

International Journal of Innovative Research in Science, Engineering and Technology

| A Monthly Peer Reviewed & Referred Journal || Impact Factor: 6.209|

Vol. 5, Issue 2, February 2016

School Related Gender Based Violence (SRGBV)

Dr. Gagan B Khanna

BBD Govt. College, Chimanpura, Shahpura, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India

ABSTRACT: School-related gender-based violence (SRGBV) can be defined as acts or threats of sexual, physical or psychological violence happening in and around schools. This type of violence is due to gender norms and stereotypes. It can include verbal abuse, bullying, sexual abuse, harassment and other types of violence. SRGBV is widely spread around the world and is common in many societies. Millions of children and families suffer from this type of violence. Incidents related to SRGBV has been reported in all countries and regions of the world.

KEYWORDS: school, gender, violence, psychological, sexual, physical, bullying, harassment, violence, suffer

I.INTRODUCTION

Many governments and organizations around the world are working towards getting reliable information regarding SRGBV, as it has been proved to be an urgent matter that should be solved. Based on all the data related to SRGBV around the world collected, it is important to try to find solutions in order to tackle this problematic.^[1]

For instance, UNICEF's report Hidden in Plain Sight included the largest collection of data relating to violence against children. As aforementioned, this report proofs how physical and sexual abuse takes place at schools.^[2] The most common types of abuse include:

- Bullying, with one out of three students between the ages of 13 and 15 worldwide claiming to suffer from this type of violence.^[1]
- Sexual violence, with one in 10 girls under 20 experiencing such violence. According to the Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality (SACMEQ), two out of five school directors in Southern and Eastern Africa recognize sexual harassment happened among pupils of their establishments.^{[1][3]}
- Also corporal punishment at school is considered to be a worrying type of abuse.^[4] Fifty percent of the children population in the world live in countries where protection against corporal punishment is inexistent (at the legal and at the moral level).^[1]
- Disadvantaged groups are also victims of SRGBV. It has been reported that more than 3000 schoolchildren from Uganda, out of which 24 per cent of girls between 11 and 14 years old suffering from disabilities are victims of sexual violence. 12 per cent of girls who do not suffer from disability are victims of sexual violence.^{[5][1]}
- Homophobic bullying is one of the most common forms of bullying. According to research by UNESCO, more than 60 per cent of LGBTI children in Chile, Mexico and Peru were bullied. More than 55 per cent of self-identified LGBTI students in Thailand communicated they were being bullied; in the United Kingdom, over 90 per cent of secondary school students reported homophobic bullying in their schools.^[6] Several country-based examples, including New Zealand and Norway show that lesbian, gay and bisexual students are three times more likely to be bullied than heterosexual students.^{[1][7]}
- Cyber-bullying is also another issue which needs to be resolved. In the US, the majority of victims suffering from cyber-bullying encounter the same problems at school. They are also bullied within their institutions. Girls are more likely to suffer from cyber-bullying than boys (Schneider et al., 2012).^{[1][8]}

International Journal of Innovative Research in Science, Engineering and Technology

| A Monthly Peer Reviewed & Referred Journal || Impact Factor: 6.209|

Vol. 5, Issue 2, February 2016

II.DISCUSSION

Social beliefs influence gender relations in all countries of the world. In this sense, the root of violence against children depends on social construction and how the populations behave vis-a-vis gender-related issues. Some of the root issues include:

- Gender discriminatory norms: These promote the belief according to which men are more powerful than women and that they can prove their power because they are stronger. In many societies, dominant gender norms prevail and influence people. LGBTI people, who do not follow these gender norms often suffer from violence if they do not comply with these norms. Indeed, many people often consider LGBT people as not "proper" and judge them inciting violence against this group.^[1]
- Use of violence to show power: Authority is often shaped by held beliefs that promote male domination among women. At the school level, this implies male and female teachers are more powerful than children, perpetrating the belief that teachers have power over children. Then, authority is reinforced and maintained.^[1]
- Other factors include income inequality, as it is a proof of social constraints. Moreover, social media, online grooming and trolling – also facilitate violence among children, as these spaces are difficult to track down by the police.^[1]
- Schools and the education system in general follow a specific social and structural framework. The dynamics of the education sector produce and reproduce environments potentially dangerous for children. It is the system itself which unintentionally exposes children to types of violence that might at times replicate, reinforce or recreate power dynamics followed by the society and the people belonging to this. There are several actors in society who are responsible for participating in and creating these dynamics, including policy-makers, authority figures, teachers, parents, other students and others. In order for these dynamics to change, a lot of effort is required at schools and in society in general.^[9]

Being exposed or having experienced SRGBV can have critical impacts on children's development. Especially in terms of mental and physical well-being, including children's health (HIV and early pregnancy). It has been demonstrated that victims of violence are more likely to accept aggressive types of behaviors or be violent themselves after suffering from violence.^[9] This creates a vicious circle in which violence becomes wrongly acceptable. SRGBV can have negative and long-term consequences for the future of young people, as it forges their adult personalities

