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High School Teachers' Perceptions of School-Related Violence: Effects on Fear of Victimization and Perceived Risk

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High School Teachers' Perceptions
of School-Related Violence:
Effects on Fear of Victimization and Perceived Risk

A Thesis
Presented To
The Faculty of the Department of Sociology
Western Kentucky University
Bowling Green, Kentucky

In Partial Fulfillment
Of The Requirement For The Degree
Master of Arts

By
Brandon H. Ungetheim
August 2000
High School Teachers' Perceptions
Of School-Related Violence:
Effects on Fear of Victimization and Perceived Risk

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7/27/00
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High School Teachers' Perceptions
of School-Related Violence:
Effects on Fear of Victimization and Perceived Risk
Brandon H. Ungetheim August 2000 83 pages
Directed by Joan Krenzin, Douglas Smith, and James Kanan
Department of Sociology Western Kentucky University

Using a sample of 204 high school teachers from nine
different counties in Kentucky, this study examined the
predictors of both teachers' fear and perceived risk of
victimization at school in an attempt to learn more about
this adult population. The predictors that were analyzed on
both fear and perceived risk of victimization are as
follows: age, sex, school location (metropolitan/
nonmetropolitan), victimization experience, indirect
victimization experience, and perceived seriousness of
school violence. Results indicate that, sex, school
location, victimization experience, and perceived
seriousness of school violence were all significant
predictors of both teachers' fear and perceived risk of
victimization. Females and those who had been previously
victimized were more fearful and perceived a greater risk of
victimization than did males and those teachers without
previous victimizations. Results also indicated that nonmetropolitan teachers were both more fearful and perceived a greater risk of victimization than did metropolitan teachers. Neither indirect victimization experience nor age, cited by many studies as predictors of fear in adults, were found to predict either teachers' fear or perceived risk of victimization.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

The events that took place on the day of April 20, 1999 were very disturbing to most Americans when "two young men wearing long, black trench coats opened fire in a suburban high school in Littleton, Colorado, injuring as many as 20 students. In all 15 were killed, including the two gunmen" (ABC News Internet... 1999, para. 1). In 1998 alone there were ten school shootings in which someone was killed. Violence in our nations' schools is not a new phenomenon, but the severity of the violence seems to be increasing.

Juvenile crime emerged as a national issue in the 1940s, and the public perceives the problem as having grown exponentially over time. Recent juvenile crime statistics, however, indicate that the youth arrest rate has declined significantly--from an all-time high of 26 percent of all arrests in 1975 to approximately 15 percent of the total number of persons arrested in 1990 (Sautter 1995). We know that the general public perceives juvenile violence as increasing, but how do the people who work most directly
with juveniles feel. Do teachers perceive greater risks of school violence today? Do teachers' perceptions of school violence cause them to fear their chosen profession?

The focus of this study is on high school teachers' perceptions of the violence within their schools. I specifically looked at whether or not teachers' perceptions of violence caused them to perceive greater risks involved in teaching and at the level of fear they possess as a result. There are many forms of violence that occur daily in schools across our nation. Forms of violence can range from verbal attacks to the mass slayings we have viewed on the evening news. Teachers' perceptions of the violence that goes on within their schools may paint a much more realistic picture of the amount and kinds of violence that plague our nation's schools. Teachers have an inside view of the violence that occurs within their schools, much more so than society at large. According to a survey entitled "Teaching in the 90's" conducted in 1993 by the British Columbia Teachers' Federation, teachers look at violence in the schools in which they teach as being of a somewhat serious issue (Malcolmson 1994). This inside view of the violence that exists or possibly exists in schools may cause teachers to feel threatened or in danger.

The theoretical perspective that I used to explain why
teachers' perceptions of violence might cause them to fear being victimized is the symbolic interactionism concept of the "definition of the situation" by W. I. Thomas. This concept means that if we perceive certain phenomena as being real, then they will be treated as real (Thomas, 1969). If a teacher perceives existing violence in his or her school as being high, then that teacher may define his or her situation as being threatened.

The constructionists perspective is also helpful in understanding teachers' perception of the situation. This perspective helps to explain how school violence as a social problem might be constructed.

A survey was administered to public high school teachers to investigate the different perceptions of violence they may have and to ascertain their perceived risk of being victimized and whether they fear being victimized as a result. This survey was administered to teachers in nonmetropolitan and metropolitan high schools in varying locations of a Southern state. The survey provided information on the amount and types of violence that teachers perceive as existing in their schools as well as the differences associated with the location of schools.

A second survey was administered to the office personnel only, of each school. The office survey involved
the number of violent incidents reported by teachers to the principal or other office personnel. This survey also indicated the number and kind of security measures a school employed to prevent school violence.
CHAPTER II
THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

With the increased frequency of violence in our nation’s schools it is important to search for an understanding of this phenomenon. In recent years there has been increased media coverage regarding the topic of violence in our schools. Rarely does a day go by without hearing of the violence that plagues school campuses around our nation. Whether we learn about this violence from the television, newspaper, Internet, interactions with others, or our actual involvement, the message is clear: violence in our schools is quickly becoming a social problem.

The ways in which our communities and society choose to deal with this problem all relate to how they define it. In order to comprehend the process of defining the events around us we must first understand how humans communicate and interpret stimuli. Through the concepts of symbolic interactionism an understanding of how these phenomena are defined can be created.
Symbolic Interactionism

Symbolic interactionism is a broad theory, which encompasses many different ideas and concepts. This perspective states that humans have the ability to think and to interpret stimuli. This unique ability allows us to communicate and form collective groups. Symbolic interaction allows us to define the world around us daily through interactions with others and through the varying forms of media that exist (Ritzer 1996). Our thoughts and perceptions about various phenomena are shaped by past and present interactions and by what we see and hear on the television and radio. Through interpretation and interaction with others the "self" is created.

According to George Herbert Mead, "the self has a character which is different from that of the organism proper....[The self] arises in the process of social experience and activity" (Mead 1934, p. 135). Without this "social experience" or interaction with others the creation of the self would not be possible.

The interpretation of symbols is also a central part of symbolic interactionism and the way humans communicate with one another. Through symbolic interaction humans interpret and define the objects and symbols around them instead of simply reacting to them (Cox 1981, p. 198). A symbol is "a
thing or event associated with some other thing or event, but it is one that is produced and controlled by the very animals that have learned to respond to it” (Hewitt 1997, p. 32). For example gang graffiti or the aggressive posturing of a student may be interpreted as students’ intentions to act violently in a high school. Symbols are the basis of our communication and exist in many forms.

Another aspect of symbolic interactionism is the concept of stimulus, interpretation, and response. This concept allows humans the ability to form ideas, interpret the actions of others, and then react accordingly (Blumer 1972). The ways in which teachers interpret and respond to the acts of their students and the influence of the media’s interpretation on teachers interpretations are of great importance to this study. This understanding leads us to another very important concept of symbolic interactionism, the “definition of the situation.”

W. I. Thomas, the originator of the concept of definition of the situation, stated, “If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences” (Thomas 1972, p. 332). Most definitions of situations are imposed by society, yet there are some that are created individually (Znaniecki 1952, p. 259). Thomas emphasized that one’s own family and community are the main
contributors to the creation of social definitions. At a very early age our parents teach us how to define situations through their speech and other acts. As we grow our parents define how we are supposed to act from one situation to another.

If we believe something is real, then in our reality it is real. Robert Stebbins in a 1971 study of teacher definitions of disorderly behavior presented a sequential model in which cultural definitions of the situation are created.

(1) Typical actors in a given identity enter a typical setting with a specific intention or action orientation in mind.
(2) Certain aspects of these surroundings, some of which are related to the intention, activate or awaken some of the predispositions the actors characteristically carry with them.
(3) The aspects of the surroundings, the intention, and the activated predispositions, when considered together, lead to the selection of a cultural or habitual definition.
(4) The definition directs subsequent action in the situation, at least until a reinterpretation occurs (Stebbins 1971, pp. 219-20).

