

SECTORAL ACTIVITIES PROGRAMME

Working Paper

**Workplace violence in service sectors with implications for the
education sector: Issues, solutions and resources**

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Working papers are preliminary documents circulated
to stimulate discussion and obtain comments

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Preface

The ILO's Sectoral Activities Department commissioned this Working Paper in preparation for a Meeting of experts to be held from 8 to 15 October 2003 in Geneva, which is intended to consider and review a draft and to adopt a Code of practice on violence and stress at work in services sectors: A threat to productivity and decent work. That Meeting is part of the continuing work of the Department on 22 sectors of economic activity, including the education sector.

In addition to this paper related to violence and stress in education, Sectoral Working Papers on the subject have been prepared on a number of other sectors and sub-sectors: financial services; health services; hotels and catering; performing arts and journalism; the postal sector; and transport.

The paper, by Richard Verdugo, senior researcher, National Education Association, United States, and Anamaria Vere, International Labour Office, Geneva, takes a unique perspective on the problems by focusing comparatively on trends and experiences from many other services sectors, and drawing lessons from these related sectors to suggest ways in which the growing challenges of violence and stress may be addressed in schools and other educational sites.

It is hoped that this study can help to promote action to tackle violence and stress in education sector workplaces, and complement work being carried out by the ILO and other organizations at various levels to assist in reducing or eliminating stress and violence at workplaces in services sectors around the world.

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1. Introduction

Schools are traditionally viewed as places where teaching and learning occur; not as places where violence occurs. And while the vast majority of schools are safe, the recent spate of school violence has created concern about safety in schools throughout the world, not just in the United States. World wide, educators are concerned about their safety and what can be done to remedy the problem. For example, in the United Kingdom teachers want to know what can be done about disruptive, even violent students (BBC 2002b):

UNION DEMANDS "EXPEL UNRULY PUPILS"

BBC NEWS

November 2, 2000

The biggest teachers' union in England and Wales says it will endorse industrial action - including strikes - if head teachers do not expel pupils who need to be physically restrained.

The tough new stance by the National Union of Teachers follows the case of Marjorie Evans, the head teacher and NUT member cleared of assaulting a pupil but suspended from work for 13 months.

"The physical restraint of a particular pupil or pupils should not be considered a regular or routine act," the union says in new guidance to its 202,000 members."

If expulsion is ruled out by the head teacher, school governors or an appeal panel, the NU says it will use industrial action to try to force an exclusion where, in the words of the Department of Education, "the retention of that pupil would disrupt education or threaten the welfare of pupils or staff".

While there have been many attempts to improve safety in schools (see Verdugo 1996, 1997, 1998 for discussions), most are based on common sense notions about school safety and lack a focused understanding about what drives appropriate preventive and intervention approaches (Gottfredson 1998). In gaining this understanding, one strategy is to examine what has been done in related occupations. The purpose of this paper therefore, is to apply lessons learned about workplace violence in the services sectors, broadly defined, to the education sector. Throughout this paper the perspective is international in scope.

Before continuing, three points need to be made about the present paper. First, a summary of existing research and data collection efforts is provided. There is no attempt to carry out original research. Second, all available information, reports, and research have not been examined. Rather, the aim has been to examine key issues that seem to dominate the extant literature. Finally, for those interested in further information it is suggested that they refer to the resources listed in the bibliography.

2. Defining Key Concepts

There are at least three reasons why defining key concepts is important. First, not only does it clarify our discussion, but such definitions have larger practical implications. Second, litigation can be tied up in defining what is meant by such basic concepts as violence or harassment. Third, the collection of data is contingent on such definitions because it is crucial that violent incidents be reported and data collected. One must have a clear idea about what to and what not to report; in other words, reporting valid, accurate data.¹

2.1. Basic terms

2.1.1. Workplace

The term workplace, as used in this report, refers to a place where services are exchanged for remuneration. Traditionally, the workplace referred to a physical structure or stationary place, such as an office or school. However, given technological advances and the mobile nature of certain jobs, such as those being conducted by service workers, the workplace can be any place where services and money are exchanged, such as a taxi, a client's home or a non-formal learning site.

2.1.2. Service workers

Service workers deliver or provide non-tangible services to individuals, as opposed to developing or making products. Service jobs encompass various sectors, including education, health services, food, sales, finance and protective jobs. For example, police officers, fire fighters, social workers, masseuses, teachers' aides and taxi drivers are all service workers.

2.2. Workplace violence

2.2.1. Why is workplace violence an important issue

Human rights

Workplace violence is a violation of one's human rights; one has a right to be safe from fear or injury while at work. Specifically, there are certain issues related to workplace violence that are especially troubling. Among the most important are:

- certain practices, cultural norms, and social structures that appear to heighten the risk of violence among some workers; in particular the absence of clear definitions of workplace violence, the absence of legislation that actually punishes perpetrators, and the existence of cultural norms that tolerate such behaviour;
- the vulnerability of immigrant workers, and women, especially those in service occupations, who are more likely to be the victims of human rights violations (SEW NEWS 1999; Leck 2002; Di Martino 2000).

¹ Validity means that one is measuring what is intended on being measured.

In many cases of human rights violations, it is difficult to distinguish between immigrant status and being female because a vast majority of immigrant workers in the service sector tend to be women (Estrella-Gust 1999; ILO 2002c). Women working in certain service jobs are assaulted or threatened because receiving countries lack appropriate norms and formal legislation that would protect them from violent behaviour (Midirs 2002; Leck 2002). There are simply no cultural safety nets to protect immigrant and female workers. The increasing migration of developing country teachers to developed countries in the context of a worldwide teachers shortage raises the prospects for greater numbers of such incidences in education, though more research is needed on this phenomenon.

Costs of workplace violence

Economic and human costs are also reasons why we should be concerned about workplace violence. There appear to be three levels at which costs may be measured: individual, organizational, and community/societal.

Individual

The individual costs of workplace violence are great. Research tends to focus on two individual costs: physical and psychological. Individual *physical costs* due to workplace violence include injury, death, and other physical consequences. Individual *psychological costs* can include depression, anxiety, fear, loss of self-esteem, and stress, which have all been linked to workplace violence. These psychological outcomes, in turn, have their physical consequences, such as eczema, psoriasis, headaches, pain, etc., all of which have been linked to the psychological costs of workplace violence (Leck 2002; ILO 2002a, 2002c).

Organizational costs

Some of the more important organizational costs result from:

- *Injury and death:* Organizations pay medical bills, through insurance plans or outright payments, for rehabilitation or other medical services and treatment used by the victim. These costs can be significant. For example, in the United States, the annual cost of workplace violence ranges from \$4 to \$36 billion. One workplace incident itself can cost an organization about \$250,000 (Leck 2002).
- *Worker absenteeism:* (ILO 2002a, 2002c; Di Martino 2000; Hazards Magazine Fact Sheet 2000). Worker absenteeism can lead to loss of productivity and to costs due to replacing the absent worker.
- *Lower worker productivity:* Both the victim and witnesses to violence tend to be less productive employees according to research (Midirs 2002; Leck 2002; Di Martino 2000). Victims of physical violence tend to worry, feel anxious, and exhibit other kinds of behaviour that reduces or entirely eliminates their focus at work (Midirs 2002; ILO 2002a, 2002c; Di Martino 2000; Hazards Magazine Fact Sheet 2000; WHO 2002). In addition, workers who are exposed to psychological violence might also engage other workers in their predicament. For example, workers who are bullied by supervisors, tend to spend time planning how to respond to their supervisors, and networking with co-workers in seeking their support.
- *Workers' emotional problems:* Research indicates that violent or stressful incidents can lead to the utilization of mental health services and that organizations must often bear the cost of these services. Moreover, emotional problems tend to exhibit

themselves physically in term of skin diseases, eating disorders, etc. (Leck 2002) that require services for which the employer is liable.

- *Litigation:* Litigation can also be a reality for organizations as a result of unsafe work environments. The time, effort, and money involved in litigation can be overwhelming.
- *Security measures:* Organizations are also saddled with the costs of developing and implementing security measures. Because it is an organization's responsibility to protect their employees, such measures become necessary and can be expensive.
- *Worker replacement:* The two most important assets an organization has are its employees and its reputation. An organization that is characterized as unsafe bears the cost of hiring and training new employees due to worker injury, death, or resignation (Leck 2002). Organizational reputation is important in attracting potential employees. An organization with a reputation for conflict or for being unsafe may not be able to attract quality personnel. Safety issues may reach beyond the boundaries of the workplace.