III.RESULTS

Physical health and health risk behaviour outcomes

- Injuries, including bruises, burns, fractures, gun wounds and stabbings
- Lacerations and abrasions
- Disability
- Genital-urinary symptoms
- Unwanted pregnancy
- STIs including HIV
- Eating disorders
- Substance misuse
- Risky sexual behaviour^[10]

Mental health outcomes

- Anxiety

International Journal of Innovative Research in Science, Engineering and Technology

| A Monthly Peer Reviewed & Referred Journal || Impact Factor: 6.209 |

Vol. 5, Issue 2, February 2016

- Depression
- Anger or hostility
- Low self-esteem
- Suicide ideation, attempts and actual suicide
- Self-harm
- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- Shame
- Obsessive-compulsive disorder
- Dissociation
- Loss of memory^[10]

Educational outcomes

- Lack of concentration
- Inability to study
- Falling grades
- Disruption in class
- Non-school attendance
- Dropping out of school^[10]

Challenges of addressing SRGBV

Addressing SRGBV raises important challenges and is very complex. The concept is not understood by many and is considered sensitive for many. Actors from the education sector, governments and policy-makers and individuals attending schools face several challenges regarding SRGBV. These include:^[1]

Social cultural norms

Reporting on SRGBV situations around the world has become especially difficult since social and cultural norms do not promote this practice. Moreover, implicitly they discourage it. Many actors from society including teachers; school directors and policy-makers still avoid talking to children openly about gender; violence and sex. They fear promoting sensitive materials to children because of the taboo present in society. Work, time and patience are required to overcome set-ideas promoted by parents within their communities. It is necessary to start real and honest dialogues with children in order to create guaranty real and long-lasting results.^[1]

Gender inequality

Gender inequalities refer to the devaluation and discrimination of women and girls in a society. This results on giving more power to men and boys, while demeaning women and girls. For instance, a study in Ethiopia highlighted that even though 93 per cent of male students recognized violence against girls to be illegal, about 33 per cent thought it is acceptable for male students to have what they want, and appeal to their charm or force to get. 21 per cent recognized behaving this way.^{[1][1]}

Capacity constraints

Capacity constraints in education systems, are also responsible for slowing down the progress related to preventing SRGBV. One of the most important challenges is the training of teachers with the tools and sensitivity to teach curriculum against violence and promote gender equality. In order for real change to happen, it is necessary to introduce these new tools slowly, analyzing who is the best to communicate these elements and what skills and knowledge are needed. What's more, having enough resources will be very important to implement change.^[1]

Weak coordination and monitoring mechanisms

International Journal of Innovative Research in Science, Engineering and Technology

| A Monthly Peer Reviewed & Referred Journal || Impact Factor: 6.209|

Vol. 5, Issue 2, February 2016

Another factor that limits the progress related to stopping SRGBV is weak coordination and unreliable monitoring mechanisms. These render difficult the collaboration between ministries of education, police, social services, child protection and more. This is important because if this collaboration is not fluent, it will be difficult to stop SRGBV. A renewal in the organization's cultural landscape will be needed to overcome challenges, including bureaucracy that disrupts the flow of knowledge sharing.^[1]

Weak service support for victims

Limited access to quality services, including child protection a social services among others (often absent) are due to the quality of services. This particularly concerns fragile communities.^[1]

Lack of governance

In the majority of countries, there is currently no legislation that protects children from violence at school, meaning not much can be done when it happens. However, it is the case that some countries have recently introduced legislations specifically for schools. This said, legislation related aspects have become a real challenge. As to stop SRGBV, perpetrators must be punished.^[1]

Limited evidence

Emerging, but limited, evidence base on what works, although this is an area that is receiving increasing attention. The few evaluations of SRGBV interventions that currently exist vary greatly in methodology, rigour, scale and scope. This makes it difficult to identify best practice and draw conclusions about effective strategies that can be transferred to other settings. There is also a growing body of promising practices and existing knowledge that has not yet been fully documented.^[1]

Insufficient data and research

As previously mentioned, many challenges slow down the reporting and impact on the quality of providing reliable data regarding certain types of violence. This implies data is incomplete in contexts such as sexual orientation, race/ethnicity, and disability among others. This is important as all of these contexts are important to fight against SRGBV. According to a recent study by USAID, to tackle SRGBV it is necessary to rely on large-scale studies which include findings that can be compared across countries; studies showing different forms of SRGBV, connections between behavior change and a discrepancy between research and practice. It is necessary to invest in strong data management system tools which divide data and will make it easier for people to analyze it.^{[10][1]}

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Six guiding strategies for national action

Leadership: Laws, policies and education reform

Governments should demonstrate leadership at the national level by:

