



ASSESSING THE NEED FOR PROMOTING STUDENTS' RESILIENCE TO VIOLENT EXTREMISM FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE IN PAKISTAN

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Abstract

Resilience is the ability of an individual to achieve desirable outcomes in the face of any adversity, violent extremism for example. Secondary school students as a representative of the youth, the larger segment of the population, and the asset of world hold critical position for the very purpose. Focus of the present study was to assess the need for promoting students' resilience to violent extremism. This was done through the perception of 28 head teachers, 140 teachers and 280 students of 10th grade from public secondary schools of district Sargodha, Punjab, Pakistan. An interview schedule, a focus group discussion guideline and a questionnaire were used to collect the data. The vulnerability of students to violent extremism was measured through a questionnaire which revealed that a larger segment of students was likely to be affected by the violent extremism. It was further confirmed by the findings of the focus group discussion with teachers and the interviews of the head teachers who recommended the need for promoting students' resilience to violent extremism.

Key Words: *violent extremism, resilience, Secondary Schools, Assessing*

Introduction

Violent Extremism has proved to be the most devastating threat to the global peace and security, for last two decades, in most of the countries over the world, specifically after 9/11 (Direct 2017, Ellis and Abdi 2017). Violent extremism has undercut the global efforts towards fostering sustainable development, promoting the rule of law, protecting human rights, maintaining peace and security, and taking humanitarian action (UN 2015b, UNDP 2020). United Nations' Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism argues that it is a well-worn phenomenon and not confined to any particular border, religion, culture or ethnic group (UNDP 2016). The literature on violent extremism indicates that ideology and religion are not in themselves the sole reasons for violent extremism but can potentially be used by extremists for justification of their actions (Fonden 2016). That is why the phenomenon has affected almost all the countries and regions of the world and "No country or region is immune from its impacts" (p, 01).

Despite countless lives lost and trillions of dollars spent, violent extremism continues to evolve and spread across the globe. This situation turned the attention of international agencies and academia to think of and use alternative ways to counter and, in most recent terms, prevent extremism (Fonseca & Rosen, 2017). At present, numerous agencies have been working world-wide and a range of techniques are being employed at different levels and in various settings for countering violent extremism (CVE). As a part of these efforts, the promotion of resilience among people, as an effective technique to counter violent extremism, is being widely used in the field of social sciences (Hassan 2016, UNDP 2016).

During recent years, the international community has been showing greater interest in promoting community resilience as a way to counter complex threats of violent extremism (Ellis and Abdi 2017). Research has identified local communities as key players in creating safety and security as they are more likely to have a better chance to understand, respond and prevent the challenges and problems peculiar to a specific community (Fonden 2016). And that, a diverse and



engaged local community holds a variety of actors (a political leader, religious scholar or even a teacher for example) and sub-communities (institutions e.g., schools, youth as a vibrant chunk of the community) that can keep the community resilient through the trust and cohesion it has within. In pursuance to the prevention of violent extremism, if one part of the local community fails, the other part takes it up and handle the issue (Fonden 2016, Mirahmadi 2016).

In the face of multi-factorial phenomenon of violent extremism, the purpose of promoting resilience is to track the multiple forms of capital available to populations at risk and to increase its capacity to resist the push and pull forces that contribute to violence (Grossman, Hadfield et al. 2020; Jadoon et al., 2022). Globally, focus has been to promote resilience against violent extremism in the coming generation by changing their narratives in to positive ones. A range of interventions is in practice to promote resilience against violent extremism at international level with the focus to reducing risk factors and increasing protective factors (Fonseca and Rosen 2017).

Resilience is, undoubtedly, a concept accompanied by positive connotations. The resilience concept invokes images of societies and individuals able to resist extreme views, prevent terrorist attacks from occurring and to bounce back from a terrorist attack (Jore 2020). Resilience is the set of factors (reactions, behaviours and attributes) which enable a person (student in this case) to achieve desirable outcomes in the presence of an adverse situation (e.g., Violent Extremism). These factors not only involve attributes of a child (e.g., emotion regulation and problem solving skills etc.) developed over time in him but many other key factors also that are present in the world around the child (the ecosystem). These factors are dependent on the interaction between the child his ecosystem (e.g. close relationships with the parents and other key adults, friendships with peer group and effective school environment etc.) (Duckhouse 2016).