Community/societal

Communities and society may also bear costs of workplace violence (ILO 2002c). Four kinds of societal/community costs are:

- *Judicial:* Workplace violence might involve the judicial system and thus involves lost revenue to both the community and society.
- *Economic:* An organization that is not productive loses its ability to contribute economically. The community and society lose in terms of less hiring from the community, less tax contribution, and less of a contribution to societal GNP.
- *Social:* Workplace violence can strain welfare services. Victims of stress or workplace violence may resign their positions and seek public assistance.
- *Healthcare-related:* The healthcare infrastructure can also be taxed because victims use this public institution for both physical and psychological injury.

2.2.2. What is workplace violence

As used in this report, violence refers to both physical and psychological behaviour. Such a definition is in keeping with the current usage of the term (Leck 2002; Di Martino 2000). Thus, the definition of violence is any attack, assault, or threat that results in physical injury or in the psychological stress of an individual or group. Table 1 presents examples of both physical and psychological violence.

Table 1. Examples of physical and psychological violence

Violence	Example
Physical	Assault, rape, homicide
Psychological	Bullying, intimidation, harassment, mobbing/ganging

Harassment

Harassment is generally any behaviour that is unwelcome and un-reciprocated and is intended to humiliate the target. The driving force behind such behaviour can be based on

a number of physical, social, political, economic, or religious traits that distinguish the target(s) from others. Specifically, harassment is:

Any conduct based on age, disability, HIV status, domestic circumstances, sex, sexual orientation, gender reconstruction, race, colour, language, religious, political, trade union, or other opinions or beliefs, national or social origin, association with a minority, property, birth, or other status that is unreciprocated or unwanted and which affects the dignity of men and women at work. (Midirs 2002, p. 3)

Sexual harassment

As used in this report sexual harassment refers specifically to:

Any unwanted, unreciprocated and unwelcome behaviour of a sexual nature that is offensive to the person involved, and causes that person to be threatened, humiliated or embarrassed. (Midirs 2002: p. 3)

Mobbing or ganging

Mobbing or ganging refers to especially egregious behaviour by a group against an individual or group of individuals that have been targeted for ostracism. The focus of this ostracism ranges from ethnic-race, to religion, gender, social class, or ideology. This behaviour appears to be on the increase throughout the world (Di Martino 2000).

2.3. Workplace stress

Work related stress exerts significant negative effects on both individuals and their employers. At the individual level, stress is linked to a variety of health problems, including heart diseases and mental health problems, such as depression. For organizations, stress can be costly in terms of employee absenteeism, lost days of work, litigation, and reduced productivity.

2.3.1. What is workplace stress

To-date, there have been three predominant approaches to defining workplace stress: an engineering approach, a physiological approach, and a psychological approach. The *engineering approach* is based on the notion of aversion or noxious response to one's work environment. The load, demand, or threats create stress among some workers (Cox 1978, 1990; Cox and Mackay 1981; Fletcher 1988).

In contrast, the *physiological approach* views stress as manifested by a syndrome consisting of changes in one's biological system (Seyle 1950). In fact, Scherick (1996) sees stress as one of the many psycho-physiological responses exhibited by humans as they adapt to internal and external changes in their environments. Stress is seen as an expression of a disorder or an imbalance in three things: the efficient pursuit of function, the minimization of effort, and one's well-being.

In response to criticisms of these two approaches, a third model – the *psychological approach* – has emerged. Proponents of the psychological model argue that there is a dynamic interaction between individuals and their work environment. The driving forces behind this interaction are the cognitive processes and emotions that underpin individual reactions (Cox and Cox 1993; Cox and Griffiths 1994, 1995a).

Two variants of the psychological approach are the interactional and the transactional. Interactional models focus on the structural character of an individual's interaction with the work environment. Specifically, interactional models include the person-environment

fit theory, which holds that stress is a result of the lack of fit between an individual and work, and that the extent and the degree to which workers are allowed to use their skills and knowledge on the job also causes stress (French et al. 1982). A second model is the demand-control theory espoused by Karasek, which posits that decision latitude and job demand are two crucial dimensions as causes of work-related stress, whereby the lower the decision latitude and the higher the job demand, the lower the satisfaction and the greater the health problems (Karasek 1979).

While Karasek's research has received some corroboration (Ahlbon et al. 1977; Karasek 1981; Karasek et al. 1991), others have found only moderate evidence in support of his theory (Kasl 1989; Warr 1990). Instead researchers have found that additive as opposed to multiplicative models work best (Hurrell and McLaney 1989; Payne and Fletcher 1983; Perrewe and Ganster 1989). Moreover, other researchers have argued that the model is too simple² and ignores social support within jobs (Johnson 1989; Johnson et al. 1991). The main criticism of Demand-Theory is that it ignores individual differences.

In contrast to interaction models, transactional models focus on cognitive processes and emotional reactions that undergird individuals' interaction with their work environment. One such model has been developed by Siegrist (1990), who argues that stress results from an imbalance between effort and reward.

Generally then, stress, as suggested here, is a reaction (both negative and positive) to conditions that define the work environment. This large body of research has yet to reach consensus on key theoretical issues.

² The argument that the model is much too simple is not convincing. In fact, parsimony is a preferred trait of any theory or model. It appears that Karasek's critics have merely chosen the wrong words with which to base their arguments.

3. Causes of workplace violence and stress

3.1. Causes of workplace stress

3.1.1. Physical causes of stress

Research has focused on two physical causes of work-related stress: noise and poor working conditions. Noise is seen as a stimulus that affects stress levels among workers (Akerstert and Landstrom 1998; Kryter 1972; Kasl 1992). Indeed, the greater the noise levels, the greater the effect on the inner ear and its impairment (Jones 1983) and the greater the stress (Cohen 1969; Barreto et al. 1997; Ahasan et al. 1999). Poor working conditions also cause stress among workers. In fact, research indicates that poor working conditions increase the stress levels among workers (Holt 1982; Szabo et al. 1983).

3.1.2. Psychological causes of stress

Psychological causes of stress are more prevalent in the research literature and have been so since the 1950s (Johnson 1996; Sauter et al. 1998). This body of research focuses on work organization and culture/climate and its effect on workers' mental health (Cox and Griffiths 1995a). In further addressing psychological causes, Hacker et al. (1983) create an interesting taxonomy that can be used in organizing this body of work: the *context* of work, and the *content* of work.

The context of work: The focus is on an organization's work culture and individual work roles in that culture. Work is presumed to be a barrier to personal freedom (Hingley and Cooper 1986) along three dimensions: organizations as task-focused environments, as problem-solving environments, and as development environments. Deficiencies in one or more of these dimensions will cause stress among workers (Cox and Kuk 1991; Cox and Howorth 1990; Cox and Leiter 1992).

Kasl (1992) adds another niche to this body of research, by arguing that four factors may be viewed as risk factors: organizational size, structures, cumbersome and arbitrary procedures, and issues about roles. Each of these factors exerts direct effects on organizational culture and function. For example, size affects worker interaction, levels of bureaucracy,³ and the development of "silos".

The content of work: Content-based stress is manifested in role ambiguity and role conflict (Kahn et al. 1964; Kahn 1973; Ingersoll et al. 1999; Jackson and Schuler 1985). Other content-based issues that affect stress include role overload, role insufficiency, and having a role where one is responsible for others (French et al. 1982). Any one of these role-related problems is associated with work-related stress (Bhalla et al. 1991):

- *Role ambiguity* refers to an inadequacy about one's work role. Change and the introduction of novelty to the work environment tend to increase role ambiguity (Ivancevich and Matteson 1980). Role ambiguity can manifest itself in a number of ways, such as confusion about work objectives and responsibilities, and the lack of clarity about work expectations. Greater role ambiguity results in lower job satisfaction, greater the job tension, and lower self-confidence (Kahn et al. 1964).

³ See Verdugo et al. (1997) for a discussion of bureaucracy and complexity, which is related to organizational size.