- developing and implementing laws to protect children from violence, ensuring accountability and treating all children equally
- adopting a comprehensive, multisectoral national policy and action plan to prevent and respond to SRGBV
- strengthening connections between education and child protection policies, procedures and systems
- reforming the education system for an enhanced and holistic response.^[1]

Environment: Ensuring schools are safe and supportive

In order to render schools safer, it is important to adopt whole-school approaches that will create better environments for children. Also different types of stakeholders at the school level should become engaged at local communities and government. There are three specific strategies:

International Journal of Innovative Research in Science, Engineering and Technology

| A Monthly Peer Reviewed & Referred Journal || Impact Factor: 6.209|

Vol. 5, Issue 2, February 2016

- creating safe and welcoming spaces
- ensuring governing bodies and school management send strong messages that SRGBV is not acceptable and is taken seriously
- developing and implementing codes of conduct.^[1]

Prevention: Curriculum, teaching and learning

At the education sector level, students should be taught in a certain way and certain topics. In order to prevent SRGBV, it is important to:

- curriculum approaches that prevent violence and promote gender equality
- training education staff to give them the tools to prevent and respond to SRGBV
- safe spaces where co-curricular interventions can be a useful entry point for addressing SRGBV.^[1]

Responses: In and around schools

- When SRGBV does occur, there should be clear, safe and accessible procedures and mechanisms in place for reporting incidents, assisting victims and referring cases to the appropriate authorities. Key strategies include:
- providing easily accessible, child-sensitive and confidential reporting mechanisms
- providing counseling and support
- referral to law enforcement and healthcare services.^[1]

Partnerships: Collaborating with and engaging key stakeholders

SRGBV being a very complex issue, it is necessary to involve many and several types of stakeholders. Thus it is about creating partnerships in order to tackle SRGBV:

- coordination/collaboration between key ministries as well as at the district level
- partnerships with teachers' unions
- participation of girls and boys
- working with families and the wider communities
- engaging civil society organizations.^[1]

Evidence: Monitoring and evaluation

- National action should be informed by research and data on SRGBV, including:
- formative research on SRGBV to inform policy and programme development
- comprehensive national data collection systems
- indicators to track progress
- evaluations to assess impact.^[1]

REFERENCES

1. UNESCO and UN Women (2015). Global guidance on addressing school-related gender-based violence (PDF). 19, 23-24, 26, 28, 31, 34: UNESCO and UN Women. ISBN 978-92-3-100191-8.
2. ^ UNICEF. 2014. Hidden in Plain Sight: A Statistical Analysis of Violence against Children. New York, UNICEF. http://les.unicef.org/publications/les/Hidden_in_plain_sight_statistical_analysis_EN_3_Sept_2014.pdf
3. ^ UNESCO/UNGEI. 2015. School-related gender-based violence is preventing the achievement of quality education for all. Global Monitoring Report Policy Paper 17, March 2015. Paris, UNESCO. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002321/232107e.pdf>

International Journal of Innovative Research in Science, Engineering and Technology

| A Monthly Peer Reviewed & Referred Journal || Impact Factor: 6.209|

Vol. 5, Issue 2, February 2016

4. ^ Greene, M., Robles, O., Stout, K. and Suvilaakso, T. 2013. A Girls' Rights to Learn without Fear: Working to end Gender-Based Violence at School. Toronto, Plan Canada. <https://plan-international.org/about-plan/resources/publications/campaigns/a-girl2014s-right-to-learn-without-fear/>
5. ^ Devries, K., Kyegome, N., Zuurmond, M., Parkes, J., Child, J., Walakira, E. and Naker, D. 2014. Violence against primary school children with disabilities in Uganda: a cross-sectional study. BMC Public Health, Vol. 14, p. 1,017.
6. ^ UNESCO. 2012a. Good Policy and Practice in HIV and Health Education: Education Sector Responses to Homophobic Bullying, Booklet 8. Paris, UNESCO. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002164/216493e.pdf>
7. ^ UNESCO. 2015. Out in the open. Education sector responses to violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression. Paris, UNESCO. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002447/244756e.pdf>
8. ^ Schneider, S., O'Donnell, L., Stueve, A. and Coulter, R. 2012. Cyberbullying, School Bullying, and Psychological Distress: A Regional Census of High School Students. American Journal of Public Health, Vol. 102, No. 1, pp. 171–177.
9. ^ Heise, L. 2011. What works to prevent partner violence? London, STRIVE, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. <http://strive.lshtm.ac.uk/system/files/attachments/What%20works%20to%20prevent%20partner%20violence.pdf>
10. ^ RTI International. 2015. Literature Review on School-Related Gender-Based Violence: How it is Defined and Studied. Washington, DC: U.S. Agency for International Development.
11. ^ ActionAid. 2004. Stop Violence against Girls in Schools. London, ActionAid.