Children, particularly teenagers, naturally tend to be influenced by the environment (of peace or violence) they live in. They will soon grow into young people as members of the society (Balasooriya 2001; Hussain et al., 2022). United Nations has affirmed that the world cannot succeed in battling violent extremism until and unless it harnesses the energy, creativity, and idealism of the young people. They are an untapped global resource and constitute the major segment of most of the countries today. They must be empowered and offered with a positive vision of the future to allow them make a constructive contribution to the development of global community (UN 2015b).

Pakistan has been experiencing its worst ever social unrest in the form of violent extremism since 9/11/ 2001. The maximum impact of violent extremism was witnessed in Pakistani society due to the already existing undercurrents of religious and sectarian abhorrence (Hayat 2019). This havoc has resulted in spoiling its image as an extremist and insecure country in the world. Inside Pakistan, an extended level of sectarian aversion and intolerance towards other religions/religious sects and social segments has been witnessed during last many decades (Direct 2017). The sectarian and communal violence has been among the major challenges affecting Pakistan's security, stability and social harmony (Rana, 2015).

In the face of existing situation of peace and harmony in Pakistan, the efforts for combating violent extremism are drastically lagging behind the efforts made by international community (Direct 2017). In the present scenario it is very difficult to judge whether or not or to what extent our youth, particularly secondary school students, are vulnerable to violent extremism and how to go for selecting the type and nature of a proper remedial strategies for them e.g. resilience to violent extremism. It is also worthwhile to assess the need for promoting resilience among students to combat the threats of violent extremism. Present research covers both of these aspects.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study was to assess the need for promoting students' resilience to violent extremism in public secondary schools.

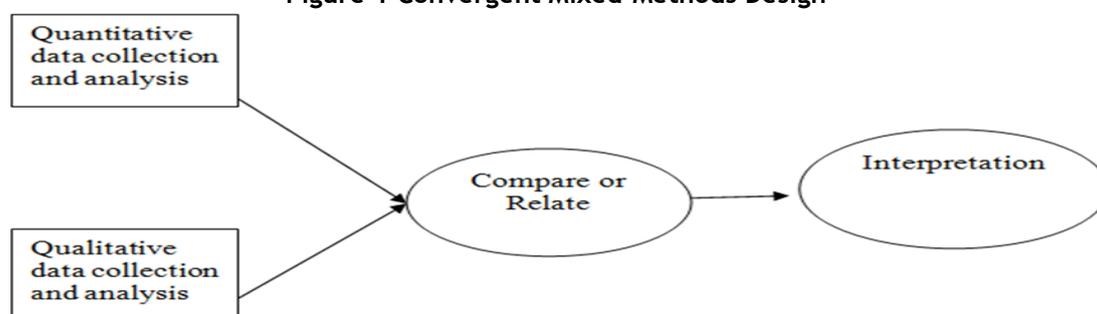
Methodology

A cross-sectional survey was used to assess the need for promoting students' resilience to violent extremism. It was a mixed-method survey built on strong theoretical foundations of pragmatist or eclectic approach.

Numerous scholars from social sciences agree that the so called "paradigm war" between positivism as a quantitative paradigm and constructivism is unrealistic and support the amalgamation of different paradigms. This new eclectic or mixed-methods paradigm, called Pragmatism (Jick 1979, Johnson, Onwuegbuzie et al. 2007, Tashakkori and Teddlie 2010, Creswell 2013, Venkatesh, Brown et al. 2013, Mertens 2014), considers the research question more important than the underlying method. It believes in practicality of the outcomes and better understanding of the social phenomenon under investigation (Craig 2005, Creswell and Clark 2007, Tashakkori and Teddlie 2010, Creswell 2012; Khan et al., 2022). Mixed-methods research is based on the assumption that collecting both type of data best provides an understanding of the research problem (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie et al. 2007). In this kind of research, the researcher collects both types of data, compares results, and uses their findings to see whether these findings validate each other or not (Creswell and Clark 2007). Several scholars from social sciences mentioned different models for conducting Mixed-methods research (Creswell and Clark 2007, Dörnyei 2007, Creswell, Clark et al. 2008, Leech and Onwuegbuzie 2009, Tashakkori and Teddlie 2010, Creswell and Clark 2011, Fraenkel, Wallen et al. 2012, Terrell 2012, Creswell 2013).