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- *Role conflict* occurs when an individual is required to play a role that conflicts with his/her basic value system. Role conflict is related to stress in an indirect way. For example, Kahn et al. (1964) find that role conflict can lead to stress via job dissatisfaction. In addition, a related body of research has focused on job type or category and how role conflict varies by these designations. Cooper and Smith (1986) find that white-collar workers experience greater role conflict than manual workers. Kahn et al (1964) find that foreman and other supervisory staff are more prone to role conflict (see also Margolis and Kroes 1974).
 - *Role insufficiency* refers to an organization's failure to fully utilize the skills, abilities, and knowledge of its workers (O'Brien 1982). Brook (1973) finds that the greater the role insufficiency, the greater the work-related stress.
 - *Responsibility for other people* can also increase work-related stress and raise serious health problems (Wardell et al. 1964). For example, individuals who have responsibilities for others tend to have a greater likelihood of smoking, higher blood pressure, higher levels of cholesterol (French and Caplan 1970), burnout and emotional exhaustion (Leiter 1991), and greater risk of stress (Colligan et al. 1977).
 - *Lack of career development, job insecurity, and poor pay* are also related to job stress (Marshall (1977) and increase the perception of inequality in an organization and levels of anxiety among employees (Porter 1990; Warr 1992; Kasl 1992).
 - *Participation in the decision making process* at work can have positive worker and organizational effects. The obverse, however, tends to lead to negative results. Indeed, research points out that participation in the decision-making process increases job satisfaction and feelings of self-esteem (French and Caplan 1970, 1972; Buck 1972; Margolis et al. 1974; Spector 1986), and that lower participation is associated with decreases in the overall physical health of workers (Margolis and Kroes 1974).
 - *The relationships one has with co-workers* are related to stress and other factors that are stress related. Positive work relations increase both worker and organizational health (Cooper 1981; Jones et al. 1998).
 - *Support networks at work* mediate the adverse effects (both cultural and environmental) of work (Cobb and Kasl 1977; Cohen and Willis 1985; House and Wells 1978). The poorer is one's support network, the greater the stress and anxiety, and the greater the likelihood of heart disease (Beehr and Newman 1978; Davidson and Cooper 1981; Pearse 1977; Warr 1992).
 - One's *relationship with a supervisor* is also critical. Karasek et al (1982) suggest that support from one's supervisor tends to reduce stress (Buck 1972) and buffer the adverse effects of job demand on depression and job satisfaction. Fielden and Peckar (1999) find that support also mediates the adverse effects of long working hours. Positive subordinate-supervisory relations, then, are buffers against the many adverse effects that occur in the world of work.
 - *Workplace violence* is both a relationship and environmental issue. In terms of violence at work, there is evidence that violence increases stress and adversely affects other kinds of psychological well-being. For example, Leather et al. (1999) find that increased work violence leads to psychological damage and poor physical health.
 - *Work scheduling* is an additional stress. Two main issues have been identified: shift work and long working hours. Also, hours worked and compressed work weeks are related to health problems (Rosa and Colligan 1986; Rosa et al. 1989), poor psychological health (Spurgeon and Harrington 1989), stress (Fielden and Pickar

1999), and a greater the likelihood of death from coronary disease (Breslow and Buell 1960).

- Research has found that *change* in an organization is related to stress (BBC News October 10, 2000; Windell 1996 [cited in Windell and Zimolong 1997]). However, it should be noted that such findings are mixed and need further research, especially in studying the mediating effects of other variables (Windell and Zimolong 1997).
- Finally, there are a number of other factors related to stress in the workplace: The *family* (Hingley and Cooper 1986; Larwood and Wood 1979; Bhagat and Chassie 1981), *task design* issues (Kornhauser 1965; Gardell 1971; Laville and Teiger 1976; Caplan et al 1975; Broadbent and Gath 1981; O'Hanlon 1981; Smith 1981), job uncertainty (Warr (1992), and *workload and pace* (French and Caplan 1970; French et al. 1974; Jones et al 1998; Bradley 1989; Cox 1985, 1985b; Smith et al. 1981; Smith 1985).

In summary, stress and its effects on the health of workers and their organizations is a complex problem and will require additional research. The overwhelming evidence suggests that: (1) many factors at work affect not only the presence of stress among workers, but its intensity; (2) stress is related to a variety of health issues among workers; (3) stress also affects the health and well-being of organizations; and (4) stress is related to workplace violence, as both a cause and an effect. It is for these reasons that we should be concerned with the presence of stress in any work place.

3.2. Causes of workplace violence

There appear to be five key factors that affect violence in the service sectors: (1) the lack of formal and informal norms concerning violence against workers, especially women; (2) the influx of immigrant- and foreign-born labour; (3) economics; (4) politics; and (5) stress. Research suggests that each area contains factors that are associated with violence in the workplace.

The *lack of norms*, both formal (e.g., laws) and informal (frequent, patterned, and acceptable forms of behaviour) are cited as national factors contributing to the increase of workplace violence. Research has indicated that in many countries laws do not exist to protect workers from certain kinds of violence, such as bullying, harassment, and intimidation (Leck 2002). Moreover, where such laws exist, they consist of no more than a slap on the wrist and fail to send a strong and clear message that such behaviour will not be tolerated. The lack of informal norms against certain types of behaviour is also cited in the literature. For example, harassment of females in certain countries is not counteracted by strict norms or taboos. In fact, in some countries the low status of women in the stratification system feeds directly into sexual harassment.

Immigrant labour and the increase of foreign-born labour have also been cited as factors related to an increase of workplace violence (Leck 2002). The presence of these workers in the service sectors creates tension and ethnic-racial conflict. The situation can be exacerbated when the economy is sluggish or in decline.

Economics also plays a role in workplace violence. When the economy is sluggish or in decline, there tends to be an increase in workplace violence (Leck 2002; Midirs 2002; Di Martino 2000). Economic self-interest is a powerful motivator and when it is challenged, individuals may react violently or aggressively if their status is threatened.

Politics can be an important factor in workplace violence. Class conflict, the changing of political regimes, or the movement from one political system to another are all

forms of political instability and are associated with conflict and violence (Villarreal 2002). Political instability affects the workplace in at least three ways. First, political instability may lead to economic instability that creates competition and conflict over jobs. Second, political conflict between two or more groups may pit workers against one another, and this may lead to conflict in the workplace. Third, political instability and the associated economic instability, may lead to scapegoating immigrant and foreign-born labour, and may lead to workplace violence.

Increased stress is also linked to workplace violence. Whether such stress originates from work or other sources, it may be a cause of workplace violence. Indeed, stress related to work pressures, bullying, and from taunting by colleagues may also lead to violence. Thus stress can be both a cause and an effect of workplace violence.

4. Sector-specific environment as originator of violence and stress at work

While no occupation is immune from violence, some are at greater risk (Chappelle and Di Martino 2000), such as those in the service sectors. Five factors tend to define the greater risk in the service sectors: handling money and valuables; providing care; advice or training; carrying out inspection or enforcement duties; working with mentally disturbed, drunk, or potentially violent people; and working alone.

As an example, in a 1994 study of workplace violence in Sweden, Nordin (1995, p. 3) found that nearly 24 per cent of all workplace violence occurs in the service sectors. In the United States, Jenkins (1996, p. 4) found that retail trades, services, and transportation industries accounted for 64 per cent of all workplace homicides. In addition, of all “high risk” occupations, taxi drivers had the highest homicide rates per 100,000 workers.

Factors causing stress are all in some way or another related to work in the education sector. For example, role ambiguity is a big stressor in the education sector, especially in recent times when educational systems are undergoing monumental reforms. Role competency may also cause stress because feelings of incompetence are not only driven by change but by such simple facts that some educators are teaching out of their content areas of expertise.

Table 2 outlines the applicability of causes for both workplace violence and stress in the services sectors to the education sector. Column 2 suggests whether the issue identified in column 1 is applicable. Information in column 3 describes the education equivalent. Note that the only workplace violence or stress factor not related to the education sector is the handling of money or other valuables. Otherwise, there appears to be considerable overlap between the education sector and other services.

Table 2. The applicability of research on workplace violence and stress to the education sector

Workplace violence and stress: Risk and causal factors	Applicability to education sector?: Y = Yes N = No	Description of how factor is applicable to the education sector
Workplace violence: Risk factors		
Working alone	Y	Unless teachers have an aide, most work alone in their classrooms.
Handling money/valuables	N	Not applicable.
Working with the mentally ill	Y	Teachers can, unknowingly or knowingly, work with students who have mental problems or are potentially violent. Also, while Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is not a mental illness, the stress such students bring to the teaching and learning environment can be overwhelming.
Working with violent clients	Y	Educators may work with violent and potentially violent students. Assaults on teachers and on students by violent students, though miniscule, are still a problem for educators.
Working with the public	Y	Educators not only work with parents, but their job performance is being continually evaluated nationally by the news media. Such monitoring and criticism can place stress on educators.

