

## Teacher Victimization in Turkey: A Review of the News on Violence against Teachers

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**ABSTRACT** School violence has become one of the important aspects of education. Incidents of violence reflected in printed media have reached limits that cannot be underestimated in terms of number. The types of school violence, the reasons, the consequences and how they might be prevented are of the issues mainly focused on. Teachers are one of those influenced by school violence. In this qualitative study, content analysis was used to examine the news in the national printed press concerning violence directed at teachers. In the study, the news printed between 2008 and 2013 in five national newspapers regarding physical violence against teachers has been analyzed in a way to reveal the tone of the language, the details about the ones who caused violence and the ones who suffered from violent actions, the details about the incidents, the incentives and consequences of the incidents.

### INTRODUCTION

Violence is a concept, which is seen in printed and visual media every day, witnessed in daily life, might be experienced in business or it could be seen even within families. Due to its recent prevalence and negative effects on society, it is discussed greatly in academic studies. Violence in family, business or school is one of the issues that researchers focus on considering its reasons and consequences.

Increasing rates of violence in schools have started to become an important challenge affecting the educational atmosphere in lots of countries as children tend to spend most of their time in educational settings when they come to school age. Although schools are supposed to offer a safe atmosphere, which is free of crime, convenient for effective learning and provide a nurturing environment which support children's development, incidents of crime or violence disrupt the educational process and influence the school and its community (Kane 2008; Henry 2000). Despite the fact that schools are aware of the risk and try to keep students and staff safe from harm, many schools face serious problems and need to develop effective strategies to prevent school

violence and increase safety (Small and Tetrack 2001). The negative atmosphere, which violence brings with it, and its unfavorable effects on the educational process, makes it a public concern. Thus, it is important for parents, educators and policymakers to have an accurate understanding of the extent, nature and context of the problem to be able to take necessary measures to provide a safer educational environment (Robers et al. 2013).

Even though violence and school seem to be contrasting words, violence is an undeniable problem commonly faced in educational settings. It is noticeable that violence in schools has been increasing at an alarming rate all over the world (Oshako 1997). As it cannot be overcome through ignoring or taking temporal measures, the problem should be coped with thoughtfully. While addressing school violence, an accurate understanding of the extent and nature of the problem is needed first (Dinkes et al. 2007).

School violence may include bullying, intimidation, gang activity, weapon use, assaults, and may occur in different social contexts like, classrooms, schools neighborhoods and involve students, teachers, administrative staff, etc. (Espelage et al. 2013). Although there are recent studies on school violence and school crime (For example, Andreou 2015; Finkelhor et al. 2014; Benbenisthy and Astor 2008; Bulut 2008), the number of the studies dealing with violence against teachers as another extent of the violence is very limited, especially in developing countries. Even if it is uncommon, school violence also occurs against other people at schools, except students.

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The people working at schools like teachers, administrators and other staff are at risk of being victimized as well (Roberts et al. 2010). Teacher victimization has been understudied and has received limited attention by media and formal authorities (Espeleage et al. 2013). American Psychological Association (APA) emphasized that despite the severity of the problem, there is not much known about factors leading to teacher victimization and further research is needed to better understand the particulars of teacher victimization (APA 2014). Thus, this study aims to contribute to the issue by dealing with one of the common types of school violence—violence directed at teachers—and explaining the extent and nature of the teacher victimization problem.

In addition to the physical influences, psychological and financial effects of violence against teachers too must be taken into consideration. Such type of victimization is probable to influence the educational atmosphere and efficiency of the staff negatively and might lead to higher rates of burnout, turnover or early retirement of educational staff (Crews et al. 2008). APA (2015) reckoned the annual cost of teacher victimization to teachers, parents and other taxpayers to be more than \$2 billion and mentioned a longer cascade for the cost of the teacher victimization in the form of lost wages, lost days of work, lost instructional time, costs of medical and psychological care due to threats and assaults, costs caused from the training and replacement of teachers who leave the profession earlier than expected and so forth.