Violence in our society as well as our perceptions of this violence are very important in social problems definition. What we as individuals perceive as being real is real in its consequences. If a teacher perceives that there is an abundance of violence or high risk of victimization in his or her school, then he or she may feel threatened as a result. The ways in which these teachers
interpret or define this situation will have real consequences for them and the students they teach. For example, quality teachers may be fearful of students and not feel safe in the classroom or at school, possibly resulting in their finding a job at another school or seeking a different profession due to this fear or perceived risk of victimization. School discipline may also suffer if teachers hesitate to confront misbehaving students due to concerns for their own safety (Rossman and Morley 1996, p. 400). This hesitation to confront misbehaving students may cause possible increases in the amount of violence the teacher may encounter.

**Constructionists’ Perspective**

In this study I am concerned with how teachers choose to define the violence within their schools and the perceived risk and actual fear that results. Teachers’ perceptions of violence in schools can also be affected by what they see and hear on television or through other forms of media. The ways in which social problems, in this case school violence, are constructed is also central to this study. Constructionists state that social problems are created socially, yet they also say that “claimsmakers,” the media for example, shape our sense of what the problem is (Best 1995; Fritz and Altheide 1987). It is not necessarily
bad if the media present the true reality of the problem. Mass media may act as primary claimsmakers, constructing social problems on their own (Best 1991). If the media are allowed to create any social problems they wish, then nonexisting crime trends may be the end result.

Mass media tend to glamorize violence, likening isolated incidents to the prolonged, dramatic violence found in films and implying far greater levels of violence than are found in press reports of single violent events (Best 1991). The comparison of school violence to popular violent Hollywood films such as "Natural Born Killers" or "Boys in the Hood" may exaggerate the seriousness of the problem. Joel Best (1991), in his study of the media's construction of freeway shootings as a social problem, states that, if the violence is portrayed as being random, it will illicit greater fear. The media warned that ordinary drivers, going about their everyday business, were potential victims. If all teachers are defined as being possible victims of this random violence, then the perceived risk they possess will surely be increased as well as their actual fear of school violence.

The ways that media affect our perceptions of reality have been widely studied over the past decades.

Media manipulate and rearrange not only the content but the processes of communicated
experience, thereby shaping how the audience perceives and interprets the physical and social reality depicted (Funkhouser and Shaw 1990, p. 75).

Teachers that are bombarded by clips on the television showing mass murders taking place in our nation's schools might perceive violence in schools as being worse than it really is. By viewing television a teacher could paint a reality that may or may not be true of the level of violence that exists in schools. I do not imply that school violence is not a social problem, but it is the severity of the problem that is in question. The selective nature of the media in the creation of social problems and their dependence on sensationalism can manufacture trends just by focusing on previously ignored offenses (Best 1991).

The construction of school violence as a major social problem facing our society may lead to an increased level of fear as well as an increase in the perceived risk involved with teaching in our nation's schools. Media cannot be held fully accountable for teachers' perceptions of school violence, but they cannot be altogether exempt either.

Risk Perception

This chapter would not be complete without defining the concept of risk perception and how it relates to the current study. Risk perception is not an easily definable concept. It is best defined in the way that it is measured. To
measure perceived risk of a crime occurring the respondents would be asked how likely they believe it is that a certain crime or event will happen to them within a period of time (Rountree and Land 1996). Perceived risk is important to this study in order to gain a greater perspective on how high school teachers actually feel about school violence. The greater the risk that teachers feel of being victimized, the more fear towards school violence they will possess.

**Fear of Victimization**

In order to understand the concept of fear of victimization one must first know what fear itself means in relation to this study. Ferraro and LaGrange (1987) defined fear as "the negative emotional reaction generated by crime or symbols of crime" (Ferraro and LaGrange 1987, p. 373). This emotional response is learned through communication and our interaction with others (Hewitt 1997).

Fear of victimization refers to "fear of criminal acts committed against one's own person or property" (Warr 1984, p. 681). This concept was chosen over the more frequently used "fear of crime" because a person may fear crime in general and not fear personal victimization (Warr 1984). Generally this concept is measured by asking a question regarding how afraid the respondent is of being victimized by a certain crime.
Fear of victimization has been shown to increase through direct or indirect victimization as well as through media accounts (Skogan and Maxfield 1981). It is important to look at both perceived risk and actual fear of being victimized to get a clear picture of how teachers really feel about school violence. Perceived risk of victimization has also been shown to affect the level of fear one possesses (Ferraro 1996).

In sum, we look at symbolic interactionism to explain how teachers' perceptions are created in their most basic form. The definition of the situation helps to explain how societal definitions as well as personal definitions are created and recreated through an interpretive process that never ends. Not only does the definition of the situation help to provide explanations for how we perceive and react to social phenomena, the constructionists perspective also demonstrates how societal perceptions of social phenomena may be shaped and created. A teachers perceived risk of being victimized and the actual fear he or she possess is a result of how their perceptions are constructed.

A review of the literature will help to demonstrate how these concepts and perspectives explain how perceptions are created. The scope of school violence will be presented in order to show what teachers in our nation's schools face.
Research on fear and perceived risk of victimization will be discussed at great lengths in the literature review.
CHAPTER III

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Is the violence that occurs in our nation's schools a real problem facing our society? How does this violence affect those exposed to it? Do teachers of differing ages and sexes and from cities of different sizes vary in their level of fear and perceived risk of victimization? In this section the relevant literature associated with school violence, fear of this violence, and perceived risk of victimization will be covered. The first section will cover the extent and perceptions of violence in schools. This section will help to define the scope of the violence that exists in schools around our nation. This section will help to show why high school teachers may or may not fear victimization from their students.

The level of violence that is perceived by teachers and students may cause them to fear possible victimization by students. The literature on fear and perceived risk of victimization will be covered in the next section. Due to the lack of research conducted on teachers' fear and perceived risk of victimization, this section will look at
other fear of crime studies to help draw conclusions on the current study.

**Extent and Perceptions of Violence in Schools**

In this section I will discuss the extent of violence and various groups' perceptions on violence in our nation's schools. Weapons and guns in our nation's schools is the first topic that will be discussed. The following topic will be on school-related violent deaths. This section will show national trends related to past deaths that occurred in our school systems. Assaults and crimes against students will be the next section to be covered. The final topic under this section will cover assaults and crimes against teachers. These sections will help us to define the scope of school violence and gain a better understanding of this social problem.

**Perceptions and Facts about Weapons and Guns in Schools**

Possession of weapons in our nation's schools is a concern of school systems and society in general. Weapons possession can range from carrying a pocket knife to carrying a sawed off shotgun. Perceptions of the prevalence of weapons and guns in schools tend to vary in differing locations around the United States. Perceptions also vary according to whose perceptions they are. Teachers will not
have the same perceptions of weapons in schools as parents will, and neither teachers nor parents have the same perceptions as police officers. The focus of this study is on teachers' perceptions; yet, with lack of relevant literature in this area, others' perceptions will also be examined in this chapter.

According to a 1990-91 survey on the "percentage of teachers indicating that certain problems in their schools were serious or moderately serious" only five percent of teachers surveyed felt student possession of weapons fell into the category of a moderately serious or serious problem. Three percent of public school principals reported student possession of weapons as a moderate or serious problem in 1991, while two percent reported the same in 1997 (National Center for Education Statistics 1998a, para. 4). From these data one could conclude that both teachers and principals viewed weapons possession as a minor problem facing public schools.

Results from the 1970 and 1998 Gallup Poll (National Education Association 1998, para 17) showed that the general public did not list possession of weapons as a major problem facing public schools. However, a 1993 adolescent student survey found that "27% of males and 5% of females did report carrying a weapon on one or more days in the preceding
month” (Malcolmson 1994, Para. 2). This survey also found that teachers and parents had either seen or heard of students bringing weapons to school, but they did not believe it to be a common occurrence. Teachers perceived knives as the most commonly carried weapon. Results from the 1997 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) conducted by the Centers for Disease Control are as follows:

- 8.3% of high school students carried a weapon (e.g., gun, knife, or club) during the 30 days preceding the survey, down from 26% in 1993
- 5.9% of high school students carried a gun during the 30 days preceding the survey
- 8.5% of high school students carried a weapon on school property during the 30 days preceding the survey

The prevalence of weapons carrying in school on one or more of the 30 days preceding the survey was 8.5% nationwide. Overall, male students (12.5%) were significantly more likely than female students (3.7%) to have carried a weapon on school property (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 1999, para. 3.)

