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THESIS
SUBJECT: **Bullying and cyber bullying in adolescents.**
Case study, incidents of LGBTQ community in Greece.



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ΜΕΤΑΠΤΥΧΙΑΚΟ ΠΡΟΓΡΑΜΜΑ ΣΠΟΥΔΩΝ:
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ΘΕΜΑ: Σχολικός και διαδικτυακός εκφοβισμός στους εφήβους και μελέτη
περίπτωσης η ΛΟΑΤΚΙ κοινότητα στην Ελλάδα.

ΜΕΤΑΠΤΥΧΙΑΚΗ ΦΟΙΤΗΤΡΙΑ: ΝΤΑΡΖΑΝΟΥ ΧΡΙΣΤΙΝΑ
ΑΘΗΝΑ
ΙΟΥΝΙΟΣ 2020

ΠΡΑΚΤΙΚΟ ΚΡΙΣΕΩΣ

**ΤΗΣ ΣΥΝΕΔΡΙΑΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΤΡΙΜΕΛΟΥΣ ΕΞΕΤΑΣΤΙΚΗΣ ΕΠΙΤΡΟΠΗΣ ΓΙΑ ΤΗΝ
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Εξεταστική Επιτροπή

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Η εξεταστική επιτροπή αφού έλαβε υπ' όψιν το περιεχόμενο της εργασίας και τη συμβολή της στην επιστήμη, με ψήφους προτείνει την απονομή στον παραπάνω Μεταπτυχιακό Φοιτητή την απονομή του Μεταπτυχιακού Διπλώματος Ειδίκευσης (Master's).

Στην ψηφοφορία για την βαθμολογία ο υποψήφιος έλαβε για τον βαθμό «ΑΡΙΣΤΑ» ψήφους, για τον βαθμό «ΛΙΑΝ ΚΑΛΩΣ» ψήφους, και για τον βαθμό «ΚΑΛΩΣ» ψήφους Κατά συνέπεια, απονέμεται ο βαθμός «(Αριστα/Λίαν Καλώς/Καλώς)& (Βαθμός).....».

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Preface

In *Philoctetes*, the tragedy of Sophocles, the hero was abandoned by his peers for ten years on the island of Lemnos, with an untreated wound, and we witness the physical pain, and the process of mourning he undergoes. The ambivalence of feeling from hate to rage is eternal and without mercy. The myth addresses the message that bereavement and pain have psychological consequences and lifelong trauma. Sophocles dares to convey, through sentiments and feelings, human pain in all its tragedy. We witness the curve of sentiments of an untold “wound.”

Abstract

This is a review of how the implementation of specific holistic and targeted initiatives can tackle the ongoing challenges of bullying among adolescents.

Implementation of a different approach to diversity through an updated curriculum to promote positive behavior at school can decrease the level of bullying and enable adolescents to gain the skills to tackle the challenges on a personal and academic level (1). The rate of incidence of bullying is increasing and remains underreported, with one out in every five students (20.2%) being bullied, with the highest percentage of incidents at middle school (33%). The impacts of bullying affect not only the adolescents who are involved but also the whole community as well, with further consequences in the mental health and the well-being of the adolescents as they grow up and exhibit with life-long behavioral problems (2,3).

In the case of Greece, there is a lack of research regarding the causes that provoke violence among adolescents and an immense need for further recording of the data and implementation of programs to address the challenges.

A need for a collective and immediate response to bullying is needed, especially in regards to the inclusion of minorities, LGBTQ+ community adolescents and who become victims on the grounds of disability, gender, race, religion, sex orientation and expression. The encouragement of welcoming diversity and feeling solidarity with others has the potential to diminish discrimination, stereotyping, stigma, hate, and other forms of inequality in both education and in later life.

Methodology

A structured search in a database of scientific literature was conducted to identify reviews of the last ten years, guidelines, data from researches and from NGOs. Through this review, interventions focused on the whole community are examined.

Keywords: Bullying, cyberbullying, adolescence, LGBTQ+, interventions

Introduction

Bullying

The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Department of Education defines bullying as an unwanted aggressive behavior(s) by another youth or group of youths who are not

siblings or current dating partners that involves an observed or perceived power imbalance and is repeated multiple times or is highly likely to be repeated. In addition, it highlights that bullying may inflict harm or distress on the targeted youth including physical, psychological, or educational harm (4). The term bullying includes two modes, the direct that happens in the presence of a targeted group of teenagers and the indirect as a non direct way communicated (5). Additionally, in a broader extent other categories of bullying can be recognised: verbal, physical, emotional or relational, cyber bullying, sexual bullying (6). There are three components of bullying: an aggressive behavior that involves unwanted, negative actions; a pattern of behavior repeated over time; and an imbalance of power or strength (7,8).

Moreover, Dr. Dan Olweus is a Swedish-Norwegian research professor of psychology, and considered the pioneer and founding father of research on the concept of bullying. In 1970, Dr. Olweus conducted the first scientific systematic study on bullying. He published the results of the scientific study on bullying in 1973, and in 1978 published the book titled, *Aggression in Schools: Bullies and Whipping Boys*. In the 1980s, Dr. Olweus continued with research on bullying, and conducted the first scientific systematic intervention study against bullying in the world. The results of the systematic intervention study against bullying showed that interventions showed as positive effects as a prevention measure of bullying. As a result of the systematic intervention study, the *Olweus Bullying Prevention Program* was born. Furthermore, Dr. Olweus published another book titled, *Bullying at School: What We Know and What We Can Do*, that would define the characteristics of bullying. According to his findings: “ A person is bullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons, and he or she has difficulty defending himself or herself.” (9,10)

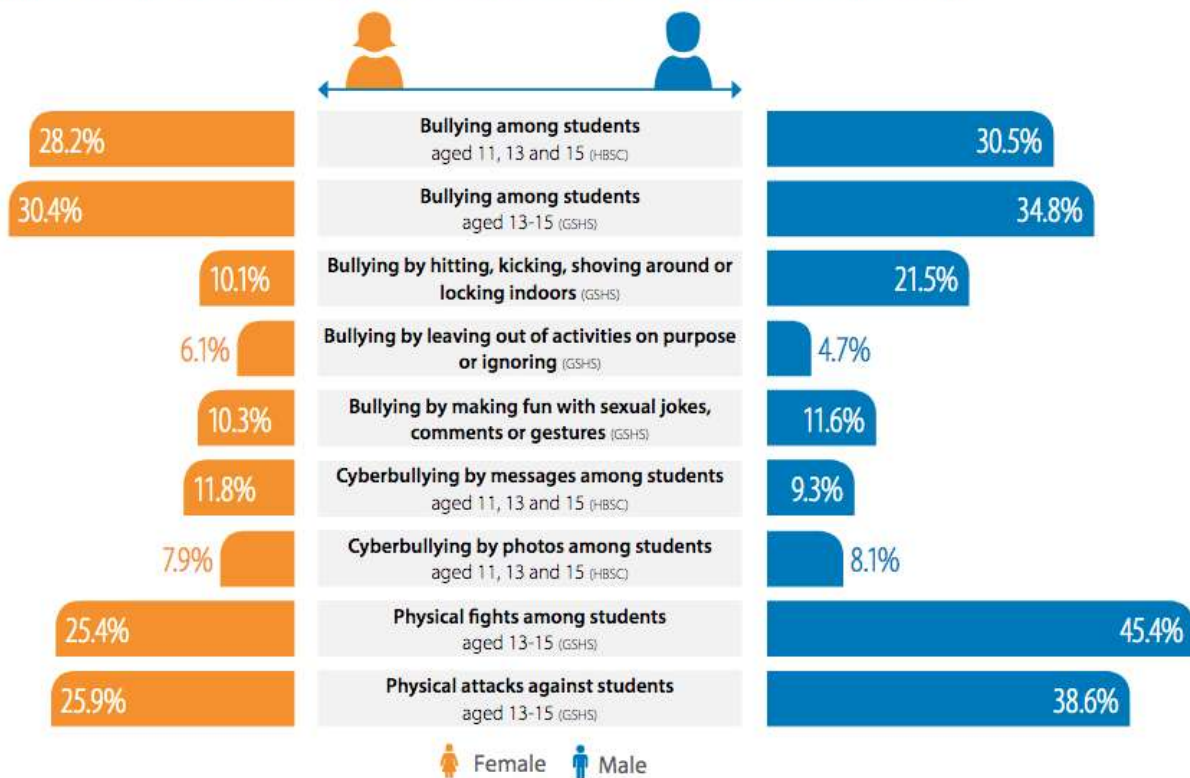
Causes of Bullying

In the school environment, it has been observed that bullying happens when there is prejudice against a student who belongs to a certain minority, sexual orientation, religion, or race, or against a student who seems vulnerable (11,12). Undoubtedly, what drives the bully is a very complex issue that occurs when there is an imbalance of power due to jealousy or frustration in the school environment. A series of factors may lead to bullying, such as some bullies have experienced bullying or aggressive behavior themselves, and may act in the same way to deal with their own issues (6). Or they come from a dysfunctional family environment which is not

supportive (13). It happens that bullying is rewarded by peers, and bullies gain popularity and often look to attract attention from their peers (14, 15).

According to research there are some differences in sexes: boys have been reported as having an increased risk of involvement directly either as victims or as perpetrators, while girls engage indirectly in bullying. Precisely, certain characteristics in adolescents are more likely to make a child more vulnerable to bullying, especially those who are less socially connected or maybe belong to stigmatized groups (16, 17, 18, 19). It is observed that bullied adolescents may internalize their experience by blaming themselves and developing psychosomatic problems, depression or anxiety. In addition, there are cases where children externalize their experience and their frustration or anger and become aggressive to others.

Figure 11. Percentage of boys and girls affected by different types of school violence and bullying



Source: Hong JS, Davis JP, Sterzing PR, Yoon J, Choi S, Smith DC. A Conceptual Framework for Understanding the Association between School Bullying Victimization and Substance Misuse. *Am J Orthopsychiatry* [Internet]. 2014 Nov [cited 2020 Jun 14];84(6):696–710. Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4291077/>

As regards the prevalence of bullying in Europe in aged 13-15 years old the percentage is high both in physical fights and bullying among students.as we can see at the graphic (figure1) (19).

