

EXPLORING ROLES OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT REGARDING SCHOOL-BASED VIOLENCE PREVENTION STRATEGIES IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

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Abstract

This conceptualized paper sought to investigate the significance of parental involvement in school-based violence prevention strategies within the context of primary schools. The main research question guiding this study is: "What role does parental involvement play in shaping and enhancing school-based violence prevention strategies in primary schools?" This paper utilizes a qualitative approach which draws extensively from the review of scholarly books and articles (2018-2024) within the myriad of fields as data collection techniques. The interpretive paradigm is employed to analyse the collected data, allowing for a deeper insight of the complex dynamics between parental involvement and school-based violence prevention strategies. The findings of this study highlight the pivotal role of parental involvement in fostering safe and supportive school environments. The significance of this study lies in its potential to inform policymakers, the leadership and administrators about good practices which advocates for greater collaboration between schools and parents in mitigating issues of violence prevention.

Keywords: *parental involvement, school violence, school safety, leadership, governance*

Introduction

In recent years, substantial concerns over school safety have been increasingly prevalent with incidents of violence and bullying presenting considerable challenges to student well-being and anticipated academic achievement (Heng, 2024). In light of these concerns, there is an increasing acknowledgement of the necessity for strategic initiatives to avert violence in educational settings. Barden et al. (2024) assert that a crucial component of these prevention strategies is the engagement of parents who significantly influence the social and emotional development of their children both at home and in the primary school milieu.

Parental engagement in education has been recognised as a crucial factor for enhancing good results and achievements for students within the context of education. Yang et al. (2024) discovered that persistent and active parental involvement in children's education correlates with enhanced academic performance, improved conduct and higher social values and abilities among students. The extent to which parental participation affects school safety especially with violence prevention require more investigation. Consequently, programs aimed at investigating parental contributions to and support for violence reduction in primary schools emphasise the possible influence of family involvement in building safer school settings. This project will investigate parental support for violence prevention methods in primary schools and its potential contribution to creating healthier and safer educational environments (Almalki & Maspul, 2024).

According to Xie et al. (2024) there are a plethora of aspects to consider when understanding the dynamics of parental involvement in school-based violence prevention. These factors include the unique characteristics of parent-school relationships, the need of open lines of communication and collaboration between teachers and parents as well as the impact of parental opinions and measures on children's attitudes and actions towards violence (Major, 2023). As a result, there is a clear need to understand the dynamics of parental involvement in school-based violence prevention including the form of partnerships and the importance of communication between parents and the primary schools. This study seeks to examine the existing literature on school safety and parental involvement in education through a comprehensive analysis of these scholarly publications. Lindsay

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(2023) asserts that policymakers, teachers, and relevant stakeholders may derive valuable insights from this study, as it aims to underscore the importance of school-family connections which are essential mechanisms for enhancing violence prevention measures in primary schools. Ultimately, it is essential to improve a collaborative strategy for school safety that acknowledges the equal responsibility of all members in creating environments where students feel secure, supported, and empowered to develop into independent critical thinkers free from any form of violence (Lazarus & Sulkowski, 2023).

Background

Klun et al. (2024) believe that the safety and welfare of students at educational institutions have acquired increased attention in recent years, mostly due to concerns around occurrences of violence, bullying and other forms of misconduct perpetrated by students. Research has highlighted the adverse impacts of such practices on students' academic achievement, mental health and general sense of belonging within the larger school communities. Kihara et al. (2024) recommend that school leaders and administrators manage these difficulties by adopting diverse strategies and programs designed to prevent and resolve violence while fostering a culture of safety and respect. The efficacy of these initiatives frequently relies on the degree of collaboration and support from parents who are crucial in influencing students' attitudes, behaviours and social interactions in both domestic and educational environments, fostering a pleasant and harmonious atmosphere (Deng et al., 2024).

Kassis et al., (2024) discovered that parental involvement in education is widely acknowledged as a critical component in fostering beneficial outcomes for students in a variety of domains, including academic achievement, social-emotional development, and overall well-being. Chahl et al. (2024) feel that when parents are actively involved in their children's education, students are more motivated, self-regulated, and achieve academic achievement. In a similar vein, Saladino et al. (2024) discovered that parental participation is associated with lower risk behaviours related to moral delinquency, substance misuse and violence by emphasising the potential benefit of parental support in developing and maintaining safer school environments.