The Convergent/Parallel/Concurrent mixed-methods design introduced by Creswell & Clark (2011) was found suitable for this study. The basic rationale for this design is that the strengths of both methods multiply alongside and/or one type of data provide strength to counterbalance the weaknesses of the other and vice versa. The researcher simultaneously collects both qualitative and quantitative data, analyse and converge the results to have a clearer understanding of the problem.

Figure 1 Convergent Mixed-Methods Design



Source: Creswell, (2012)

Informants of the Study

The informants of the study were the head teachers of the public secondary schools of district Sargodha, 10th grade students and their teachers.

Multistage sampling technique was applied for sample selection to assure the representation of all segments of public secondary schools i.e., urban/rural and male/female. At first stage, all the seven (7) tehsils of district Sargodha were taken universally. At second stage, from each tehsil, four (4) public secondary schools were selected (28 schools in total) with an equal bifurcation of two (2) urban and two (2) rural schools which were comprise one (1) male and one (1) female school. At third stage, the head teacher of the relevant school, a group of six to eight (5-8) secondary school teachers (for focus group discussion) were taken as sample (28 groups in total). Beside this, ten (10) students from grade 10 were randomly selected (280 students in total).

Three types of research instruments were used to collect data from the informants: a questionnaire for students; a semi-structured interview schedule for head teachers; and a focus group discussion guidelines for secondary school teachers.



Results of the Study

The present study was underpinned by the mixed-methods approach which required the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data. Hereunder are the results of quantitative data followed by the qualitative data.

Part I: Results of the Quantitative Data

Table 1
Students’ Perceived Vulnerability to Violent Extremism

Factors	S D	D	SD+D	N	A	SA	A+SA
Religious Power Violence and Extremism	26.89	24.95	51.84	3.87	16.82	27.47	44.29
Extent of Negative Thinking	60.18	21.52	81.70	2.95	6.16	9.19	15.36
Power Politics	25.00	30.00	55.00	6.00	18.00	21.00	39.00
Risk taking and Impulsive Behaviour	59.07	29.07	88.14	2.36	3.00	6.50	9.50
Average	42.79	26.38	69.17	3.79	11.00	16.04	27.04

Table 1 shows the level of ‘vulnerability to violent extremism’ of secondary school students. Data in the table although indicates that majority of the students (69.17%) do not agree with the indicators of violent extremism. However, the rest of students (3.79 + 27.04=30.83%) are either unclear about the situation or agree that they possess the attitude that may potentially lead them violent extremism. It is evident from the data that a significant number of them are possibly vulnerable to violent extremism with respect to using/having ‘religious power’ (44.29%) and their inclination towards ‘power politics’ (39.00%). However, the considerable fraction of students showing their extent of ‘negative thinking’ (15.36%) and ‘risk taking and impulsive behaviour’ (9.50%) is not negligible also.

Table 2
Religious Power Violence and Extremism

Religious Power Violence and Extremism	S D	D	SD+D	N	A	SA	A+SA
Only life after death is important	10.71	15.00	25.71	1.79	23.21	49.29	72.5
I cannot bear the unfair treatment of other people to me	13.57	15.71	29.29	2.50	24.29	43.93	68.21
Doing war is justified if a country is against our national ideology	12.86	12.5	25.36	6.79	27.5	40.36	67.86
It is worrisome if someone is against one’s religious beliefs	11.79	17.86	29.64	6.07	32.14	32.14	64.29
Everything that religious scholars say should be compulsory to follow	13.21	18.21	31.43	4.64	24.64	39.29	63.93
Spending time in praying is better than taking care of the rights of others	17.50	27.14	44.64	3.93	18.21	33.21	51.43
It is right to take up arms to achieve one’s goals	22.14	27.86	50.00	5.71	13.57	30.71	44.29
Nothing wrong in using force to make people understand our point of view	38.57	24.64	63.21	3.57	8.57	24.64	33.21
There is nothing wrong in going to any extent to acquire power	32.50	38.57	71.07	5.36	14.64	8.93	23.57
One should go to any extent to convert other people to their faith	37.99	36.56	74.55	3.58	8.96	12.90	21.86
Nothing wrong in having control on the lives of the others	51.07	35.36	86.43	2.50	3.57	7.50	11.07
It is fair if a friend or acquaintance uses violence on others in the name of religion	60.71	30.00	90.71	0.00	2.50	6.79	9.29
Average	26.89	24.95	51.84	3.87	16.82	27.47	44.29