The preceding statistics show that there was a significant decrease between 1993 and 1997 in the number of high school students who reported carrying a weapon. These statistics also show that there are differences between males and females as regards carrying a weapon on school property.

The literature available suggests that school officials’ perceptions of possession of weapons in our nation’s schools is not as extensive as the media or general
public feel it is. Knives and clubs have always been present in school settings to some extent, but guns, especially handguns, are a different issue. "It has been estimated that between 100,000 and 135,000 guns are brought into schools on a daily basis nationwide" (U.S. National Institute of Justice 1996, Para. 3.) From 1992-1995 firearms were the cause of 103 of 131 fatalities in schools. The knowledge of weapons being brought into schools may cause students to perceive the need to carry weapons for self-defense, further increasing the number of weapons (Gaustad 1991). It is important to note that few firearm-related deaths among school-age children occur in schools or on school property (National Education Association 1998).

School Related Violent Deaths

School violence today is an alarming issue and is a heavily researched topic. There is no single act or form of school violence that draws more attention than homicides in our nation’s schools. Even though national trends have shown that the rate of homicides in our schools has been decreasing over the past several years, the existence of one death is too many (Donohue, Schiraldi, and Ziedenberg 1998). In spite of this statistical decrease in the number of school related homicides, people tend to perceive this problem as getting larger. This section will examine the
trends and statistics of past and present school-related homicides.

Homicides in schools are extremely rare events according to the 1998 Annual Report on School Safety (Annual Report on...1998, para. 6). This study also reported that of the more than 7,000 children who were murdered in 1992 and 1993 less than one percent were killed at school. According to data collected over a six-year period by the National Center for Education Statistics, there were 55 deaths resulting from school shootings in the 1992-93 school year (Donohue et al. 1998, para. 20). This number decreased to 20 deaths in 1994-95 and then increased to 40 in the 1997-98 school year. The NCES noted that in the 1997-98 school year the 40 deaths were calculated differently than in previous years and included some adults' deaths and those who committed suicide. This difference in calculation is misleading, yet the actual number of student deaths for this year must not have exceeded 20 because the NCES states that the total number of school homicides has decreased steadily since the 1992-93 school year. There seem to be no trends in connection with these homicides.

School related violent deaths have decreased over the past few years, but the number of multiple-victim violent deaths has been on the increase.
The number of multiple-victim homicide events at school has increased, from two in the 1992-93 school year to six in 1997-98. The number of victims in these events has also increased (from four in 1992-93 to sixteen in 1997-98). (Annual Report on School Safety: 1998, Ch. 1, para. 5)

The quote above shows a dramatic increase in the number of multiple-victim deaths and in the number of victims involved in these events.

Perceptions of school-related violent deaths as being on the rise may be the result of the increased media coverage of these events. According to the Justice Policy Institute,

Between 1990 and 1995, for example, homicides in America dropped 13 percent according to the FBI, but coverage of homicides on the ABC, CBS and NBC evening news programs increased by 240 percent. (Donohue et al. 1998, para. 13.)

A list of past school shootings was compiled by ABC News Internet Ventures in 1999, and it lists sixteen separate school shootings that occurred since February 2, 1996. In all there were 37 people killed, and 40 were wounded. This huge increase in the reporting of homicides has increased the public’s awareness of this issue. This increased knowledge may have caused parents and society in general to perceive school-related violent deaths as a larger problem than it really is.

Assaults and Crimes against Students

Students of all ages are victimized in our schools on a
daily basis. From a very young age students learn about and are aware of violence in their schools. Teachers have noticed that children are increasingly becoming more violent at younger ages (Malcolmson 1994). The Task Force on Violence in Schools reported that aggressive behavior such as using violent language and punching teachers and students have been noticed in children as young as five. These violent behaviors are quite alarming and occur more frequently than they used to (Malcolmson 1994).

Violence among students has also become more severe. Instead of fights occurring between two students there is a tendency today for groups to attack an individual (U.S. National Institute of Justice 1996). Students today resort to violence for conflict resolution faster than in the past (Malcolmson 1994). Today victims are often continuously attacked even after they are down. There is also an increasing trend in unprovoked random acts of violence (U.S. National Institute...1996). Violence of this nature may result from body language or even eye contact.

Physical fighting and assaults have always been a common characteristic of school life, yet their occurrences may be on the increase. According to a 1999 study conducted on violence and weapons in Texas schools, student assaults rose 27 percent from the 1996-97 school year to the 1997-98
school year (Violence and Weapons...1999). A 1997 youth risk behavior survey conducted by the Centers for Disease Control reported that

14.8% of students had been in a physical fight on school property one or more times during the 12 months preceding the survey.

Male students (20.0%) were significantly more likely than female students (8.6%) to have been in a physical fight on school property.

Black students (20.7%) and Hispanic students (19.0%) were significantly more likely than white students (13.3%) to have been in a physical fight on school property. (Youth Risk Behavior... 1998, para. 30)

Youth risk behavior surveys, on the other hand, report a decrease in the percentage of physical fights on school property from 1993 (16.2%) to 1997 (14.8%). Due to the varying results in data on assaults against students more research needs to be conducted before a solid conclusion can be made on this topic.

Younger students are generally bullied with greater frequency than are students in high school. According to a report by the National Center for Education Statistics (1998b), students in sixth grade were four times as likely to be bullied as were high school seniors. Male students also reported being bullied more frequently than female students.
Assaults and Crimes against Teachers

Students are not the only group that has suffered as a result of violence in schools. Teachers are all too often the objects of victimization. Teachers suffer from many forms of violence by students nationwide. These forms of violence range from verbal abuse to theft, rape, and murder. Violence against teachers is not a new phenomenon, yet there tend to be more serious offenses in greater volume committed against them today. A 1994 study conducted by the British Columbia Teachers’ Federation stated that teachers have been reporting increases in verbal threats against them and their families over the past few years (Malcolmson 1994).

According to Indicators of School Crime and Safety, a study conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics, over a five year period from 1992-1996, teachers were the victims of 1,581,000 nonfatal crimes at school, including 962,000 thefts and 619,000 violent crimes (rape or sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, and simple assault). On average, this translates into 316,000 nonfatal crimes per year. Among the violent crimes against teachers, there were about 89,000 serious violent crimes (14 percent of the violent crimes), including rape or sexual assault, robbery and aggravated assault. On average this translates into 18,000 serious violent crimes per year. (National Center for...1998a, para. 1)

From the above quote one can see that theft was the most common form of crime committed against teachers between 1992 and 1996. The results from the same study listed above
revealed that

the rate of serious violent crime at school was similar for elementary and secondary teachers (on average, 4 incidents per 1,000 teachers) regardless of their instructional level, sex, race-ethnicity, and the urbanicity of the schools where they taught. (National Center for...1998a, para. 2)

According to a recent study conducted on violence and weapons in Texas schools (Violence and Weapons...1999), the number of assaults against teachers and staff has decreased from 6,238 in the 1994-95 school year to 4,369 in the 1997-98 school year. The decreases associated with assaults on teachers and staff in Texas are attributed to intervention efforts and more effective counseling practices conducted by schools.

According to a 1996 overview of school violence and crime statistics compiled by the U.S. National Institute of Justice

nearly one out of five public school teachers reported being verbally abused (in a period of a month). Eight percent reported being physically threatened, and 2% reported being physically attacked. (U.S. National Institute of Justice 1996, para. 4)

This same report stated that in the New York City school system 3,984 teachers were victimized by students in the 1994-95 school year. According to a 1997 survey conducted on principals’ perceptions of discipline issues in their schools, only zero to two percent of principals indicated
physical abuse of teachers in their schools as a serious or moderate problem. The CDC reported in the findings of a 1996 study conducted on school related homicides that 11% of the school-associated violent deaths were teachers and other staff members.

As one can see, teachers today suffer from many different types of abuse and crimes against them. Violence directed toward teachers seems to be decreasing, yet any violence still presents a problem to those who must endure it. Violence against teachers is an ongoing problem that will need to be dealt with so that teachers can concentrate more on teaching and less on their personal safety.

