Original Article

A Comparative Study of School Based Violence and Strategies for Control in Public and Private Secondary Schools in Osun State.

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ABSTRACT

BACKGROUND: Violence is universal; it occurs in schools (both public and private). The study aim was to assess the rates of violence as well as existing violence prevention strategies in public and private schools in Osun state.

METHODOLOGY: A cross sectional study was conducted among 800 secondary school students (599 in public and 201 in private schools) selected by multi-stage sampling technique using quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection.

RESULTS: The mean age for all the respondents was 14.26 years ±2.00. Males make up about 51% of the respondents in both public and private schools. Respondents from public schools assaulted other students and staff with a weapon more than their colleagues in private schools (24.7% and 9.7% against 12.9% and 6.5% respectively). The commonest violence 'prevention' strategy in both schools was punishment for violent acts (>90%).

CONCLUSION: Respondents in public schools perpetrated and experienced virtually all forms of school-related violence more than those in private schools. There were mild differences in existing violence prevention strategies in both schools. School connectedness seems to be a major factor in the differential rates of violence between both groups of schools.

KEY WORDS: School, violence, public, private, prevention.

NB: The work was carried out in 12 selected secondary schools in Osun state as part 2 dissertation for award of FWACP when the first author was a resident doctor at OAUTHC, Ile-Ife.

INTRODUCTION

Violence is a health-related event that is universal [1]. Although it is common to all age groups, it has been recognised as a major challenge of young people in Nigeria. Violence is one of the nine focal areas of the National Policy on the Health and Development of Adolescents and other Young People [2]. Violence is common in the school setting because schools bring together different students from diverse backgrounds in a very close interaction with tendency for conflicts with or without violence. School violence occurs in both public and private schools Violence is not limited by either school location or school type, but schools of all types and in virtually all locations is affected by it in various ways [3].

Public schools are funded primarily by government (federal or state) and regulated and supervised by relevant government institutions like ministries of education, while private schools are funded by individuals or organizations usually without government input. Private schools can be considered to be of two sub-types: registered private schools that have, supposedly been inspected and satisfy state regulations, while unregistered private schools are those that either have not applied to be registered, or have not satisfied registration regulations [4]. In Nigeria, there has been a proliferation of unregistered private schools over the years [5], in so much a number that some constituted authorities in the educational sector such as ministries of education do not know the exact number of private schools in their domain. This proliferation has been attributed to an apparent fall in educational standards in public schools, especially in terms of infrastructure and dwindling performances of academic staff [5,6].

School violence is a global phenomenon that affects one of the core institutions of modern society to varying degrees in virtually all nation-states [7]. While school violence is experienced and studied extensively in developed countries in Europe, USA and Australia, it is not limited to industrialized societies [8]. Violence currently occurs at a high rate in developing countries and its impact on schooling, learning and living is grave, which refutes the commonly-held view that it is primarily an issue of industrialized countries [9]. School violence is of public health importance, [10] not just because of the proportion of the population affected, which in itself is very significant, but, also because of the magnitude of adverse effects which comes to affected individuals and families and whole communities. School-based violence among school age children can give rise to injuries that may be devastating to their health and crippling to their educational attainments. Aside from the physical injury and/or death to students, staff and community members that may result from acts of violence, a lot of psychological, social, emotional and behavioural problems usually arise from school based violence. Oftentimes the consequences are serious and

may include post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), failure to acquire competence in peer relations, adoption of or highly aggressive behaviour, use of psychoactive substances etc[11]. School violence has also been frequently associated with wanton destruction of school and other properties, thus it leads to wastage of scarce resources.

Unlike developed countries where school violence has been recognised as a major scourge affecting young people and studied extensively with preventive programmes being put in place, there seems to be a lack of recognition of the adverse effects of school based violence and a dearth of studies on it in Nigeria. There is a global lack of comprehensive data on the levels of violence within schools[12], and this is especially true of developing countries[13]. It was only very recently that international organizations, the Federal Ministry of Education and other line ministries along with other relevant stakeholders in Nigeria took interest in school based violence. Collecting and using data are essential steps for creating safe schools. With good data, it is possible for schools and government to develop effective prevention and intervention plans and to improve overall school safety and address specific safety issues.