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying may have consequences across the educational life span (20). It has a series of forms of digital practices, of online or through messages, by emails, social media, gaming and platforms (21, 7). It happens by spreading rumors on social platforms, by posting embarrassing videos or pictures, making threats, sharing private information, photos online without their consent, by creating fake accounts in order to post embarrassing information for someone, accessing other profiles with malicious content or excluding someone from social groups and gaming (8, 22, 23).

Schulze-Krumbholz et al. in his study found that cyber bullied adolescents were the ones that had been bullied themselves in traditional ways (24). The anonymity of the perpetrator deprives of the victim the possibility to fight back and thus preserves the vicious circle of bullying (25).

Moreover, in contrast with traditional bullying, in the digital world a message goes fast and viral (26). People working with adolescents must take into consideration that cyberbullying has mainly four characteristics: 1) most of the time is anonymous, 2) it can be permanent, 3) it is persistent, and 4) it can be hard for parents and teachers to notice.

Cyberbullying has many forms, such as:

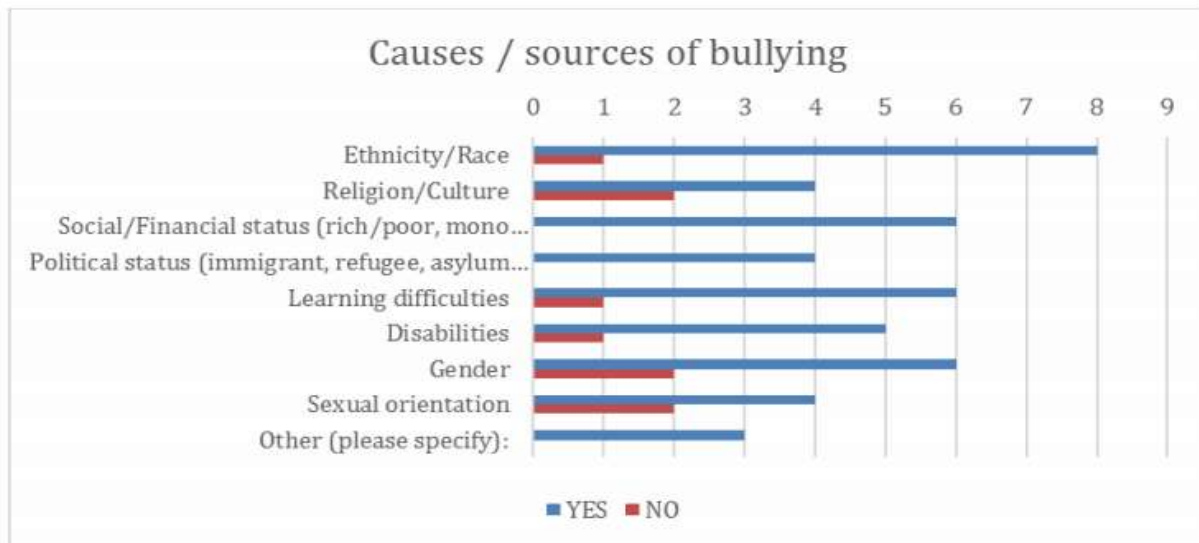
- flaming: online using messages with angry content
- harassment: by sending messages repeatedly
- sending information which is derogatory
- impersonation: breaking into an account
- outing and trickery: sharing someone's embarrassing information
- cyber stalking: sending messages repeatedly that include threats (22, 27)

Cyberbullying involves the use of digital devices like cell phones, computers, and tablets, through SMS, Text, and apps, or online social media, forums, or gaming where people can view, participate in, or share content that includes sending, posting, or sharing negative harmful, false, or mean content about someone else (28). The sending, posting, or sharing personal or private

information about someone else brings on negative effects such as embarrassment or humiliation (6). The most common places that cyberbullying occurs is on Social Media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and Tik ToK, text messaging and messaging apps on mobile or tablet devices; instant messaging, direct messaging, and online chatting over the internet; online forums, chat rooms, and messaging boards, such as Reddit, email, and online gaming communities (29, 30).

At school- related violence in Greece there are several causes of bullying in Greece, the first cause of bullying is ethnicity, and the second cause of bullying is social/financial status, learning difficulties and gender; and the third cause of bullying is religion/culture, political status, and sexual orientation (31).

As we can see at the graphic below
 (Figure 2) Causes/Sources of Bullying



Source: Myers C-A, Cowie H. Cyberbullying across the Lifespan of Education: Issues and Interventions from School to University. *Int J Environ Res Public Health* [Internet]. 2019 Apr [cited 2020 Jun 15];16(7). Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6479619/>

On January 1, 2019, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) published the report called *Behind the Numbers: Ending School Violence and Bullying* (33). The report provides for the first time up-to-date evidence on school violence and bullying both on global and on regional level. For the first time two large-scale international surveys, the Global School-based Student Health Survey (GSHS) and the Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) study provided data to show the changes that the prevalence of school violence and bullying have over a period of time (31, 34). These two large-scale international surveys covered 144 countries and territories in all regions of the world. There were a wide range of other global and regional surveys conducted as well. This report provides snapshots of the status of school violence and bullying in regional areas. It is worth noticing that according to the report (32%) of students, one in three almost, has been bullied at the school district (33).

Additionally, it has to be carefully considered that the most common cause of bullying occurs when students are perceived as different from the norm, not conforming to gender norms and physical appearance (35).

Scope, Extent & Matrix

A psychodynamic approach examines bullying as a symptom of a dysfunctional approach on the part of a student in order to express power at school (19). It is recommended not to limit data collection to bullying alone, but rather to gather information on the broad threats to an adolescent's safety. According to evidence-based research, adolescents who are engaging in bullying tend to engage in sexual violence too (36).

A great initiative "Counter Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse" was drafted by the governments of Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The principles contained in this initiative urge technology firms to take specific actions to ensure children are protected from sexual exploitation on their platforms:

- ensuring the end to existing and new child sexual abuse material appearing on platforms
- pledging to stop the live streaming of abuse
- tracing and stopping grooming and predatory behaviour
- ongoing monitoring to threats as they evolve

Multiple coordination in the US has been undertaken by stakeholders and by technology companies. Facebook, Google, Microsoft, Twitter, Snapchat endorsed the principles of this initiative.

Collaboration is critical not only at the national and regional levels and among smaller tech companies, but also at the global level and with the contribution of the largest tech companies. Such a grounded framework with effective partnerships with technology companies has the ability to combat the evolving threats in terms of effects that are facing children online.

Students' lives are being shaped behind a screen, and every day, young people dive more deeply into platforms not designed with their safety in mind. Adolescents' lives and experiences are increasingly being shaped in the digital world. Moreover, there is an increase of active youth online, with 200,000 children going online every day, and 800 million actively using social media. It is easy for disturbing trends that emerge to negatively affect them. It is critical to address the risk factors that children have long been exposed to, in regards to violence and exploitation (22).

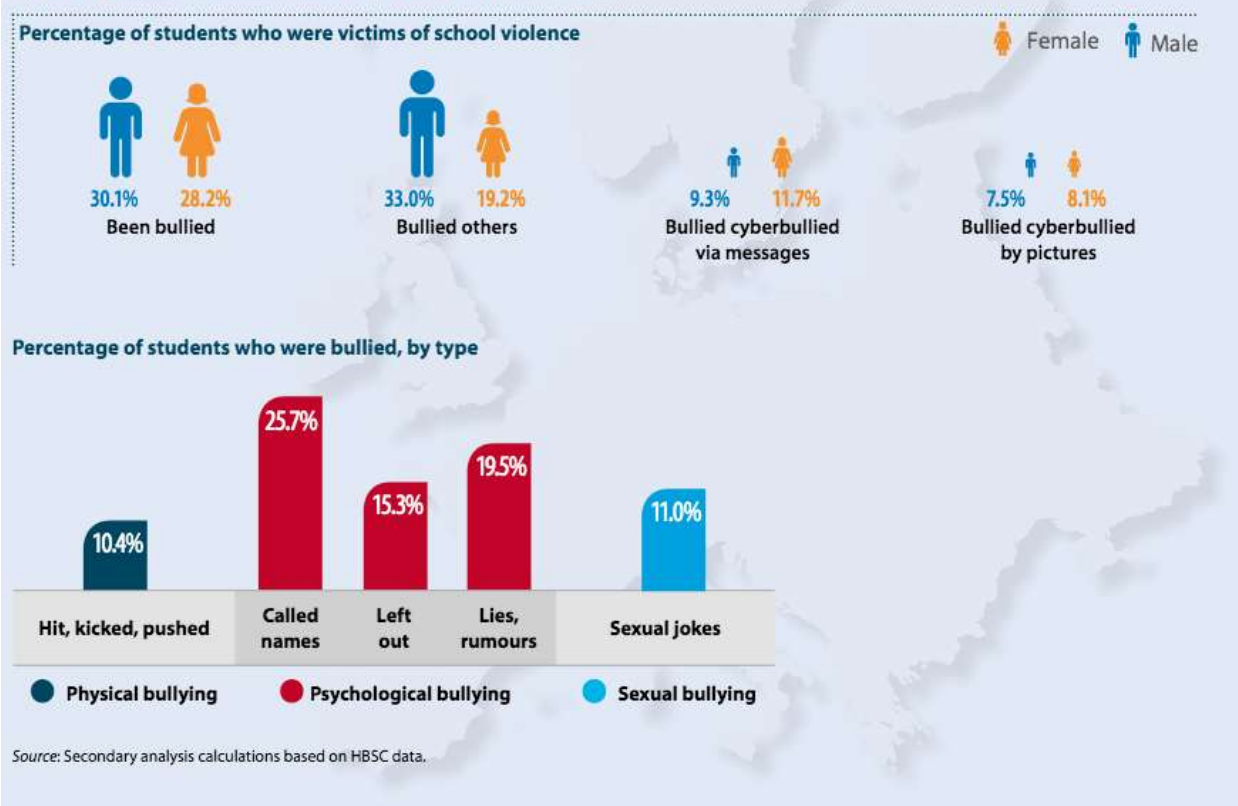
This increase refers to the number of cases of violent and sexual images and videos of children uploaded or even live-streamed on the internet and dark web, which are increasing at an incredible speed. This trend was reported by the Internet Watch Foundation, which also reported that in 2017 alone, online photos and videos with sexual abuse of children increased 37% as compared to the previous year in 2016.