**Previous Research on Fear and Perceived Risk of Victimization**

Fear of being victimized is not the term the majority of past research has used to measure fear. As stated in the theoretical section “fear of crime” has been the most frequently used term in this type of study. Most of the past research has also employed a single item to measure fear. A question like “Is there anywhere within a mile of your home in which you are afraid to walk at night?” is most frequently used (Warr 1984, p. 682).

This type of single-item measure suffers many operational and conceptual problems (Ferraro and LaGrange,
One major conceptual problem with this type of measure of fear is the lack of distinction made between perceived likelihood of victimization and fear of victimization (Miethe and Lee, 1984). Rountree and Land (1996) state that most fear of crime studies focus on judgment-based or general concern questions, which actually measure perceived risk instead of fear. Rountree and Land (1996) also state and offer empirical support in their research that fear of crime and perceived risk of crime are two conceptually distinct reactions. For these reasons, both fear of victimization and perceived risk of victimization are measured in the current study in order to analyze both of these concepts separately.

**Teachers’ Fear of Being Victimized**

With the growing threat of lethal violence in light of recent school-related deaths, teachers have become something other than educators; they have become targets. According to a 1999 study conducted by the CDC of school related homicides, 11 percent of those murdered were teachers and staff members (Centers for Disease...1999). This statistic may cause some teachers to be fearful of violent students and even students in general. However, even with the increasing level of violence occurring in schools, the majority of teachers reported not feeling threatened while
at work (Malcolmson 1994). Teachers who reported having had experience with threats and intimidation by students stressed that the incidents were isolated and infrequent (Malcolmson 1994, Appendix C., para. 9).

Teachers may suffer emotional and physical abuse both by their students and by the parents of students. Parents of students who are sent to detention or are expelled from school may confront and threaten teachers for taking these actions. Teachers may react to these threats in varying ways. In some cases they may withdraw from the school and request a reassignment; in other cases such experiences may cause them to find a new vocation (Sugar 1990, pp. 485-86). Very little data exist on the extent to which teachers are fearful of victimization. This research will attempt to gain an accurate view of teachers' fears of violence and their perceived risk of being victimized by their students.

Victimization Experience and Fear of Victimization

There has been substantial research conducted on fear of crime and victimization experience. Being criminally victimized has been proven to make people more wary, more cautious, and more fearful of other individuals (Smith and Hill 1991, p. 217). If teachers develop these characteristics, they may lose some of their teaching effectiveness, causing the quality of education to decrease.
Both property and personal victimizations affect both worry and concern and the defensive and protective measures taken against crime (Skogan 1986, p.138). Victimization experience has been one of the most widely sited predictors of fear of crime and perceived risk of crime (Miethe 1995; Parker and Ray 1990; Weinrath and Gartrell 1996). Knowing others who have been victimized is another strong predictor of fear of crime (Miethe 1995).

**School Location and Fear of Victimization**

Like victimization experience there is extensive data that show city size to be a strong predictor of fear of crime (Bankston, Jenkins, Thayer-Doyle, and Thompson 1987; Clemente and Kleiman 1977). Previous research indicates that fear of victimization increases with city size and is positively associated with urban residence (Clemente and Kleiman 1977). However, not all the evidence supports this relationship. Studies have found that rural residents have considered the probability of crime occurring in their neighborhoods higher than have residents of suburban areas (Boggs 1971). In another fear of crime study, fear was greatest among farmers and urbanites, with small-town and rural-nonfarm residents lower (Lee 1982). How fear of victimization will relate to teachers from metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas is not yet known and will be discussed
Personal Vulnerability and Fear of Victimization

Two very important demographic variables included in this study were age and sex. The majority of research conducted on fear of crime has stated that there are differences between the sexes and age groups. A sort of paradox exists with women and the elderly in relation to fear of crime. Both women and the elderly report the highest levels of fear, yet their actual risks of victimization are the lowest (Clemente and Kleiman 1977; Miethe 1995).

Ferraro 1996 states that women are more fearful of all types of victimization, but this is caused by their perceived risk of these offenses. Along with victimization experience and city size, sex has been proven to be a strong predictor of fear (Clemente and Kleiman 1977). Age has also been frequently cited as being an important contributor to fear (Clemente and Kleiman 1977; Ferraro 1996; Sharp and Dodder 1985).

Security Measures and Fear of Victimization

In my review of the literature, I could not find any research discussing how security measures used in schools have affected the fear teachers may possess. Yet, I found some material that evaluates program effectiveness in
combating school violence. The results of studies on the use of school resource officers have shown that the officers placed in schools have a positive effect on school violence and disciplinary infractions, showing a decrease in all types of offenses (Dunn 1999; Johnson 1999). I feel that this type of security measure will also help decrease the amount of fear teachers possess by adding the visibility of the law.

There is conflicting evidence when it comes to the effectiveness of security measures such as metal detectors. Ferraraccio (1999) stated that metal detectors are not really effective in preventing violence and can create rather than alleviate fear among students. At the same time another researcher stated that metal detectors are very effective in keeping weapons out of school and deterring violence (Johnson 1999). More research needs to be done in this area in order to find any definitive answers.
CHAPTER IV

METHODS

Thus far, I have examined the extent to which violence exists in our nation's schools and the fear of being victimized. The following section concerns my hypotheses and the manner in which they will be tested. Also within this section the variables used in this study as well as the questionnaire and sampling design are discussed.

Hypotheses

Based on the literature review, the following hypotheses will be tested:

Fear of Being Victimized

H1: Teachers from metropolitan schools will report greater fear of being victimized than will teachers from nonmetropolitan schools.

H2: As teachers' victimization experience increases, teachers' fear of victimization will increase.

H3: As school reported violent incidents against teachers increase, teachers' fear of victimization will increase.

H4: Older teachers will have a greater fear of victimization than will younger teachers.

H5: Female teachers will have a greater fear of victimization than will male teachers.
H6: Teachers who perceive school violence as being a serious problem will fear being victimized more than will teachers who do not perceive school violence as being a serious problem.

Perceived Risk of Being Victimized

H7: Teachers from metropolitan schools will perceive a greater risk of violence than will teachers from nonmetropolitan schools.

H8: As teachers' victimization experience increases, teachers' perceived risk of victimization will increase.

H9: As school reported violent incidents against teachers increase, teachers' perceived risk of victimization will increase.

H10: Older teachers will perceive a greater risk of victimization than will younger teachers.

H11: Female teachers will perceive a greater risk of victimization than will male teachers.

H12: Teachers who perceive school violence as being a serious problem will perceive a greater risk of being victimized than will teachers who do not perceive school violence as being a serious problem.

Sample

A convenience sample was drawn from metropolitan (<50,000 population) and nonmetropolitan (>50,000 population) public high schools of varying locations in Central Kentucky. A total of nine high schools, five nonmetropolitan and four metropolitan, made up the sample, for an n of 204. In these nine schools there were a total of 448 teachers, 238 nonmetropolitan and 210 metropolitan
teachers. The respondents for this study were composed of 118 nonmetropolitan respondents (for a 50% response rate) and 86 metropolitan respondents (for a 41% response rate). The sample was composed of 72 (35.3%) male teachers and 132 (64.7%) female teachers.

Two questionnaires were administered for this study. The instruments included a 52-item questionnaire administered only to teachers and a 10-item office questionnaire completed by the principal of each high school (see Appendices A and B). Survey data were collected during the months of March and April, 2000.

Dependent Variables

The dependent variables for this study were "teachers' fear of victimization by students" and "teachers' perceived risk of victimization." Fear of victimization was conceptualized as being made up of the following sub-concepts:

- Being verbally threatened with physical violence by a student
- Being sexually harassed by a student
- Having your possessions stolen by a student
- Having a student take your possessions/money through force or threat of force
- Having your possessions destroyed by a student
- Being punched or hit by a single student
- Being punched or hit by a group of students
- Being punched or hit by a gang
- Being knifed by a student
- Being shot by a student
- Being murdered by a student

To measure fear of victimization, respondents were asked to rate their level of fear of victimization of the previously listed events. This rating was accomplished by asking the respondent to circle a number from one to ten, one representing "Not Afraid at All" and ten representing "Very Afraid."