One important area in which comprehensive data is totally lacking in Nigerian studies on school violence is in comparing the rates and factors affecting violence in public and private schools. Public and private schools are not alike in many respects; the differences between them may range from the types of students attending each group of school, the psycho-social environment of both types of schools and the presence or absence of school policies among other differences. This study examined the rates of violence experienced and perpetrated by students as well as existing violence prevention strategies in public and private schools in Osun state, South Western Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY
The study was a comparative one with a cross-sectional analytical design. Osun state is a land-locked geographical entity located in south-western Nigeria, having three senatorial districts there are 10 local government areas (LGAs) in each of the senatorial districts, adding up to 30 LGAs within the state. The study population included 599 students from public and 201 from private schools- making a total population of 800 students from twelve schools (four schools per senatorial district) selected by a multi-stage sampling method. Students in the first level of junior secondary school (JSS1) were excluded from the study, because the response time frame for the questions relating to respondents' experience of violence was 'the last one year' and most of them would have spent less than one year at school.

First stage: A stratified random sampling procedure was used to select two LGAs from each of the three senatorial zones - making six local governments out of the 30 in Osun state.
Second stage: From each of these six LGAs, a public and a privately funded secondary school were selected by stratified random sampling thus making a total of twelve schools selected - with six in public schools and six in private schools. From each school, a proportionate sample was determined from the required sample size of 800 students based on the total population of the twelve schools and the population of each school.
Third stage : After determining a proportionate sample for each of the twelve schools, a class from each of the strata JSS2 to SSS3 in each school (of public and private schools) was selected through stratified random sampling - making a total of five classes per school and sixty classes in all.
Fourth stage : Also, from the five classes chosen in each school, a proportionate sample was taken from each class by simple random sampling - the gender status of all the selected schools was mixed, that is both boys and girls attend all the schools. At the final stage of the multi-stage sampling, the study population in each school was chosen at the rate of 51% for males and 49% for girls - based on the 2005 enrolment figures for boys and girls in Osun state[14].

Qualitative data was collected through use of key informant interviews that were collected from Principals, Counsellors and Senior Prefects of the schools involved in the study. The key informant interviews were conducted in conducive settings and interviewees were encouraged to express their opinions freely. At each interview, a note-taker jotted down the questions asked, as well as the interviewees' responses and at least one audio tape recorder was also used to record the responses and other things that may influence the interpretation of information. At the end of each interview, the researcher listened to the recorded tapes and reconciled what was heard to what was written down by the note-taker before accepting it as authentic information. A prepared interview guide was used for the key informant interviews.

Quantitative data was collected from students in selected schools using a facilitated self-administered questionnaire through trained assistants[15]. Most of the questions were adopted from the **"Experiences of violence** questionnaire" developed by a non- profit organisation known as RIVA (Research Into Violence and Aggression)[16] and the "Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children (HBSC)" Questionnaire by WHO[17] and a few others were developed for the study. The questions were suitably modified where necessary to fit Nigeria's socio-cultural situation. The questionnaire was translated to the Yoruba language (the language spoken

in the western part of the country) and back-translated into English. The pre-tested questionnaires were completed by study respondents. The qualitative data was analysed using content analysis method and the results were used to triangulate the findings from the quantitative data. The quantitative data was analysed using SPSS 16.0. The outcome measures and their definitions which were as stated in the questionnaire are as shown below -

Verbal abuse - Insults, threats, shouting, intimidating language, etc.

Physical assault/Fighting - Slaps, punches, kicks, chokes, head butts etc where the aggressor is attempting to cause physical harm and injury without using a weapon.

Assault with a weapon - Use of a knife, stick (club), bottle or other available sharp or pointed objects to cause actual harm e.g. being clubbed or stabbed .

Intentionally damaging property- Refers to school and other properties that are intentionally damaged by students on school grounds.

Sexual harassment - Verbal sexual comments, offensive jokes or gestures, unwanted sexual touching, kissing, forced sexual intercourse with or without penetration etc.

Forceful Acquisition of property- Refers to students forcefully taking belongings within/ around the school without the owner's consent e.g. money, objects or materials.

