

DOGUTAS, AYSUN, Ph.D., August 2011

Cultural Foundations of Education

SCHOOL VIOLENCE IN TURKEY, MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES IN MULTIPLE SETTINGS (214 pp.)

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The purpose of this study was to explore views of teachers and parents regarding school violence in Turkey. The primary research question was What do teachers and parents know about school violence in Turkey? Secondary questions were as follows: What do teachers and parents say about school violence in Turkey? How do they describe it? What factors do teachers and parents identify as the primary causes of school violence in Turkey? Data were generated through semistructured interviews and analyzed for emerging themes.

Findings revealed the following: (a) Although teachers and parents cited violence in schools as a problem, they trivialized it as innocent joking resulting from immaturity. (b) Participants identified families other than their own as the major cause of school violence, followed by media and environment. Cultural change and conflict were identified less frequently; neither has been addressed in the literature on violence in Turkish schools. (c) Participants stated that sexual violence had become a problem that is at least discussed in their schools, ending the unfortunate silence and shame previously endured by female victims. (d) Teachers and parents asserted that girl-on-girl psychological violence in Turkish schools causes harm more destructive than boy-on-boy physical fighting. No previous studies have focused on violence among Turkish females. (e) Teachers and parents described types of school violence differently, depending on the socioeconomic status (SES) of the school.

Implications for future research emerged from this study. (a) Because familial problems and parenting styles were identified as major factors in preventing or condoning school violence, future research should include families as participants. (b) Future researchers should also consider the role of cultural conflict in school violence. (c) They should examine the role of cultural change and degeneration. (d) Future researchers should address the frequency and level of sexual violence among students in Turkish schools. (e) Policy restrictions precluded students' perspectives; however, their inclusion would enhance future studies. (f) In general, Turkish education literature would benefit from additional qualitative and quantitative studies to amass baseline data and develop theory to inform the development of policy on school violence in Turkey.