All values are in percentages

n= 280



Table 2 reflects the degree of vulnerability of secondary school students in relation with the ‘religious power violence and extremism’. Overall results indicate that 44.29% secondary school students supported extremist ideas which showed their attitude vulnerable to violent extremism. Moreover, the degree of their vulnerability varies against different subsidiary indicators of ‘religious power violence and extremism’. Maximum number of respondents reported their vulnerable attitude towards the indicators that ‘only life after death is important’ (72.5%), ‘I cannot bear the unfair treatment of the peoples with me’ (68.21), ‘doing war is justified if a country is against our national ideology’ (67.86), ‘it is worrisome if someone is against one’s religious beliefs’ (64.29), ‘everything that religious scholars say should be compulsory to follow’ (63.93) and ‘spending time in praying is better than taking care of the rights of others (51.43)’ the vulnerable attitude is at high level.

Table 3
Extent of Negative Thinking

Extent of Negative Thinking	S D	D	SD+D	N	A	SA	A+SA
Treating people equally will not reduce problems	53.21	20.71	73.93	4.29	9.64	12.14	21.79
People of every religion should not be allowed to practice their faith in Pakistan	58.21	25.71	83.93	1.43	8.93	5.71	14.64
People belonging to every religion should not be treated fairly	61.07	21.79	82.86	4.29	4.64	8.21	12.86
Illegal weapons should not be strictly banned	68.21	17.86	86.07	1.79	1.43	10.71	12.14
Average	60.18	21.52	81.70	2.95	6.16	9.19	15.36

All values are in percentages n= 280

Table 3 reflects the degree of vulnerability of secondary school students in relation with the ‘Extent of Negative Thinking’. Overall results indicate that 15.36% secondary school students supported extremist ideas which showed their attitude vulnerable to violent extremism. Moreover, the degree of their vulnerability varies against different subsidiary indicators of ‘Extent of Negative Thinking’. Maximum number of respondents reported their vulnerable attitude towards the indicators that ‘Treating people equally will not reduce problems’ (21.79%), ‘People of every religion should not be allowed to practice their faith in Pakistan’ (14.64), ‘People belonging to every religion should not be treated fairly’ (12.86), and ‘Illegal weapons should not be strictly banned’ (12.14) the vulnerable attitude is at high level.

Table 4
Power Politics

Power Politics	S D	D	SD+D	N	A	SA	A+SA
If the government goes against our beliefs then we should take steps to the extreme to change the system	20	17.5	37.5	3.57	27.14	31.79	58.93
Necessary to use force to change the system of governance in this country	17.5	25	42.5	4.29	23.93	29.29	53.21
Nothing wrong in going against the system of governance	28.57	34.64	63.21	10.71	15.71	10.36	26.07
Only the people of my sect follow religion correctly	34.29	42.14	76.43	6.07	5.71	11.79	17.5
Average	25.00	30.00	55.00	6.00	18.00	21.00	39.00

All values are in percentages n= 280



Table 4 reflects the degree of vulnerability of secondary school students in relation with the ‘Power Politics’. Overall results indicate that 39.00% secondary school students supported extremist ideas which showed their attitude vulnerable to violent extremism. Moreover, the degree of their vulnerability varies against different subsidiary indicators of ‘Extent of Negative Thinking’. Maximum number of respondents reported their vulnerable attitude towards the indicators that ‘If the government goes against our beliefs then we should take steps to the extreme to change the system’ (58.93%), ‘Necessary to use force to change the system of governance in this country’ (53.21), ‘Nothing wrong in going against the system of governance’ (26.07), and ‘Only the people of my sect follow religion correctly’ (17.50) the vulnerable attitude is at high level.