The statistics from various countries concerning the issue also show how critical the issue is, not only for the developed countries but also for the developing and underdeveloped ones. Even if it is a global problem faced by educational settings, it is surprising that developed countries monitor the problem and prepare reports on the issue while the others tend to neglect it. In this part of the study, sample statistics attained from related literature are referred to. Firstly, one of the countries that keep relatively regular and comprehensive records on the issue is United States of America. However, the officials even from the USA point out that providing a comprehensive overview of the state of school violence is difficult since there is not a standard set of indicators that exist to describe school violence and the indicators that are available have limitations (Small and Tetrick 2001). Yu (2003) also

noted a similar difficulty, stating that making comparisons between findings of the studies in the form of reports, portrayed a mixed picture of school safety, and there was no consensus on the definition of school violence.

### Research on Teacher Victimization

In general, the reasons for the increase in the rate of violence at schools are generally associated with personal factors. According to APA (2015) and Espeleage et al. (2011), situations which can trigger rage and cause school violence as a result might be—a break-up with the boy/girl-friend, the death or suicide of a family member, friend or classmate, the arrest of a family member, parents' separation, public or peer humiliation, prejudice (for example, racism, homophobia, bigotry), physical factors (for example, hunger, allergies, sleep deprivation), being exposed to violence or bullying, being abused (physical, sexual, psychological), academic stress, strained teacher-student relationship, peer isolation and so forth. When the factors that cause the increase in the rate of violence directed against teachers are considered, similar personal motives might be assumed as the precipitators of violent acts. Additionally, factors related with an educational atmosphere are also associated with violence, such as, disorganized school structures, negative school climates and lack of administrative and collegial social supports (Espeleage et al. 2013). Furthermore, Chen and Astor (2009) assert that being punished by a teacher, fighting for his/her friend to express support for him/her, a teacher's unfair treatment, disagreement with teachers, being provoked by teachers, a teacher's unreasonable academic requests, being upset at teachers are few of the major reasons for students engaging in violent behaviors.

Despite being limited, there is some information regarding the statistics on teacher victimization from various countries. In the study carried out by Reddy et al. (2013), a comprehensive literature search on worldwide studies including empirical findings related to teacher victimization in schools was done. As a result of the literature search, the studies reviewed keywords like teacher stress, violence, school, teacher victimization, teacher wellbeing, teacher effectiveness, survey, school climate, delinquency and school disorder in two databases (ERIC and PsycINFO) and a search engine (Google Scholar) from 1998

to 2013. Totally 21 studies published in 20 journals were found. Nine of these studies were conducted in the USA and remaining 12 studies were conducted in Belgium, Canada, Israel, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Slovakia, Spain, Taiwan and Turkey.

As one of the countries realizing the seriousness of the problem and doing a number of noticeable studies on the issue, USA brought the problem of school crime to national attention in the 1970s through the efforts of the Bayh Committee (U.S. Congress, 1975, 1976, 1977). The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) was asked to explore ways of reducing problems of violence and vandalism in the schools. According to the report supported by OJJDP over 35,000 students and 7,000 teachers suffered from student and teacher victimization in a year (Grant and Capell 1983). Moreover, in the gallop poll by Phi Delta Kappa on the public's attitudes toward public schools, violence in the schools and ways of dealing with disruptive students were the biggest problems faced by schools (Elam and Lowell 1995). Moreover, Small and Tetrick (2001) stated that each year from 1994 to 1998, teachers from public and private school reported an average of 133,700 violent and 217,400 thefts as crimes committed against them. A similar rate of violent crimes is reported in the study by Kaufman et al. (2000). Kaufman et al. (2000) found from the reports that over the 5-year-period from 1994-1998 teachers were victims of 668,000 violent crimes (like sexual assault, robbery, aggravated or simple assault) and 1,087,000 thefts. That is, between these years, on an average 351,000 non-fatal crimes or 83 crimes per 1000 teachers per year were committed against them. According to the reports prepared during different periods, the percentage of violent behaviors seemed to decline in time. While the rate of the teachers who were threatened with injury by students in 1993-1994 was twelve percent, the rate decreased to nine percent in 1999-2000 and to seven percent in 2007-2008. Dissimilarly, the percentage of the teachers who were physically attacked by students was four percent and the rate was not measurably different between 1993-2008 (Robers et al. 2013; Robers et al. 2010; Dinkes et al. 2007).