Ethical clearance was obtained from the Research and Ethics Committee of the Obafemi Awolowo University Teaching Hospitals' Complex, Ile-Ife. Permission to carry out the project was taken from the Osun state ministry of Education as well as from the Local Inspectorate of Education in each LGA, and the authorities of each school where the research was actually carried out. Participation in the study was

RESULTS

More than half of the respondents in both public and private schools were in the age group 14-16 years (51.6% and 52.7% respectively) and the mean age for all the respondents was 14.26 years ±2.00 (14.56± 2.08 for public and 13.95±1.92 for private). Male respondents were 51.1% in public schools and 51.7% in private schools. About two thirds of the respondents in both public and private schools lived with both parents (65.3 % and 69.2% respectively). Almost three fifths (58.3%) of the respondents in public schools had mothers whose educational status were high compared to two thirds (66.7%) in private schools (Table i).

Table i : Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents

Variable	Public, n=599		Private, n=201		Total, n= 800.	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Age (years)						
10-13	199	33.2	81	40.3	280	35.0
14- 16	309	51.6	106	52.7	415	51.9
> 17	91	15.2	14	7.0	105	13.1
Sex						
Male	306	51.1	104	51.7	410	51.2
Female	293	48.9	97	48.3	390	48.8
Fathers educational status						
Low *	148	24.7	33	16.4	181	22.6
High **	372	62.1	137	68.2	509	63.6
Unknown	79	13.2	31	15.4	110	13.8
Mothers educational status						
Low *	157	26.2	33	16.4	190	23.8
High **	349	58.3	134	66.7	483	60.4
Unknown	93	15.5	34	16.9	127	15.8
Living arrangement						
Living with both parents.	391	65.3	139	69.2	530	66.2
Not living with both parents.	208	34.7	62	30.8	270	33.8

* Low educational status- (no formal education or did not complete secondary education).
** Completed secondary school or had tertiary education).

Table ii shows the proportion of respondents who experienced school related violence as victims, in public and private schools. Respondents in public schools consistently experienced higher levels of school related violence when compared to those in private schools - in all forms of violence - except verbal abuse. For instance, 37.9% of respondents in public schools claimed being sexually harassed compared to 24.4% of respondents from private schools in the year prior to the study. There were statistically significant differences between respondents from public and private schools for all the various forms of school related violence except for verbal abuse and physical assault.

Table ii: School-related violence (SRV) as experienced by respondents in public and private schools in the last one year.

SCHOOL	PUBLIC n=599 Experienced violence as a victim.		PRIVATE n=201 Experienced violence as a victim.		X^2, (p value)
Type of SRV	YES No (%)	NO No (%)	YES No (%)	NO No (%)	
Verbal abuse	519 (86.6)	80 (13.4)	183 (91.0)	18 (9.0)	2.711, (0.100)
Physical assault/ fighting	360 (60.1)	239 (39.9)	108 (53.7)	93 (46.3)	2.514, (0.113)
Assault with a weapon	175 (29.2)	424 (70.8)	37 (18.4)	164 (81.6)	9.025, (0.003)*
Intentionally damaging property	313 (52.3)	286 (47.7)	80 (39.8)	121 (60.2)	9.338, (0.002)*.
Sexual harrassment	227 (37.9)	372(62.1)	49 (24.4)	152 (75.6)	12.171, (<0.001) *
Forceful Acquisition	323 (53.9)	276 (46.1)	70 (34.8)	131 (65.2)	21.962, (<0.001) *

*Statistically significant at p <0.05.

Evidence from the qualitative aspect of this study (key informant interviews) also showed that violence is apparently commoner in public than in private schools. Virtually all the interviewees agreed that all forms of violence occur more in public than in private schools. Two of the respondents stated the fact this way-
"By far, violence is commoner in public schools than in private schools; you cannot really compare them, it is not really the same setting."
Principal, public school, Ibokun LGA.
"*Violence is common to both public and private schools, but it occurs more in public schools There is a close knitted interaction among pupils and teachers in private schools than in public schools."*
School prefect, private school, Aiyedire LGA.

Respondents in public schools not only experienced a higher frequency of violence as victims, they also perpetrated higher level of school related violence compared to those in private schools for all forms of violence. For instance, 24.7% of respondents in public schools assaulted other students with a weapon compared to 12.9% of respondents from private schools , in the last one year. There were statistically significant differences between respondents from public and private schools for all the various forms of school related violence perpetrated except for verbal abuse and forceful acquisition of property (Table iii).

Table iii: School-related violence (SRV) as perpetrated by respondents against fellow students in public and private schools in the last one year.