Table 5
Risk taking and Impulsive Behaviour

Risk taking and Impulsive Behaviour	S D	D	SD+D	N	A	SA	A+SA
Dangerous activities induce thrill in me	49.29	28.21	77.5	3.21	5.36	13.93	19.29
The use of weapons gives a sense of power	58.93	27.5	86.43	2.86	4.29	6.43	10.71
Inducing fear in someone is thrilling for me	55.71	36.43	92.14	1.07	2.86	3.93	6.79
I never done anything wrong in my life	47.5	42.14	89.64	3.57	1.43	5.36	6.79
It’s better to forgive than to take revenge	83.93	11.07	95	1.07	1.07	2.86	3.93
Average	59.07	29.07	88.14	2.36	3.00	6.50	9.50

All values are in percentages

n= 280

Table 5 reflects the degree of vulnerability of secondary school students in relation with the ‘Risk taking and Impulsive Behaviour’. Overall results indicate that 9.50% secondary school students supported extremist ideas which showed their attitude vulnerable to violent extremism. Moreover, the degree of their vulnerability varies against different subsidiary indicators of ‘Risk taking and Impulsive Behaviour’. Maximum number of respondents reported their vulnerable attitude towards the indicators that ‘Dangerous activities induce thrill in me’ (19.29%), ‘The use of weapons gives a sense of power’ (10.71), ‘Inducing fear in someone is thrilling for me’ (6.79), ‘I never done anything wrong in my life’ (6.79), and ‘It’s better to forgive than to take revenge’ (3.93) the vulnerable attitude is at high level.

Part II: Findings of Qualitative Analysis

The qualitative data were collected by two means; through interviews with the head teachers and the focus group discussion with teachers who teach 10th grade students in their respective schools.

Need for Promoting Students’ Resilience to Violent Extremism: Head Teachers’ Perspective

i. Witnessing an Adverse Situation in the School

The head teachers were asked if they have ever witnessed an adverse situation in their schools. Most of the head teachers (89%) reported that they have faced adverse situations for a number of times in their schools. Commonly, it happened at students’ level during a student-to-student interaction. Sometime, it is manifested in the form of a conflict between a student and a teacher e.g., a student/s say that they will no more study by a particular teacher due to his/her odd behaviour or in rare cases due to personal clashes (i.e., in case being member of the same family or being neighbours), religious (i.e., between the opposing sects), political (i.e., being supporters of two rival political parties) or communal issues. Importantly, the communal adversities are generally reflected in showing negative social behaviour (both by the students and the teachers) like calling names, disgracing others by pointing out his/her caste (if the counterpart belongs to a lower caste i.e., barber, cobbler or an iron smith etc.).



- ii. Conversion of Adversities into Violent Incidents**
- Majority of school heads (79%) reported that typically the adverse situations are not converted into violent incidents. However, sometime it so happens that trivial issues turn into a serious conflict or fight due to the impulsive or egoistic behaviour of students. It usually starts on sharing stationary; while discussing religious, political or communal issues; or at any conflict of opinion while playing games.
- iii. Kinds of Violent Activities Students involved in**
- Most of the respondents (82%) stated that students commit different types of violence like direct/physical violence (e.g., bullying, fighting on minor issues), structural/political violence and socio-cultural/psychological violence (e.g., prejudice/enemy images, cultural dominance, racism, or religious intolerance). They commonly torment other students, call names referring others' caste, exchange harsh words, abuse each other (bullying). Sometimes they quarrel, slap and even beat each other (direct/physical violence) in a very few severe cases. There are some rare cases when students commit violence against their teachers inside or outside the school.
- iv. Reasons of In-school Violent Incidents**
- The head teachers reported a range of factors that cause happening of violent incidents in the schools. These issues mainly include socio-cultural disparities, particularly the caste abuse; the sense of communal/cultural/ supremacy; theological conflicts among different religious sects; and psychological issues i.e., personality clashes, impulsive behaviour; diverse socio-political status; and home environment etc. Alongside, administrative issues in the school occasionally bring about violent incidents in the school settings. These issues involve grouping among students; laissez-faire management by the head teacher; favouritism/victimisation by the teachers; intra-staff conflicts; political involvement; school-community gap; and lack of guidance/training in schools.
- v. Dealing with Violent Situations**
- Majority of the head teachers (82%) opined that usually class teachers handle the situation in the classroom and settle the conflict personally, if any, because most of the violent activities originate from the students' interaction therein. If the situation aggravates and brought into the notice of the head teachers, they use various ways to deal with it. Primarily, they discuss the situation with the concerning teacher as well as with other staff members and seek their suggestions. School discipline committee looks into the matter independently according to individuality of the cases, as students come from diverse family background. The committee hears the view point of both parties (the aggrieved and the guilty) disjointedly; involve parents if necessary; and finally takes disciplinary action against the offenders. Within school the guilty or aggressive students are kept apart from other classmates for some time and are assigned some special tasks to create a sense of responsibility among them e.g., appointing them as monitor/prefect of the class; shuffling their seating arrangement etc. Moreover, the schools focus on moral development of students with special emphasis on promoting the sense of equality, justice, caring and sharing, tolerance, human brotherhood and interconnectedness.
- vi. Need to promote Students' Resilience**
- All the respondents unanimously stressed upon the need for promoting resilience to violent extremism among secondary school students so that any potential extremist or harmful incidents may be prevented.
- vii. Suggested Strategies for promoting Resilience to Violent Extremism**
- The head teachers suggested that reformation of students' attitudes or the way how they see the world around them is the only way for promoting resilience to violent extremism. Beside this, they stated that teachers being the role model for students should themselves be peace loving and avoid committing any kind of violence in the school premises. Their polite, positive and just behaviour may lead students to reshape their attitude. Frequent parents-teacher meetings will be narrow down the school-community gap and result in a more positive school environment. Special sessions should be organized to commemorate special days involving tableaux, role playing, speech competition, paintings exhibition to mark the importance of equality, justice, tolerance and mutual co-existence. Similar activities may be included in the regular curriculum for secondary school