Similarly, we see that in Europe few studies have been conducted on violence against teachers. According to a report prepared in 1997, in France physical violence against teachers was

seen as a kind of trial of strength or an attempt of physical domination (Kane 2008). In another study by Fuchs et al. (1996) carried out in Germany, it was stated that verbal threats were more common compared to the rate of physical violence. Similarly, based on their national survey Steffgen and Ewen (2007) pointed out that 23.9 percent of the teachers were the victims of verbal attacks while four percent were victims of physical assault. In the small-scale survey carried out in England by Martin et al. (2008), it was found that 68.3 percent of the teachers experience a form of physical violence sometime in their career in the form of, being bitten, being pushed or having some objects thrown at them. Moreover, Furniss (2000) restated that teacher victimization was not as common as student victimization, but assaults on teachers were often reported to the police. Furthermore, in Portugal the results of a large-scale study showed that eighteen percent of teachers suffered from physical or psychological violence within or near the school and eight percent said that their performance was badly affected by such incidents (DECO 2006).

Even though in Eastern culture teachers are highly respected, incidents of verbal, psychological and physical assaults against teachers exist. For instance, a study reported that 65.5 percent teachers in Taiwan's junior high schools have been verbally assaulted by their students (Chen 1999). Moreover, in another survey carried out by Chen and Astor (2009), 30.1 percent of Taiwanese students who participated in the survey replied that they were involved in at least one aggressive act against their schoolteachers. Obediat (1997) specified that teacher victimization was the least common type of violence. Yet, he reported that students' aggressive behaviors, such as assaulting teachers had increased in Jordan compared to the previous years. A corresponding study from Malaysia indicated that fighting with teachers and other school staff was the most frequent form of violence in Malaysia (Ahmad and Salleh 1997). In another finding from a study carried out in Ethiopian schools, sixty-two percent of the students who participated in the study responded that they have witnessed violent acts against their teachers or headmasters (Terefe and Mengitsu 1997).

When it comes to statistics from Turkey, there is no regular formal data on this issue. Even on school violence, in general, we see the first for-

mal statistics only in 2006. Beginning April 2006, violent actions at schools have regularly been observed by the Ministry of National Education within the framework of Preventing and Reducing Violence in Educational Environment Strategy and Action Plan (2006-2011). Such incidents have been recorded in a formal database by school managements. Apart from the formal statements, there are lots of outstanding studies on violent actions at schools. Some of these studies depict the occasions wherein students experience violence (example, EARGED 2008); some analyze students' perceptions concerning violence (for example, Gozutok et al. 2006; Ogulmus 1996) and some give information about the effects of school violence (for example, Cinkir 2006). However, the studies revealing the existing state of violence directed at teachers appear to be rare. As the first example from a nationwide study, 56.3 percent of the respondent teachers stated that they had been insulted; 20.3 percent stated that they had been threatened or assaulted physically and 15.74 percent were seriously wounded by these assaults, generally by the students (Egitim Sen 2006). In another study by Ozdemir (2012), it was found that teachers often experienced emotional (24.1%), followed by verbal (14.7%), physical (6.3%) and sexual (4.6%) violence.

### METHODOLOGY

In this study, content analysis was used to examine the news in the national printed press concerning violence directed at teachers. Content analysis is a widely used qualitative research technique and it defines the process of summarizing and reporting the examined data (Mayring 2004). The objects of the analysis can be all sorts of recorded or written data as transcripts of interviews, discourses, videotapes and similar documents (Mayring 2000). It shows conventional, directed, or summative approaches. The main goal of all the three approaches is to interpret meaning from the content of text data (Hsieh and Shannon 2005). Anderson and Arsenault (1998) state that counting concepts, words or occurrences might be used as a simple way of interpreting the data in the analysis. Moreover, Krippendorff (1980) indicates the points to be considered while interpreting the document. According to Krippendorff (1980), answers to the fol-

lowing six questions must be sought during analysis:

1. Which data is analyzed?
2. How is it defined?
3. What is the population from which the data is drawn?
4. What is the context relative to which the data is analyzed?
5. What are the boundaries of the analysis?
6. What is the target of the inferences?

In the content analysis there are four stages consecutively. These phases include, processing the data gathered from the documents, encoding the data, finding out the themes and organizing codes and themes, identifying findings and interpreting them (Yildirim and Simsek 2006). In the study the collected data was encoded based on the defined criteria and themes were formed accordingly. Then, the data was organized and grouped according to the themes, after which the data was presented quantitatively and interpreted as the final stage.

