

School Violence and the Role of Social Climate in Student Protection: A Case Study from Cameroon

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Abstract: This article investigates the phenomenon of school violence in Cameroon's public educational institutions, examining how the social climate and institutional frameworks influence both the prevalence of violence and the measures implemented to protect students. It identifies five key forms of school violence-student-on-student, student-on-teacher, teacher-on-student, psychological, and institutional-while situating these within broader socio-economic and policy contexts. The study underscores the need for integrated, curriculum-based interventions, community involvement, and improved infrastructure to foster a safe, inclusive learning environment. It contributes to global educational discourse by aligning with Sustainable Development Goals targeting child protection and educational equity.

Keywords: School Violence, Student Protection, Social Climate, Education Policy, Cameroon.

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I. INTRODUCTION

This study takes place in Cameroon in a critical context of the situation of students in Cameroon's public primary or secondary schools, coupled with the resulting difficulty regarding school violence. This phenomenon leaves no country indifferent.

At the international level, given the importance of the sovereign mission of students, the UNESCO Convention (1966), through the International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa, set up, strategies for improving the living conditions of pupils who are the guarantors of a fulfilling life. This commitment demonstrates the fight against school insecurity. This is a situation that jeopardizes the intrinsic value of the student. The student feels like a victim of iniquity that affects his personality. Opportunities to solve the self-fulfillment problem are reduced in schools, especially in the administration.

approach in the same direction, many authors state in a study on the living conditions of pupils that there is interdependence between neighborhood life and school life. When the child struggles to thrive, it affects his profession and there is an imbalance between life in the neighborhood and school life. According to Plone and Python (2012, p. 23), the situation of students is almost identical to the previous one. A lack of self-esteem is not to be excluded from their lives. Many authors denounce school violence and the identity of the student who is suffering. In this regard,

Froese (2014, p. 47) informs us that the work condition of the students is very difficult.

This study is significant because it sheds light on the intersection between school environments and violence, providing empirical evidence that could inform national education policy and child welfare strategies. By focusing on Cameroon, it contributes to a broader understanding of school violence in underrepresented contexts.

➤ Study Problem

School violence is a global problem with consequences that are detrimental to the child but also to society as a whole. Child abuse affects their learning, personality, and future prospects. This violence can take different physical and psychological forms (abuse, corporal punishment, verbal abuse, sexual violence) and come from several actors in the school environment (teacher, student, etc.), but also the family or the child's social context.

The causes of school violence are many such as gender norms and social norms, as well as broader structural and contextual factors such as income inequality, deprivation, marginalization, and conflict. The latter is likely to disturb most or less strongly the development and development of the child. There are millions of teenage children reported to be victims of school violence.

School violence is a violation of the rights of children and adolescents, including their rights to education and

health it has a negative impact on educational outcomes, physical and mental health, and well-being. be emotional to the students who are victims.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The social climate can be defined as a measure of the degree of satisfaction that prevails in an establishment, the atmosphere, Lombroso, C. & Ferrero, W. (1895). The social climate represents students' level of satisfaction with their institution, or with the entity for which they study. The social climate is not only an indicator of morale and working conditions in the establishment but also an extremely important issue at a time when students attach more importance than ever to quality of life at school.

Is the use of force or power, physical or psychic, to compel, dominate, kill, destroy, or damage. We have five type of Violence's: Student violence, Student violence against teachers, Teacher violence against students, Psychological Violence, Institutional Violence Lombroso, C. & Ferrero, W. (1895).

Child protection aims to ensure that the basic needs of the child are taken into an account, to support their physical, emotional, intellectual, and social development, and to preserve their health, safety, morality, and education while respecting their rights. It includes preventive actions in favor of the child and his parents, the organization of the identification and treatment of situations of danger or risk of danger to the child, and administrative and judicial decisions taken for its protection.

A school is an institution that welcomes individuals called "schoolchildren" or students to teach them collectively, Lombroso, C. & Ferrero, W. (1895). The word school comes from the Latin schola, meaning "leisure devoted to study", itself coming from ancient Greek, which was an ideal often expressed by philosophers and a socially valued category opposed to the sphere of productive tasks. By studying the relationship between school buildings and their environment, geographer Pascal Clerc distinguishes four successive models of schools: the monastery, the agora, the fortress and the node of exchanges.

➤ *The Theories*

Early positivist theorists argued that the offender was fundamentally different from the non-religious (Lombroso & Ferrero, 1895). They were the first to focus their research on the causes of delinquency (Ouimet, 2009). Supporters of this approach argue whether one is criminal or not. Lombroso and Ferrero (1895) explain their low representation in the criminality population. The few students who engage in criminal behavior would be errors of evolution, primitive beings who resemble, physically and psychologically, men (Lombroso & Ferrero, 1895). According to Lombroso and Ferrero (1895), non-criminal students are inferior and weak beings, possessing an underdeveloped intelligence and a lack of passion. However, when they are criminals, they would be even crueler than others. Lombroso and Ferrero were misogynistic and blamed for large methodological errors (Barker, 2009). His crimes would also be less denounced because the victims are mostly children or men who risk having their reputations damaged by such revelations. The point is that the first theories considered first and foremost the students are fundamentally different from each other, with different motivations and needs. The debate on common characteristics and common factors of crime is still topical, although more and more researchers conclude that there are both similarities and differences (Cortoni, 2009).