Campie et al. (2024) maintain that in the context of school-based violence prevention, parental involvement assumes greater significance as parents are expected to act as vital partners in enhancing violence prevention initiatives both at home and within the school community. To promote open communication, collaboration and shared decision-making between parents and teachers, schools should leverage the resources, expertise, and perspectives of families to formulate comprehensive strategies for violence prevention that will improve positive social interactions among students. Parental involvement must be fundamental in cultivating a sense of belonging and shared responsibility for school safety thereby motivating all stakeholders to actively establish safe, courteous and empowered learning environments. (Bhowmick, 2024).

Undoubtedly, there are greater potential advantages to parental involvement in school-based violence prevention yet, problems and barriers exist that may impede effective collaboration between schools and families (Man Arfa, 2024). These impediments include technical barriers like conflicting schedules, language constraints and socioeconomic disparities as well as attitudinal barriers such as a lack of trust, communication issues and perceived differences in priorities between parents and teachers. According to Nuñala & Perez (2024), managing these challenges requires school leaders and administrators to establish trusting relationships with families to foster open communication and provide support and resources to engage parents in violence prevention initiatives.

Given the significance of family involvement in school violence prevention, further research is needed to identify how parental engagement effects school safety outcomes and what factors negatively impact parents and teachers working together (Ovaningsih et al., 2024). Konishi et al., (2024) suggest that scholars examine the perspectives and actions of teachers, parents and community members in order to develop strategies for increasing parental involvement in violence prevention initiatives and creating a school environment that values safety, respect and inclusivity. According to Hakim and Baihaqi (2024), policymakers, teachers and community stakeholders can develop evidence-based strategies to promote safer and more supportive educational environments for all students by understanding the critical role of parental involvement in school-based violence prevention. **The purpose** of the study is to explore the role of parental involvement in school-based violence prevention strategies in primary schools. **The main question** of this study is: What roles do parents play in school-based violence prevention strategies in primary schools, and how does their involvement contribute to creating safer school environments?

Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework for exploring parental involvement in school-based violence prevention strategies draws on socio-ecological models of behaviour, emphasizing the interconnectedness of individual, interpersonal and environmental factors. At the micro-level, Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (EST) highlights the significance of parental influence within the immediate family context, emphasizing how parenting practices and family dynamics shape children's behaviors and attitudes (Careemdeen, 2024). Moving to the meso-level, social cognitive theory (SCT) suggests that parental modelling and reinforcement of prosocial behaviors contribute to children's socialization and their ability to navigate conflicts peacefully. At the macro-level, social disorganization theory (SDT) suggests that community-level factors, including parental engagement with schools and neighborhood cohesion influence the prevalence of violence and the effectiveness of prevention efforts. In an attempt to integrating these theoretical perspectives, this study seeks to highlight the multifaceted role of parental involvement in shaping the socio-ecological landscape of primary schools and its implications for violence prevention strategies (Abbas et al., 2024).

Findings

The findings of this study reveal several critical challenges novice female teachers encounter in classroom management within secondary schools. Many participants reported difficulties in establishing authority which often led to issues with student discipline and engagement. For instance, teachers noted that their attempts to implement rules were frequently met with resistance, underscoring the need for more effective strategies to assert control. Moreover, the findings indicate that gender dynamics play a significant role in shaping classroom interactions. Specifically, several teachers expressed that they faced biases based on their gender which impacted their ability to manage students effectively. In contrast, male colleagues appeared to navigate similar situations with less resistance. In the same vein, the study highlighted the importance of support systems for novice teachers. Teachers who had access to mentorship and professional development opportunities were better equipped to handle classroom management challenges. Consequently, this finding suggests that providing targeted training and resources could significantly enhance novice female teachers' confidence and effectiveness. Notably, the study emphasizes the need for schools to foster supportive environments that address the unique challenges faced by novice female teachers, thereby promoting positive classroom management and improved educational outcomes.

METHODOLOGY

Data collection strategies

This is a qualitative study which comprised of literature review as a research method. A systematic literature review was conducted drawing evidence based on books and articles published in (2018-2024) focusing on the topic. Minerbo & Briton (2022) elucidate that integrative literature review is a form of research that reviews, critiques, and synthesises representative literature on a topic in an integrated way such that new perspectives on the topic are generated. An integrative literature review is a special kind of systematic literature review that permits the combination and synthesis of findings.

