Eradicating Violence Provoked by Narcissism and others Factors in Secondary Schools: Case Study of Fako Division South West Region of Cameroon

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Abstract

Purpose: School violence is a major concern in Cameroon and the world at large. As an estimated 246 million children and adolescents experience violence in and around the school yearly. In spite of measures put in place by International Organizations and Government of Cameroon, the prevalence of school violence is still on a raise and the consequences devastating on the victims. This study aimed to investigate a transformative approach to curb school violence provoked by narcissism and other factors among secondary schools in Fako Division, South West Region of Cameroon.

Methodology: In an effort to eradicate this ill, a mix research method, with a sequential explanatory design was used. The sample constituted of 381 students, 10 counselors, 10 school administrators, 10 community leaders and 10 parents. Questionnaires, interview and focus group discussion guides were used at different stages for data collection. Thematic analysis was used to analyses qualitative data and Microsoft Excel 2016, Epidata V.4.1 and R programming V.4.1.2 was used to analysis quantitative data.

Findings: Findings revealed that the school has as priority to put learners on the path to a promising future, but some dishonest persons hide behind the school to victimize others. It further revealed that a combined 54% of the respondents manifested narcissism at different levels and 44% rarely or never. However, narcissism explained only a portion of the cause of different forms of violence, with variations ranged from 2.2% to 10%. Other causes of school violence includes; drugs & alcohol abuse, embarrassment from some teachers and friends, bullying, corporal punishment, age, past traumatic experiences, peer influence, poverty, negative family dynamics and intoxicated community, impulsive personality, lack of self-control, poor of class management skills, arrogance and misconduct from students.

Recommendations: This study recommends a school-home-community partnership in order to manage narcissism and other violent behaviour. Parents should avoid the display of violence at home. They should create a home-school and community partnership and help children know that, they are not exemptions to the rules and regulations.

Keywords: *Eradicate, school violence, provoked, narcissism, secondary schools.*

INTRODUCTION

School violence is a disruptive behaviour carried in and around the school compound with an intention to hurt, abuse, destroy, and kill someone or something. It includes attacks by students on other students, or the school staff and vise-visa. There are different forms of school violence namely; bullying, cyberbullying, sexual, physical and psychological violence (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), 2020). The consequences this social ill is devastating as infringes students' right to study in a safe and unthreatening environment. School violence creates insecurity and fear among students, teachers and the school administrators. It reduces school attendance, causes lower academic performance and increase drop-out rates. The general health of those violated are in jeopardy, as some suffer from sexually transmitted infections, depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and in extreme cases it can lead to the loss of human lives (The United Nations International Children Emergency Fund (UNICEF) (2021). Some of these issues may not present for days, weeks, or even years after exposure to a traumatic event (Meleen, 2018).

In an effort to eradicate this social ill, UNESCO Member States declared the first Thursday of November as the international day against violence and bullying at school including cyberbullying. UNICEF works in collaboration with governments, schools, teachers, families, children and young people to prevent and respond to violence in schools through the adoption laws prohibiting corporal punishment and other forms of violence, develop codes of conduct and other safeguarding measures in schools, set up confidential and safe reporting mechanisms in schools, establish a referral mechanism for response services, and monitor and collect data on violence in schools, train teachers and school staff on positive discipline, classroom management and peaceful conflict resolution, develop and implement life skills and social and emotional learning programs to build the resilience and protective capacity of children and youth, research, monitor and collect data on violence in schools (UNICEF, 2021).