Workplace violence and stress: Risk and causal factors	Applicability to education sector?: Y = Yes N = No	Description of how factor is applicable to the education sector
Workplace stress: Causes		
Role ambiguity	Y	Role ambiguity has many origins. In education, two of the more important sources are change (curriculum, teaching styles, schools organization, etc), and teaching out of content area. Reform, for example, has created the following kinds of stress-related problems for teachers: (1) making them technicians which tends to lower the ownership role as an educator (Menter et al. 1997; Novick 1996; Woods 1995); (2) placing teachers in the role of managers or cost-effective analysts, which lowers their job satisfaction and lessens their sense of autonomy (Menter et al 1997; Pollard 1992; Sullivan 1994).
Role conflict	Y	Role conflict means a conflict between basic core values held by an individual and the duties and responsibilities of their role as educators. For example, suppose an educator is charged with moving his/her students at a certain pace through a curriculum, but a small number of students are unable to keep up with such a pace. Conflict may arise because the educator realizes that certain students are unable to keep up due to issues of poverty, family problems, etc. His/her core values suggest that extra time be spent "educating" these children, but the formal role of being a teacher dictates that they move on.
Role insufficiency	Y	Role insufficiency occurs when there is a mismatch between knowledge and skills, and one's work role. It is quite possible that a significant proportion of educators are in this situation. For example, the phenomenon of teaching out of one's field of expertise can cause feelings of role insufficiency.
Role responsibilities	Y	This particular stressor is a clear factor in teaching because teachers have responsibilities for their students. In fact, as schools have become "relatively independent education providers" the role of education and educator has become even greater. Educators now have greater responsibilities for their students (Stenhouse 1975; Fullan 1991; Brown et al. 1995).
Change	Y	Change in education has been a perennial issue. Educational reform, standards-based education, site-based management, etc. all cause change and tend to create stress for educators. In terms of educational reform pertaining to curriculum development, for example, Novick (1996) notes that teachers are viewed as technicians and purveyors of a "canned" program. The consequences are that teachers lose sense of ownership of the curriculum and are merely delivering knowledge. (See also Menter, Muschamp, Nicolls, Ozga, and Pollard 1997 for studies of teachers in England.)

Workplace violence and stress: Risk and causal factors	Applicability to education sector?: Y = Yes N = No	Description of how factor is applicable to the education sector
Career delays	Y	The topic of career delays also may characterize teachers but in a slightly different version. In this case, it is the issue of pay and other benefits over which educators are constantly fighting.
Decision making	Y	Autonomy and control are issues that constantly emerge in studies of teachers and their work. Movements to change school organization, accountability, etc. all decrease the inputs educators might have about their job. Such lack of autonomy and decision making responsibilities may lead to stress.
Relations	Y	The relations teachers have with students can be a stressor. In fact, according the NEA's report on the Status of the American Public School Teachers (1997), the most important factor hindering teachers from delivering their best services to students is student discipline. In other studies and reports, the lack of understanding between students and teachers is an important factor among many educators.
Family	Y	Family issues can be a stressor for educators. Whether it be marital problems, problems of scheduling, or parenting problems, family issues may lead to stress in the education sector.
Task design	Y	As we noted earlier, task design is a stressor. The way teaching and schools are organized leads to stress among educators.
Workload and pace	Y	The demands placed on educators in terms of variability in student preparation, skills, motivation, timelines, and issues related to educational reform all impact workload and pace and stress levels among educators. Hargreaves (1994) points out that reform efforts increase the expectations about the role of being a teacher – they are expected to do more. Other research indicates that reform intensifies teachers' work and pace (Bullock and Thomas 1997; Wylie 1997; Chamberlain 1995; Rutter and Smith 1995; 'e et al. 1992). Most of these reforms lead to illness, burnout, or early departures among some teachers (Travers and Cooper 1996).

In the workplace violence literature, we saw that working with the mentally ill and/or with violent individuals tended to increase service workers' risk of work place violence or crime. Educators are also likely to work with or interact with individuals with these profiles, whether they are students, parents, colleagues, or strangers. The probability of educators coming into contact with these individuals is clearly lower than for other service workers such as police officers or mental health workers, but the likelihood exists and is therefore listed.

5. Scope of violence and stress in the education sector and impact on the sector and its workforce

5.1. School crime and violence: An international overview

International research on violence in the education sector should be more comprehensive. Shaw (2001a, p. 3) indicates that “Unlike the United States, most countries do not collect national statistics on school violence. Outside the US, most information on school safety relates to bullying, insecurity or problems of vandalism or theft.” With this in mind, the present section undertakes a brief analysis of school crime as it occurs internationally.

Before commencing, however, two points should be made. First, data are not available to undertake international comparisons. Second, data from the United States indicate that violence in the education sector has declined (De Voe et al. 2002) and has never been at a level comparable to violence in other workplace sectors (Verdugo 2000). Schools are among the safest places for both children and adults.

5.1.1. School disruptions

Concern about school crime and violence crosses national boundaries (Shaw 2001). The highly publicized shootings in the United States, as well as those in Dunblane, Scotland (in which 16 students died in 1996), and the killing of Headmaster Philip Lawrence in London, England in 1995, have spurred many countries with school-related crime and violence problems to undertake a number of initiatives in making schools safer.

- In *Sweden*, there has been a 300 per cent increase in reports of school violence. However, they all tend to be minor infractions that did not seem to have been reported in the past (Shaw 2001b).
- In *Canada*, teachers reported greater incidences of weapons in schools, ethnic-racial conflict, and extortion among elementary school children (Smith et al. 1999). In Quebec, 9 per cent of youth in schools are victims of extortion, and the figure is 15 per cent in Montreal (Tondreau 2000). Also, Gomes et al (2000) found that although there is greater victimization in school than in the past, victimization occurs mostly among young children and males. In addition, 20 per cent of violent crime by 12 to 17 year-old urban youth occurs in school (Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics (1999).
- In *South Africa*, 40 per cent of rapes and 43 per cent of indecent assaults were against girls under the age of 17, and often occurred at school (Shaw 2001b). Also, 62 per cent of school violence involves racial incidents and the sexual harassment of girls (Shaw 2001).
- In *France*, during the 1998-99 school term, there were 88,500 reported incidents among 3.5 million middle and secondary school students. The most common incidents were verbal abuse, attempted robbery, and physical violence. In 17 per cent of these incidents, school staff were targeted (Shaw 2001b).
- In *Japan*, 2 per cent of school violence is against staff and school property (US Departments of Education and Justice 1999a).

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- In the *United States*, during the 1996-97 academic year, 10 per cent of all public schools reported at least one serious violent incident (De Voe al. 2002). Data from the responses of school principals indicate that another 47 per cent reported at least one less serious violent or non-violent crime (such as physical attack, fight without a weapon, theft/larceny, and vandalism).

For teachers, the information is somewhat the same. From 1995 to 1999, teachers were the victims of some 1,708,000 nonfatal crimes at school. These included 1,073,000 thefts and 635,000 violent crimes (rape or sexual assault, robbery, and aggravated or simple assault). On average, these figures translate to about 79 crimes per 1,000 teachers per year. Other crime data pertaining to teachers in the United States include:

- Over the 1995-99 period, teachers in senior and junior high schools were more likely than teachers in elementary schools to be victims of violent crime (most were simple assaults).
- Crimes against teachers varied by where they taught. Urban teachers were more likely than suburban or rural teachers to be victims.
- During the academic year 1993-94, 13 per cent of teachers were threatened by a student. This varied by urbanicity: 18 per cent in central cities, 12 per cent in the urban fringe, and 10 per cent in rural areas.
- During the 1993-94 academic year, 4 per cent of all teachers were physically attacked by a student: 6 per cent in central cities, 4 per cent in the urban fringe, and 3 per cent in rural areas.

5.1.2. Bullying

In many countries, bullying is the leading school safety problem.