Data collection

In the quest to embark on this research initiative, the author employed the utilization of scholarly literature review as a method of collecting data. A systematic literature review was conducted drawing evidence based on books and articles published in (2018-2024) on the topic under discussion.

Data analysis

In the analysis of the reviewed books and articles in understanding the topic, the interpretivist paradigm was followed within a local context with its limitations that have deep social and cultural foundations (Pervin & Mokhtar, 2023). The reflections were primarily based on the researcher's subjective perspectives about the specified topic.

Discussion

Parental involvement in education has long been recognized as a critical factor in children's academic success and overall well-being. These scholars Efthymiou & Katsarou (2024) found that the multifaceted nature of parental involvement encompasses various forms like home-based activities, communication with teachers and participation in school events. Research by Maqsood (2024) emphasizes the importance of a collaborative

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partnership between parents and schools with the suggestion that when parents are actively engaged in their children's education, students exhibit higher motivation, better attendance and improved academic achievement. Pusztai et al., (2023) propose a model that distinguishes between different dimensions of parental involvement which comprise of parents' beliefs about their role in their child's education, their perceptions of invitations from the school to be involved and their self-efficacy in helping their children with school-related tasks. Thus, this model suggests that parents' beliefs and perceptions influence their level of involvement by highlighting the importance of fostering positive attitudes and effective communication between parents and primary schools. Similarly, Careemdeen (2024) indicates that the benefits of parental involvement extend beyond academic outcomes to include social and emotional development. Engaging parents in primary school activities and decision-making processes not only strengthens the home-school connection but also enhances a sense of belonging and community among families. Thus, Zhou & Ou (2024) found that parental involvement was associated with reduced dropout rates, improved behaviour and enhanced social skills among students.

The role of parents in school violence

Ajani et al., (2024) confirm that parents play a pivotal role in the prevention of school-based violence. Their involvement is crucial not only in understanding the dynamics leading to violent behavior but also in implementing effective strategies to mitigate its occurrence. Primarily, parents serve as foundational caregivers and role models for children through shaping their attitudes, behaviours and responses to conflict. Konishi et al., (2024) suggest that children who experience positive parenting practices, characterized by warmth, support and consistent discipline are less likely to engage in aggressive or violent behaviors at primary schools. Similarly, Kearney et al., (2023) concur that parental involvement enhances the school's capacity to manage potential risk factors and early warning signs of violence. Parents who are actively participating in school activities, parent-teacher conferences and parent education programs are encouraged to collaborate with teachers to identify and support students who may be at risk of perpetrating or experiencing violence. In addition, parental engagement fosters a sense of community and mutual responsibility for school safety which creates a supportive environment where students feel empowered to report concerns and seek help when needed (Ma et al., (2023). Thus, parents' commitment to fostering a culture of respect, empathy and conflict resolution within both the home and school settings is instrumental in promoting peaceful and safe learning environments for all students.

Determinants of effective parental involvement in school violence

Effective parental participation in school violence prevention initiatives largely depends on a myriad of crucial factors. Haisraeli & Fogiel-Bijaoui (2023) believe that establishing transparent avenues of interaction between schools and parents is crucial for developing confidence and promoting parental involvement with decisiveness. Therefore, primary schools should efficiently communicate guidelines for security, potential risks as well as possibilities for interaction between families through regular newsletters, parent meetings or digital platforms which encourage open dialogue. Parental empowerment is an additional vital component in meaningful involvement.

Alias et al., (2023) found that parents who feel empowered and equipped with the knowledge and skills to participate in violence prevention programmes are more likely to be active participants. Training sessions, tools and opportunities for collaboration with school staff can help parents become more confident in their abilities in supporting violence prevention initiatives. Being sensitive to different cultures is essential for fostering inclusivity and productivity in diverse societies. To engage in meaningful conversations, it is crucial to acknowledge and respect differences in parenting styles, communication preferences, and perspectives on violence. This understanding helps bridge cultural gaps and promotes more effective collaboration. (Amin et al., 2023). For schools to truly work with families in their struggle against violence, they have to create culturally sensitive approaches that consider each family's distinct background, values and experiences.