The Cameroon education providers on their part have; improved educational policies and adopt laws prohibiting corporal punishment and other forms of school violence such as Law No 98/004 of 14th April 1998. To Lay down Guideline for Education in Cameroon (Tangwe, 2022). The Ministry of Secondary Education in collaboration with the school administrators have taken a variety of measures to improve school safety. These include the use of metal detectors, the presence of security guards on campus, rules and regulations regarding student and teachers conduct and dress, profiling of potentially violent students, the interventions of school counselor and the administration to guide students on the consequences of violence and the establishment of referral mechanism for response services. The recent wave of violence in the secondary milieu necessitated a consultative 2 days' workshop from the 11 to the 12 of May 2021 in Buea, which assembled all 10 Regional Delegates of Secondary Education, some principals, students, and traditional rulers (Ngonmenyui, 2021). Several of such workshops have been held in different Regions and Towns in Cameroon, all in an effort to curb violence in the school setting.

The above and more notwithstanding, the prevalence of school violence in Cameroon and the world is still a major challenge, especially cases where weapons are involved. On the 16th of April 2022, a student stabbed the principal of the Yona School Complex located in the Nkolbisson district in Yaounde (Kom, 2022). In a study conducted among selected secondary schools in Buea Municipality 2021, with a sample of 343, findings revealed that, 75% of the respondents have been

physical and 73% verbally violated in school (Research Key, 2021). These are just few of the cases which our educational community has witness over the past few years. Between 2005 and 2020, the United Nations verified more than 13,900 incidents of attacks, including direct attacks or attacks where there has not been adequate distinction between civilian and military objectives, on educational and medical facilities and protected persons, including pupils and hospitalized children, and health and school personnel (UNICEF, 2021).

Different factors increases an individual's likelihood to commit violence in and around school, one of which is personality disorder. Among several types of personality disorders, narcissism is a risk factor for violence and aggressive behavior (Sweet, 2021). Narcissism is a mental health condition which causes problems in many areas of a person's life, such as; relationships, school, work or financial affairs (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research (MFMER), 2022). It is characterized by an exaggerated sense of entitlement, grandiose self-view, a sense of superiority, abusive authority and control over others, arrogance, intolerance of criticism, a selfish orientation and lack of empathy for others (Sopie & Bard, 2021). Narcissists are often boastful, pretentious, emotionally distant, and jealous, devaluating other people and easily get addicted to drugs (The Dawn, 2022). Research has revealed that, these characteristics have become so common in our society.

With an aim to eradicate school violence, this study investigated the statistics of narcissism among secondary school students in Fako Division in the South West Region of Cameroon, and the influence of this mental health condition on students' likelihood to commit different forms of violence in school. The study also examined other factors provoking school violence, and assessed if the school is a refuge for evil doers, or for a place for people to foster good. Furthermore, it proposes measures to eradicate school violence and establishes guidelines inspired by the community to curb school violence.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed a mixed methods research design, with a sequential explanatory sequential design. The population of the study was made up of all Secondary School Students in Fako Division, South West Region of Cameroon. According to the South West Regional Delegation of Secondary Education (2022), 90 schools were functional in the academic year 2021/2022, comprising of 23 Public General, 18 Confessional, 42 Lay Private and 7 Technical Secondary Schools, with a total student enrollment of 53,523. Following the Krejcie & Morgan (1970), a sample of 381 student were randomly selected from 8 Secondary Schools.

Instruments for Data Collection

To understanding why violent behaviours/actions are stemming from students and staff, questionnaires were administered to a sample of 381students in Fako Division. The questionnaire was structured to determine the statistics narcissism among secondary school students in Fako Division, and then investigate the influence of narcissistic personality disorder on students' likelihood to get involved in violent acts. To achieve this, the researcher made use of the standardized scale developed by The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5), which listed nine criteria for Narcissistic Personality Disorder (NPD), but it specifies that someone only needs to meet five of them to clinically qualify as a narcissist. The characteristics measured by DSM-5 include; grandiose sense of self-importance, preoccupation

with fantasies of unlimited success, power, brilliance, beauty, or ideal love, the belief they are special and unique and can only be understood by or should associate with others special or high-status people or institutions, need for excessive admiration, sense of entitlement, interpersonally exploitative behavior (.e., takes advantage of others to achieve his or her own ends), lack of empathy, envy of others or a belief that others are envious of them, demonstration of arrogant and haughty behaviors or attitudes. The response option ranged from; very often – often – sometimes - rarely – never.