SCHOOL	PUBLIC n=599 Perpetrated violence against students		PRIVATE n=201 Perpetrated violence against students		X^2, (p value)
Type of SRV	YES No (%)	NO No (%)	YES No (%)	NO No (%)	
Verbal abuse	484(80.8)	115 (19.2)	158 (78.6)	43 (21.4)	0.45, (0.499)
Physical assault/ fighting	327(54.6)	272(45.4)	88 (43.8)	113 (56.2)	7.04, (0.008)*
Assault with a weapon	148 (24.7)	451 (75.3)	26 (12.9)	178 (87.1)	12.25, (<0.001) *
Intentionally damaging property	202(33.7)	397 (66.3)	48 (23.9)	153 (76.1)	6.78, (0.009)*.
Sexual harrassment	191 (31.9)	408(68.1)	39 (19.4)	162 (80.6)	11.44, (<0.001) *
Forceful Acquisition	237 (39.6)	362 (60.4)	66 (32.8)	135 (67.2)	2.897(0.089)

*Statistically significant at p <0.05.

Apart from student to student violence, the study also investigated the perpetration of violence by respondents against school staff. Table iv shows respondents' experience as perpetrators of school related violence against school staff. The respondents in the public schools perpetrated all forms of violence against school staff more than those in the private schools. For instance, 28.9% of respondents in public schools verbally abused school staff, while 19.4% of respondents from private schools did so in the year prior to the study. There were statistically significant differences between public and private school respondents for all the various forms of school related violence perpetrated against school staff except for assault with a weapon and sexual harassment.

Table iv: School-related violence (SRV) as perpetrated by respondents against school staff in public and private schools in the last one year.

SCHOOL	PUBLIC n=599 Perpetrated violence against staff		PRIVATE n=201 Perpetrated violence against staff		X^2, (p value)
Type of SRV	YES No (%)	NO No (%)	YES No (%)	NO No (%)	
Verbal abuse	173(28.9)	426 (71.1)	39 (19.4)	162 (80.6)	6.942 (0.008)*
Physical assault/ fighting	90(15.0)	509 (85.0)	13 (6.5)	188(93.5)	9.825, (0.002) *
Assault with a weapon	58 (9.7)	541 (90.3)	13 (6.5)	188 (93.5)	1.924, (0.165)
Intentionally damaging property	90(15.0)	509 (85.0)	18 (9.0)	183 (91.0)	4.748, (0.029)*
Sexual harrassment	75 (12.5)	524(87.5)	18 (9.0)	183 (91.0)	1.862(0.172)
Forceful Acquisition	82 (13.7)	517 (86.3)	14 (7.0)	187 (93.0)	6.444(0.011)*

*Statistically significant at p <0.05.

Table V shows the proportion of respondents in public and private schools who answered in the affirmative when asked whether certain violence prevention strategies were in place at their schools. There were little differences in respondents' views about existing violence prevention strategies in both public and private schools. The commonest violence prevention strategy in both public and private schools was that students who exhibit violent behaviour are physically punished (94.2 and 92.5% respectively), while the least common was the use of trained security men as anti-violence agent (46.1% and 45.3% respectively).

Table v: Respondents' views on existing violence prevention strategies in public and private schools.

Existing violence prevention strategies schools	Public n=599 No (%)	Private n=201 No (%)	X^2, (p value)
Students are ACTIVELY encouraged to report violent behaviour in my school	550 (**91.8**)	172 (85.6)	8.012 (0.018)*
My school punishes/ disciplines those who engage in violent behaviour	564 (**94.2**)	186 (92.5)	10.314 (0.006)*
Disciplinary measures may include suspension or expulsion of students who engage in violent behaviour	470 (78.5)	162 (**80.6**)	5.484 (0.064)
My school keep records of violent activities in the school.	443 (74.0)	150 (**74.6**)	0.431 (0.806)
My school engages in regular health education and/or counselling on violence as part of the school curriculum.	461 (**77.0**)	151 (75.1)	1.454 (0.483)
Teaching of skills based health education e.g. conflict resolution, interpersonal, communication and good coping skills etc	461 (**77.0**)	158 (78.6)	0.367 (0.832)
My school engages in collaboration/ team-work with students, staff, parents, and community members on violence prevention	429 (**71.6**)	143 (71.1)	0.131 (0.937)
My school has clear guidelines on how teachers should discipline students.	459 (76.6)	165 (**82.1**)	4.966 (0.083)
My school gives positive reinforcements e.g. commendation, awards / gifts to reward students that are of good behaviour	471 (78.6)	163 (**81.1**)	0.630 (0.730)
My School uses/ empowers trained security men e.g. Man 'O' war, private security guards, Civil defence or Police as anti-violence agents.	276 (**46.1**)	91 (45.3)	0.096 (0.953)