It is noteworthy that bullying behavior occurs when there is a power imbalance, due to a wide range of things, such as strength, popularity, level of cognitive ability, or even desire to gain social status (37). Bullies share some characteristics, like aggressiveness and frustration. This complexity goes further with a desire for dominance, power, competitiveness, reputation and popularity. The aggregation of adversities exacerbates adolescents' attitudes in general in Europe.

The overall prevalence of bullying in Europe by evidence based data, reports that one in four adolescents who experience bullying refers that was based on their physical appearance and 8,2% on race, colour or nationality reasons (33).

Additionally, in terms of trends specifically region the psychological bullying reposted as a major concern and the most frequent type as we see at the graphic below (figure 2) (33).

Figure 24. Status of school violence and bullying in Europe



Source: Nassem E. *Bullying is still rife in schools. Here's how teachers can tackle it.* *The Guardian* [Internet]. 2018 Jan 17 [cited 2020 Jun 15]; Available from: <https://www.theguardian.com/teacher-network/2018/jan/17/bullying-is-still-rife-in-schools-heres-how-teachers-can-tackle-it>

Case Study

Given the considerable evidence on the issue of youth bullying experience from community of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ), there is still a social, cultural stigma against gender and binary individuals (38).

The survey of Human Rights Campaign, indicates that LGBTQ+ students report being victims of bullying at school, verbally and physically, at a rate twice that of non-LGBTQ youth.

Considering that experiences of violence have not only educational and psychological outcomes, it is imperative to support the bullied groups.

To cope with peer victimization, bullying among youth in general, and to develop special care against the stigma facing the LGBTQ+ community, protocols informed by academic research must be implemented in school communities (38).

Indisputably, labeling and stereotypes of the LGBTQ+ group (not only at the structural level - laws and policies - but also, at interpersonal level) serve the function of enforcing social norms of heterosexuality and binary gender roles. Stigma, discrimination, and bias based on socioeconomic criteria is prevalent. From the perspective of identities, attributes or characteristics that are out of the norm are more susceptible to being bullied.

It has to ensure a positive, safe school district that promotes diversity and has the law to protect the rights of gender, sexual diversity. Additionally, in schools where clubs of Gender and Sexuality Alliances (GSA) exist, there is evidence that shows the positive benefits for students. GSAs are generally school-based clubs that provide comfortable settings for LGBTQ+ students. These initiatives work on with positive well-being among LGBTQ+ students. LGBTQ+ students in schools with GSAs report engaging in fewer health risk behaviors (eg, substance use, sex while using substances, and suicide attempts) and have more positive psychosocial well-being and educational attainment as young adults compared with LGBTQ+ students in schools without them.

Moreover, GSAs provide opportunities to foster social integration between LGBTQ+ youth and their non-LGBTQ+ peers in ways that promote well-being among LGBTQ+ students.

Discussion

School-related violence, which includes bullying, has a negative effect on a student's mental health, quality of life, and academic achievement. School-related violence occurs on school grounds, on the way to school, on the way home from school, and in cyberspace (39).

According to evidence based research conducted by the International LGBTQ+ Youth & Student Organisation (ILGYO) in January 2018, Greece is one of five countries with the least public awareness on sexual orientation and gender equality. Greece has no anti-discrimination law applicable to education, no policies, and action plans, no inclusive national curricula, no mandatory teacher training on LGBTQ+ awareness, no data collection of bullying and harassment, support systems, or information and guidelines about the matter (40, 41).

In June 2018, the Greek Ministry of Digital, Telecommunications, and Media, and the Greek Ministry of Health partnered to announce an initiative on promoting public awareness on gender equality. The purpose of the initiative was to promote public awareness on gender equality. The public awareness initiative on gender quality involved television and radio stations transmitting public information regarding the promotion of essential gender equality, equal treatment, combatting violence against women, gender stereotypes, sexual orientation, identity and gender characteristics as parts of the messages of social content that should be transmitted (42).

In the Greek school environment, there are a series of challenges that Greek school staff face in regards to bullying in the school environment. The first challenge is that Greek school staff lack knowledge or systematic training in identifying the characteristics of bullying. The school staff face difficulties in identifying bullying among students. The Greek school staff respond by punishment. The second challenge is the lack of staffing in Greek school in the social services in providing support for students. The third challenge is the Greek educational curriculum lacks curriculum on gender issues in the Greek classroom.

In terms of prevention it is needed an effective anti-bullying policy (43). Given the deficiency in the school community and the challenges the educators face. Additionally, it is suggested through this review that the Greek Ministry of Education has to implement the model of the Counselor. A Counselor would be an Educator with a training in bullying and could provide the mediator among students and the educational community. Specifically, the Instructor will be responsible for the issues correlated to the spectrum of violence, bullying, racism and discrimination in general (44). Further, the role of the Behavior Interventionist-Coordinator has to be to train the school community in the matter of bullying, by implementing a protocol and developing synergies to better overcome the arised challenges. An will be responsible for monitoring, applying the protocol, evaluating and managing the school bullying policy. The person in that position would be a mediator at the school when it comes to bullying challenges, building trust with the students, encouraging them to express their problems, help them to cope with bullying, and create conditions of communication through victims and bullies (45, 46, 47).

Legislation

The European Commission (EC), the executive branch of the European Union (EU), implements policies aiming to raise public awareness on equality by implementing legislation and measures to protect the rights of the victims since 1975. There are 27 European countries that are members of the European Union. Greece has been a member of the European Union since 1981.

According to the European Union, any discrimination based on sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation is prohibited by law. In 2000, the European Union established a law that prohibited discrimination in the workplace based on racial or ethnic origin, religious or beliefs, disability, age or sexual orientation in the workplace; and extended the law to prohibit racial or ethnic origin in the area of education and social services. The Europe Commission proposes, implements, and enforces legislation on behalf of the European Union. In 2016, the European Commission established Law No. 3304/2005 - G. G. 16/A (27/01/2005), which refers to the application of the principle for equal treatment to equality in the area of racial or ethnic origin, religious or beliefs, disability, age or sexual orientation in the workplace (19).

In October 1998, the Greek Ombudsman, an independent Authority, was formed to protect the fundamental rights and freedoms of citizens of Greece. The Greek Ombudsman collaborates with the United Nations (UN), European Union (EU), Council of Europe (CE), Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development(OECD). The Greek Ombudsman monitors and promotes Law 3304/2005 (2005-Equal Treatment) and Law 4443/2016 (2016-Equal Treatment and Elimination of Discrimination) (48). Law 4443/2016 is the equal treatment and elimination of discrimination on the bases of race, colour, national or ethnic origin, descent, religion or other belief, disability or chronic illness, age, marital or social situation, sexual orientation, identity or sex characteristics (49). The Greek Ombudsman is divided in six departments: Human Rights Dept., Social Protection, Health and Welfare Dept., Quality of Life Dept., State-Citizen Relation Dept., Children's Rights Dept., and Equal Treatment Dept. Each department handles the complaints submitted by the citizens; and controls and investigates the complaints submitted by the citizens (50, 51, 52).

Since 2003, the Greek Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs has collaborated with Children's Ombudsman to create a central institution responsible for monitoring and prevention in school violence. The Children's Ombudsman is responsible for the rights of minors rights. Furthermore, over the years the Greek Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs established at the national level created institutions to monitor and prevent school violence such as Network for Prevention and combating Corporal punishment of Children(2005), Observatory for the prevention of School (2013), and Network on Information Training (2013), and Prevention and Combating of School Violence and Bullying (2013-2015) (53, 54, 55).

The Greek Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs created and funds the institute called the Institute of Child Health. The Institute of Child Health(ICH) provides service and training in the area of child well-being and welfare.

The “Network for the Abolishment of Corporal Punishment” in a National level has been established by the Institute of Child Health Department of mental Health and Social Welfare along with the Deputy Ombudsman for Children’s Rights, the Institute of Social Protection and Solidarity and supervised by the Ministry of Health, the Ministries of Health and Education, the General Secretariat of Youth, the Hellenic Department of UNICEF and the Hellenic Association of Paediatricians since 2005, has included various public, private bodies or non-governmental organizations, with the mission of circulation, health promotion and training of professionals and the general public. Furthermore, at the state level it has also provided the training of police officers in handling cases of violence, police officer academies and refresher training courses in all stages of education (51).

In order to prevent and eliminate the corporal punishment the Institute of Educational Policies (IEP), Pedagogical Institute cooperates with the Greek Ombudsman’s Children’s Rights Department has established the prohibition of corporal punishment at school. An ongoing process at the Education field implemented through curriculum implemented various programmes in order to combat violence and violence at the family environment and hate crimes against minorities.(Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2011) (51).

Regarding corporal punishment, in secondary education it is forbidden, at any form, by the Law 3328/2005148, art 21. A Circular by the Ministry of Education (section C) (Γ2/22673/02.03.2006) focused on corporal punishment of students, explaining that no authoritarian or violent behaviour is acceptable towards the child, on behalf of the educator.

The Greek Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs in the framework of combating violence at school districts, in combination with the rising phenomenon of bullying, alongside other bodies has established in 2011 a network against violence in schools working for the prevention and treatment of violence and bullying. Moreover, in 2012, the Greek State established the Observatory for the Prevention of School Violence and Intimidation (56). The role of the Observatory for the Prevention of School Violence and Intimidation would be to draft and apply measures against violence and bullying, identify such incidents, refer them to the authorities and finally also publish the corresponding statistical data on an annual basis (57).

It is worth mentioning that, the Committee pointed out, the inadequacy of the services, the lack of recording, the statistical data, the information on sanctions regarding the whole process of violence towards youth. There is a demand for filling the gaps and having the indicators to better measure, evaluate and monitor the child protection (58).

The problem specifically with this Law as well as with other parts of legislation is that there are gaps in its implementation on behalf of the judicial system when it comes to how this law will

be implemented. (GOV, GR01) In this law frame attempts to address the gaps and comply with the existing international legislation have to take place (59).