The dependent variable "Perceived Risk of Victimization" was conceptualized with the same sub-components as fear of victimization, but it differs in the way that it is measured. Respondents were asked to rate the chance of a specific incident happening to them during the 2000-2001 school year. This rating was accomplished by asking the respondents to circle a number from one to ten, one representing "Not at All Likely" and ten representing "Very Likely."

**Independent Variables**

There were six independent variables chosen for this study suggested as predictors by most of the fear of crime literature. The first two variables were "Victimization Experience" of the teachers and the "Reported Victimization" of teachers that had occurred in these schools in the preceding two years. These variables were measured using
the same method, but they were administered on different instruments. The first variable "Victimization Experience" measured the respondent's personal victimization experience and was asked of teachers only. The second variable "Reported Victimization" (or a teachers' indirect victimization experience) measured only reported incidents of the same acts of violence against any faculty member of the school. The "Reported Victimization" variable was asked of principals only and was administered as a separate instrument.

Both sections of this variable were measured using a four-point, Likert-type scale. A scale including "No Times," "1 Time," "2 Times," and "3 or More Times" was constructed to account for both teachers' personal victimization experience and the reported acts of violence against faculty during this time period. The subcomponent acts under teachers' personal victimization experience that were measured are as follows:

- Observed gang violence
- Observed violence by a group of students
- Observed a student with a firearm on school property
- Observed a student with a knife on school property
- Been physically assaulted by a student
- Been verbally threatened with physical injury by a student
- Had an item taken through force or threat of force by
- Been sexually harassed by a student
- Had possessions damaged or destroyed by a student
- Had an item stolen by a student

The "Reported Victimization" variable was composed of the number of times these same acts listed above had been reported by the teachers to the principal over the previous two years.

These two types of victimization experience were used as independent variables due to the strong support in the literature stating that victimization experience, both direct and indirect are strong predictors of fear and perceived risk of victimization (Miethe 1995; Parker and Ray 1990; Weinrath and Gartrell 1996).

The next independent variable used in this study was "School Location." School location was chosen as an independent variable due to the extensive support in the literature stating that location is a major predictor of perceived risk and fear of being victimized (Bankston et al. 1987; Clemente and Kleiman 1977). This variable was coded 0 for metropolitan schools and 1 for nonmetropolitan schools. A negative correlation between school location and either fear/perceived risk index would mean that metropolitan teachers were more fearful or perceived a greater risk of victimization than did nonmetropolitan teachers.
The next independent variable used in this analysis was teachers' "Perceived Seriousness of Violence." This variable represents high school teachers' perception of the level of seriousness of violence within their school. To measure this concept I used a four-point Likert scale. This scale measured the level at which teachers felt that certain types of violence were a problem at their school during the 1999-2000 school year. The answer selections ranged from 0 to 3 (0 "No Problem"; 1, "Minor Problem"; 2, "Moderate Problem"; and 3, "Serious Problem"). The subcomponent problems that were measured were as follows:

- Physical conflicts among students
- Theft of personal items
- Theft of school items
- Vandalism of school property by students
- Student possession of knives
- Student possession of firearms
- Student lack of respect for authority
- Verbal threats of teachers by students
- Verbal conflicts between students
- Physical assaults of teachers by students
- Violence by a group of students
- Gang violence

The next set of independent variables were demographic in nature and were as follows: "Age," which was not coded because teachers were asked to fill in their ages; "Sex," coded 0 for male and 1 for female. Both age and sex were
chosen as independent variables due to the strong support for these two being predictors of fear of victimization. Studies have shown that both females and the elderly exhibit a disproportionate amount of fear of being victimized and perceive themselves as being at a greater risk of victimization than do their younger and male counterparts (Clemente and Kleiman 1977; Ferraro 1996; Sharp and Dodder 1985). Race was originally included as an independent variable in this study, but this variable had to be excluded due to lack of variance among the teaching staff sampled.

Two other independent variables originally included in the study were "Security Controls" used by the school and "Teaching Experience." The principal of each school was asked to check all security measures that his or her school employed to prevent school violence and protect faculty and students. The security measures listed were metal detectors, security guards, random locker searches, security cameras, police presence in and around the school, escorts, gates, and a blank space marked other, in which they could write other security measures being used.

This variable was chosen for this study because little is known of how the implementation of security measures affects teachers' levels of fear and perceived risk of victimization. However, this variable was later excluded
from the results because it was not found to be a significant predictor of either fear or perceived risk of victimization.

"Teaching Experience," the last independent variable used in this analysis, was not coded. Teachers filled in the number of years they had been teaching. There is little known about teaching experience and both fear and perceived risk of victimization. As with security measures this variable was excluded from the current analysis because it was not found to be a significant predictor of either fear or perceived risk of victimization.

**Analytical Procedures**

Looking back over the operational definitions we see that several concepts are comprised of many items, each measuring a particular facet of the larger domain. To measure the relationships among the larger concepts it was necessary to combine the items into one measure. Scaling was used to accomplish this task.

In scaling the items of each concept, both factor and reliability analyses were used. Factor analysis allowed me to check whether all the items were related to our general concept. This analysis also allowed me to ascertain how strongly related each item was to the overall concept and provided a set of weights (i.e., factor score coefficients)
that could be used to improve the accuracy of the scale.

Reliability analysis also improves the overall scale by examining the intercorrelations of the items and providing some guidance about improving the scale accuracy. For example, on several scales I found that I could attain higher reliability (as measured by Cronbach’s alpha) by deleting some of the items. However, in other scales I did not delete any of the items because I wanted to ensure the scales were exactly the same.

To produce each of the six scales used in this study, items were standardized, giving each a mean of zero and a standard deviation of one, and then weighted by their factor-scale-score coefficient. Items for each scale were then summed. (For a complete listing of these six indices see Appendix C.) To minimize missing data I allowed SPSS to sum the scale if one item had missing data (i.e., if the scale was comprised of four items, I told the program to add it up if at least three items were present.) It is understood that this process has the potential to depress the mean and increase the standard deviation; however, it is believed that the increase in sample size outweighs these costs.

To test the hypotheses of this study, bivariate correlations were run on these six indices as well as the
other independent variables included in this study. These correlations were run to find out whether these variables were related to each other and to find the level of significance of these relationships. A table containing these correlations can be found in the results section. Multiple regressions were then run to create further support for the hypothesized relationships. Regression analysis allows us to make some claim that the hypothesized relationships between the variables exist even when other relevant variables are controlled.
CHAPTER V

RESEARCH FINDINGS

The results of these analyses affirm the majority of the hypotheses in this study. However, four of the twelve hypotheses were found not to be significant. Bivariate correlations were used to view the associations and directions between the independent variables and the dependent variables and also as a check for multicollinearity. A discussion of the multivariate models in which both teachers' fear and perceived risk of victimization are regressed on several independent variables (including age, sex, school location, reported victimization, perceived seriousness of violence, and victimization experience) follows. The results of both the bivariate correlations and the linear regressions are stated below.

Bivariate Correlations

A correlation matrix was used to examine the relationships between age, sex, school location, victimization experience, and reported victimization in
relation to both fear and perceived risk of victimization. In looking at the matrix we see the threat of multicollinearity is minimal because none of the correlations between these variables are too strongly associated. The correlations range from .042 between reported victimization and perceived risk of victimization to .647 between reported victimization and security measures.

The correlation matrix is also useful for observing the relationships, directions (positive/negative), and significance levels among the variables. The hypothesized relationships on the correlation matrix are discussed below.

The first hypothesis of this study was that teachers from metropolitan high schools would report a greater fear of victimization than would teachers from nonmetropolitan high schools. However, the correlation between location and fear of victimization (r = .238, p<.01) suggests that this hypothesis is not supported. From this data nonmetropolitan teachers are more fearful of being victimized than are metropolitan teachers.

The second hypothesis of the study also deals with teachers' fear of victimization. This hypothesis is as follows: as teachers' personal victimization experience increases, their fear of victimization will increase.
According to the data in Table 1, the significant association between victimization experience and fear of victimization (r = .195, p < .05) supports this hypothesis. The correlations of the third hypothesis dealing with teachers' fear of victimization will be covered next. This hypothesis is stated as follows: as school reported violent incidents against teachers increases, teachers' fear of victimization will increase. There was no association found between reported victimization and fear of victimization. Therefore, this hypothesis was not supported.