Impediments to effective parental involvement in school violence

Kleindienst (2024) believes that parents' limited involvement in mitigating school violence is often a consequence of their lack of awareness regarding the vital function they play in this endeavour. However, some parents may not completely understand the significance of their involvement towards minimising school violence and contributing to inadequate participation in appropriate activities (da Fonseca et al., 2024). When parents don't know what they should be accomplishing, they might not realise the extent of a significant impact they can have on ensuring their children's schools safer. Therefore, this lack of knowledge may result in missed opportunities for

collaboration between parents and school administrators by reducing the effectiveness of violence prevention initiatives. In order to mitigate this issue, it will be necessary to make considerable communication efforts to educate parents about the significance of their involvement and any potential advantages that it could provide to their children as well as their primary schools' community (Pai et al., (2024).

Pliogou & Tromara (2024) discovered that communication barriers, especially the inadequate channels of communication and language barriers between parents and the school staff could impede effective parental involvement in school violence prevention initiatives. Similarly, it could become difficult for parents to fully understand the efforts made to minimise school violence or to receive essential updates and information when there are such inefficient or ineffective channels of communication (Choi et al., 2024). Language barriers further exacerbate this issue as parents who are not proficient in the dominant language of the school may face challenges in understanding the written materials or verbal communications. As a result, these communication barriers can impede parents' ability to actively engage in violence prevention efforts which ultimately limit the effectiveness of such initiatives. In a plight to overcoming these barriers requires schools to implement inclusive communication strategies that accommodate diverse linguistic backgrounds and ensure that information is accessible and understandable to all parents (Kovačić et al., 2024).

According to (Montazer et al., (2024) time and economic constraints may constrain parental involvement in school-based violence prevention efforts as parents may lack the time due to work and family responsibilities. Financial constraints and unstable living conditions may additionally impede parental involvement in school-based violence prevention as they prioritize meeting immediate needs over engaging in school activities thereby creating barriers to their full contribution to violence prevention efforts within the school community. Thus, school leaders and administrators ought to use adaptive strategies for engagement which incorporate parents' schedules and provide support services in order to overcome social and economic barriers to participation (Kushwaha et al., 2024).

Moller et al. (2024) contend that challenges to promoting effective parental engagement in school-based violence prevention initiatives primarily emerging from trust deficits and restricted resource availability. When parents perceive marginalization or devaluation by school leaders they exhibit unwillingness to engage. Furthermore, Rasool et al. (2024) identified that limitations such as insufficient transportation or internet connectivity aggravate the issue, impeding parents' effective engagement. Establishing trust and ensuring fair access to resources, including enhanced transport and internet connectivity, are crucial for schools to foster significant parental involvement in violence prevention activities. All parents should be afforded equitable opportunities to engage in violence prevention activities which may substantially enhance communication channels between school officials and parents.

Acumen strategies to resolve the impediments.

Price et al. (2024) advise school leaders and administrators to adopt comprehensive trust-building programs to enhance trust between parents and school authorities while also increasing parental involvement in school-based violence prevention methods. This strategy comprises scheduling regular parent-school sessions to facilitate open communication and dialogue. A school can provide more targeted assistance in dealing with problems and enhancing interactions by appointing a dedicated staff member or guidance counsellor to act as a liaison between the school and parents. To demonstrate the institution's commitment to trustworthiness, decision-making processes for violence-prevention initiatives must be fair and transparent. Primary schools can build trust and retain parental engagement by actively engaging parents in these discussions and recognising their contributions (Campie et al., 2024). Improve communication between school administration and parents.

The equitable distribution of readily available resources and the promotion of involvement opportunities are both essential for the purpose to make possible parental involvement in the prevention of school-based violence. In order to successfully achieve this, it is necessary to ensure that all relevant resources are accessible in a broad range of forms and languages as well as actively encourage involvement through ways such as committees, meetings, and training sessions (Szarkowski et al., 2024). Therefore, school leaders and administrators can also establish a supportive environment by providing accessible resources that promote active involvement, empowering parents to contribute towards improving safety within the school community (Ahasu et al., 2024). Enhancing communication channels is pivotal in improving parental engagement in school-based violence prevention efforts.