Specifically regarding the Greek framework related to LGBTQ+ community rights covered by the Constitution of Greece. A series of articles cover the significant fundamental rights of equality, protection, free development of personality, protection of people generally. Moreover, verbal violence based on gender identity and sexual orientation is forbidden and clarified in the law 4285/2014 to combat expressions of racism and xenophobia.

Determinants to promote a safe frame

- Ratification and implementation of international and national legislation
- Social campaigns to increase social awareness
- Reinforce child protection system at national level
- Training of the professional
- Reach out vulnerable groups, families providing social services (60)

The research conducted by HBSC/WHO (Health Behavior in School -Aged Children) in 2018, showed the decrease in the percentage of bullying, with one in five children being bullied (19,1%) once or twice weekly.

It is worth noticing that according to a UNESCO publication, the median prevalence of students who were bullied is 23% at the age of 13 years old, which means that that has to be addressed in education policies.

It is important to note that research indicates that cyber bullying, especially in girls, is connected with socioeconomic status. In general, a high percentage of bullying victims are girls from the lowest socioeconomic status. Whereas the bullying background is not connected with economic criteria. It is worth noting that according to students, their percentage of satisfaction with the school environment is at a low level, which further means the development of negative feelings and mistrust about school. This research finding should be taken into consideration when it comes to the implementation of anti-bullying campaigns and the formative role of a supportive school environment (12).

To sum up the results regarding the four indicators, evidence of implications in incidents of bullying both in school districts and out as well, participation in quarrels among adolescents in Greece, the results in total of adolescents range from 11 to 15 years old indicate important

differences. Discrepancies are found among the group ages, sex, economic status, and geographical differences. Especially, in 2018, the research highlights that one in 5 adolescents reported being bullied, at least 1 or 2 times, during the last months of the study and that it happened many times during the week.

Inequalities due to gender, origin and economic status

The students report that bias and bullying based on sex, gender, origin and economic status of families still do happen (3). It is worth noting that there are no differences regarding the indicators of sexes and no discrepancies in bullying and cyberbullying. However, there is an increase of cases in adolescents with low economic status (31). There is a lack of social services in Greece and the need to develop a strategy for the special needs of the students. In this spectrum the creation of an informative and supportive center at school that cooperates with the whole community, school staff, parents and students would be a welcome addition (61).

Anti - Bullying policy

- Whole- school approach: a continuum of teacher and parent training/workshop (21, 62)
- Partnership approach: collaboration with parents, inform them on the best practices to cope (3)
- Promote a democratic school where students have a voice in implementing policies (21, 63)
- Network of support approach: family support services (21, 64)
- Community approach: outreach the community, family support (65)
- Make the school open to community (66)

In terms of safety at school, each Board of School has to reinforce the law, ethics and clarify that there is no room for tolerance of violence and discrimination (61). Implementing anti bullying policies for a just environment at school districts is imperative (63,67,68)

Social and emotional learning (SEL) is another component to the bullying policy. Implementing a SEL curriculum in the classroom will increase positive interactions among students. The SEL curriculum will teach the following skills: self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making (63, 65).

- **Self-awareness:** focus and see one's own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior.
- **Self-management:** self-regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behavior in different situations such as managing stress, impulses, and motivating oneself
- **Social-awareness:** interact with empathy, tolerance and and appreciative of differences, and interact empathetically with peers from diverse cultures and backgrounds
- **Relationship skills:** maintain social connections and feelings of belonging with others, especially with diverse individuals and groups,by communicating clearly, listening well, cooperating with others, and seeking and offering help when needed
- **Responsible decision making:** making positive choices about self behavior and social interactions with others based on moral and ethical standards (69)

Implementing the SEL curriculum will encourage positive interactions and decrease bullying among students.

- a comprehensive school based plan to reduce violence at school, with blended learning, that aims at social and **emotional modules** to cultivate the foundational skills of the youth in general in order to reduce incidents of violence. Adopting a whole school approach with the involvement of the community tends to be effective.

Moreover, to apply a SEL program at schools serves to combat bullying at school. Meta analysis assessments of interventions highlight the importance of parents' involvement at training, of school staff, students and parents' raising awareness of the problem, rules of conduct at school level, classroom management techniques (69, 70).

In the spectrum of prevention, it would be helpful to apply the public health model, which examines the factors that set youth at risk of bullying and implement anti-bullying strategies, by continuous examination to achieve better results.

Implementing a framework that aims at social and emotional learning (SEL) among students and school staff can promote inclusion, respect and warmth and work. Bullying is consistent with social and emotional factors (70).

Research indicates that multifaceted approaches are more effective, that is programs that include training, monitoring, assessment, and awareness. Also social-emotional learning, problem-solving and empathy, including targeted groups and perpetrators, is important.

Needed also are curricula that provide instruction and practice of the spectrum of SEL skills, such as self management, self and social awareness, relationship skills, decision making (71). The effectiveness of such a program depends not only on the cooperation but also of the compliance of the stakeholders, educators, parents, carers, school staff, and students in order to reduce the rates of violence.

- a comprehensive school based plan to reduce violence at school, with blended learning, that aims at social and **emotional modules** to cultivate the foundational skills of the youth in general in order to reduce incidents of violence. Adopting a whole school approach with the involvement of the community tends to be most effective (72).

Impact of Bullying on Youth Victims

Disaggregated studies and data show that that victims report isolation, not being socialised and low self-esteem, psychosomatic problems, and low academic performance in school (18). With a further evaluation to report a serious public health problem with far-reaching consequences in mental health of the adolescents students such as depression and anxiety with far-reaching consequences across their lifespan (39, 73).

Figure 20. Impact of bullying on learning outcomes, mean scores*



Data source: Difference in learning achievement between students who were bullied and not bullied, PIRLS 2015



Data source: Difference in learning scores between students who were bullied and those who were not bullied, TERCE



Data source: Relationship between being frequently bullied and other student outcomes, OECD average, PISA 2015

*Surveys use different achievement scores. They are based on the achievement across all participating countries. The scale centerpoint is set to correspond to the mean of overall achievement or mean performance across countries. PIRLS: The scale has a typical range of achievement between 300 and 700. The centerpoint is 500. TERCE: The centerpoint is 700 for both reading scores and mathematics scores. PISA: the mean performance for science is 493.

Response

In addressing the challenges of school violence, more specifically bullying, on a global level there is common interest among all stakeholders: researchers, government officials, public health professionals, community members, school leaders, educators, parents, and students. There is common shared interest to develop innovative strategies, through an interdisciplinary approach and coordination among the stakeholders at the international, national, and local level.

A comprehensive action plan has to be implemented in order to strengthen the social services in the school environment that is focused on mental health and wellbeing of students. Furthermore,

the comprehensive action plan should take into consideration the inclusiveness of minorities, LGBTQ+ community. In essence, creating a supportive school environment meets the needs and rights of students to learn in the school environment. In the end, the students learn the foundational skills and be prepared for any challenges that arise in their lifetime.

A systemic approach, given that this is a complex process, which meets the needs and the rights of students is necessary. Education has a mission for the youth to obtain a complex set of skills and be prepared for any challenges in their lifetime.

There is a shared interest worldwide in addressing the challenge and developing innovative strategies, through an interdisciplinary approach and coordination among stakeholders, researchers, government officials, school leaders, community members, parents, youth, and public health professionals around in all forms of bullying. That has significant far reaching effects in terms of mental and physical health.

A comprehensive action plan has to be implemented in order to strengthen social care services, focused on mental health and well being of the adolescence. A reinforced whole procedure from prevention to protection that takes into consideration the local context. Implement a different approach, like inclusiveness of minorities, sensitivity of LGBTQ+ community, and adaptation to the special needs of each school district in order to promote the protective factors in young students, family and community level (74).

A systemic approach, given that this is a complex process, which meets the needs and the rights of students is necessary. Education has a mission for the youth to obtain a complex set of skills and be prepared for any challenges in their lifetime.

Resilience and well-being

Resilience plays a major role here in developing the mechanism to cope with hardship and bullying. Resilience is the skill that can lead to the best outcomes in spite of negative events, serious threats, and traumas. Moreover, it is generally agreed that resilience has a key role

towards achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (75), working in parallel into the three levels, individual, community and system (society). One provision of those goals is that societies have to ensure life protection and free access to public health, education, and social welfare and well being to adolescents who have experienced traumatic events, and, in most of the cases, continue to face bullying.

It is important to realize that the development of resilience is a dynamic process that can be affected by many external factors. It is also important to stress that in childhood and adolescence, this process will take place in the family environment – thus that environment has a critical role in determining the strength of the development of resilience in children. Also having a big impact is the psychological situation of other family members and genetics. But the role of developing resilience has been left just to their families; the greater community and public health officials must begin to play their role also (76).

The pillars that work on the well being of the adolescence are characterised by the 7C traits of resilience :

Competence: the skill to deal with challenges effectively, by an empirical process, role playing at workshops

Confidence: work on the competence to feel safe to develop confidence

Connection: cultivate social bonds with family, friends and community, leads to connection

Character: work on life skills to be able to know the right choices for a child in order to become mature enough

Coping: teach children the ability to cope with stress and the ability to tackle the challenges of life

Control: through experiential learning, work on control of their actions in order to have effective results

Among the critical elements, data shows that the supportive family environment of the child or even a stable presence of a caring teacher, counselor, neighbor, sibling helps to develop resilience and be effective. It seems that a complex range of factors, family, age, culture and personality of the young people react differently in the face of adversity. Working on resilience of youth and aiming to robust the personality of the students is essential to to promote psychological well being.

A study in Sweden shows that victims of cyberbullying have high levels of depression and the lowest levels of subjective well-being and support from their family background. It seems that social support can reduce the anxiety and depression symptoms.

Projects targeted in school infrastructure with the engagement of parents in order to promote healthy parenting styles. The mediating effect of depression, self harm and bullying and, have to be considered further from health professionals and schools have to screen incidents of bullying in order to decrease self-injury cases

In order to develop a school based anti-bullying intervention:

- at district level having known the extent of bullying at school. Evaluate and implement policies by educating the school staff, engaging parents, students and community members.
- at the classroom level, input Social Emotional Learning curricula that include lessons and mainly activities of stressing empathy, anger management, conflict resolution skills. Promote communication, friendship and cooperation in the dynamic of the class. Develop workshops aiming to experiential learning focus on discourse, dialogue, narrative styles at individual and community level to stimulate talks targeted in communication.
- At the individual level, work with bullies and victims, role playing of assertive behaviors when it comes to victims or non-aggressive behavior with bullies. Strengthen personal skills self-confidence and increase protective factors like resilience (72).