For in-depth knowledge on others possible causes of violence stemming from students and staff, interview guides were also administered to 10 students and 15 school staff identified by the school counsellors as frequent perpetrators of school violence. With an objective to find out if the school is a refuge for evil doers, or for a place for people to foster good? A focus group discussion was conducted between the researcher together with 10 discipline maters and 10 school counsellors. To introduce measures to eradicate school violence and establish guidelines inspired by the community, interview guides were administered to 10 school administrators, 10 students, 10 community leaders and 10 parents.

FINDINGS

Research Question One: Why are Violent Behaviours Stemming from Students and Staff?

1.1) Statistics of Narcissism among Secondary School Students in Fako Division in the South West Region of Cameroon

Table 1: Frequency of responses to the DSM-5 on narcissist behaviour

Items	Very Often	Often	Some times	Rarely	Never	No res-ponse	Total
Do you experience an exaggerated sense of self-importance that frequently involves the need to exaggerate your talents or accomplishments?	6 (2%)	38 (10%)	168 (43%)	83 (21%)	74 (19%)	21 (5%)	390 (100%)
Do you believe you are special and unique and can only be understood by, or should associate with others special or high-status people or institutions?	43 (11%)	56 (14%)	149 (38%)	52 (13%)	84 (22%)	6 (2%)	390 (100%)
Do you find that you constantly have a willingness to take advantage of others to achieve your own goals?	35 (9%)	29 (7%)	84 (22%)	61 (16%)	174 (45%)	7 (2%)	390 (100%)
Do you require excessive admiration from others?	36 (9%)	45 (12%)	159 (41%)	72 (18%)	73 (19%)	5 (1%)	390 (100%)

Are you preoccupied with fantasies of unlimited success, power, brilliance, beauty, or ideal love?	64 (16%)	62 (16%)	106 (27%)	75 (19%)	80 (21%)	3 (1%)	390 (100%)
Do you have a sense of entitlement from others that involve unreasonable expectations of especially favorable treatment or automatic compliance with their expectations?	37 (9%)	44 (11%)	68 (17%)	96 (25%)	133 (34%)	12 (3%)	390 (100%)
Do you find you are unwilling to recognize or identify with the feelings and needs of others?	51 (13%)	63 (16%)	133 (34%)	64 (16%)	75 (19%)	4 (1%)	390 (100%)
Do others perceive you as arrogant or snobby?	23 (6%)	28 (7%)	113 (29%)	56 (14%)	150 (38%)	20 (5%)	390 (100%)
Do you find that you are often envious of others and/or believe that others are envious of you?	51 (13%)	67 (17%)	130 (33%)	59 (15%)	64 (16%)	19 (5%)	390 (100%)
Multiple response	346 (10%)	432 (12%)	1110 (32%)	618 (18%)	907 (26%)	97 (3%)	3510 (100%)

Table 1 presents the frequency of responses to the 9-item scale to measure narcissist behaviour. Beginning with the first item, it can be noticed that only a small percentage of the respondents experience a sense of self-importance very often (2%) and often (10%); the greatest majority experienced this sometimes (43%). The second item indicates that least majority (11%) of the respondents very often felt special and unique and could only associate or be understood by other people of high status; another small proportion (14%) of respondents often felt this way while a majority (38%) only felt it sometimes. Item three indicates that very few (9%) respondents very often felt or often felt (7%) as to willingly take advantage of others to achieve their goals and a majority of the respondents (45%) never felt the will to do so. Looking at item 4, the least majority (9%) required excessive admiration from others while a relatively larger proportion (12%) often required it; a majority (41%) of the respondents sometimes required excessive admiration.