Thus, school leaders and administrators can achieve this vital task by diversifying communication methods, including emails, phone calls, text messages, and social media platforms, to reach parents effectively (Marler et al., 2024). Establishing a dedicated hotline or email address for reporting safety concerns ensures

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prompt and confidential communication. There is a need for regular updates and progress reports on the effectiveness of violence prevention strategies, along with seeking feedback from parents for continuous improvement that will further strengthen communication efforts. Phillips et al., (2024) found that schools have the capacity to establish trust and collaboration between parents and school authorities through the creation of communication channels which are readily visible and accessible. This, in turn, contributes to a safer school environment for everyone. It is critical to overcome financial barriers in order to ensure equitable participation in school-based violence prevention activities. According to Perry et al. (2024), school leaders and administrators may be required to apply for external funds or grants specifically designated for parental engagement projects focussing on violence eradication. These activities can be carried out in partnership with community organisations, enterprises and local government agencies which may help obtain more resources and assistance (Eyana et al., 2024). Dr. Saltiel Khololo Collen Mataboge is a Senior Lecturer at the University of South Africa in the Department of Educational Leadership and Management. Research interests encompasses instructional leadership in schools, Transformative leadership and management in schools, School safety, violence and social justice for students in schools, Mentorship and mentoring. I authored and published several articles regarding contemporary issues in the field of education.

Curriculum transformation

Curriculum transformation should be aimed at fostering parental involvement in mitigating school violence is a critical step toward creating safer learning environments. Integrating topics related to conflict resolution, empathy and emotional intelligence into the curriculum can empower students with the skills needed to navigate interpersonal relationships peacefully (Ilie, 2024). However, to maximize the impact of such initiatives, it is essential to actively involve parents in the curriculum development process and implementation. Jiang et al., (2024) found that parents can provide valuable insights into the specific needs and concerns of their children through which they can help to design violence prevention strategies to the unique dynamics of the primary school community. Engaging parents through workshops, forums and collaborative decision-making processes allows schools to build trust and strengthen partnerships between home and school. It is prudent to provide resources and training sessions for parents on how to recognize signs of violence and support their children in conflict resolution. This further enhances their effectiveness in addressing school violence.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

Undoubtedly, parental involvement plays a crucial role in shaping effective school-based violence prevention strategies in primary schools. Engaged parents not only contribute to creating a safer environment but also foster a collaborative approach with educators, administrators, and students. On the other hand, the lack of parental involvement can limit the success of such initiatives, as schools cannot resolve violence in isolation. Conversely, when parents actively participate in discussions on school safety and work closely with stakeholders, they help to develop designed strategies that reflect the unique needs of the school community. Similarly, parents serve as role models for students, reinforcing the values of respect, non-violence and empathy which are essential in preventing violence. Nonetheless, there may be challenges in engaging all parents due to cultural, economic, or personal barriers. Schools must therefore create inclusive opportunities that accommodate diverse parental backgrounds and experiences. Thus, building strong relationships with parents is pivotal in establishing a culture of shared responsibility. Hence, it is clear that parental involvement is not just a supportive component but a cornerstone of comprehensive violence prevention. Therefore, schools must prioritize partnerships with parents to ensure the success and sustainability of their violence prevention efforts ultimately contributing to safer and more inclusive learning environments.

Recommendations

Undoubtedly, schools should prioritize building strong partnerships with parents as part of their violence prevention strategies. Schools must implement regular communication channels, such as workshops and meetings, to actively involve parents in discussions on student safety. On the other hand, schools should recognize and address cultural and socioeconomic barriers that may prevent some parents from participating. Similarly, flexible engagement opportunities like virtual meetings or community events can foster greater inclusivity. Conversely, parents should also take responsibility for their role in promoting non-violence by reinforcing positive behavior at home. Schools can provide resources and training to support this effort. Thus, collaboration between schools and

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parents becomes a shared responsibility. Hence, schools should develop policies that encourage active parental participation in decision-making processes related to safety.

Limitations of the study

The study's limitations include potential bias from relying heavily on scholarly books and articles published between (2018-2024) which may not capture all relevant perspectives. In the same vein, the focus on specific sources could overlook valuable insights from other research or practical experiences thereby limiting the comprehensiveness of the findings related to parental involvement in violence prevention strategies.

Author biography

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