### The Criteria for Selecting the Samples

In this study, the data was gathered through analyzing national newspapers in Turkey. Within the scope of the study, the news reporting physical assaults against teachers were analyzed. The news published through five years in the newspapers, selected on the defined criteria, was scanned. The sample newspapers used in the study comprised of five national newspapers (Cumhuriyet, Haberturk, Hurriyet, Sabah and Zaman). The news published between 1<sup>st</sup> September (the start date of the academic year), 2008 and 31<sup>st</sup> August 2013 (the end date of the academic year) regarding violence at schools against teachers were looked at. When defining the newspapers for the sample, the criterion for the defined ones were:

- ♦ The newspaper should be published and sold nationwide
- ♦ Should be referenced in terms of news since they have the opportunity to reach large mass
- ♦ Have internet access
- ♦ Should be owned by different publishing groups.

Based on the above-defined criterion, five national newspapers with high sales rates were selected for the sample.

The news printed in the mentioned five newspapers concerning teacher victimization was scanned. Repetitive news, that is, same incident news in different newspapers was detected and the accurate number of the incidents on this issue was defined. Totally 144 separate news were included in the analysis.

### Data Analysis

The study tried to bring out how common such news was in the printed media, how the news was reflected, what the details were in terms of the source (the person who committed), results and consequences of the violence. How the violent actions were reflected in the news was analyzed by using the document analysis technique. Classifying the news printed in the above named five newspapers; the violent actions that took place at the school or surroundings of schools while the teachers were in charge were taken into consideration. The definition of the Turkish Ministry of National Education (M.E.B. 2006) for physical violence (pushing, kicking, attacking with or without some kind of weapon, throwing something, or slapping) was taken as the basis to consider the action as a kind of violence.

## RESULTS

Within the scope of the study, all the news on the issue published in the five newspapers was analyzed. Table 1 gives detailed information on the number of news pieces and academic year when these actions took place considering the newspapers separately. In this section, the number of news pieces on teacher victimization at schools, the victims who suffered from such physical assaults, the perpetrators who committed the crimes, some details like gender of the

victims or perpetrators and number of the perpetrators, the school types where these crimes took place, the location where the incidents happened, instruments used during the attacks, the reasons and consequences (physical damages and legal procedures) were referred relatively.

### Distribution of the News in Printed Media

This domain involved specifying the news printed in the national newspapers concerning violence directed against teachers. The news was classified according to the time (academic year) when it took place and number of news pieces is shown in Table 1 after grouping the news based on the newspaper in which it was printed.

As seen in Table 1, the disposition of the news was unsteady. That is to say, there was a decrease in the number of the news related with violence at school against teachers after the 2008-2009 academic year considering the total number of the news until 2011-2012. In the 2011-2012 academic year, it could easily be seen that there was a noticeable increase in the number of violent actions. When the newspapers were analyzed separately, it might be noticed that the number of news pieces on the issue was undulating. However, in the last two academic years (2011-2012 and 2012-2013) the number of news pieces increased in all the newspapers and sharply increased considering the total number.

What is more is, it is quite normal to anticipate that there were news items that iteratively reported the same cases. In order to get the definite number of the violent actions against teachers, the repetitive news published in different newspapers were defined and the exact number of the cases was determined. Table 2 shows the accurate number of incidents after defining the repetitive cases and counting them solely.

**Table 1: Distribution of the news in the printed media related with violence against teachers according to academic year**

Newspaper	Academic year					Total
	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	
Cumhuriyet	1	2	1	12	9	25
Haberturk	3	6	5	16	22	52
Hurriyet	16	11	6	17	6	56
Sabah	2	6	4	11	24	47
Zaman	12	8	8	27	7	62
Total	34	33	24	83	68	242

**Table 2: The number of the incidents published in the newspapers regarding teacher victimization**

Number of the incident	Academic year					Total
	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	
	20	17	16	39	52	144

Seen in Table 2, the number of violent cases decreased in academic years 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 compared to 2008-2009. However, in the last two academic years, the number of assaults against teachers started to increase again. In a distinguishable manner, it might be stated that the violent actions against teachers were inclined to increase during academic years 2011-2012 and 2012-2013. Especially in the 2012-2013 academic year, the increase in incidents like, abduction of teachers and officials by a terrorist group (the terrorist group founded to establish an independent state in the southeastern Turkey) were remarkable. The terrorists tried to impair educational services by abducting teachers and other officials. No casualties were reported in such incidents but the abducted teachers were put under custody and they were illegally deprived of freedom.