III. METHODOLOGY

- Sample demographics (teachers, students, administrators)
- Sampling method (random, purposive, etc.)
- Tools used for data collection (surveys, interviews)
- Analytical framework (qualitative coding, thematic analysis, etc.)
- Ethical approval from relevant bodies

It was a matter of assessing the views of the various respondents on the issue of risk and protection of violence in schools, defining the key concepts of the subject, and presenting the explanations. It is apparent from the views of these respondents that there are several factors that determine school violence. It is about working on the methodological elements that gave us the types of violence we encounter in schools today in Cameroon.

IV. RESULTS

Table 1 There are Five Forms of Violence

N°	TYPE OF VIOLENCE	ASPECT
1.	Student violence	As I just said, this violence often happens outside of school or in poorly or unsupervised places. We do not have reliable figures to show an increase in violence in schools. The study carried out showed that in schools in Cameroon, there is an increase in violent acts.
2.	Student violence against teachers	Violence against teachers sometimes results in tragic events up to the murder committed by young people, (the case of high school of Nkolbisson-Yaoundé Cameroon) often with the weapon of their parents.
3.	Teacher violence against students	This form of violence is unfortunately much more common than the reverse. In recent years, it has in most cases taken the form of psychological violence in which the teacher lashes pupils in all schools.
4.	Psychological violence	Singer not only wants to be an accuser, but he also wants to show the way for mutual

		respect between students and teachers. Although physical abuse of students is prohibited, it is found that there are still teachers who believe they are allowed to “correct” children, sometimes even with the support of their parents.
5.	Institutional violence	This form of violence is imminent to the structures of the school system. In my opinion, since the introduction of compulsory education, the structures of education have been adapted more to the needs of teachers than to the needs of children. The unease in our schools (increase in the number of children disturbed by behavior, children with learning difficulties, etc.) shows that the school is no longer adapted to the changes in the outside world. The easy solution is to find the culprits in the children and their parents. But the living conditions of parents, poverty, the lack of living space, and the influence of the media produce a type of children radically different from the model pupil idolized by the school. The cultural gulf between teachers and children at risk has never been so deep. Robert Soisson.

➤ *Preventing Violence Through Curriculum-Based Activities*

The curriculum is a crucial component of any educational process. It addresses questions such as what students of different ages should learn and be able to do, why, how and how well (UNESCO-IBE, 2015).

Curriculum approaches are important, as education that encourages young people to question, negotiate and challenge violence and gender discrimination is critical for preventing SRGBV. Young people need to be able to recognize what constitutes violence and abuse, how to protect themselves from harm, and take action to avoid harm to others. Young people also need to be given the opportunity to develop positive notions of gender, including masculinity and femininity and non-binary expressions, and to develop increased understanding and acceptance of sexual and gender diversity (Atthill & Jha, 2009).

V. DISCUSSION

➤ *Discuss Values and Beliefs with Teachers and Train them in Positive Discipline and Classroom Management*

Many of us have heard of “positive reinforcement” in the context of parenting. As parents, we know that positive discipline is more effective than negative discipline. When kids are given rewards for good behavior or an incentive to do better, they are more likely to continue on that path. Positive Discipline in education does the same thing by providing clear expectations and consequences with a focus on teaching social skills and problem-solving strategies rather than punishment alone.

➤ *Respond to Violence*

Through a constant vigilance, Public Safety strives to maintain a peaceful and safe environment for students, staff, visitors and neighbors, and to protect school property. Guidelines have been created to prepare the educative community for threats of violence/ targeted violence on campus, including an active shooter.

➤ *Review and Adapt School Buildings and Grounds*

The entire school grounds must be properly maintained on a routine and preventive basis. School grounds can be

defined as the full extent (i.e., corner pin to corner pin) of all school property, including school sites, the central office, and other administrative or support facilities. This include, but is not limited.

➤ *Involve Parents in Violence Prevention Activities*

Fostering open lines of communication with your children and teens is a critical step in becoming involved in their education, friends, and interests.

It is no secret that kids are using social media, though it may not be as well-known the issues can come from it. According to do something, being able to recognize when a child’s behavior is starting to change is a crucial part of preventing violence in the classroom. The behavior does not have to be radical, it can be very subtle. These sudden or gradual changes aren’t always an indicator of potential violence, but communicating when such a change occurs can have long-lasting impacts. Seeing someone recognizes such changes can have beneficial impacts on the mental and emotional health of the child.

Showing your children that you truly believe in their education is important and one of the ways you can do this is by being involved in their education. Show initiative by getting to know your child’s teachers and helping them get to know you and your child. Communicate with your child’s teachers throughout the school year, not just when problems arise. By getting to know more about your family, their teachers will be better prepared to identify when behavior changes or red flags occur.

➤ *Involve the Community in Violence Prevention Activities*

Schools and education systems can play a key role in encouraging parents to send their children to school. Children who have received quality education are more likely to find paid work as adults, and children who participate in organized activities are less likely to engage in aggressive or violent behavior. Schools can also lend themselves perfectly to the organization of activities aimed at preventing violence. They can reach a large number of young people at a time and influence them from an early age. Qualified teachers can set up violence prevention programs and serve as role models outside the children’s family or community life. Schools can also reach parents and thus improve parenting practices that can harm the

health and education of children. School is an ideal environment to challenge some of the harmful social and cultural norms that tolerate violence against others.

VI. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study underscores the urgent need to address school violence in Cameroon through multi-tiered strategies involving curriculum reform, teacher training, parental engagement, and community participation. Recognizing schools as both educational institutions and social environments, the findings stress that improving the social climate can play a pivotal role in reducing violence and promoting student well-being. As such, the paper advocates for policy reforms that place student safety and mental health at the forefront of national education agendas.

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