* Statistically significant at p<0.05. No = Numbers

Additional information was collected from 27 key informants (Principals, Counsellors and Prefects) on violence prevention strategies in schools. Apart from the strategies already stated in table v above, some other strategies were suggested by them. These included school authorities reporting violent students to the Police; counselling of parents when their children are involved in violence; school authorities should involve students in decision making and execution to bridge communication gap; inclusion of school violence prevention topics in school curricula; schools should not admit students expelled from other schools without knowing the reasons for their expulsion. Respondents further stated that government should ensure adequate number and quality of teachers in public schools and regular training of teachers on violence prevention; violent children should be disgraced along with their parents at PTA meetings; showing love to the students especially those who repeat classes because they usually cause trouble; students found loitering about the streets during school hours should be arrested and handed over to the police; cyber café/film houses where students may engage in smoking and other negative behaviours should be banned around school areas and students should not be allowed to use cell phone in the school premises.

Most of the interviewees stated that violence prevention strategies are better implemented in private schools than in public schools. Some of the reasons given for the lower rates of violence in private schools include the closer relationship among staff and students in private schools, as well as their academic focus and the formulation and implementation of school rules and regulations ("policies").

Some interviewees further expressed their views in the following way; *"Violence is not common in private schools because there is a closer interaction between students and teachers compared to public schools and the students are free to express themselves. Private schools also give a lot of time to moral and religious instructions"*

Principal, Private School, Aiyedire LGA
"Violence is commoner in public schools than in private schools because of various factors, some of which may include home/parental factors, school factors such as school size (number of students in relation to number of teachers), staff attitude, enforcement of school rules and regulations and environmental factors such as locating school close to a motor garage."

Principal, Public School, Osogbo LGA
"School violence is not common in private schools because our teachers monitor us (students) closely and they show great interest in our moral and academic development."
Senior Prefect, Private School, Boripe LGA

DISCUSSION
School-based violence is a global phenomenon and even within countries it cuts across various strata of the society. The perpetration and/or experience of violent-related behaviours are not confined to type of school - whether public or private, day or boarding, male, female or mixed school[3]. It is therefore not surprising that violent acts were not only perpetrated against other students by the study respondents, but, some also admitted that they perpetrated violence against school staff. This study assessed the rates of violence in public and private schools and the existing violence prevention strategies in both types of schools.

In this study, respondents in public schools experienced all forms of violence as perpetrators and victims, more than their counterparts in privately funded schools. For most forms of violence perpetrated or experienced as victims, respondents in private schools had at least 25% less violence than those in public schools. Similar findings had been reported in other parts of the world especially in America. A US national report revealed some rather alarming information comparing violence and related issues in public and private schools. Among other findings, 4.3% of students in public schools were victims of violence on their way to school compared to 2.6% in private schools - 25.4% of students in public schools feared the presence of street gangs at, or going to/ from school as opposed to 4.2% of those in private schools, while 5.1% of students in public schools feared being threatened going to/from school compared to 0.9% of those in private schools[18]. Public schools not only report higher crime prevalence than private schools do, but the severity of experienced violence is frequently more than twice as high in the public system as in the private school system[19].

From literature a number of reasons could possibly account for the disparity in violence occurrence between public and private schools. Although public schools teach subjects according to standards set by regulatory bodies, subjects like religion and sexual issues which encourage good life behavioural skills that are part of the curriculum in private schools are not usually taught in the public schools. Discipline which encourages learning and respect for code of conduct is difficult to implement in public schools which are governed by due process and constitutional rights, unlike private schools in which wards and their parents have agreed to comply with consequences for unacceptable behaviour. Private schools are generally safer places because more attention is given to security and there is the tendency for easy supervision because the students are fewer. Unlike private schools which accept students according to laid down standards, public schools accept students with minimal restrictions l. Private schools usually charge fees and tuition unlike most public schools that are almost free, so students in private schools are fewer and

more easily monitored [18,20]. Other reasons that have been given for this nearly universal difference in rates of violence between both groups of schools include the assertion that the atmosphere and child development is better in private schools than in public schools, the smaller school size (in terms of enrolment) in private school compared to public schools as well as the inherent characteristics of private school students and their parents[19 21].