As for the tone of the news, it might be stated that the news were generally given in a criticizing manner or given without comments. The reporters reported the news to reflect their point of views and it might be conceived by the readers depending on the tone, that reporters see assaults against teachers as inappropriate. In the content analysis, the words that appeared in a repetitive manner were taken into consideration and the word count was made accordingly. The words that appeared most frequently in all the newspapers were the words directly related with education. Top three, most frequent words that were detected in the news were, "teacher", "school" and "student" respectively. When we took notice of all the recurrent words in the news related with education, it was seen that the commonly used words were, "teacher" (1427 times),

"school" (1084 times), "student" (770 times), "principal" (395 times), "education" (345 times), "class" (254 times), "high school" (238 times) and "primary school" (195 times). If the total number of words in the news items (approximately 39500 words) were taken into account, the terms related with education constituted 12.4 percent. On the other hand, the number of the words in the news related with violence and crime was found to be relatively low. The words like, "attack" (346 times), "knife/stab" (289 times), stroke/hit (250 times), "police" (244 times), "injure/hurt" (221 times), quarrel (122 times), "custody" (103 times), "admonish" (84 times), "break" (69 times), "violence" (65 times), "abduct" (58 times), "kill/die" (52 times) and "threat" (51 times) constituted 5.1 percent of the news. Therefore, it might be stated that the news were designed in a way to call the readers' attention to the place where the actions happened or to the people who suffered from the violence. The news items emphasized on the violence happening in educational settings and teachers' victimization instead of emphasizing on the nature, reason or consequence of the violent attacks.

### Victims Suffering from the Violence at Schools

This domain involved the educational staff that suffered from violence. Table 3 shows statistics about the people who were physically influenced by the attacks.

As seen in Table 3, a total of 144 cases were analyzed in the news and as a result it was seen that 88 teachers and 18 school principals or vice principals were negatively influenced by the violent attacks directed towards them. In 36 cases,

**Table 3: Educational staff who were influenced by the violence at schools**

	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	Total
Teacher	12	14	11	28	23	88
Administrative staff	7	1	-	6	4	18
Other	1	2	5	5	25	36
Total	20	17	16	39	52	144

the attacks were not directed personally at a teacher or principal but the attacks were directed towards all the school staff. In such incidents, generally, more than one staff and school building was physically harmed by the attacks.

### Perpetrators Applying the Violence at Schools

As for the ones who committed the violent actions against teachers, it might be noticed that in most of the cases the problem aroused in relation with the students. Table 4 shows the statistics regarding the perpetrators of the violent attacks against teachers.

As seen in Table 4, out of 144 cases, 45 violent onsets were committed by students, 21 by students' parents, 15 by students' relatives or friends, 11 by colleagues of teachers (other teachers, principals or vice principals) and 29 by the terrorist groups who tried to protest or impair educational services supplied by the Turkish government. The perpetrators of 11 assaults could not be identified. In 12 incidents, the ones who committed violent attacks were people who did not have any direct relation with the school (for example, foreigners who trespassed the

school garden and were asked to be sent out by the monitoring teachers).

### School Type and Location where the Incidents Happened

Within the scope of the study, school types where the violent attacks and the location where these attacks took place were also taken into consideration. Table 5 shows the details of the school types and places of the incidents.

As seen in Table 5, the attacks directed towards teachers were noted at three different types of school—preschool, primary and secondary school (including vocational schools). It is surprising that we see four incidents to have happened at preschool institutions. The perpetrators of these assaults were students' parents and colleagues of the teachers. The number of violent actions against teachers at primary schools was higher than that of secondary schools. But it could be noted that most of the incidents of violence at primary schools happened in the upper classes of the primary schools (that is, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grades).