students to realise the 'Paigham e Pakistan' campaign. Alongside, the teachers may be equipped with necessary teaching skills through in-service training. Significant personalities from the local community like sportsmen, religious scholars, politicians, professionals and educationists may also be called on the occasion to highlight the importance of these values and sharing their experiences on the significance of observing these values. Observance of school discipline in letter and spirit for students and a friendly environment for teachers, as team members, characterized by their good working relationships may help avoid the violent conflicts in the schools.

Need for Promoting Students' Resilience to Violent Extremism: Teachers' Perspective

i. Witnessing an Adverse Situation in the School

A large number of teachers (68%) were of the opinion that many times they face adverse situations in their schools. For example, the students become aggressive on various issues while playing, in the class or during informal discussion in the recess period. These issues mainly involve socio-cultural disparity, theological conflicts of different religious sects, complex on the basis of social status, caste abuse, local or personal conflicts. These adverse situations may occur at student level, teacher level or between the student and the teachers. The triggers to precipitate such incidents may be students, teachers, both of them or there may be some external factors e.g., parents or other community members.

ii. Conversion of Adversities into Violent Incidents

Maximum number of teachers (57%) proclaimed that it is not a commonplace for an adverse situation to convert into a violent incident. But the threat is always there that any time a precursor e.g., extremist beliefs, social conflicts or impulsiveness of students, may convert an adverse situation into violent incident.

iii. Kinds of Violent Activities Students involved in

A large number of teachers (87%) pronounced that generally the students bully (e.g., pointing, fingering, mocking etc.) each other within classroom however these actions sometimes transform into ensuing physical violence in the playground or outside school interactions. The violent activities include physical violence (e.g., bullying, beating each other), structural and socio-cultural violence (e.g., prejudice, cultural domination, racism, or religious intolerance). They commonly torment other students, call names referring others' caste, abuse each other (bullying). Sometimes they quarrel, slap and even beat each other (physical violence) in some cases.

iv. Reasons of In-school Violent Incidents

Secondary school teachers pointed out numerous reasons of why students involve in violent activities. Most of them originate from their socio-cultural context. For instance, the superiority complex based on the social status, cultural and unlawful social division on the basis of caste system. The other reasons are the ideological conflicts among various religious sects; the psychological issues like personality clashes and impulsiveness of teenagers; and the adverse social and family environment. Some of the underlying reasons are very general or situation-specific. For example, weaker control or laissez-faire management by the head teacher; grouping among students; favouritism/victimisation of students by their teachers; confrontation among school staff; political interference; school-community gap; and lack of guidance/training by the parents and the school with regarding respecting others and the sense of peaceful co-existence.