Item 5 indicates that a small proportion (16%) were very often preoccupied with fantasies of unlimited success, power, brilliance, beauty, or ideal love. The same proportion (16%) often felt this way while a majority of the respondents (27%) were sometimes preoccupied with such fantasies. Item 6 indicates that just a small proportion (9%) of the respondents had a sense of entitlement from others that involved unreasonable expectations of favourable treatment. A relatively larger proportion (11%) often had that sense while the majority (34%) never sense any entitlement from others. Looking at item 7 it will be noticed that the least (13%) proportion of the respondents very often found they were unwilling to recognize with the feelings and needs of others a relatively larger proportion (16%) often felt the same while a majority of the respondents

(34%) felt the same sometimes. From item 8, a very small proportion (6%) of the respondents very often felt being perceived as arrogant or snobbish while the second small majority (7%) were often perceived the same but the largest proportion (38%) were never perceived as being arrogant or snobbish. Item 9 indicates that a very small proportion (13%) of the respondents found they were often envious or believed that others were envious of them; a slightly larger (16%) proportion of felt the same while the majority (33%) sometimes felt the same.

From the multiple responses, 10% of students sampled exhibited narcissism very often and a relative proportion 12% often acted narcissist. Thus, a combined 22% of the respondents could be labeled as mostly narcissists while the majority 32% sometimes felt or acted in a narcissist way. A combined 44% of the respondents rarely or never felt or acted as narcissists.

1.2) The Influence of Narcissism on Students' Likelihood to Commit Different Forms of School Violence

Table 2: Linear regression of DSM-5 and sexual violence

	Estimate	Std. Error	t value	P-value	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower	Upper
(Intercept)	7.119	0.872	8.162	0.001	5.404	8.833
Narcissism	0.202	0.036	5.586	0.001	0.131	0.273

Adj. R square = 0.073; F-statistic: 31.2 on 1 and 382 DF, p-value: 0.001

Table 2 presents the multiple linear relationship between narcissism and sexual violence. As a unit increase in narcissism led to a 20% increase in sexual violence (p-value = 0.001) as indicated by the 95% confidence interval. This ranged from 13.1% to 27.3%, however, the Adjusted R square value at the foot of the table indicates that narcissism only explained 7.3% of the variation in sexual violence.

Table 3: Linear regression of narcissism on psychological violence

					95% Confidence Interval	
	Estimate	Std. Error	t value	p-value	Lower	Upper
(Intercept)	14.877	0.719	20.677	0.001	13.462	16.291
Narcissism	0.173	0.030	5.789	0.001	0.114	0.232

Adj. R square = 0.078; F-statistic: 33.52 on 1 and 382 DF, p-value: 0.001

Table 3 presents the multiple linear relationship between narcissism and psychological. The estimate indicates that a unit increase in narcissism led to a 17.3% increase in psychological violence (p-value = 0.001) and ranged between; 11.4% to 23.2% as shown by the 95% confidence interval. Thus, there exists a significant linear relation between narcissism and psychological violence though the latter only explained 7.8% of the former as shown by the adjusted R square value.

Table 4: Linear regression of narcissism on bullying

	Estimate	Std. Error	t value	P-value	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower	Upper
(Intercept)	13.626	0.712	19.152	0.001	12.227	15.025
Narcissism	0.092	0.030	3.099	0.002	0.033	0.150

Adj. R square = 0.022; F-statistic: 9.602 on 1 and 382 DF, p-value: 0.002

Table 4 presents the multiple linear relationship between narcissism and bullying. Focusing on the estimates, a unit increase in narcissism led to 9.2% increase in bullying and could be as low as 3.3% and as high as 15% (p-value = 0.002). This is in relation to the findings of Fanti and Henrich (2014), whose results from the Hierarchical Linear Regression analyses suggested that high narcissism (i.e., grandiose self-view) may contribute to the continuation of both bullying and victimization. Though narcissism explained a significant variation in bullying, it only explained 2.2% of the variation as shown by the adjusted R square at the foot of the table.