**Table 4: Perpetrators of the violence at schools**

	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	Total
Student	7	9	4	12	13	45
Student's parent	3	-	2	11	5	21
Student's relative/friend	2	2	1	7	3	15
Colleague	3	2	2	4	-	11
Terrorist	-	-	1	1	27	29
Unknown	3	1	3	2	2	11
Other	2	3	3	2	2	12
Total	20	17	16	39	52	144

**Table 5: School types and locations at schools where the attacks took place**

		2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	Total
<i>School Type</i>	Preschool	-	1	1	1	1	4
	Primary	8	10	9	21	34	82
	Secondary	12	6	6	17	17	58
	Total	20	17	16	39	52	144
<i>Locations at School</i>	Classroom	3	6	4	4	5	22
	Corridor	3	1	2	10	7	23
	Garden	1	7	5	13	9	35
	Neighboring	5	2	4	9	10	30
	Teacher's room	4	1	1	3	6	15
	Unknown	4	-	-	-	14	18
	Other	-	-	-	-	1	1
	Total	20	17	16	39	52	144

With respect to the locations where the violent attacks against teachers took place, inside schools' campuses and school gardens had the highest ratings. 24.3 percent of the incidents happened at school gardens, 20.8 percent happened at neighboring places, like, in front of the schools' main gate or near the main gate. The locations of 14 of the assaults were unclear and 1 assault occurred at the school canteen. When it comes to the settlements (example, metropolis, city, town or village) where the incidents happened, it might be stated that such incidents generally took place in crowded or bigger settlements like metropolises, cities and counties. The number of incidents that happened in smaller settlements like towns or villages was relatively low. Based on the statistics derived from the study, 66 percent of the assaults against teachers were witnessed in the metropolises or cities, while 27.8 percent were seen in the counties and only 6.2 percent were seen in the villages.

#### Instruments (Weapons) Used During Attacks

The instruments that were used during attacks against teachers to harm them were indicated in the study. Table 6 gives information concerning the weapons used during the attacks.

As seen in Table 6, most of the violent acts were physical without using any kind of weapons. The most frequently used weapons during assaults were knives. Thirdly, frangible grenades, fireworks or noise bombs were used especially by the terrorist groups, generally not taking aim at a certain person but at any teacher, administrative staff or student. Lastly, some other instruments like a special kind of knife to prune vineyard, axe or hydrochloric acid were used during the attacks.

#### Gender of the People who got Involved in the Violent Actions

This domain states detailed information by specifying the gender of the people who got involved in violent actions as perpetrators of these actions or victims who suffered from the actions. In Table 7, you find the information on the issue.

As it might be seen in Table 7, the majority of the people from both the parties who committed violent actions and who suffered from these actions were male. Out of 144 cases 71.5 percent of the perpetrators were male and similarly 65.3 percent of the victims were male, too. Moreover, in 51.4 percent of the violent actions the assailants attacked in groups. These groups generally com-

**Table 6: The types of the weapons used during attacks**

	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	Total
Stick/Club	1	-	-	-	-	1
Knife	5	5	5	9	10	34
Gun	2	3	3	2	9	19
Without any weapon	12	7	7	26	12	64
Frangible grenade/ firework/ Noise bomb	-	2	1	-	20	23
Other	-	-	-	2	1	3
Total	20	17	16	39	52	144

**Table 7: Gender of the people involved in the violent actions**

		2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	Total
<i>Perpetrator</i>	Male	18	15	14	36	20	103
	Female	2	1	1	3	1	8
	Both	-	-	1	-	-	1
	Unknown	-	1	-	-	31	32
	Total	20	17	16	39	52	144
<i>Victim</i>	Male	16	12	11	31	24	94
	Female	3	4	4	6	2	19
	Both	1	1	1	2	22	27
	Unknown	-	-	-	-	4	4
	Total	20	17	16	39	52	144



prised of men. Only in one case, the group was noticed to involve both men and women. Furthermore, in 27 cases both male and female teachers suffered from the attacks. Usually in the attacks started by terrorist groups, the genders of the assailants could not be identified clearly. Besides, in four cases the newspapers did not specify the gender of the victims explicitly.

### The Incentives of the Violent Actions

Another aspect that was one of the major concerns in the study was the motives behind the violent acts. When the reasons for the attacks against teachers were investigated, we realize that the reasons that prompted the assault were mostly related with the students. Table 8 shows the statistics on the incentives for the attacks against teachers.