The climate in Greece indicates that adequate measures have not been adopted yet for the protection of the child and especially in cases of violence. This review proposes that it is urgent to promote and protect the rights of the children by implementing the Convention and precisely the 12th Protocol of the European Convention on Human Rights, targeted at the general prohibition of all forms of discrimination against marginalized groups.

Measures have to be taken in order to diminish inequalities of youth in targeted groups of discrimination. Further the International Conventional on the Rights of the Child has to be implemented to ensure the rights of the children that it proclaims. According to the Convention, these rights include an equal basis and without discrimination and stress the need of special care, promote the right of dignity of life, and ensure the right to education.

Despite the convention, we should note that these rights are being violated on a daily basis and we need to fight for a more inclusive and supportive educational environment.

Victims of bullying should receive sufficient and effective help immediately. To ensure protection and assistance there is a need for disciplinary cooperation of stakeholders, to begin with a protocol implemented from Greek Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs, educators, social partners, police and care services. Reinforce social services in order to correspond and guarantee for their safety and well-being.

In the field of education, it is suggested that it would be beneficial to adequately train all professionals who interact with children on detection, prevention and furthering the support of victims. Regarding the life-long consequences for youth being traumatized by bullying, it is suggested to work on reaching a consensus, an anti-bullying strategy alongside developing a protocol implemented by professionals. Specifically, this review aims to increase awareness in the issue of bullying at LGBTQ+ adolescents at school districts and to propose actions to promote inclusion.

A comprehensive policy from the Greek Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs should reinforce not only the legal framework but also the work on adequacy of structures. In this direction they should reinforce the legislation and address the gaps. There is a need to establish a National Record for reporting all cases, a telephone helpline for handling all cases of child abuse generally, and mainly a need for counseling and specialized support to vulnerable groups. Specialized child services professionals need to be reinforced in order to ensure the best care system for the youth.

Educational policies should be coherent and in coordination with all the stakeholders that interact with students. It is urgent to ensure the rights of the children.

In order to successfully address bullying problems, the entire school must comprise a culture of respect. Expectations for how staff and students treat one another should be clearly reflected in school policies, and the rules for classroom interaction should be consistently modeled by adults and enforced and reinforced in all school settings

Interventions

In a school with a climate of respect and collaboration among stakeholders, administration, health professionals, educators and carers, is one in which most vulnerable students feel safe. Anti-bullying policies that include sexual orientation, gender diversity, promote diversity and inclusion of all minorities in the community and protect the mental health and well-being of LGBTQ+ adolescents.

There is a need for surveillance on sexual and gender diversity, to monitor effective policies, ensuring the anonymity of the process. Preventive programs are necessary, with a wide range of strategies, including professional development for educators and workshops for the whole school community.

The interventions focused on the life skills of individuals have to be developed continuously(72). Moreover, diversity in the spectrum of gender and sexual youth has to be taken into consideration of curricula at schools. There must be inclusiveness of racial, ethnic, religion, immigrant minorities who are also gender and sexual diverse adolescents. Innovative curricula at schools with a wide range of themes such as substance abuse, contraception, sexually transmitted infections, must be implemented in order to include a focus to promote resilience and academic success.

Education should encourage diversity and thus, stakeholders should implement courses to train professionals, not only educators and school staff, but also health professionals, parents and community, and implement protocols focused on sex education, sexual orientation and gender expression, ethics and dynamics.

Education must implement programs that work on psychoeducation of the community in order to reinforce all individuals to develop resilience, self-acceptance and safe exploration of their identities, in order to have better outcomes in academic success and psychological well-being (77).

The key role has an advisor-educator who can be a mediator at the school when it comes to bullying challenges, build trust with the students, encourage them to express their problems, help them to cope with bullying and create conditions of communication through victims and bullies (78).

Implementing a framework that aims at social and emotional learning (SEL) among students and school staff can promote inclusion, respect and warmth and work. Research indicates that multifaceted approaches are more effective. Programs that include training, monitoring, assessment, and awareness are most effective (46, 78).

Appropriate curricula provide instruction and practice at the spectrum of SEL skills, such as self management, self and social awareness, relationship skills, decision making (66, 69).

Victims of bullying should receive sufficient and effective care immediately. To ensure protection and assistance, there is a need for disciplinary cooperation of stakeholders, to begin with the Greek Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs, educators, social partners, police, and care services. Social services must be reinforced in order to correspond and guarantee the safety and well-being of bullied students.

In the field of education, it is suggested that it would be beneficial to adequately train all professionals who interact with children in the detection, prevention, and further support of victims (17). Regarding the life-long consequences for youth being traumatized by bullying, it is imperative to work on reaching a consensus on anti-bullying strategies alongside developing protocols implemented by professionals. Specifically, this review aims to increase awareness in the issue of bullying at LGBTQ+ adolescents at school districts and to propose actions to promote inclusion.

Results of research in Greece regarding the behavior correlated with the health and wellness of students

Creating the framework of the bullying policy that encompasses the development and implementing systems of reporting and monitoring bullying, interventions, programs, and professional development training for staff is key to the success of the bullying policy. At the district level, a Prohibition Bullying policy should be created and adopted by the school district.

Priority Actions: Recommendations at a national level (Greece)

- Establish a surveillance system, recording the incidents of youth violence (79)
- Enforcement of the law
- Continuous training programs for educational staff, students, and parents
- Specialized programs for vulnerable adolescents taking multidisciplinary approach (80)
- Creation of meetings with participation of parents at schools
- Social-emotional learning and health education lessons in school at all grades
- Anti-bullying campaigns that raise awareness, among the student population, with the involvement of local communities (44, 81, 82)

Proactive strategies are necessary to remain focused on the development of an inclusive school environment that is supportive. This includes strategies that rest on positive relationships at school, anti-bullying groups, working on respecting rights of others, protective behaviours, establishing golden rules and resilience training (27, 83)

Assemblies should be encouraged that discuss and set the rules that would be functional at each school environment with rules and policies, written together with the students, which include anti-homophobic campaign (84).

It would be helpful in order to beat cyberbullying at youth to have at school cybermentors who can react effectively at any problems that arise. Mentors would train teams of young people and provide virtual support using new technology and monitoring any inappropriate action (80). Moreover, this allows students, especially in the case of cyber bullying, to have immediate support which is available at any time by their peers.

This support is provided online by senior counsellors who are available at all times. Cyber Mentors and mentees sign an agreement before a session, which can be terminated by either party at any time. Some cybermentors also offer face-to-face mentoring in a designated room.

Outcomes and recommendations

The global evidence from cases studies in countries with effective response to bullying indicates some common key elements being implemented in order to have a sustainable strategy to the phenomenon (33, 85). To reduce the prevalence of bullying at school (37). It is recommended that there be a robust legislation that safeguards the rights of the youth, implements evidence-based research and initiatives, and commits to support education with training to prevent and respond at any phase of school violence (7, 61, 86).

Responses include:

- **Leadership:** a policy framework with a consistent legal system on child protection field, bullying and violence (37, 64, 86, 87)
- **Coordination:** among the stakeholders, education sector, civil society organizations, social workers, health providers (88, 89, 90, 91)
- **Commitment:** to promote the safety and the rights of the youth and especially the vulnerable ones, including minorities (23, 87, 92)
- **Interventions:** based on research and impact indicators based on school bullying (38, 85, 93, 94)
- **Programs:** based on school community, training of teachers, involving parents and implementing workshops for students with restorative approaches (88, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98)
- **Protocols:** develop mechanism to provide referral to other services and support (44, 99)
- **Multi-agency mechanism:** for reporting, data collection procedure at national level, evaluation, monitoring, and objective results (2, 100).

Schools Board should develop a restorative agenda and a different culture of health in terms of Global Health policies to work on healthy adolescents, by implementing programs on physical programs and on physical activity programs as well. There is a need for a holistic monitoring of

health-risk behavior among youth and further planning, implementation, and evaluation of health policies (22, 90, 97, 98, 101).

Good Practices

A great social-focused initiative to address the gender-based violence at the national level in order to promote gender equality and combat violence, stereotypes, sexual orientation and identity issues, took place in 2018 with the cooperation of the Greek Ministry of Digital Policy, Telecommunications and Media, along with the Greek Ministry of Health released by the television and radio stations (Official Government Gazette, Issue B', Sheet No. 2037) (41). Also present in the country are NGOs advocacy projects regarding the issue of gender-based violence and LGBTQ+ rights, through a series of projects aiming at prevention, research, training of professionals, and recording of incidents, in order to combat any form of discrimination due to gender expression in general, to provide psychological and legal support, and to raise awareness. Some of the NGOs below act on these vital issues that work towards strengthening solidarity in society (32).

- Colour Youth- Athens LGBTQ Youth Community
- OLKE
- 11528 Helpline – By Your Side Psychological Support
- Centre for Research on Women's Issues-Diotima
- KETHI (Research Centre for Gender Equality)
- KMOP
- Rainbow school

Conclusion

It must be acknowledged that a cross disciplinary collaboration among policy makers, public health professionals and educators plays a leading role in addressing bullying and mainly, cyberbullying (given the prevalence of the use of technology among youth). It is urgent to have a holistic approach and implement an effective and innovative strategy at schools. (76)Help is urgently needed for the youth to receive the support, resources and opportunities they deserve to meet their full potential.

Given the uncertainty of remote education, there is already evidence of a new era in terms of high tech use, especially cyber-bullying in youth, that needs a comprehensive and coherent multidisciplinary strategy (3). It is imperative to take proactive measures and address the gaps

and the weaknesses of the system in order to protect the youth, and to prepare educators to know what to do when they have a suspicion or see definite signs of abuse for any child. The adults in schools need to understand that it is necessary to report any abuse and for the school to take action immediately (95). A disciplinary and academic task force is needed to develop the appropriate protocol and implement multiple policies to ensure that every child lives in a safe environment (94, 102).