Table 5: Linear regression of narcissism on physical violence

	Estimate	Std. Error	t value	P-value	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower	Upper
(Intercept)	8.717	0.786	11.088	0.001	7.171	10.263
Narcissism	0.215	0.033	6.594	0.001	0.151	0.279

Adj. R square = 0.100; F-statistic: 43.49 on 1 and 382 DF, p-value: 0.001

Table 5 presents the multiple linear relationship between narcissism and physical violence. It revealed that, a unit increase in narcissism led to a 21.5% increase in physical violence (p-value = 0.001). As indicated by the 95% confidence interval, this ranged from 15.1% to 27.9%, however, the Adjusted R square value at the foot of the table indicates that narcissism explained 10% of the variation in physical violence. This was relatively higher as compared to all other forms of violence in this study.

In conclusion, narcissism led to a significant increase in violent behaviours among the respondents. This was mostly expressed in physical violence (estimate = 21.5%, p-value = 0.001), followed by sexual violence (estimate = 20.2%, p-value = 0.001), psychological violence (estimate = 17.3%, p-value = 0.001) and lastly bullying (estimate = 9.2%, p-value = 0.001). This can be supported by a study conducted in Ohio State University, where the researchers analyzed 437 independent studies including 123,043 participants, and found that many types of aggression (like physical, verbal, or bullying) and violence were linked to narcissism across the board (Sarah, 2021). However, in the present study, narcissism explained just a portion of these forms of violence, that is, the variations ranged from 2.2% to 10%. This therefore meant that there are other factors that are responsible for these forms of violence.

1.3) What are Other Causes of Violent Behaviours/Actions Stemming from Students?

Findings expressed that, drugs and alcohol abuse, is a major cause of school violence. Students and school staff who are drug addicts, tend to lose control of themselves and often act in an irrational manner. Embarrassment from some teachers and disciplinary masters in the form of beating and bullying is a serious problem. Some teachers use degrading words on students to make them feel worthless. Such humiliating words, make some victimized students feel ashamed among their peers and may want to protect their ego, so they fight back. Poverty and negative family dynamics, can increase the probability to commit school violence. Respondents revealed that, dysfunctional homes creates psychological deficiencies. Access to weapons is another major cause of school violence as today's youths are more exposed to weapons compared to the previous generations. Adding to their responses, age is also a factor that can cause violence in school, as respondents further revealed that, students who are much older, and those who have had past experience of violence, often react anti-socially towards others in school.

1.4) Why are Violent Behaviours/Actions Stemming From School Staff?

In responding to the interview guide, it was exposed that, agitated or impulsive personality among school staff is a major cause of violence on campus. Their responses revealed lack self-control and act spontaneously without thinking. Respondents emphasized that, arrogance from students and colleagues another cause of violence stemming. Findings complemented that, some school staff abuse others because of personal trauma and different mental health issues.

2) Research Question Two: Is The School A Refuge For Evil Doers, Or A Place For People To Foster Good?

Responses from focus group discussion revealed that, every student has the right to go to school free from terror. The school has an objective to provide knowledge and develop the physical, social, intellectual and emotional competencies in learners. Thus, the school is a place for people to foster good by providing quality, inclusive and safe environment, for students to be grounded in their culture, but yet open to the world. Respondents continued by saying that, achieving the above objectives has become a challenge for the school. As some dishonest individuals' hide under the canopy of the school to victimize others, buy and sell hard drugs, steal and do all kinds evil things in and around the schools,

Sometimes, because of fear and other reasons, these wrongs are covered. With the presence of armed conflicts in some parts of the country, the school is often at the front line casualties. The consequences of this ill are devastating, thus hinders the teaching learning process and make the school an unsafe place. Struggling with these challenges, the educational stakeholders' strive for the school to foster good and transform learners through innovative teaching and learning process.