- In *Norway*, 9 per cent of students are victims of bullying (Shaw 2001b).
- In *Britain*, the percentage of students who are bullied ranges from 4 to 10 per cent per year (Sharp and Smith 1994).
- In *Spain*, 15 per cent of secondary school children are bullies or victims of bullying behaviour (Ortega and Mora-Merchan 1999).
- In *Japan*, bullying is common in elementary and middle school. Students in the first year of middle school report high levels of bullying (Morita et al. 1999).
- In *Canada*, a survey of children up to the 8th grade indicates that 6 per cent of students admit to bullying others. Moreover, 15 per cent indicate they were victims of bullying behaviour (National Crime Prevention Centre 2000).
- In *Australia*, during the 1990s, one in 6 or 7 children indicated they were bullied on a weekly basis (Rigby and Slee 1999).
- In *Germany*, between 4 and 12 per cent of students experienced frequent and persistent bullying (Lösel and Bliesener 1999).
- In the *United States*, 20 per cent of 15 year-old students said they had been bullied in their current term in school (US Departments of Education and Justice 1999). A study of junior and high school students found that 77 per cent had been bullied in their school career (Arnette and Wasleben 1998).

5.2. Workplace stress in the education sector

In this subsection, an argument is developed as to how workplace stress emerges in the education sector. While the education sector is characterized by many factors that are stressful, it is unfortunate that this topic has not received additional research attention (Buie 2002).

Cox and Griffiths (1995b) identified various sources of teachers' stress. Among those most commonly cited were:

- problems arising from the organization of the school and of work;
- lack of support and cooperation;
- lack of training and career development opportunities;
- the nature of the work (including classroom situation, heavy workloads and disruptive pupils);

Other research points out the following (note that in some cases a bulleted fact may be followed by a case study):

- In the United Kingdom, workplace stress is a concern in four out of five schools (UK National Union of Teachers 2000).
- Stress is rooted in the way teaching and schools are organized (UK National Union of Teachers 2000), and may contribute to educators themselves behaving violently (Moushavi 2001):

Record violence among Japan's teachers
Sharon Moushavi
BBC News
December 27, 2001

A record number of Japanese teachers were disciplined for committing "obscene acts" against students in the latest school year, an Education of Ministry survey found.

At the same time, teachers are facing extraordinary strains. Last year the same survey showed a record one-in-400 took a leave of absence, citing mental anguish or stress.

Much has changed in Japan's once vaunted school system. What used to be a model of the country's success appears to have become a breeding ground for trouble.

The problem has been blamed on a number of factors, including the enormous pressures students face to pass competitive exams.

The situation in Japan's schools mirrors what is happening across the country. Crime is rising nationwide, as are the levels of suicide and depression. Nearly all of the problems are attributed to Japan's decade of economic decline – a decline that shows no sign of ending.

- Teaching is one of a handful of high stress jobs (Smith et al 2000).
- Students with ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) cause stress among teachers (Greene et al. 2002).⁴

⁴ There are at least two pieces of information concerning ADHD students that may be important. First, students with ADHD problems may develop oppositional and aggressive behaviour which

- The lack of school and/or classroom discipline causes stress among teachers (Geiger 2000; Almeida 1995; Schottle and Peltier 1991).
- Stress among teachers is a contributor to illness as well as a cause for some to leave the profession (Wainwright 2002; Patterson 2001; Aitken 2002; Cassidy 2001). Consider the following case study:

News and features – Teachers’ stress leave soars, and worse to come
The Sydney Morning Herald
Robert Wainwright
September 17, 2002

Stress leave among teachers in NSW is soaring, with more than 23,000 working days lost last year and an even higher number this year.

The figures come as WorkCover analysis reveals that teachers suffer from stress more than any other professional group, making up 60 per cent of all “occupational diseases.”

The Department of Education’s statistics show that by the end of June its employees, mainly teachers and bureaucrats, had already clocked up more than 15,000 lost working days.

If the trend continues in the second half of the year, stress leave will have jumped 27 per cent in the past two years.

The number of teachers on stress leave for more than a month jumped almost 25 in one year from 251 in 2000 to 309 last year.

- Teachers’ stress cost Scottish taxpayers approximately £43 million per year (Britton 2002).

Teachers’ stress lessons
Mirror Group Ltd.
Emma Britton
May 8, 2002

Stressed-Out Scots teachers are costing the taxpayer a staggering £43 million each year.

And education chiefs fork out a further £37 million on supply teachers to cover for those off sick.

Teacher Support Scotland, which formed six months ago to help teachers cope with stress, yesterday claimed that a proper counseling service could save more than £1million in sick pay each year.

- Naylor (2001a) found that teachers in Canada (British Columbia) reported that the following factors cause their stress: (1) increasing difficulty and complexity of teaching and relating to their students; (2) the volume of work during the day and the expectation that they will deal with a wide range of tasks and issues; and (3) lack of time, resources, support, and respect.

Naylor also reported on the consequences of stress among teachers: (1) they take on more work; (2) they opt for part-time work; (3) they quit teaching all together; (4) they become ill; and (5) stress has negative effects on their family life.

- In another study, Naylor (2001b) found: (1) that teachers report high levels of stress related to *reporting* practices and issues; (2) site-based management leads to increased workload and stress; and (3) accountability, lack of autonomy, relentless change, constant media criticism, reduced resources, and moderate pay all increase stress levels among teachers.

stresses parents and thus teachers (Abikoff and Klein 1992; Biederman et al. 1996; Anastopoulos et al. 1992; Breen and Barkeley 1988). Second, teachers tend to have poor views of ADHD students (Abikoff et al. 1993; Hughes et al. 1999; Lovejoy 1996).

6. An examination of strategies to remedy the problem

6.1. General strategies from the services sectors and their applicability to the education sector

It is now commonly suggested that workplace violence requires comprehensive strategies and solutions because workplace violence is itself a complex problem (Chappell and Di Martino 2000). Such an approach entails work in three areas: the individual, the organization, and in the community. Regardless of where one begins, however, it is important for organizations to take the following steps first (Chappell and Di Martino 2000):

- *Evaluate the organization to see if there is a problem:* Take a confidential survey of staff to see if there are indeed problems. If there is a problem(s), determine its nature, where it occurs, when it occurs, and who seems to be involved. Basically, look for types of incidents, patterns, and common causes.
- *Determine the relevance of the problem:* Find out the location of the greatest risks, examine incident reports, and examine the circumstances surrounding such incidents.
- *Describe the problem:* Look for common and differentiating elements of incidents, e.g., time of day, day of the week, etc.
- *Examine reasons for the violence:* Look for types of violence, and how it may have been averted.
- *Design a prevention strategy:* The strategy may involve one or more of the following: changing the physical environment; changing the organization of work; changing/invoking new organizational procedures/policies; looking at work design issues; providing training; and examining the selection/screening of new employees.
- *Implement the strategy.*
- *Evaluate and monitor the strategy:* Assess the effects of the new strategy on the identified problems and employee behaviour, and evaluate the strategy itself.

1. Individual prevention strategies

Employees should take the initiative to protect themselves and their co-workers. A summary of these strategies is provided below.

- (a) *Inquire about safety in the organization.* Employees should take some responsibility for their own safety. Being proactive involves: (1) asking the employer about safety policies and plans that exist in your organization; (2) seeking training; (3) asking if there has been an assessment and if there has not, asking that one be conducted; if an assessment has been conducted, ask to see it; (4) joining a union in order to insure that the employer is concerned with safety; and (5) reporting all problems.
- (b) *Seek training about self-protection.* As part of proactivity, seek training from the employer. In addition, ask that all colleagues participate in such a training program.

Some possible topics for training include, but are not limited to:

- self defence;
 - how to diffuse a potentially violent situation;
 - knowledge about the company's plan;
 - what to do after an incident.
- (c) *Advocate for drills and practice.* If there is a plan in place, ask that practice drills or simulations be frequently conducted. Such drills remind staff that incidents do occur, that the employer has a plan for their safety, and that all employees should become familiar with the plan.
- (d) *Work With co-workers.* Finally, it is worthwhile to work with colleagues on safety issues. Become acquainted with colleagues and with their schedules. Bonding with co-workers ensures that all can take care of one another.

2. Organizational prevention strategies

At the organizational level, two broad areas of activity should take place – prevention strategies and prevention measures.