It is obvious that despite the laws, social policies, and concerns, bullying still does exist and children continue to live under violence. Especially, we need reinforced social policies, well trained professional staff, to interview and detect and protect the youth (3).

This review brings to light the host of dilemmas and challenges faced by all the stakeholders, including the secondary traumatic stress and the overloaded professionals, given the fact that there is a lack of a sufficient number of employees working in the field.

This must be a goal in the entire society of affirming the need for advocacy and commitment to eradicate discrimination, to mitigate the effects of violence and to protect every sphere of life for young people. We had hoped that we had made progress but now, even in the 21st century, young people still experience discrimination and violence (3). Unfortunately, this tendency has been exposed even more clearly on the global level (53).

Dedicating to protect every single child

Given my experience working in NGOs dedicated to refugee children and to orphaned children, I cannot forget the feeling I had every time I crossed the threshold of the institutions, to feel the trauma that these children have experienced. Even more it was gut-wrenching when you heard each single story to realize how much pain is out there. Last but not least, the culture of silence that permeates the whole system of child services still exists today. We are challenged to redesign the course and to the benefit of the most vulnerable of youth is a mission that must happen, with a more inclusive and just future in sight for our youth.

“

**IT IS TIME FOR PARENTS TO
TEACH YOUNG PEOPLE
EARLY ON THAT IN
DIVERSITY THERE IS BEAUTY
AND THERE IS STRENGTH.**

Maya Angelou

Appendix

| | |
|---------|---|
| PISA: | Programme for International Students Assessment |
| TIERCE: | Third Regional Comparative Explanatory Study |
| TIMSS: | Trends in Mathematics and Science Study |

Population-based surveys:

| | |
|---------|---|
| DHS: | Demographic and Health Survey |
| VACS: | Violence Against Children Surveys |
| LGBT: | Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender |
| UN: | United Nations |
| UNESCO: | United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization |
| UNGEI: | United Nations Girls' Education Initiative |
| UNICEF: | United Nations Children's Fund |
| UNGA: | United Nations General Assembly |
| UNSC: | United Nations Security Council |
| VACS: | Violence Against Children Survey |
| WHO: | World Health Organization |

ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΗ

Σχολικός Εκφοβισμός και Διαδικτυακός στους εφήβους μαθητές, με ομάδα αναφοράς τη ΛΟΑΤΚΙ κοινότητα.

Σύμφωνα με τον Παγκόσμιο Οργανισμό Υγείας το φαινόμενο του εκφοβισμού είναι μείζον πρόβλημα δημόσιας υγείας. Παράλληλα, το Κέντρο Ελέγχου και Πρόληψης Νοσημάτων στις Ηνωμένες Πολιτείες Αμερικής αναφέρει ότι ως εκφοβισμός ορίζεται η ανεπιθύμητη επιθετική συμπεριφορά από κάποιον νεαρό ή ομάδα νέων που δεν έχουν συγγενική σχέση και εμφανίζεται με σκοπό την επιβολή δύναμης, ενώ επαναλαμβάνεται με την πάροδο του χρόνου αρκετές φορές. Επιπλέον, επισημαίνεται ότι ο εκφοβισμός μπορεί να προκαλέσει βλάβη, σωματική, ψυχολογική και με επιπτώσεις στην εκπαιδευτική πορεία των εμπλεκόμενων μαθητών. Με τον ορισμό σχολική βία ορίζεται η βία που λαμβάνει χώρα στο σχολικό χώρο, στον δρόμο για το σχολείο, στον δρόμο για το σπίτι και στον κυβερνοχώρο.

Ο όρος εκφοβισμός περιλαμβάνει δύο συνιστώσες, τον άμεσο που συμβαίνει παρουσία μιας ομάδας εφήβων και τον έμμεσο, εννοώντας το μη λεκτικό τρόπο επικοινωνίας. Διαφορετικά, οι τρεις θεματικές κατηγορίες εκφοβισμού: λεκτικός, σωματικός, συναισθηματικός ή ανάμεσα σε σχέσεις, διαδικτυακός εκφοβισμός και σεξουαλικός εκφοβισμός.

Ο εκφοβισμός στο σχολικό περιβάλλον, έχει παρατηρηθεί ότι συμβαίνει λόγω προκαταλήψεων σε βάρος μαθητών που προέρχονται από μειονότητες, ή λόγω διαφορετικού σεξουαλικού προσανατολισμού, θρησκείας ή φυλής ή γενικά σε μαθητές ευάλωτων κοινωνικά ομάδων. Αναμφίβολα, πρόκειται για ένα αρκετά σύνθετο ζήτημα που φαίνεται να προκύπτει όταν υπάρχει κάποιου είδους ανισορροπία δύναμης μεταξύ του μαθητικού πληθυσμού. Μια σειρά διαφόρων παραγόντων μπορεί να οδηγήσει σε εκφοβισμό, όπως η ζήλεια ή ο φθόνος ενώ αρκετές φορές τα θύματα εκφοβισμού συμβαίνει να αντιδρούν κατά τον ίδιο τρόπο, δηλαδή να εκδηλώνουν επιθετική συμπεριφορά όταν δυσκολεύονται σε τυχόν θέματα που ανακύπτουν στις κοινωνικές τους σχέσεις. Στη βιβλιογραφία επισημαίνεται ότι αρκετές φορές όσοι εμπλέκονται σε περιστατικά βίας φαίνεται να προέρχονται από δυσλειτουργικό οικογενειακό περιβάλλον ή σε χαμηλό βαθμό υποστηρικτικό.

Μάλιστα, παρατηρείται η τάση, ο εκφοβισμός να επιβραβεύεται από τους συνομηλίκους και οι έφηβοι που εμπλέκονται με κίνητρο την ένταξη σε ομάδα ή τη στόχευση στη δημοτικότητα τους και γενικά, μια προσπάθεια προσέλκυσης της προσοχής από τους συνομηλίκους τους.

Οι έρευνες διεθνώς, παρουσιάζουν κάποιες διαφορές στα φύλα: με το ανδρικό φύλο να έχει αυξημένο κίνδυνο εμπλοκής είτε ως θύμα είτε ως δράστης, ενώ τα γυναικεία να παρουσιάζει έμμεση εμπλοκή στον εκφοβισμό. Υπάρχουν ωστόσο, ορισμένα χαρακτηριστικά τα οποία συγκεντρώνουν οι έφηβοι οι οποίοι γίνονται συχνά θύματα βίας, οι μαθητές που δεν αναπτύσσουν κοινωνικές σχέσεις στο σχολικό περιβάλλον ή εκείνοι προέρχονται από ευάλωτες ομάδες με αυξημένο κοινωνικό στίγμα. Στην περίπτωση εκείνων των μαθητών που έχουν βιώσει εκφοβισμό και εσωτερικεύουν την εμπειρία τους, παρατηρούνται ψυχοσωματικά προβλήματα, όπως κατάθλιψη και έντονο άγχος. Ενώ αντίθετα, στις περιπτώσεις εκείνες που τα θύματα εξωτερικεύουν το θυμό τους, την απογοήτευσή τους και την εμπειρία τους, παρατηρείται η εκδήλωση επιθετικής συμπεριφοράς.

Ιδιαίτερη μέριμνα πρέπει να δοθεί στον ψηφιακό εκφοβισμό καθώς παρουσιάζει αυξητική τάση στη μαθητική κοινότητα, λαμβάνει χώρα μέσω των διαφόρων κοινωνικών δικτύων, διαδικτυακών παιχνιδιών, κοινωνικών μέσων και με ανησυχητικές διαστάσεις για τους εφήβους. Δεδομένης της χρήσης της ψηφιακής τεχνολογίας οι έφηβοι εύκολα γίνονται θύματα ψηφιακού εκφοβισμού μέσω των διαφόρων διαδικτυακών πλατφορμών. Με ιδιαίτερο χαρακτηριστικό την ταχύτητα της διάδοσης της πληροφορίας, συμβαίνει ο διαδικτυακός εκφοβισμός να διαδίδεται άμεσα στις κοινωνικές πλατφόρμες, είτε δημοσιεύοντας ενοχλητικά βίντεο ή εικόνες, με επακόλουθο αρκετοί έφηβοι να λαμβάνουν μηνύματα με ανεξέλεγκτες διαστάσεις. Αρκετές φορές, δημοσιεύονται προσωπικές πληροφορίες σε κοινή χρήση, φωτογραφίες στο διαδίκτυο χωρίς τη συγκατάθεσή ή ακόμα και εν αγνοία των εφήβων θυμάτων. Επίσης, συχνή είναι και η δημιουργία ψεύτικων λογαριασμών σε κοινωνικές πλατφόρμες με σκοπό την ανάρτηση ενοχλητικών πληροφοριών για κάποιον, ή ακόμα και ο αποκλεισμός κάποιων εφήβων από ομάδες και παιχνίδια στο χώρο των κοινωνικών δικτύων.

Συνεπώς, ο ψηφιακός εκφοβισμός έχει τα εξής ιδιαίτερα χαρακτηριστικά της ευρείας διάδοσης σε ασύλληπτο χρόνο, την ανωνυμία του θύτη, και μάλιστα, να ενοχλεί το θύμα με επίμονο τρόπο, ενώ, δύσκολα ανιχνεύεται από τους εκπαιδευτικούς και τους γονείς.

Ο εκφοβισμός στον κυβερνοχώρο πραγματοποιείται μέσω της χρήσης ψηφιακών συσκευών όπως κινητά τηλέφωνα, υπολογιστές, διάφορων συσκευών μέσω μηνυμάτων, κειμένου και εφαρμογών ή διαδικτυακών κοινωνικών μέσων, παιχνιδιών όπου οι χρήστες μπορούν να δουν, να συμμετάσχουν ή να μοιραστούν περιεχόμενο που περιλαμβάνει αποστολή, δημοσίευση, ή κοινή χρήση επιβλαβούς και ψευδούς περιεχομένου. Με αρνητικές επιπτώσεις στην ψυχική υγεία των μαθητών. Συνήθως μέσω των κοινωνικών μέσων που τυγχάνουν μεγάλης αποδοχής από τους μαθητές όπως το (Facebook, το Instagram, το Snapchat και το Tik Tok).