School size has been shown to be an important factor in violence in schools. A study found that school size remains a significant determinant of school violence even after controlling for other violent influences- students attending schools with more than 2000 students were 22 percent more likely to engage in serious violence compared to those less than 2000[22], implying that, less bureaucracy and more direct control by a principal of a small private school may explain the difference in school violence. Since private schools usually have direct control over decisions at the school level, they may be less tolerant of small discipline problems that could lead to larger problems, and the fact that students chose the school may all play a role in the difference between perceptions of school violence in private and public schools.

In spite of the fact that violence was commoner in public schools, there were no major differences in the existing violence prevention strategies in the public and private schools from the quantitative data collected in this study. In fact, based on students reports, public schools have a slightly higher percentage in some of the existing violence prevention strategies compared to private schools. Naturally, it would be expected that the greater proportion of strategies should have been in place in private schools since they experienced less violence compared to public schools, however it stands to reason that respondents in public schools recorded slightly higher percentages for some of the strategies because the more affected public schools are likely to carry out more definitive interventions than private schools who are less affected by violence related problems.

Examining the evidences from literature and the quantitative and qualitative data collected in this study, some of the plausible reasons for the higher frequency of violence in public schools compared to private schools will include the disparity in the psychosocial atmosphere of both schools. Private schools had a more conducive academic environment with students being encouraged and challenged to be their best by teachers who have a friendlier disposition with students compared to public schools. This suggests that there is increased connectivity between students of private schools and the school itself compared to those in public schools. School discipline (enforcement of school rules and regulations) was also identified by majority of the interviewees from the key informant interviews as being responsible for the difference in the rate of violence between private and public schools.

The strength of this study lies in the fact that it has compared violence between public and private schools highlighting strong reasons why violence is commoner in public schools bringing to the fore the need for pertinent interventions on the part of stakeholders in the educational sector. Since health and education are inseparably linked[23], health workers, especially those in the field of preventive and social medicine need to take violence prevention as a priority to avoid further negative consequences. Another significant strength of this study was that both quantitative and qualitative data were collected. The qualitative aspect was made a part of the study because of the need to collect direct information from relevant stakeholders (key informants) on the topical issue of school violence. Violence is a complex and multidimensional subject and the views of relevant stakeholders must be sought in order to achieve effective control. In view of this reason, the quantitative survey in this study was enriched and complemented with qualitative survey.

A limitation of the study was that data were collected through self-reports. As in all such studies, both inadvertent and deliberate misreporting is a major concern. It is not impossible that certain information given by respondents are exaggerated or withheld. However, the collection of data in this study was anonymous and the respondents were assured of confidentiality at every data collection session. This might have discouraged deliberate falsehood and/or misreporting. Another limitation of this study was that quantitative data was not collected on 'school connectedness', perhaps this would have made the disparity in violence between public and private schools clearer. On the whole, the study has revealed some pertinent facts and highlighted possible areas for future research.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS
Respondents in public schools perpetrated and experienced virtually all forms of school-related violence more than those in private schools. There were mild differences in existing violence prevention strategies in both schools. Reactive violence prevention strategies such as punishing violent behaviours and the reporting of violence to school authorities rather than proactive ones such as teaching of skills-based health education are the commonest prevention strategies in both public and private schools. According to most interviewees from the key informant interviews conducted, there is closer interaction among students and staff as well as a friendlier atmosphere in private schools compared to public schools. This suggests a strong connectedness or attachment between private schools and their students compared to public schools.

In view of the findings of this study, we recommend that violence prevention should be given topmost priority in all schools and proactive measures such as inclusion of violence prevention topics in students' curricula and the teaching of skills-based education should be established in all schools, public ones especially. School policies with zero tolerance for violence should be put in place in all public secondary schools because policies in private schools have helped in violence prevention. Also, the government, through relevant stakeholders like health and education officials, should embark on public enlightenment or education on the deleterious effects of school violence since it is prevalent in public secondary schools. Furthermore, school-based interventions on violence prevention should be put in place to address the unique needs of each school and training and retraining of teachers on violence prevention strategies and control should be embarked upon since teachers have been identified as having a prominent role to play in violence prevention in school settings. Adequate attention should also be given to the psycho-social environment of public schools.

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