. This system overburdens women with more stressed situation and limits their potential or sometimes completely restricts abilities of women. Therefore, the causes of violence against females mainly are associated with social and cultural factors. Its roots came from unequal power relations between men and women and this in turn led to male domination and discrimination against women; and all these extended and manifested within the stereotype process of socialization which brought women and girls in a very obedient passive situation to male orders and decisions.

On the other hand, more than half of the schools girls experienced violence at school and beating was the most prevailing type of violence. Other forms include expulsion, neglect and insult from peers (Table 4). While, peers violence comes from their peers who at higher class levels. Girls also face harassment at streets on their way to or back from school. The most common actors are pedestrians, shopkeepers, and neighbors. But violence irrespective it occurs in home, school or street, it is perceived as unacceptable behavior for girls (Table 5).

It is evident that home was the major source of violence against girls, and then follows the schools and the street (Table 3). Other sources included persons who are not residence at home like the driver, plumber, and the carpenter. The psychological repercussions of violence lead 39% of the girls feel depressed; 17% of them feel frustrated and 14% feel isolated. Whereas, 13% of the girls are tending to be aggressive and sad and the rest feel ashamed (Table 6). The majorities of the respondents seek support or may be help from their friends (Table 7). But concerning communication with family members, 34% of the respondents find it is easy to communicate with their mothers than other family members when facing violence. These data support Shuman's (1993) finding that adolescent's people tend to find it easier to communicate with their mothers than other members of their family. It is also found that the basis of an effective parent-child relationship is open communication (King et al., 1996). The facts that, this communication is limited since the majorities of mothers are illiterate. This means that education promotes better daughter-mother communication and hence reduces the tension and aggression that produced by violence at home or at school.

Finally, it is evident that most of the schools have no clear preventive and treatment measures adopted against violation acts. Also, only two schools out of the fifteen have social workers who deal with such cases. Usually, the schools in most cases brought the actors and their parents for counseling session without any further follow up or firm solution taken by the school.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The researcher has introduced some most crucial steps of prevention and treatment of school based violence, these are:

First, transformation of the power structure and inequality that produce violence, as well as to respond to the micro dynamics of gender relations within everyday life.

Second, involvement of both boys and girls in understanding that they are equal partners in stopping practices of violence within and outside the school setting.

Third, the school administration can play effective roles in creating an environment of peace, love, and harmony to achieve the EFA and MDGs. Thus, in school services such as counseling and rehabilitation are essential to solve problems and encourage passive children and reduce incidences of violation that practice by unstable peers, teachers or staff.

Fourth, creating partnerships between stakeholders involve in education, health, justice and gender equality will strengthen local systems of support. Similarly, school based partnerships can assist to promote gender-friendly environment and facilitate to engage parents in the process of enhancing gender equality at family and community levels.

CONCLUSION

It is clear from this research, that violence against young adolescents girls are a reality and it occurs at all levels (home, schools and streets). Our societies play a great role in shaping the violence against girls. This violence affects the girl's child psychology. Leads to depressed, frustration and isolation. The first person the girls seek help from is her friend and this natural for the majority of those their mothers being illiterate and this result supported by the fact that

the communication between a mother and a daughter was limited when mothers were illiterate.

Moreover, it is clear that understanding school based violence is within the context of human rights and child's rights conventions. Still major challenges continue to hamper implementation of strategies and policies at the region. Also, because the work on children's rights and EFA have been slow to recognize and link the issues of school violence as fundamental field for putting clear strategies and policies for prevention and treatment. In depth researches on SGBV are limited to revealing the prevalence and consequences, as well as intervention measures and legislation is not yet thoroughly investigated.

This paper has suggested holistic approaches for prevention that enhances gender equality and improves school environments in a way to increase participation of all members of the school family. School-related gender-based violence is a widespread barrier to girls' attaining educational equity, which also brings with it many health risks. Addressing power imbalances between men and women is central to preventing gender violence, and this process must be deeply rooted in schools. Successful efforts must include both boys and girls. The lives of girls/women and boys/men are intimately interwoven, and working only with girls is, at best, only half a solution. Framing the issue in the polarizing language of girls versus boys, victims versus perpetrators, only exacerbates an already difficult situation and masks the complexity of the dynamics of gender and power. Working with girls *and* boys—sometimes together and sometimes separately depending on the social context—is the only way to implement approaches that can truly reshape the construction of gender roles. This transformative approach is a key to long-term success. It is clearly indicated that addressing school-related gender-based violence requires a holistic, multifaceted approach. Efforts must involve all levels of schooling, teacher training programs, community efforts, and ministerial policy and practice.

Finally, leadership at the national level and the development of strong policies at every level are crucial. As well as, the need to engage all stakeholders, i.e., teachers, parents, students, government officials in education, health and social welfare, the police and child protection agencies, and NGOs working with women and children to promote an overall enabling environment and effective interventions.

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Annexes

Table 1: Expose to violence at School

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes Yes	139	57.9
N NonNo	101	42.1
Total	240	100

Table 2: Types of violence at school

Types		
Beating Physical violence	57	41.0
Expulsion	23	17.5
Neglect	26	18.8
Verbal Insult	33	23.7
Total	139	100

Table 3: sources of violence

Source	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Home	87	36.3
Street	5	2.0
School	106	44.2
Both home and school	42	17.5
Total	240	100

Table 4: level of peers who practice violation against the victim

Rank of peers	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Of the same level	86	61.8
At higher levels	53	38.2
Total	139	100

Table 5: Frequency of experiencing violence irrespective of type and place

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Always	48	20.0
Sometimes	128	53.3
Rarely	55	22.9
Never	9	3.8
Total	240	100

Table 6: Acceptability of violence

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Perceived Not acceptable	196	81.7
Perceived Acceptable	29	12.1
Don't know	15	6.3
Total	240	100

Table 7: Respondents' feelings after they faced violence

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Frustrated	21	15.1
Depressed	34	24.5
Isolated	37	26.6
Ashamed	19	13.7
Aggressive & sad	28	20.1
Total	139	100

Table 8: Respondents' report to whom after facing violence

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Mother	22	15.8
Father	3	2.2
Brother	4	2.9
Sister	15	10.8
Friend/peer	95	68.3
Total	139	100

Annex

Statistical analysis

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