Συγκεκριμένα, σύμφωνα με έρευνες που έχουν διεξαχθεί στην Ελλάδα η πρώτη αιτία εκφοβισμού είναι η εθνικότητα ενώ ακολουθεί η κοινωνική / οικονομική κατάσταση, οι μαθησιακές δυσκολίες και το φύλο. Στην τρίτη αιτία εκφοβισμού βρίσκεται η θρησκεία / ο πολιτισμός, ο πολιτικός/ο σεξουαλικός προσανατολισμός.

Συγκεκριμένα, ο ερευνητής Schulze-Krumbholz et al. στη μελέτη του αναφέρει ότι έφηβοι οι οποίοι υπήρξαν θύματα στον κυβερνοχώρο είχαν υπάρξει θύματα και με τον παραδοσιακό τρόπο. Φαίνεται ότι στην περίπτωση του εκφοβισμού στο διαδίκτυο η ανωνυμία του δράστη να περιπλέκει ακόμα περισσότερο την κατάσταση του θύματος, εφόσον δεν γνωρίζει από ποιον ή ποιους προέρχονται τα κακόβουλα σχόλια ή ηλεκτρονικός αποκλεισμός.

Η σχολική κοινότητα διαδραματίζει ένα σύνθετο ρόλο στην ψυχοκοινωνική, συναισθηματική και σωματική ανάπτυξη των μαθητών. Αξίζει να σημειωθεί ότι ο ρόλος της εκπαιδευτικής κοινότητας δεν έγκειται μόνο στη μετάδοση των γνώσεων αλλά στοχεύει στη διευκόλυνση της μαθησιακής διαδικασίας και λειτουργεί υποστηρικτικά στη σχολική ζωή με κάθε τρόπο. Ειδικότερα για το φαινόμενο του εκφοβισμού στο σχολικό περιβάλλον το οποίο παρατηρείται πιο έντονα και κυρίως, ο διαδικτυακός εκφοβισμός τα τελευταία χρόνια απαιτούνται σε θεσμικό επίπεδο οι κατάλληλες ενέργειες για την πρόληψη του φαινομένου και την αντιμετώπιση της βίας στο σχολικό πληθυσμό.

Η ανίχνευση του φαινομένου της ενδοσχολικής βίας και του εκφοβισμού στα ελληνικά σχολεία, οι μορφές εκδήλωσης και οι συνέπειές του, έχουν αποτελέσει αντικείμενο έρευνας και στην Ελλάδα. Ωστόσο, χρειάζεται περαιτέρω ερευνητική δραστηριότητα στο συγκεκριμένο πεδίο με επικαιροποιημένα ερευνητικά δεδομένα, και κυρίως, τις απόψεις του συνόλου της μαθητικής κοινότητας, η καταγραφή των εμπειριών και των βιωμάτων των μαθητών/τριών. Συνίσταται η ολιστική προσέγγιση του φαινομένου της βίας και μια διαφορετική πολιτική σε επίπεδο Υπουργείου Παιδείας με σκοπό την εφαρμογή στοχευμένων δράσεων.

Μέσω της παρούσας εργασίας προτείνεται, δημιουργία διεπιστημονικής επιτροπής συνάπτοντας συνέργειες με επαγγελματίες διαφορετικών ειδικοτήτων και ανάπτυξης πρωτοκόλλου. Συνεπώς, η δημιουργία δικτύου με ομάδες δράσεις και διασύνδεσης η οποία θα στοχεύει στην εξάλειψη της βίας. Η συνεχής επιμόρφωση των εκπαιδευτικών σε θέματα που άπτονται του σχολικού εκφοβισμού θεωρείται επιβεβλημένη καθώς και η ευαισθητοποίηση της κοινής γνώμης.

Δεδομένης της ανεπάρκειας στο θέμα διαχείρισης της βίας στη σχολική κοινότητα και των προκλήσεων που αντιμετωπίζουν οι εκπαιδευτικοί χρειάζονται αποτελεσματικές παρεμβάσεις. Αρχικά, προτείνεται το Ελληνικό Υπουργείο Παιδείας να εισαγάγει το θεσμό του συμβούλου-εκπαιδευτικού. Ο Εκπαιδευτικός-διαμεσολαβητής θα είναι υπεύθυνος για την επίλυση προκλήσεων μεταξύ των μαθητών και της εκπαιδευτικής κοινότητας καθώς και για τα

ζητήματα στο φάσμα της βίας, του εκφοβισμού, του ρατσισμού και εν γένει των διακρίσεων στην εκπαιδευτική κοινότητα.

Επιπλέον, ο ρόλος του Εκπαιδευτικού ειδικού σε θέματα διαχείρισης του εκφοβισμού έγκειται και στην πρόληψη και εκπαίδευση της σχολικής κοινότητας στο θέμα της βίας, εφαρμόζοντας πρωτόκολλα βάσει της διεθνούς βιβλιογραφίας, σε συνεργασία με επαγγελματίες υγείας και αναπτύσσοντας συνέργειες. Σε εθνικό επίπεδο συνίσταται καταγραφή περιστατικών βίας, παρακολούθηση, εφαρμογή πρωτοκόλλου κατά περίπτωση, αξιολόγηση και υποστήριξη περαιτέρω των θυμάτων και των οικογενειών τους. Με πλαίσιο δράσης το σχολείο προτείνεται η συνεχής μετεκπαίδευση του εκπαιδευτικού προσωπικού και ο διάλογος σε επίπεδο κοινότητας με παράλληλη ανάπτυξη πολλαπλών υποστηρικτικών δράσεων στο σχολικό περιβάλλον.

Η εισαγωγή στο σχολικό πρόγραμμα μαθημάτων και εκπαιδευτικών σεμιναρίων θεωρείται επιβεβλημένη. Με στόχο την ενδυνάμωση και την καλλιέργεια των κοινωνικών δεξιοτήτων των μαθητών, ούτως ώστε να καθιστούν έτοιμους τους μαθητές να αντιμετωπίσουν τις προκλήσεις τόσο σε προσωπικό όσο και σε επαγγελματικό επίπεδο.

Αξίζει να σημειωθεί ότι συγκεκριμένα στην Ελλάδα τα ποσοστά του σχολικού εκφοβισμού είναι ανησυχητικά, ενώ δεν καταγράφονται όλα τα περιστατικά, χαρακτηριστικά ένας στους πέντε μαθητές δηλαδή (20,2%) να αναφέρει ότι έχει υπάρξει θύμα εκφοβισμού με το ποσοστό στο Γυμνάσιο να έχει αυξητική τάση στο (33%). Η παρούσα βιβλιογραφική ανασκόπηση καταδεικνύει την έλλειψη έρευνας στο ελληνικό σχολικό περιβάλλον για το σύνολο του μαθητικού πληθυσμού, των αιτιών της σχολικής βίας και της καταγραφής των περιστατικών. Επιπλέον, προτείνεται η εφαρμογή στοχευμένων παρεμβάσεων που προκύπτουν από τη διεθνή βιβλιογραφία, εφαρμοσμένων στο σχολικό πλαίσιο.

Οι επιπτώσεις του εκφοβισμού επηρεάζουν τους μαθητές με περαιτέρω επιπτώσεις στην ψυχική και σωματική τους υγεία, την ποιότητα ζωής καθώς και, την ακαδημαϊκή τους πορεία. Δεδομένων των συνθηκών και της αυξημένης χρήσης των κοινωνικών δικτύων μεταξύ των μαθητών προτείνεται η διεπιστημονική συνεργασία μεταξύ των υπευθύνων χάραξης πολιτικής, των επαγγελματιών της δημόσιας υγείας, των εκπαιδευτικών και όλων των επαγγελματιών που αλληλεπιδρούν με τη σχολική κοινότητα για την εξάλειψη φαινομένων βίας.

Ειδικότερα η χάραξη αποτελεσματικής στρατηγικής κατά του εκφοβισμού οφείλει να στοχεύει στις παρακάτω δράσεις: σε επίπεδο σχολείου, συνεχής εκπαίδευση με σεμινάρια για τους εκπαιδευτικούς και τη συμμετοχή των γονέων, την ενημέρωση και την υποστήριξη τους, σε θέματα που αφορούν στα προβλήματα των μαθητών και εκπαίδευση σε βέλτιστες πρακτικές αντιμετώπισης. Γενικότερα, η ανάπτυξη κλίματος συνεργασίας στο σχολείο και προώθηση διαλόγου όπου οι μαθητές θα συμμετέχουν και θα σχεδιάζουν δράσεις.

Επιπλέον, ένα σχέδιο δράσης το οποίο θα στοχεύει στον διάλογο, στην ισότητα και στη διαφορετικότητα, στην συμπερίληψη των μειονοτήτων και κυρίως, της ΛΟΑΤΚΙ κοινότητας. Επίσης, τροποποίηση μη λειτουργικών μοτίβων και ενίσχυση των θετικών στοιχείων ειδικότερα εκείνων που ενισχύουν την αυτοδιαχείριση και τη λήψη αποφάσεων. Εκπαιδεύοντας το σύνολο της εκπαιδευτικής κοινότητας με βιωματικά σεμινάρια και εφαρμόζοντας το εν λόγω μοντέλο στη σχολική τάξη.

Δεδομένου των συχνών φαινομένων εκφοβισμού της ΛΟΑΤΚΙ κοινότητας χρειάζεται ιδιαίτερη μέριμνα. Σύμφωνα με την έρευνα της Εκστρατείας για τα Ανθρώπινα Δικαιώματα, οι μαθητές ΛΟΑΤΚΙ αναφέρουν ότι είναι θύματα εκφοβισμού στο σχολείο, με λεκτικό ή θύματα σωματικής

βίας, με διπλάσια ποσοστά σε σύγκριση με αυτά των νέων που δεν ανήκουν στην κοινότητα ΛΟΑΤΚΙ.