- (a) *Preventive strategies.* Prevention strategies are global plans of action aimed at eliminating the *causes* of workplace violence. Such strategies should embody at least three traits. First, they should be comprehensive. Workplace violence is multifaceted and strategies should be directed at reaching all of its multiple causes. Second, comprehensive strategies should involve all stakeholders – management, employees, and community members if necessary. Finally, comprehensive strategies should layout their goals and objectives in clear statements.
- (b) *Preventive measures or programmes.* A second line of prevention focuses on specific measures or activities. There are at least five preventive measures organizations can pursue:
- *Screening potential problem employees* may stop problems from occurring in the future. Some commonly recommended activities in this area include psychological tests, written exams and interviews.
 - *Training* should be given to all staff and management. Training has four important functions. First, training develops communication skills among staff that can be used in defusing potentially violent situations. Second, training develops skills and competencies in the specific roles/functions employees will take in the organization. These skills can be used to defuse problems. For example, incompetence is an issue that creates frustration and anger among many clients. The greater the competency, the less likely are clients to become angry and frustrated. Third, training assists employees in identifying and recognizing violent situations and people. Fourth, training can be used to train a core group of individuals who have responsibility in handling complicated and potentially violent situations.
 - Providing *information* is an important trait of effective preventive measures. Information not only prevents the risk of violence, but it can also lower the causes of potential violence, such as anxiety and frustration. Information clears the air about what is and what is not appropriate behaviour in the workplace, and

cuts the silence about inappropriate behaviour. Finally, information to staff about how to handle potentially violent situations, stress, frustration, etc., can stem violence in the workplace.

- A fourth preventive measure concerns the *physical environment and layout of the workplace*. There are two broad areas of prevention work in this topic: addressing general factors, and addressing specific design issues. In terms of general factors, such things as air temperature, noise levels, and lighting are issues that need to be addressed. Other general factors include surveillance monitors, alarms, and lock-down procedures.

Specific-design issues focus on eliminating or reducing the risk of violence by altering the physical layout of work. For example, a receptionist could be placed at the front entrance to a school, which might help prevent intruders.

- *Work organization and design* aims at changing the organization of work activities in order to reduce the risk of violence. Two areas are critical: changing and/or altering work practices and developing organizational solutions. To begin with, change practices in order to limit client dissatisfaction. Practices such as having adequate staffing, rotating staff assignments, or acquiring more staff during peak operating periods are measures that should be pursued. Such policies reduce the amount of face-to-face contact with clients and improve cash handling procedures by using technology.

3. Community/societal prevention strategies

- (a) *Legislation.*⁵ A number of prevention legislative strategies can be undertaken by countries to reduce violence in the workplace. The focus of legislation can be in many areas:

- criminal law;
- civil or common law;
- employment injury legislation;
- health and safety legislation;
- legislation focused on environmental issues;
- legislation that focuses on specific factors at work;
- legislation that focuses on collective agreement.

Some countries have instituted legislation that makes certain kinds of work place behaviour a crime. For example, in the United Kingdom, it is a crime to engage in harassment behaviour. In other countries, legislation makes it a civil or common law violation to engage in inappropriate behaviour at work. For example, workers in Paraguay can lose their jobs for sexually harassing another employee. In the United States, 15 states recognize negligent hiring as a tort if the hired employee harms or intimidates another employee.

⁵ This section relies heavily on the work of Chapell and Di Martino (2000).

Some legislation seeks to *compensate* injured workers. In such contexts, employers or the government are responsible for compensating injured workers. However, in some countries, compensation, especially for stress, has come under serious question. In Australia, the United States, and Canada, decision-making bodies are seriously questioning this kind of legislation.

In many countries, *the responsibility for the care of injured workers is placed on employers*. In the United Kingdom, the Cullen Report states that employers have a legal duty to protect their employees. In New Zealand, the Health and Safety in Employment Act of 1992 makes it clear that employers are responsible for the safety of their employees. In the United States, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) states that employment should be free from hazards that increase the likelihood of death or harm.

Environmental legislation focuses on the causes of work place violence and may lead to strategies, policies/guidelines, and procedures that remedy the problem. A number of countries have pursued this type of legislation.

- In 1994, the Netherlands added a provision to the 1980 Working Environment Act. The provision prohibits sexual intimidation, aggression, and violence at work. It also holds employers culpable for such incidents.
- In Sweden, the Work Environment Act makes employers responsible for the safety of their workers.
- In Norway, amendments to Norwegian legislation state that workers shall not be subject to harassment or other improper conduct.

Some *legislation also targets specific factors* related to work place violence. For example, British Columbia (Canada) adopted a regulation to protect workers from work place violence by requiring employers to conduct a risk assessment, and to develop and implement policies that would eliminate risks. In 1993, Sweden issued two ordinances on work place violence under the existing Work Environment Act. The ordinances focus on the context or organization of work that lead to work place violence and not on individual workers themselves.

Other specific legislation include:

- *Working alone*. The Canadian Labour Code indicates that it is the employers' responsibility to protect their employees, including employees working in isolation.
- *Health and social service workers*. In the United States, OSHA provides guidelines for the protection of these workers.
- *Sexual harassment*. While many countries do not have legislation that addresses this issue, in common law countries, such as Australia, Canada, the United States, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom, legislation prohibits such behaviour. In France, Spain, and Sweden, legislation in the labour penal code outlaws such behaviour. Some countries, such as Austria, Belgium, Finland, Germany, the Netherlands, and Switzerland are working on similar legislation. The topic has also caught the attention of decision makers in other countries: Argentina, Costa Rica, the Republic of Korea, and the Philippines have adopted legislation prohibiting such behaviour.

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- *Legislation can also be enacted to encourage action against violence* or it may suggest incentives aimed at its prevention. For example, in the United States the Workplace Violence Prevention Tax Credit Bill of 1997 has pursued such a strategy. The Bill provides a tax credit of up to 40 per cent of the cost of a program or activity, if the program does one or more of the following:
 - Ensures the safety of women.
 - Provides counseling services.
 - Provides education to employees.
 - Finally, *legislation could be enacted in conjunction with collective bargaining agreements*. The European Union, EROFIET (European branch of the International Federation of Commercial, Clerical, Professional and Technical Employees) signed a statement in 1995 to combat crime and violence in commerce with EURO Commerce.
 - *Norway*: In 1994 an agreement was signed between the Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions and the Confederation of Norwegian Business and Industry. The agreement states that workers have a right to refuse to work with other workers who exhibit improper conduct.
 - *United Kingdom*: UNISON developed a model agreement on tackling violence in the National Health Services. The agreement specifies that policies and procedures must be negotiated and agreed upon by management and trade union representatives.
- (b) *Campaigns*. Campaigns assume that general understanding and awareness will eliminate or reduce work place violence.

The effects of campaigns are both direct and indirect. Direct effects may include raising the awareness of perpetrators, which may then persuade them to stop their behaviour.

Indirect effects may include raising the awareness of victims and bystanders and therefore increasing the likelihood of their reporting incidents to the proper authorities. Campaigns raise awareness and understanding not only about what is and is not inappropriate behaviour, but also about what sanctions perpetrators will face, should they act inappropriately.

- (c) *Labour unions/collective bargaining*. At the national level, countries have the opportunity of working with labour unions in developing and implementing policies, legislation, and initiatives that protect workers. At both the national and international level, agreements between national governments and unions should stress cooperation in protecting workers. Specific issues worth considering include:
- Governments should pay attention to the problem.
 - The agreement should emphasize to employers that they are responsible for the safety of their employees.
 - The agreement should emphasize that cooperation between government agencies, unions, and employers is critical for the successful elimination or reduction of work place violence.

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- The agreement should emphasize that training of both employees and employers is critical.
 - The agreement should ensure that adequate information about workplace violence is to be provided to both employees and employers.
- (d) *Cooperation with other countries about immigrant workers.* Given the significant level of violence that is directed at immigrant labour, especially women, countries should develop agreements that protect this category of workers. At a minimum, these agreements should emphasize the following:⁶
- Employers are responsible for the protection of their employees.
 - Training should be provided to immigrant employees, other employees, and employers.
 - Information should be distributed to all stakeholders about what is considered inappropriate behaviour, and the sanctions individuals face should they act inappropriately.
 - Severe sanctions will be levied against perpetrators.

6.2. What is being done in the education sector

In the education sector a number of activities have been tried to make schools safer. Generally, these activities may be grouped into two categories: strategies and programmes.

Unfortunately, most activities have been programme activities without any thought to placing them under the theoretical umbrella of some strategy. That, in fact, is the difference between a strategy and a program. The former is a theory that guides a set of programmes for a given set of goals. The latter are a set of specific activities aimed at remedying a problem. This section briefly summarizes the literature and then proposes a synthesis.

Before continuing, one point needs to be made. Prior to starting any safe schools activities, it is highly recommended that educators undertake a survey of safety in their schools. Results from such a survey will help identify any problems areas, who is involved, when the problems take place, where they take place, how they occur, and why they occur. Only after such a survey has been completed does it make sense to develop and implement safe schools activities.