The fourth hypothesis covering teachers' fear of victimization deals with the teachers' age. This hypothesis is that older teachers will have a greater fear of victimization than will younger teachers. The correlation matrix shows that there is a significant association (r = -.154, p < .05) between teachers' age and fear of victimization, but the expected direction was not supported. This negative correlation between these two variables means that younger teachers were actually more fearful of victimization than were older teachers. Therefore, the hypothesis was not supported for these two variables.

The fifth hypothesis covering teachers' fear of victimization deals with the teachers' sex. This hypothesis is that female teachers will have a greater fear of
victimization than will male teachers. Again the correlation matrix shows that there is a significant association \((r = .175, p<.05)\) between a teachers' sex and fear of victimization. The direction of the correlation supports my original hypothesis that female teachers are more fearful of victimization than are male teachers.

The final hypothesis covering teachers' fear of victimization deals with teachers' perceived seriousness of violence. This hypothesis is stated as follows: teachers who perceive school violence as being a serious problem will fear being victimized more than will teachers who do not perceive school violence as being a serious problem. The information in Table 1 shows that there is a significant association \((r = .258, p<.01)\), supporting my original hypothesis, between perceived seriousness of violence and fear of victimization.

The next set of hypotheses to be discussed deal with teachers' perceived risk of being victimized. The first hypothesis is that teachers from metropolitan schools will perceive a greater risk of being victimized than will teachers from nonmetropolitan schools. The correlation matrix in Table 1 shows that there is an association \((r = .161, p<.05)\) between location and perceived risk of victimization, but the direction is opposite that stated in
Table 1. Bivariate Correlations among Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Reported Victimization</th>
<th>Perceived Seriousness of Violence</th>
<th>Victimization Experience</th>
<th>Fear Of Victimization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>-.196**</td>
<td>-.070</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Reported Victimization</td>
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<td>.016</td>
<td>-.116</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Seriousness of Violence</td>
<td>.103</td>
<td>.102</td>
<td>-.103</td>
<td>.030</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victimization Experience</td>
<td>-.007</td>
<td>.008</td>
<td>-.148**</td>
<td>.065</td>
<td>.620**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear Of Victimization</td>
<td>-.154**</td>
<td>.175*</td>
<td>.238**</td>
<td>.080</td>
<td>.258**</td>
<td>.195*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Risk of Victimization</td>
<td>-.018</td>
<td>.167*</td>
<td>.161*</td>
<td>.042</td>
<td>.299**</td>
<td>.170*</td>
<td>.647**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<.05  **p<.01  n = 204
my original hypothesis. This association being positive (.161) shows that nonmetropolitan teachers perceive a greater risk of being victimized than do metropolitan teachers, therefore not supporting my hypothesis. The next hypothesis also deals with teachers’ perceived risk of victimization. This hypothesis states that as teachers’ victimization experience increases, their perceived risk of victimization will also increase. The correlation matrix supports this hypothesis and shows that there is a significant association (r = .170, p<.05) between teachers’ victimization experience and their perceived risk of victimization.

The ninth hypothesis is that as school reported victimizations of teachers increase, their perceived risk of victimization will also increase. No association was found between reported victimization against teachers and their perceived risk of victimization. For this reason the original hypothesis was not supported.

The next hypothesis covering teachers’ perceived risk of victimization deals with the teachers’ age. This hypothesis states that older teachers will perceive a greater risk of victimization than will younger teachers. There was no association found between teachers’ age and perceived risk of victimization. Therefore, this hypothesis
was not supported. Female teachers will perceive a greater risk of victimization than will male teachers is the next hypothesis to be covered. There was a significant association \( r = .167, p < .05 \) found between these two variables. This correlation supports my original hypothesis and indicates that female teachers are more likely than male teachers to perceive a greater risk of being victimized.

The final hypothesis covering teachers' perceived risk of victimization deals with teachers' perceived seriousness of violence in school. This hypothesis states that teachers who perceive school violence as being a serious problem will perceive a greater risk of being victimized than will teachers who do not perceive school violence as being a serious problem. There was a significant association \( r = .299, p < .01 \) found between these two variables, which supports my hypothesis. While the correlation matrix was used as a preliminary test, providing us with information on the relationships between the dependent and independent variables in my hypotheses, regression analysis allows us to test these relationships in a much more sophisticated way, adding further support for these hypotheses.

**Multiple Regression**

The bivariate analysis has indicated that school location, victimization experience, perceived seriousness of
violence, and sex are significantly correlated to both teachers’ fear and perceived risk of victimization. Forced entry multiple regression was employed in order to ascertain which of the hypothesized relationships persist even when other relevant variables are controlled. Ten models were tested to explain the variation in the dependent variables (fear of victimization and perceived risk of victimization).

The results of the regression analyses used to explain variation in the teachers’ fear of victimization variable are shown in Table 2. The standardized (beta) regression coefficients are provided for each of the independent variables.

The first model in Table 2 regressed teachers’ fear of victimization on the three demographically oriented independent variables age, sex, and school location. This model explains 10.3 percent of the variation in teachers’ fear of victimization at school, the least of any model in this table. School location emerged as the best predictor for teachers’ fear of victimization because those who were from nonmetropolitan schools were more likely to be fearful of victimization than were teachers from metropolitan schools ($\beta = .232$, $p<.001$). These results further support the relationship between school location and fear of victimization found on the correlation matrix. However,
again the original hypothesis was not supported.

The teachers' sex was the next best predictor for fear of victimization ($\beta = .186$, $p<.01$) because female teachers were more likely than male teachers to fear being victimized. The relationship was also consistent with the relationship found on the correlation matrix between these two variables and supports my hypothesis. This finding supports the existing data that females are more fearful of being victimized than are males (Miethe 1995). Contrary to research examining fear of crime among adults, age was not found to be a significant predictor of fear of victimization in this or any of the models in this study. The significant relationship found between age and fear of victimization on the correlation matrix disappears with the introduction of other variables in the regression analysis. Thus, it would appear that the dynamics driving fear of crime among teachers in school settings may be somewhat different from those driving fear in other situations. On the other hand, it may be that only the elderly fear crime more than other age groups, and few elderly people continue to teach.

The second model in Table 2 introduces the teachers' personal victimization experience. Model two explains the second largest amount of variation (15.6 percent) in the fear of victimization models. Again school location
Table 2. Regression of Fear of Victimization on Predictors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3</th>
<th>Model 4</th>
<th>Model 5</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Beta</td>
<td>Beta</td>
<td>Beta</td>
<td>Beta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>-.089</td>
<td>-.084</td>
<td>-.124</td>
<td>-.103</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
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<td>.187**</td>
<td>.186**</td>
<td>.157*</td>
<td>.164*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>.232***</td>
<td>.268***</td>
<td>.246***</td>
<td>.254***</td>
<td>.276***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victimization Experience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.233***</td>
<td></td>
<td>.092</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reported Victimations</td>
<td></td>
<td>.096</td>
<td></td>
<td>.281***</td>
<td>.221**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Seriousness of Violence</td>
<td>R .321</td>
<td>R .395</td>
<td>R .335</td>
<td>R .424</td>
<td>R .438</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R² .103</td>
<td>R² .156</td>
<td>R² .112</td>
<td>R² .179</td>
<td>R² .192</td>
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<td></td>
<td>n = 204</td>
<td>n = 204</td>
<td>n = 204</td>
<td>n = 204</td>
<td>n = 204</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<.05  **p<.01  ***p<.001
(β = .268, p<.001) is the best predictor of teachers' fear of victimization, with teachers' victimization experience (β = .233, p<.001) as the next best predictor.

This finding supports my second hypothesis that as teachers' victimization experience increases, their fear of victimization will also increase. The same relationship is observed between victimization experience and fear of victimization on both the correlation matrix and in model two, therefore adding further support to victimization experience as a predictor of teachers' fear of victimization. In this model again, female teachers were more likely to fear being victimized than were male teachers even with the addition of personal victimization experience.