3) Research Question Three: What Measures can be to Use in Order to Eradicate School Violence

Respondents highlighted that, to eradicate school violence, the schools should continue using metal dictators to prevent students from entering the school with harmful objects. Random search should conducted and dangerous objects be seized. The presence of security guards on campus should be maintained, rules and regulations regarding student and teachers conduct and dress should be reinforced. Adding to the above, respondents opined that, potentially violent students/staff should profiled. The school administration together with the school counsellors,

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should organize sensitization talks regularly to educate students and staff on human dignity and the consequences of violence. The response in violent situations should be timely, and an established referral mechanism for response services should be created.

4) Research Question Four: What Measure can the Community Put in Place Order to curb school violence?

Respondents expressed that, school violence occur as a result of negative spill overs from the home and community. These two agencies, provide the informal and non-formal education. Therefore to eradicate school violence, the community should work together with other stakeholders, to ensure that case of school violence are properly managed in order to prevent further violence. They reiterated that, the creation a "school and community partnerships to enhance safety measures and continuous follow up is very important as potential violent individuals will be identified and refer for proper management.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study uncovered that, the school is not a refuge for evil doers, but a place for people to foster good. But different factors provoke violent behaviours/actions stemming from students/staff in and around the school. These include; narcissistic personality disorder, drugs & alcohol abuse, embarrassment from some teachers and friends, bullying, corporal punishment, age, past traumatic experiences, peer influence, poverty, negative family dynamics and intoxicated community, impulsive personality, lack of self-control, poor of class management skills, arrogance and misconduct from students. Based on the findings, the causes of schools violence are multi-faceted. Therefore, eradicating violence in schools requires multi-dimensional actions engaging different educational stakeholders in a holistic manner. Thus this study recommendations the following;

1. Community leaders should give room for intergenerational dialogue, in the management of school violence. In such a dialogue, members will be educated on the need of peace building as an essential element in dealing with the reasons why people fight in the first place. In achieving this, the community, family, and the school work in collaboration with other stakeholders to develop an action, response, management, referral and follow-up mechanism in order to manage conflict in a non-violent manner. It should be remembered that, schools are found in the community. Thus community leaders should create a safe and supportive environment to eradicate social and cultural norms perpetrating violence. Adding to the above, perpetrators should be covered. They should be brought to judgment and educated on the consequence of their behaviour in the community, school and individuals.

2. It has also been noticed that school violence occur as a result of negative spill overs from the home and community. The home is the immediate and first environment children are born into. Therefore, parents and guidance should set boundaries and teach children that the world doesn't revolve around what they want. To achieve this, parents should develop effective communication and functional relationships at home. Research has revealed that, narcissism and other factors provoking school violence stem up from home. Therefore parents and guidance are advised to parent their children and seek for help when necessary. They need to work in collaboration with the school, health care providers, community-based organization, youth and faith based institutions on strategies to address delinquency.

3.   Parents should avoid the display of violence at home. They should create a home-school and community partnership and help children know that, they are not exemptions to the rules and regulations.

4.   The school administrators should create a school-wide behavioral expectations, and a supportive school climate with positive interventions mechanism. Psychological and guidance practices should be integrated in the school programs. The school should create synergies between the different educational stakeholders and develop an anonymous reporting systems. They should control access to the school building and monitor school guests.

5.   In order to eradicate school violence, the teachers also have a very significant role to play. Transmission of knowledge is just one of the many things teachers do. They also make an essential contribution school parents improve on the emotional and cognitive development of their learners. They play a crucial role in social and behavioural modification among learners. Thus the teaching and learning process should be properly managed, both the learner and teacher are co-constructors of knowledge. Getting learners construct knowledge make the feel valued. There should be active interdependence and collaboration between the learner and the teacher with much input in the transaction from learners. The teacher him/herself should be a model to foster creativity and empathy among learners. This will go a long way to prevent school violence as learners learn to feel for each other.

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