6.2.1. Safe schools programmes

Safe school programmes are a set of activities aimed at addressing selected problems in a school. There are three categories of safe school programmes: school climate, physical plant, and student behaviour.

⁶ Currently, a small number of such agreements exist that nations might examine as models for the development of their own agreements. One example is the 1990 International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, which was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. Another international Convention adopted by the United Nations is also applicable: the 1965 International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

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- 1) *School climate programmes* aim at creating positive and safe learning environments, with strong relations between educators and students. Examples include programmes that focus on teacher and student expectations of one another, on classroom instruction, and on other policies and programmes that focus on school organization.
 - 2) *School physical plant programmes*: An important component of safe schools is their appearance and design, and their policies about entering and leaving school grounds. Thus a school physical plant program might include policies against offensive graffiti and policies or activities that focus on keeping school grounds clean and neat. Other components of a school plant physical program could include:
 - *Visibility*. It is important that educators have clear views of students and their activities while on school grounds. Thus, some school programmes use television monitors or cameras, better lighting in hallways, and the removal of barriers or obstructions. Some new schools have been designed with curved hallways to insure greater visibility.
 - *Entering and exiting*. Some schools have *organized* themselves so that a receptionist is the first person a visitor encounters upon entering the school building. Other schools have turned to using school resource officers or security guards. Still other schools utilize locked doors, metal detectors, metal bars on windows to regulate entry and exit to the school. These activities tend to be controversial, but many schools have used them in addressing safety problems.
 - 3) *Student behaviour*. Schools have also attempted to make schools safer by controlling student behaviour. Thus, schools have used such school programmes as peer mediation, no bullying/harassing behaviour and policies about school dress and language. In addition, schools have invoked policies against weapons, drugs, and alcohol on school premises. Students who violate these rules are quickly sanctioned.

6.2.2. Safe school strategies

In contrast to programmes, which are narrow and single focused, strategies are broad and comprehensive. Strategies operate under two major assumptions:

- School safety problems are complex and require comprehensive approaches.
- Schools can't make schools safer alone, they need help.

A review of this specific body of research has identified four strategic approaches from the United States:

- The U.S. General Accounting Office approach (1995).
- An approach advocated by Drug Strategies, Inc. (1998).
- An approach advocated by Gottfredson (1998).
- An approach made by Guerra and Williams (1996).

Table 3 outlines each of these strategic approaches.

Table 3. Key components of four safe schools strategies

U.S. General Accounting Office	Drug Strategies, Inc.	Gottfredson	Guerra and Williams
1. Comprehensive approach	1. Activities against violence, aggression, and bullying	1. Programmes that build school capacity to initiate and sustain innovation	1. Identify different kinds of violence: – Situational – Relationship – Predatory – Psycho-pathological
2. Early start and long-term commitment	2. Skills training based on a strong theoretical foundation	2. Programmes that clarify and communicate norms about behaviour – by establishing school rules, improving the consistency of their enforcement, or holding school-wide campaigns	2. Identify risk factors: – Individual – Peer- – Family – School – Community/society
3. Strong leadership and disciplinary policies	3. Comprehensive, multifaceted approach	3. Comprehensive instructional programmes that focus on a range of social competency skills (self-control, stress management, responsible decision-making, social problem solving) and that are delivered over a long period of time to continually reinforce skills	3. Identify different kinds of programmes: – Individual level – Close interpersonal relations – Proximal social contexts – Societal macrosystem
4. Staff development	4. Promotion of a positive school climate	4. Behaviour modification programmes and programmes that teach thinking skills to high-risk youth	
5. Parental involvement	5. Long-term commitment to skills development		
6. Inter-agency partnerships and community linkages	6. Interactive teaching		1.
7. Cultural sensitivity and developmental appropriateness	7. Developmentally tailored interventions 8. Culturally sensitive materials- 9. Teacher training		

Each of these strategies has common points, but there are also significant differences. The synthesis undertaken here is based on two assumptions. First, that schools cannot make themselves safer alone; they need the help of the community and families. Second, we need to be proactive and develop preventive strategies and then use appropriate programmes.

Based on the four strategies listed in Table 3, there are three steps recommended for making schools safer:

- Take a comprehensive approach by focusing on the school, the community, and the families.
- Use the public health strategy in identifying problems.
- Finally, identify appropriate prevention, intervention, and suppressive strategies.

6.2.3. Public health strategy and its application to the education sector

The public health model has been seen as a legitimate strategy because school crime and violence are seen as a public health problem (Hamburg 1998). This strategy is excellent for its ability to check the spread of diseases and other health problems that infect communities. It has also been used to reduce the incidence of child abuse by applying primary, secondary, and tertiary programmes to resolve problems. Primary prevention stops problems before they occur. Secondary prevention stops existing problems from getting worse. Finally, tertiary prevention stops problems from being passed on to other cohorts.

There are three broad steps in the public health model: identifying problems; identifying solutions and resources; and implementing programmes, including monitoring, evaluating data and making adjustments, if necessary.

- (1) *Identifying the problem.* In the past 5 to 7 years, educational decision makers have attempted to implement many safety programmes, ranging from peer mediation to the use of metal detectors (National School Boards Association 1993). What has been troubling about these attempts is that they have been implemented without any prior effort to study school problems by identifying types of problems, their causes, and appropriate solutions. In other words, it appears that there hasn't been an effort to link problems to programmes. The identification of problems should be a first step in any safe schools strategy.

In identifying school safety problems, education decision-makers need to take stock of problems by asking the usual questions (See Verdugo 1997, 2000 for detailed discussions):

- What kinds of problems are occurring in the school?
- Where are these problems occurring?
- Who is causing these problems and who might be recruited to help resolve them
- What might be the best solutions to resolving these problems?

In addition to identifying problems, there should be an effort to categorize problems in terms of risk factors – individual, peer, family, school, community and societal. A related task is to identify problematic behaviour in terms of its being predatory, situational, interpersonal, and/or psycho-pathological. Each type of behaviour calls for specific kinds of solutions. Table 4 links risk factors, problems, and possible solutions.

Table 4. Risk factors, problems, and possible solutions

Risk factors	Problems	Solutions
Individual	Low achievement, drug abuse, fighting, bullying, harassment	Academic tutoring, drug program, conflict resolution
Peer	Anti-social peers, gangs	Peer assistance, mainstreaming activities, isolation
Family	Witnessing violence/abuse, child abuse, inappropriate role models	Parenting classes, parent involvement, family therapy
School	Low teacher expectations, unjust application of school discipline policies, lax behaviour codes	Just rules that are equitably applied, positive teaching and learning climate
Community	Crime, drugs, violence, gangs	School-community partnerships, student activities to bond with community
Societal	Gun violence, lack of support for education, destructive media coverage	Policies and campaigns that support education, policies that attempt to reduce violence in communities

As can be seen from Table 4, solutions and programmes are targeted specifically to problems based on the risk or origins of the problem. Below is a brief discussion of the various kinds of prevention, intervention, and suppressive programmes.

(2) *Prevention and intervention programmes.* A listing and description of prevention and intervention programmes is provided below:

- *Social development programmes* are delivered as part of the curriculum and they help children develop skills and attitudes for getting along with others. Some typical programmes include role playing, discussions, and rehearsals.
- *Youth involvement programmes* attempt to connect or reconnect students with other social institutions. The intent is to assist children in joining or bonding with legitimate groups.
- *Peer mediation programmes* get children to resolve their disputes non-violently. Such programmes can take many forms, but peer mediators tend to be influential students.
- *Gang prevention programmes* pursue prevention and intervention strategies. Such programmes focus on changing attitudes and behaviour and on restricting gangs' access to potential recruits.
- *Parent behavioural training programmes* attempt to teach pro-child skills to parents. These programmes focus on increasing positive interaction with children, and on helping parents set limits on their child's behaviour.
- *Family therapy and family problem-solving programmes* are tailored to individual family needs and problems. These sorts of programmes process the family as a system. Areas of therapeutic work include emotional disengagement, ineffective family problem solving, dysfunctional family relations, and shared negative beliefs and behaviour patterns.
- *School organization and parent and student involvement programmes* seek to change and enhance the school environment. It is presumed that certain school practices facilitate the development of inappropriate student behaviour.
- *Links between quality and safety.* An emerging and promising line of research centers on the relationship between school quality and school safety (Verdugo and Schneider 1999). Specifically, quality schools are safe schools; in contrast,

safe schools are not necessarily quality schools. There are six traits that are believed to characterize quality schools: (1) a shared understanding and commitment to high goals; (2) open communication and collaborative problem solving; (3) continuous assessment for teaching and learning; (4) personal and professional learning; (5) resources to support teaching and learning; and (6) curriculum and instruction.