Reported victimization is introduced as a predictor in model three. This model explains 11.2 percent of the variation in teachers' fear of victimization at school. Both school location (β = .246, p<.001) and sex (β = .186, p<.01) maintain their significance when adding reported victimization; however, the variable reported victimization, which measured teachers' indirect victimizations, was not found to be significant, which is consistent with the information on the correlation matrix between reported victimization and fear of victimization.

The fourth model of Table 2 introduces the independent
variable perceived seriousness of violence in schools. This model explains 17.9 percent of the variation in teachers' fear of victimization in school. Perceived seriousness of violence in schools (β = .281, p<.001) was also the strongest predictor of teachers' fear of victimization. The information in this model supports the hypothesis that teachers who perceive school violence as being a serious problem will have a greater fear of being victimized than will those who do not see school violence as a serious problem and is consistent with the relationship found on the correlation matrix. Again both school location (β = .254, p<.001) and sex (β = .157, p<.05) were significant predictors of fear with the addition of perceived seriousness of violence.

The final model regresses all the independent variables from the previous models with fear of victimization. This comprehensive model explains 19.2 percent of the variation, the greatest amount of all the fear of victimization models. The data in model five show that when both victimization experience and perceived seriousness of violence are tested together, violence experience drops out and is not significant. By looking at the correlation matrix you can see that the two variables are moderately related (r = .620, p<.01) to one another. Therefore, perceived seriousness of
violence (β = .221, p<.01) is the better predictor of fear of victimization. The data in this model support the hypothesis between perceived seriousness of violence and fear of victimization. The hypothesis between victimization experience and fear of victimization is not supported once perceived seriousness of violence is controlled. Again, both sex (β = .164, p<.05) and location (β = .276, p<.001) were found to be significant predictors of fear of victimization, even with the addition of other variables. These relationships remained consistent throughout Table 2, with those presented on the correlation matrix, therefore adding further support to these variables being predictors of teachers' fear of victimization.

Results from Table 3 follow the same format as those in Table 2 except that Table 3 deals with perceived risk of victimization instead of fear. In general, regressions from Table 3 do not explain as much variation as regressions of fear on the independent variables. Yet the relationships remained consistent with those presented on the correlation matrix. Model one in Table 3 displays the same pattern as in Table 2 except that sex (β = .181, p<.01) is a slightly stronger predictor of perceived risk than is school location (β = .179, p<.05). This model explains 5.9 percent of the variation, the lowest amount of all the models. These
Table 3. Regression of Perceived Risk of Victimization on Predictors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3</th>
<th>Model 4</th>
<th>Model 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Beta</td>
<td>Beta</td>
<td>Beta</td>
<td>Beta</td>
<td>Beta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.027</td>
<td>.035</td>
<td>.036</td>
<td>-.001</td>
<td>.008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>.181**</td>
<td>.182**</td>
<td>.181**</td>
<td>.150*</td>
<td>.152*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>.179*</td>
<td>.210**</td>
<td>.188**</td>
<td>.203**</td>
<td>.212**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victimization</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience</td>
<td>.200**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reported</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victimization</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seriousness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of Violence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R .242</td>
<td>R .312</td>
<td>R .251</td>
<td>R .386</td>
<td>R .390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R² .059</td>
<td>R² .098</td>
<td>R² .063</td>
<td>R² .149</td>
<td>R² .152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n = 204</td>
<td>n = 204</td>
<td>n = 204</td>
<td>n = 204</td>
<td>n = 204</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<.05  **p<.01  ***p<.001
results are contrary to my original hypothesis that metropolitan teachers would perceive a greater risk of victimization at school than would nonmetropolitan teachers. This model also supports the hypothesis that female teachers will perceive a greater risk of victimization than will male teachers. The relationships found between school location and perceived risk of victimization and between sex and perceived risk of victimization were both consistent with those found on the correlation matrix, further supporting these relationships. Age, as in the correlation matrix, was not found to be a significant predictor of perceived risk of victimization.

Victimization experience was added as a predictor to the model in model two. The strongest predictor of perceived risk of being victimized, according to this model, was school location ($\beta = .210$, $p<.01$). The next highest predictor of perceived risk was the teachers' personal victimization experience ($\beta = .200$, $p<.01$). This relationship is consistent with the relationship between these two variables on the correlation matrix. This model supports the hypothesis that teachers who experience greater personal victimization at school will perceive a greater risk of victimization even with the addition of other
variables. Sex was also a significant predictor of teachers' perceived risk of victimization in this model. This model explains 9.8 percent of the variation in perceived risk of victimization.

The third model introduces reported violence and explains 6.3 percent of the variation in teachers' perceived risk of victimization. As in model three in Table 2, both sex (β = .181, p<.01) and school location (β = .188, p<.01) are significant predictors of perceived risk of victimization. As in the fear of victimization table, reported victimization is not a significant predictor of perceived risk. Reported victimization was not expected to be a predictor because there was no correlation found between it and perceived risk of victimization on the correlation matrix.

The forth model of the analysis adds the variable perceived seriousness of violence and explains 14.9 percent of the variation in perceived risk of victimization. The best predictor of perceived risk of victimization in this model is perceived seriousness of violence in schools (β = .304, p<.001). This relationship is consistent with the relationship found between these two variables on the correlation matrix, therefore adding support to perceived
seriousness of violence being a predictor of perceived risk of victimization. Again both school location ($\beta = .203$, $p<.01$) and sex ($\beta = .150$, $p<.05$) were significant predictors of teachers' perceived risk of being victimized.

The final model in Table 3 regresses all the independent variables from the previous models with perceived risk of victimization. This comprehensive model explains 15.2 percent of the variation, the greatest amount of all the perceived risk models. As in model five on Table 2, the data show that when both victimization experience and perceived seriousness of violence are tested together, violence experience drops out and is not significant. Again, by looking at the correlation matrix you can see that the two variables are moderately related ($r = .620$, $p<.01$) to one another. Therefore, perceived seriousness of violence ($\beta = .293$, $p<.001$) is the better predictor of fear of victimization. The data in this model support the hypothesis between perceived seriousness of violence and perceived risk of victimization and also show that this variable is the best predictor of perceived risk of victimization. However, unlike the significant relationship found in the correlation matrix, the hypothesis between victimization experience and perceived risk of victimization is not supported once perceived seriousness is controlled.
Again, both sex ($\beta = .152, p<.05$) and location ($\beta = .212, p<.01$) were found to be significant predictors of fear of victimization, even with the addition of other variables. These relationships remained consistent throughout Table 3 with those presented on the correlation matrix, therefore adding further support to both sex and location being predictors of teachers' fear of victimization.
CHAPTER VI
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The present study advances the understanding about how high school teachers’ perceive the issue of school violence. Criminologists and other social scientists have conducted extensive research on the topic of fear of crime over the past thirty years. Most fear of crime studies have used single-item fear indicators, which more commonly measure a judgement of risk (Ferraro and LaGrange 1987). In this current study I took the advise of Ferraro and LaGrange and created multidimensional measures to examine more accurately and uniquely both fear of victimization and perceived risk of victimization. In addition, my research seems to support the contention that fear and risk are both conceptually and empirically distinct concepts (Barth 1998, Rountree and Land 1996).

Even with the extensive research on adult fear of crime, very little, if any, is known about how teachers’ fear and perceive the risk of being victimized. I find it surprising that this research has been omitted from the fear
of crime literature, based on the increased media coverage of violence in our nation's schools.

The primary purpose of this study was to help fill the void in the literature by examining the factors that may be linked with teachers' fear and perceived risk of being victimized. Based on past research on the predictors of fear of crime, a set of factors were examined in relation to both teachers' fear and perceived risk of victimization. Using a convenience sample of 204 high school teachers from nine different counties in the state of Kentucky, I examined the impact of selected variables on teachers' fear and perceived risk of being victimized.

My findings suggest that there is a great deal of similarity between the determinants that affect both teachers and other adults; however, some differences were found between the current study and other fear of crime studies. For example, age, a significant predictor for adult fear of crime in many studies, was not found to be significant in the current analysis for either fear or perceived risk of victimization. This result may be due to the fact that many teachers today retire in their late fifties and early sixties.

Another finding that differs from previous research on fear of crime is that a teachers' indirect victimization
experience (reported victimizations) was not found to be a significant predictor of teachers' fear or perceived risk of victimization. Yet, even though reported victimization was not found to be a significant predictor of fear and perceived risk, the teachers' personal victimization experience was found to be significant. There are several possible explanations for these findings.