As seen in Table 8, the reasons for 52.1 percent of the attacks against teachers were directly related with students. The most frequent incentive that prompted people (mostly students, parents, students' relatives or friends) to act violently against teachers was students being criticized by their teachers due to their misbehavior or their traits that lacked discipline. Blaming

teachers for a student's academic failure, for their negative attitudes against student and teacher's physical or sexual harassment of students are one of the reasons which caused attacks against them. Moreover, 47.9 percent of the violent cases happened due to the reasons not directly related with students. Terrorist attacks against schools, personal disputes between teachers and attacks because of the teacher's private problems (which were not directly related with school or educational affairs) could be mentioned as incentives for the assaults. The reasons for 24 of the attacks were unclear or not stated in the newspapers.

### Judicial or Medical Consequences of the Attacks

The consequences of the attacks against teachers were classified into two groups—judicial and medical consequences—then examined accordingly. Table 9 shows the details on the issue.

As seen in Table 9, for all the cases examined within the scope of the study, police forces were involved in the incidents. In the news it was explained that in 80.5 percent of the cases it was the police who started investigating. In sixteen

**Table 8: The incentives for the violent actions**

<i>Incentives</i>		<i>No.</i>
<i>Reasons Directly Related with Student</i>	Student's academic failure	6
	Student's being criticized/warned due to the misbehaviors/ student's traits lacking discipline	36
	Student's argument with teacher	3
	Teacher's negative attitudes towards student	5
	Student's being physically/ sexually harassed by teacher	17
	Teacher's breaking up students' fight	8
	Total	75
<i>Reasons Directly Related With Student</i>	Terrorist attack against school	29
	Personal disputes between teachers	6
	Reasons not directly related with school or educational affairs	10
	Unknown	24
Total	69	

**Table 9: Consequences of the attacks**

<i>Consequences</i>		<i>No.</i>
<i>Judicial Consequences</i>	Police investigation	116
	Police custody	23
	Arrestment	5
	Total	144
<i>Medical Consequences</i>	Non damaged	36
	Simple physical injuries	60
	Gunshot wound	5
	Stab wound	31
	Break in the arm/leg etc.	8
	Death	4
	Total	144

percent of the cases, police caught suspects and took them under custody. In 3.5 percent of the cases, the suspects were convicted. As for the medical consequences, in twenty-five percent of the cases, the victims escaped from the assaults without getting injured; in 41.7 percent of the cases the victims were slightly wounded; in 3.5 of the cases the victims were injured with a gun; in 21.5 percent of the cases victims were stabbed; in 5.5 percent of the cases the victims' body parts like leg, arm, nose and so forth were broken and in 2.8 percent of the cases the victims were killed.

### DISCUSSION

Academic studies, formal reports and cases reflected in the national media relating violence at schools clearly reveal the point that violence has reached. School violence is not a concept discovered recently but the increasing rate of violence at schools has brought the issue into the agenda for a lot of countries. School safety includes students', teachers' and other school staff's feeling safe not only physically but also psychologically (Isik 2004). An insecure school atmosphere would adversely affect the quality of education because being subjected to violence would lead to negative attitudes towards the school and cause loss of motivation. Atmaca and Ontas (2014) also claimed that teachers' teaching practices were badly affected from physical or psychological violence against themselves. According to Mestry (2015), school violence would affect not only the people who are directly victimized but also the ones who witness these cases. Currier et al. (2015) alleged that morally injurious experiences for teachers might violate their moral values and beliefs and might cause professional burnout and trauma-related problems.

One of the findings of the study was the frequency of news regarding violence at schools against teachers in the printed media differing depending on the newspaper. Although the number of such incidents was thought to be far higher, they might not be reflected in the newspapers since most of the incidents did not include critical consequences like death or heavy injuries. Moreover, another reason for publishing such news less frequently in the newspapers is to prevent the readers from worrying about school safety and from perceiving that schools

are dangerous places for their children (Altun et al. 2006). Teyfur (2014), as another researcher studied school violence, stressed that the news regarding school violence was tended to be given the inner pages and reported in a way not to attract the readers' attention and generally reported without any kind of visual detail.

As a result of the study it was found that the news regarding violence against teachers is reflected in the newspapers without comments, in a criticizing tone, critical or as a claim. The study by Altun et al. (2006) titled, "School Violence: Reflections from the Printed Media" supports the findings. They stated in the study that incidents like sexual abuses at schools were criticized as a fault, the other incidents containing physical or psychological violence without comments or as claim in terms of the tone. According to Altun et al. (2006), expressing accusation in the tone of the news and not mentioning the reasons for such misbehavior in detail would lead the readers to perceive that the people who are vicious in character commit such crimes. In a similar manner, Teyfur (2014) also supported the idea with the findings from his study and asserted that the news on school violence were reflected using the similar criticizing tone in most of the news.