- *Teacher practices and cooperative learning programmes* are intended to develop academic skills and connect with students (OERI 1992; Walker, Colvin, and Ramsey 1994; May 1995). These programmes stress:
 - attending to positive behaviour by praise and rewards;
 - minimizing disruptive/negative behaviour by using clear, consistent rules and sanctions;
 - cooperative learning as an option.
- *Enhanced community services programmes* are used because the community is a major source of crime and violence, which can spill into schools. Disengaged, dysfunctional communities produce at-risk children (Wilson 1987, 1996). Hence, communities that rebuild and expand services are contributing to safer schools in an indirect way. Such services include but are not limited to recreation, employment, and community policing.

Community focused programmes need to be comprehensive. In addition, to those services listed above, such services should address economics, police work, and health issues.

- *Community development, neighborhood mobilization and public information programmes* focus on youth development and on reducing access to guns, providing gang information, etc. They tend to be what McEvoy (1999) calls social-community movements, and include the following components: campaigns to raise public awareness, and campaigns to change laws and public policy.
 - *Suppressive strategies.* These kinds of strategies focus on permanently or temporarily removing offending students from school or on remanding students to law enforcement agencies. These strategies are reserved for the most violent or chronically disruptive students:
 - Temporary or permanent expulsions.
 - Placement in an alternative school environment.
 - Placement in the juvenile justice system.
- (3) *Developing procedures for the education sector.* In developing solutions for work place violence in the education sector, much that has been learned from the service sectors is applicable. Three levels of activity are outlined in Table 5: nationally; at the school level; and at the individual level. It should be mentioned that in pursuing strategies for reducing stress and violence in schools, some prior evaluation at the school level should have taken place.

Table 5. Applying solutions to the education sector based on lessons learned from the service sector

Level and area of activity	Examples of activity
National	
Campaigns	Develop national campaigns against school and youth violence.
Legislation	Develop legislation for the funding of safe schools programmes and research.
Unions	Work with educators' unions. Make school safety and stress issues part of collective bargaining.
Organizational	
Physical aspects of work environment	Ensure that hallways and other areas are well-lit. Remove all obstacles in areas that inhibit views. Consider technological solutions, such as monitors and metal detectors, phones in the classroom, etc.
Work design/practices	Implement practices and design issues that may heighten safety and reduce stress. For example, team teaching, having the school receptionist be the first person anyone sees upon entering the school, creating smaller schools and classes.
Policy	Develop and implement safe school policies and programmes, crisis management plans. Consider developing zero-tolerance policies that are fair and equitably applied. Develop policies that allow educators time for planning and to pursue professional development activities.
Training	Provide programmes that address defusing potentially violent situations, conflict resolution, stress reduction, etc. It is important that each school determine the best program for its own environment and population.
Information/communication	Ensure that all incidents are reported. It is also important that policies be communicated to all stakeholders and that everyone understands the policy and consequences for violating such policies.
Families	Working with families is crucial for reducing stress and violence in schools. Pursue activities that inform and communicate regularly with parents about student progress, important issues, and the need for cooperation. It is also important to empower parents so they become partners in the schooling process.
Communities	Work with communities to ensure a violence and stress free environment. Develop a community school safety committee; key community leaders take charge of the community and pursue activities in school or school related that gets key community members and parents involved in schooling.
Individual	
Reporting	Individuals (educators and students) report all problematic incidents.
Proactive	Educators should ask about school policies that address stress-increasing factors and safety. If none exist, take the initiative to develop and implement such policies. Work with a union to make this happen.

National activities

Nationally, the service sectors' literature emphasizes three strategies: campaigns; legislation; and collaboration with unions. Each of these can easily be applied to the education sector with some appreciable success. Hence, countries might undertake campaigns that push for reasonable zero-tolerance for school crime and violence, raise awareness about what it means to have a violence-free school, and deliver the message that it is one's responsibility to report all school crime and violence incidents to the proper individuals and authorities.

In addition, a number of legislative efforts can be undertaken that not only punish perpetrators, but also provide funds for safe school programmes, enhancements to schools, and training for educators and students.

Organizational activities

Organizationally, there are at least five activities specified in the literature concerning work place violence in the service sectors: altering or enhancing the physical environment; work design; changing work practices; organizational policy; and training. For example:

- Schools can alter the *physical environment* so that it is safer. Some examples include removing bushes and other physical elements that obstruct views, install proper lighting in hallways, and remove lockers.
- *Work design* is a second school-level activity. Some examples of work design include smaller classes or schools, placing the school receptionist in an area where all visitors are visible and must pass by this person upon entering the school. Yet another design issues entails putting phones in teachers' classrooms.
- A third organizational measure focuses on *work practices*. For education employees this means how they routinely interact with others, deliver their services, or generally go about their work. Team teaching is a strategy that might work to enhance classroom safety. Another practice might involve having parent-teacher meeting areas that are open to viewing by one's colleagues. These are only a few of the work practices that schools can initiate to make themselves safer.
- *Policy* is a fourth organizational measure. Schools can develop and implement policy about behaviour in school, and sanctions should be applied if such behaviour fails to materialize among students and adults. It is important that such policies be clearly written, be concise, and disseminated to all education staff, students, and parents. Moreover, it is crucial that such policy be fairly and consistently implemented. Finally, a key policy activity is developing school and crisis management plans.
- Finally, schools need to provide *training* on school safety to both educators and students. School participants need to understand their roles when it comes to safe school policy, the implementation of a safe school plan, and a crisis plan.

Individual activities

Individual level measures include reporting all problematic incidents. In addition, individuals should take the initiative in asking schools administrators if safe school plans exist – a crisis management plan, and a general safe school plan. If such plans do not exist, it is strongly recommended that individuals push for their development and implementation.

7. Conclusions

Though the vast majority of schools are safe, problems exist that pose significant challenges for educators. Many of these problems take away from a quality teaching and learning environment (Verdugo and Schneider 1997), but may also be related to potentially violent incidents and job-related stress. A number of programmes and strategies have been attempted to make schools safer as a result of these and other school related incidents, but most strategies fail for a number of reasons, the most important being that they are not comprehensive (see Verdugo 2000, and Gottfredson 1998).

One tactic that has not been approached in the school safety literature is applying the notion that schools are work environments that share many of the same traits as the service sectors and thus may benefit from safety strategies that have been developed and implemented for that sector. The purpose of this paper has been to draw the link between work in the service sectors on safety and its relationship to the education sector.

Causes of workplace stress and violence

Workplace stress and violence are international problems. A review of the literature reveals that many countries experience these problems to such a degree that they bear significant costs not only to individuals and their organizations, but to the countries as well. The causes of such problems are complex and multifaceted, but five factors stand out. First, the lack of cultural norms makes such behaviour taboo, especially against women. Second, there is the lack of rigorous legislation that punishes perpetrators of workplace violence. In many countries, sanctions are no more than hand slaps. Third, racial or ethnic conflict between native and foreign labour can occur, especially during times when economies are sluggish. Fourth, political instability contributes to workplace violence by pitting co-workers with different political stances against one another, and may also influence indigenous populations to scapegoat foreign workers for their problems. Finally, stress can lead to workplace violence.

Workplace stress and violence in the services sectors

In addition to the causes found in other work environments, there is a set of causes that appear to be unique to workers in the services sectors. These unique causes or risk factors include: (1) working alone; (2) handling money or valuables; (3) working with the mentally ill; (4) working with violent clients; and (5) working with the public. These and other less significant factors raise the risk among service workers of being victims of violence.

Implications for the education sector: A synthesis

A synthesis was undertaken in an attempt to apply what is known in the services sectors to the education sector. Such an exercise indicates that many of the causes of workplace violence in the services sectors also apply to the education sector. Moreover, it was also discovered that there was much overlap between these sectors in terms of what are considered effective safety practices. The clear implication is that the education sector can learn much about making itself safer by examining safety practices and activities in the service sectors. Several things are particularly relevant: begin by evaluating the problem; develop comprehensive strategies; identify programmes that fit the problem; and evaluate, monitor, and change the strategy if necessary.

In conclusion, the most important reason why proposals for making schools safer fail, based on information from services sectors and the school safety literature as well, is that they are not comprehensive. Work place violence is not a simple matter, and thus it requires multifaceted strategies.

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