v. Dealing with Violent Situations

The school teachers reported that deal with the violent situations according to their nature. If it is simply an act of bullying, they try to settle it down in the class. If it persists, they take it into the notice of head teacher and he forwards it to discipline committee or any senior teacher. They conduct a remedial session and inform the offender about its consequences. Additionally, they guide and instruct the students about their role and responsibilities, and that why peaceful co-existence is beneficial for them. Such vulnerable students are focused and assigned them special remedial activities to transform their attitude. If the case is of a serious nature and happening frequently then parents are involved also to keep them on board. Disciplinary actions are also taken according to the severity of the violent incident to set an example for other



students. At precautionary level the students are frequently guide inside and outside the classroom to incarnate moral values in them.

vi. Need to promote Students' Resilience

All the teachers affirmed the need for promoting students' resilience to prevent violent incidents so that the students' violent attitude can be reformed at basic level and can be stopped prevented from changing into devastating violent incident in future.

vii. Suggested Strategies for promoting Resilience to Violent Extremism

The teachers put forward that to ensure the promotion of ensuing resilience against violent extremism among students it is prerequisite to reshape the thinking of students about the world around them. The major role to play in the regard rests with teachers who are role model for their students. If they are tolerant, peace loving, have the sense of and practice equality, show a constructive and sustained behaviour in the face of adversities, and avoid committing any kind of violence in the school premises, the students will ultimately characterize these virtues. Frequent parents-teacher meetings can also contribute a great deal in developing positive and tolerant behaviour among students if they involve discussions on overall conduct of students along with their academic performance. These meetings are hoped to narrow down the school-community gap and creating a healthy school environment characterized by tolerance, caring and sharing, respect for others and peaceful co-existence. During the observance of special days certain activities like tableaux, role playing, speech competition, paintings exhibition should be organized to highlight the importance of equality, justice, tolerance and mutual co-existence. Significant personalities from the local community like sportsmen, religious scholars, politicians, professionals and educationists may also be called on the occasion to highlight the importance of these values and sharing their experiences on the significance of observing these values. A sizeable number of similar activities may be included in the regular curriculum for secondary school students to realise the 'Paigham e Pakistan' campaign. To reap the real fruit of these efforts it is necessary to harness secondary school teachers with relevant teaching skills through in-service training. Maintaining school discipline and friendly environment in schools coupled with the good working relationships among teachers may help avoid the violent incidents to occur in schools. Increasing the share of co-curricular activities in the curriculum with the aim to promote the sense of working with others and sportsman ship. Sophisticated therapeutic techniques may be use for the students vulnerable to involve in violent incidents as a remedial strategy and vaccination for others.

Cumulative Findings of Qualitative Data

i. Witnessing an Adverse Situation in the School

Both the teachers and the head teachers agreed that they have faced adverse situations for a number of times in their schools. Commonly, it happened at students' level during a student-to-student interaction. Occasionally, it is manifested in the form of a conflict between a student and a teacher e.g., a student/s say that they will no more study by a particular teacher due to his/her odd behaviour, and rarely among teachers or between school staff and community members.

ii. Conversion of Adversities into Violent Incidents

Respondents of the study opined that typically the adverse situations are not converted into violent incidents. However, sometime it so happens that a trivial issue turns into a serious conflict or fight due to the impulsive or egoistic behaviour of students. It usually starts on sharing minor things like stationary; while discussing religious, political or communal issues; or at any conflict of opinion while playing games.

iii. Kinds of Violent Activities Students involved in

The informants of the study reported that mostly the students bully each other within classroom (e.g., pointing, fingering, mocking etc.) however these actions sometimes transform into ensuing physical violence in the playground or outside school interactions. The violent activities include physical violence (e.g., bullying, beating each other), structural and socio-cultural violence (e.g., prejudice, cultural domination, racism, or religious intolerance). They commonly torment



other students, call names referring others' caste, abuse each other (bullying). Sometimes they quarrel, slap and even beat each other (physical violence) in some cases.