Συγκεκριμένα, για την αποτελεσματική αντιμετώπιση του σχολικού εκφοβισμού σε εθνικό επίπεδο συνίσταται μέσω της παρούσης βιβλιογραφικής ανασκόπησης τα παρακάτω βήματα: η δημιουργία συστήματος παρακολούθησης και καταγραφής των περιστατικών βίας στη μαθητική κοινότητα, η ενίσχυση του υπάρχοντος νομοθετικού πλαισίου, η πρόβλεψη και η υλοποίηση προγραμμάτων συνεχούς κατάρτισης και υποστήριξης για το εκπαιδευτικό προσωπικό, μαθητές και γονείς, ειδική μέριμνα για ευάλωτους εφήβους με την κατάλληλη ψυχοεκπαιδευτική προσέγγιση. Επιπλέον, πρωτοβουλίες του σχολείου που στοχεύουν στη συμμετοχή και στη συνέργεια εκπαιδευτικών και γονέων, συμμετοχή της εκπαιδευτικής κοινότητας σε σεμινάρια με κοινωνικό και συναισθηματικό προσανατολισμό καθώς και προσπάθειες ευαισθητοποίησης και ενημέρωσης της κοινής γνώμης κατά του εκφοβισμού και τη συμμετοχή της κοινότητας σε διάφορες δράσεις.

Στο σημείο αυτό δεν θα μπορούσε να μην σημειωθεί η στρατηγική σημασία της πρόληψης και η αναγκαιότητα ανάπτυξης επικαιροποιημένου πλαισίου διαχείρισης των περιστατικών στην εκπαιδευτική κοινότητα. Σημαντική προτεραιότητα στην ενίσχυση θετικού κλίματος, στις σχέσεις ανάμεσα στις σχέσεις των μαθητών, δηλαδή στην ανάπτυξη σχέσεων οι οποίες να διαπνέονται από τον σεβασμό των δικαιωμάτων και την αποδοχή της διαφορετικότητας. Επιπλέον, οι εκπαιδευτικοί είναι σε θέση να συμβάλλουν καθοριστικά στον περιορισμό φαινομένων εκφοβισμού και με τη συνέργεια της μαθητικής κοινότητας, να θεσπίσουν τους «χρυσούς κανόνες», με στόχο την ενίσχυση της αυτοπεποίθησης και της ψυχικής ανθεκτικότητας των μαθητών.

Αναλυτικότερα, στο εν λόγω πλαίσιο θα πρέπει να καλλιεργηθεί στη μαθητική κοινότητα η λογική της συμπερίληψης και της αποδοχής, με συμμετοχή του συνόλου των μαθητών στις συνελεύσεις των σχολείων και η ενθάρρυνση για ανοιχτό διάλογο. Κρίνεται επιβεβλημένη η συμμετοχή στον σχεδιασμό και στη λήψη αποφάσεων από κοινού με τους εκπαιδευτικούς ούτως ώστε να διασφαλιστεί η εύρυθμη λειτουργία του σχολείου.

Η αποτελεσματικότητα ενός ανοιχτού σχολείου συνίσταται στη σχέση εμπιστοσύνης μεταξύ των μελών του και όχι στην ετεροβαρή ή αποξενωμένη σχέση μεταξύ καθηγητών και μαθητών. Στο πλαίσιο αυτό οικοδομείται ένα σχολείο που διέπεται από τις αξίες της συνεργασίας, της αποδοχής και δίνεται έμφαση μέσω των κατάλληλων παρεμβάσεων στη μείωση και στην εξάλειψη φαινομένων βίας ή ομοφοβικής συμπεριφοράς.

Στο σημείο αυτό η συνεργασία και η σύμπραξη με Μη Κυβερνητικές Οργανώσεις, Φορείς, το Ινστιτούτο Εκπαιδευτικής πολιτικής, ή εταιρείες που δραστηριοποιούνται στον χώρο της τεχνολογίας, εξειδικευμένες στην ανάπτυξη κατάλληλων λογισμικών με σκοπό την έγκαιρη ανίχνευση περιστατικών που εντάσσονται στο πεδίο της βίας είναι καθοριστικής σημασίας για την προάσπιση και την ασφάλεια των μαθητών.

Η λειτουργία του θεσμού των Συμβούλων-Μεντόρων στο σχολείο, εννοώντας ομάδες δράσης εφήβων σε συνεργασία με εκπαιδευτικούς με στόχο την εκπαίδευση ομάδων νέων σε θέματα ασφάλειας στη χρήση του διαδικτύου, και παροχή βοήθειας μέσω ηλεκτρονικής πλατφόρμας. Διαφαίνεται η ανάγκη για τη λήψη των κατάλληλων μέτρων και η αξιοποίηση των νέων τεχνολογικών εργαλείων για την προστασία των μαθητών. Ειδικότερα, τέτοιες πρωτοβουλίες για την εξάλειψη του ηλεκτρονικού εκφοβισμού στον κυβερνοχώρο, φαίνεται και βάσει της βιβλιογραφίας να λειτουργούν αποτελεσματικά στη μείωση των φαινομένων βίας ενώ τυγχάνουν και της αποδοχής των εφήβων μαθητών.

Συγκεκριμένα, στο πλαίσιο αυτό η υποστήριξη παρέχεται ηλεκτρονικά, διαδικτυακοί σύμβουλοι είναι διαθέσιμοι κατόπιν αιτήματος των εφήβων. Μάλιστα, με αυτό τον τρόπο διασφαλίζεται η έγκαιρη βοήθεια στον έφηβο-θύμα και ίσως, ενθαρρύνεται να ζητήσει βοήθεια. Κατά περίπτωση μπορεί να διενεργούνται δια ζώσης συνεδρίες και παρακολούθηση με διεπιστημονική ομάδα σε θέματα σχολικού εκφοβισμού.

Τα στοιχεία σε παγκόσμιο επίπεδο από τις μελέτες περιπτώσεων με χώρες με αποτελεσματική διαχείριση του σχολικού εκφοβισμού δείχνουν ορισμένα κοινά βασικά στοιχεία και εφαρμόζονται στην προοπτική μιας βιώσιμης στρατηγικής. Αρχικά, συνίσταται ενίσχυση της υπάρχουσας νομοθεσίας ούτως ώστε να προστατεύει τα δικαιώματα των νέων, σύμφωνη με τη διεθνή βιβλιογραφία, εφαρμογή των πρωτοκόλλων προσαρμοσμένων στο εκάστοτε περιβάλλον και ισχυρή δέσμευση για την ενίσχυση της συνεχιζόμενης κατάρτισης των εκπαιδευτικών σε θέματα πρόληψης της σχολικής βίας. Στο πλαίσιο αυτό οι θεματικές περιλαμβάνουν: στρατηγική σε επίπεδο ηγεσίας, ισχυρό νομικό σύστημα μέσω του οποίου διασφαλίζεται η προστασία των παιδιών, του εκφοβισμού και της βίας. Προώθηση της συνεργασίας μεταξύ των επαγγελματιών, σε επίπεδο εκπαίδευσης, οργάνωσης και διασύνδεσης, σύμπραξη της κοινωνίας των πολιτών, των κοινωνικών λειτουργών και των παρόχων υγείας.

Κρίνεται απαραίτητο να σημειωθεί ότι οι αποφάσεις και οι παρεμβάσεις λαμβάνονται βάσει των των ιδιαίτερων αναγκών και συνθηκών κάθε σχολικής μονάδας. Επίσης, στο πλαίσιο στοχευμένων παρεμβάσεων διενεργούνται εκπαιδευτικά προγράμματα με βάση την εκάστοτε σχολική κοινότητα, με τη συμμετοχή γονέων και την παρακολούθηση βιωματικών εκπαιδευτικών σεμιναρίων για μαθητές. Η ανάπτυξη κατάλληλου πλαισίου το οποίο να υποστηρίζει τη διασύνδεση σχολικής κοινότητας με κοινωνικές υπηρεσίες και εν συνεχεία την κατάλληλη υποστήριξη και των οικογενειών. Σε αυτή την κατεύθυνση η πολυτομεακή συνεργασία καθίσταται επιβεβλημένη με δράσεις σχετικές με την καταγραφή των περιστατικών, τη συλλογή των δεδομένων σε εθνικό επίπεδο, την αξιολόγηση, την παρακολούθηση και περαιτέρω ανάλυση των αποτελεσμάτων. Ωστόσο, υπάρχει η ανάγκη για περαιτέρω βελτίωση, επικαιροποιημένο σχεδιασμό, εφαρμογή και αξιολόγηση των πολιτικών για την υγεία.

Το ελληνικό Υπουργείο Ψηφιακής Πολιτικής, Τηλεπικοινωνίες και μέσα ενημέρωσης, μαζί με το ελληνικό Υπουργείο Υγείας πραγματοποίησαν το 2018 μια μεγάλη πρωτοβουλία σε εθνικό επίπεδο για την αντιμετώπιση της βίας με βάση το φύλο και με σκοπό την προώθηση της ισότητας των φύλων και την καταπολέμηση της βίας, των στερεοτύπων στο πεδίο του σεξουαλικού προσανατολισμού και τα ζητήματα ταυτότητας, μέσω τηλεοπτικών και ραδιοφωνικών σταθμών (Επίσημη Εφημερίδα της Κυβέρνησης, Τεύχος Β', Φύλλο Αρ. 2037).

Τα τελευταία χρόνια αναπτύσσονται πρωτοβουλίες μέσω των Μη Κυβερνητικών Οργανώσεων όπου δραστηριοποιούνται στο ζήτημα της έμφυλης βίας, και των δικαιωμάτων LGBTQ +, που αποσκοπούν στην πρόληψη, στην έρευνα, στην κατάρτιση επαγγελματιών και στην καταγραφή περιστατικών, προκειμένου να καταπολεμηθεί οποιαδήποτε μορφή διάκρισης λόγω του εκφοβισμού. Τέλος, παρέχεται ψυχολογική και νομική υποστήριξης και λαμβάνουν χώρα πρωτοβουλίες με στόχευση την ευαισθητοποίηση της κοινής γνώμης. Ενδεικτικά οι παρακάτω ΜΚΟ δραστηριοποιούνται σε ζητήματα σχετικά με την εξάλειψη της έμφυλης βίας όπου συμβάλλουν τα μέγιστα στην ενίσχυση της αλληλεγγύης στην κοινωνία των πολιτών.

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Κέντρο Έρευνας για τα Γυναίκεα Θέματα - Diotima

ΚΕΘΗ (Κέντρο Ερευνών για την Ισότητα των Φύλων)

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