Studies that brought out how common school violence is, also gave details about victims and perpetrators of the incidents. One of the most comprehensive studies was carried out by Egitim Bir Sen (one of the unions of educators in Turkey) in 2011. 600 teachers and 1200 students from 12 cities of Turkey participated in the study. Students participating to the study stated that verbal violence experienced at schools that was seen as the most common type of violence (53.3 percent), whereas physical violence (43.8 percent) was the second most common type. At some schools one incident, while at most of the schools two or more incidents of violence were reported. Dissimilar to the students' views, teachers participating in the study emphasized that physical violence (44.2 percent) was seen as the most common type of violence, whereas verbal violence (43.8 percent) was the second most common type. It was found out that 28.5 percent of the students and 8.2 percent of the teachers were subjected to violence at schools. Correspondingly, Atmaca and Ontas (2014) found out that physical violence was the most common type of violence directed against teachers.

The students indicated that mostly the other students at school (46 percent), then the teachers (29.3 percent), school managers (13.5 percent) and other teenagers outside the school were the ones who engaged in violent actions against them. As for the teachers, they pointed out that mostly school managers (22.9 percent), then students' parents (20.8 percent), students (18.8 percent), other teachers at school (18.8 percent), teenagers and people from outside who did not have any relation with school (16.7 percent) were the ones committing violent actions against them (Egitim Bir Sen 2011). The mentioned study also supported the findings of this study in terms of the type of the violence generally experienced at school, the actors and the victims of such incidents. According to the analysis of the news in the study, the most common type of violence experienced at schools was physical violence. In the group who committed violence against teachers, there were people like students, students' parents, school managers, teachers' colleagues (other teachers working at the same school), former students (who did not have any relation with school any more for some time), intruders to schoolyard and some other people who generally did not have relation with school.

With respect to the reasons for the violent actions at schools, the motives that caused violent behaviors to be enacted are usually simple problems between people or sudden outburst of rage. As Kizmaz (2006) highlighted, a lot of teenagers and adolescents consider physical power as the simplest way to solve conflicts. Similarly, Bulac (2012) restated that actions containing violence are considered to be one of the most common methods to solve chaotic situations between people. With reference to Bulac's statements, at high schools or even lower secondary schools, the incidents like threatening teachers for higher marks, engaging in violent actions for being warned because of their misbehaviors or fighting due to simple conflicts are becoming common among students. Similar to these statements, most of the sample cases analyzed in the study were student-centered. That is, most of the problems between students-teachers, students-school manager, parents-teachers sourced from problems like reacting against being warned for misbehaviors, not being satisfied with students' mark, students' irregular attendance to school, disciplinary punishments and so forth. The findings study carried out by Joyce and

Mmankoko (2014) backed up the findings of the existing study restating that in some cases relationship between teachers and students deteriorated in a way that students may also fight with their teachers physically or verbally and these unfortunate affairs even led to students' or their relatives physically attacking their teachers when they were reprimanded.

## CONCLUSION

This study aimed to highlight violence against teachers according to reflections from printed media along with the frequency of such incidents, actors and victims, reasons and consequences. As a result of the analysis of the news, students, parents, school managers, other teachers working at the same schools and some other people committed violent actions against teachers. The study is limited to the incidents mentioned in five sample national newspapers. It must be kept in mind that the actual number of such cases is probably higher than the ones analyzed in the study. The news included in the study and reflected in the newspapers are the cases which resulted in serious injuries or even death, or the cases which caught the attention of the newspapers through victims' (disadvantaged parties of the crimes) informing about the aspects.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to prevent the incidents containing violence at schools, it is essential for the individuals (school managers, teachers, parents and students) to behave responsibly in resolving conflicts. Especially school managers, teachers and parents need to be a better model for students and not behave violently in personal relationships. The Ministry of National Education might do some studies to define the sources of violence and try to make schools safer by minimizing the causes of violence at schools. Moreover, performing risk screening tests, briefings, and collaborative projects with related parties like formal institutions, NGOs and other partners would help to prevent violent actions by informing students, teachers and parents.

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