iv. Reasons of In-school Violent Incidents

The respondents reported a range of factors that cause happening of violent incidents in the schools. These factors mainly include socio-cultural disparities, particularly the caste abuse; the sense of communal/cultural supremacy; theological conflicts among different religious sects; and psychological issues i.e., personality clashes, impulsive behaviour; diverse socio-political status; and home environment etc. Alongside, administrative issues in the school occasionally bring about violent incidents in the school settings. These issues involve grouping among students; laissez-faire management by the head teacher; favouritism/victimisation by the teachers; intra-staff conflicts; political involvement; school-community gap; and lack of guidance/training in schools.

v. Dealing with Violent Situations

No single approach is reported by the informants to deal with a violent situation. They use multifaceted techniques to handle the situation according to its nature. When teachers find a case of just bullying, they try to settle it down in the class. If it persists, they take it into the notice of head teacher and he forwards it to discipline committee or any senior teacher. They conduct a remedial session and inform the offender about its consequences. Additionally, they guide and instruct the students about their role and responsibilities, and that why peaceful co-existence is beneficial for them. Such vulnerable students are focused and assigned them special remedial activities to transform their attitude. If the case is of a serious nature and happening frequently then parents are involved also to keep them on board. Disciplinary actions are also taken according to the severity of the violent incident to set an example for other students. At precautionary level the students are frequently guide inside and outside the classroom to incarnate moral values in them.

vi. Need to promote Students' Resilience

All the respondents ubiquitously stressed upon the need for promoting resilience to violent extremism among secondary school students so that any potential extremist or harmful incidents may be prevented.

vii. Suggested Strategies for promoting Resilience to Violent Extremism

Both the teachers and the school heads suggested that to ensure the promotion of ensuing resilience against violent extremism among students it is prerequisite to reshape the thinking of students about the world around them. The major role to play in the regard rests with teachers who are role model for their students. If they are tolerant, peace loving, have the sense of and practice equality, show a constructive and sustained behaviour in the face of adversities, and avoid committing any kind of violence in the school premises, the students will ultimately characterize these virtues. Frequent parents-teacher meetings can also contribute a great deal in developing positive and tolerant behaviour among students if they involve discussions on overall conduct of students along with their academic performance. These meetings are hoped to narrow down the school-community gap and creating a healthy school environment characterized by tolerance, caring and sharing, respect for others and peaceful co-existence. During the observance of special days certain activities like tableaux, role playing, speech competition, paintings exhibition should be organized to highlight the importance of equality, justice, tolerance and mutual co-existence. Significant personalities from the local community like sportsmen, religious scholars, politicians, professionals and educationists may also be called on the occasion to highlight the importance of these values and sharing their experiences on the significance of observing these values. A sizeable number of similar activities may be included in the regular curriculum for secondary school students to realise the 'Paigham e Pakistan' campaign. To reap the real fruit of these efforts it is necessary to harness secondary school teachers with relevant teaching skills through in-service training. Maintaining school discipline and friendly environment in schools coupled with the good working relationships among teachers may help avoid the violent incidents to occur in schools. Increasing the share of co-curricular activities in the curriculum with the aim to promote the sense



of working with others and sportsman ship. Sophisticated therapeutic techniques may be use for the students vulnerable to involve in violent incidents as a remedial strategy and vaccination for others.

Findings of Quantitative Data

Although the majority of the students do not agree with the indicators of violent extremism. However, a sizeable number of students (30.83%) are either unclear about the situation or agree that they possess the attitude that may potentially lead them violent extremism. It is evident that a reasonable number of the students are possibly vulnerable to violent extremism with respect to using/having 'religious power' (44.29%) and their inclination towards 'power politics' (39.00%). However, the considerable fraction of students showing their extent of 'negative thinking' (15.36%) and 'risk taking and impulsive behaviour' (9.50%) is not negligible also.

Conclusion

The need for promoting students' resilience to violent extremism is evident from the findings of both quantitative and qualitative data. Findings of the quantitative data revealed that a larger segment of students is vulnerable to violent extremism particularly under the influence of 'religious power' and with respect to their sense of power politics as well as having 'negative thinking' and 'impulsive behaviour'. This situation clearly calls for promoting students' resilience against the potential threat of violent extremism. It was further confirmed by the qualitative findings where the secondary school teachers and the respective heads of schools stressed the need for promoting students' resilience to prevent the happening of any potential violent incidents.

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