The first explanation I will suggest relates to the way this variable was measured. The information for this variable was completed only by the principal of each high school. Therefore, there may have been differences between the number of victimizations the principal knew of and the actual number of teacher victimizations. Another possibility could have been that the principal chose to report fewer incidents than actually occurred in order to make his school appear less violent. A third possibility, and probably the correct one, is that the teachers themselves may not have known about the extent of the victimizations of other colleagues and students. In any case reported victimization was not found to be a significant predictor of either fear or perceived risk of victimization.

School location was found to be a strong predictor of both fear and perceived risk of victimization. Location is
also a strong predictor of fear in most fear-of-crime studies, but location is measured in so many different ways in these studies that it is difficult to compare these findings. The current study used metropolitan and nonmetropolitan as the two choices for school location. Some fear of crime studies suggest that fear increases with city size (Clemente and Kleiman 1977). However, another study has reported that rural-farm residents and urbanites fear victimization to about the same extent (Lee 1982).

In my original hypotheses I stated that metropolitan teachers would both fear and perceive a greater risk of victimization than would nonmetropolitan teachers. However, my findings suggested the opposite, nonmetropolitan teachers' were more fearful and perceived a greater risk of being victimized than did metropolitan teachers. I find this result to be very interesting because metropolitan teachers were also found to share greater victimization experiences than nonmetropolitan teachers.

One possible suggestion for this result is that metropolitan teachers may expect and accept a certain amount personal victimization in their environment, while nonmetropolitan teachers do not. Another possibility for this elevated fear and perceived risk of victimization in nonmetropolitan teachers could have resulted from the
increased media attention given to school shootings occurring in other nonmetropolitan communities like their own. Only further analysis into this issue will uncover the real reasons behind why nonmetropolitan teachers both fear and perceive greater risks of being victimized than do metropolitan teachers.

The similarities between the current study and other fear of crime studies are as numerous as the differences. Sex, a commonly cited predictor of both fear and perceived risk of victimization was also found to be a significant predictor in the current analysis. Most fear-of-crime studies report that females both fear and perceive a greater risk of being victimized, yet they are victimized less frequently than are their male counterparts (Clemente and Kleiman 1977; Miethe 1995). Females’ belief that they might lack the physical strength to ward off an attack offers a partial explanation. Males’ concurrent belief that they can “handle themselves” provides another possible explanation for the differences.

Previous victimization experience is also widely cited by many fear of crime studies as being a major predictor of fear of future victimization and perceived risk (Miethe 1995; Parker and Ray 1990; Weinrath and Gartrell 1996). This study is no exception when this variable is looked at
separately from perceived seriousness of violence; a teachers' personal victimization experience was found to be a significant predictor of both fear and perceived risk of victimization. One suggestion to help decrease the teachers' victimization experience is to employ better security measures in schools and train teachers how to deal with hostile situations.

Teachers' perceptions of the seriousness of school violence was also found to be a significant predictor of both fear and perceived risk. This variable is fairly straightforward; teachers who feel school violence is a serious problem also fear and perceive a greater risk of victimization at school. The way a teacher perceives school violence in his or her own school or school in general is obviously an important indicator of his or her level of fear and perceived risk of being victimized.

In order to find the reasons why teachers have such a negative perception of school violence you have to examine what seems to be valued by the media. The media seem to sensationalize the more negative violent school events such as Columbine, and gloss over the more positive issues occurring in schools nationwide. This finding has serious implications for the future of the teaching profession. Possible teachers may be choosing not to be teachers due to
the fear and perceived risks involved in teaching today. If this is the case, then all of society will eventually lose out due to teacher shortages and decreased quality of teachers.

Limitations of the Study

There are several limitations of this study. Probably the most important limitation, due to time and financial constraints, was that this analysis was not conducted in a random nature and, therefore, the results are not generalizable to even the state of Kentucky, much less to the nation's high schools as a whole. Yet, even though these results may not be generalizable outside of the sample, I feel that this analysis provides both interesting and useful information and helps to fill a void in both fear and perceived risk of victimization literature. Besides the problem of generalizability, the models that were used in this analysis accounted for only a modest amount of variation in both teachers' fear of victimization and teachers' perceived risk of victimization.

Suggestions for Future Research

This research helps to answer many questions on teachers' fear and perceived risk of victimization, yet much more needs to be learned in this area. Future research should be concerned with how teachers learn this fear of
being victimized. Are the media really to blame or is this fear derived from past victimization experiences or some other unknown cause? If the media are at fault, what form contributes most to this fear and perception of risk?

Examination should be conducted on how security measures affect both teachers' and students' fear and perceived risk. Research needs to be conducted on whether or not the lack of corporal punishment affects teachers' fear and risk by not letting them control the classroom situation. Studies also need to be conducted to see if there are racial differences in teachers' fear and perceived risk of victimization. This variable had to be dropped from the current analysis due to lack of diversity among the teachers in the sample. Any additional fear and perceived risk research conducted on teachers will be useful in filling the void in this literature.
APPENDICES
Appendix A

Teacher Survey

School Violence Survey

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. By completing this survey, you are giving the researcher consent to use any of the information collected for research purposes. The information from this survey will be kept confidential and anonymous. To maintain your anonymity please do not place your name or leave any identifiable marks on the survey.

1. Please compare your experience teaching in schools today to your experience when you started teaching school. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Please circle your answer.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female students are more violent today</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School violence is more severe today</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers feel more threatened today</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students are less respectful of authority today</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. To what extent, if any, has each of the following been a problem in your school during the 1999-2000 school year. (Please circle your answer.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>No Problem</th>
<th>Minor Problem</th>
<th>Moderate Problem</th>
<th>Serious Problem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical conflicts among students</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theft of personal items</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theft of school items</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student possession of firearms</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vandalism of school property by students</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student possession of knives</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of respect for authority</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Verbal threats of teachers by students ... 0 1 2 3
Verbal conflicts between students ...... 0 1 2 3
Physical assaults of teachers by students 0 1 2 3
Violence by a group of students 0 1 2 3
Gang violence ......................... 0 1 2 3

In the past two years at school, how many times have you... (Please circle your answer.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed gang violence?</th>
<th>No Times</th>
<th>1 Time</th>
<th>2 Times</th>
<th>3 or More Times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed violence by a group of students?</th>
<th>No Times</th>
<th>1 Time</th>
<th>2 Times</th>
<th>3 or More Times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed a student with a firearm on school property?</th>
<th>No Times</th>
<th>1 Time</th>
<th>2 Times</th>
<th>3 or More Times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed a student with a knife on school property?</th>
<th>No Times</th>
<th>1 Time</th>
<th>2 Times</th>
<th>3 or More Times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Been physically assaulted by a student?</th>
<th>No Times</th>
<th>1 Time</th>
<th>2 Times</th>
<th>3 or More Times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Been verbally threatened with physical injury by a student?</th>
<th>No Times</th>
<th>1 Time</th>
<th>2 Times</th>
<th>3 or More Times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Had an item taken through force or threat of force by a student?</th>
<th>No Times</th>
<th>1 Time</th>
<th>2 Times</th>
<th>3 or More Times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Been sexually harassed by a student?</th>
<th>No Times</th>
<th>1 Time</th>
<th>2 Times</th>
<th>3 or More Times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Had possessions damaged or destroyed by a student?</th>
<th>No Times</th>
<th>1 Time</th>
<th>2 Times</th>
<th>3 or More Times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Had an item stolen by a student?</th>
<th>No Times</th>
<th>1 Time</th>
<th>2 Times</th>
<th>3 or More Times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. How afraid are you of becoming a victim of the following events? (Please circle your answer.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Not Afraid At All</th>
<th>Very Afraid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Being verbally threatened with physical violence by a student</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being sexually harassed by a student</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having your possessions stolen by a student</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having a student take your possessions or money through force or threat of force</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having your possessions destroyed by a student</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being punched or beaten by a single student</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being punched or beaten by a group of students</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being punched or beaten by a gang</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being knifed by a student</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being shot by a student</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being murdered by a student</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. How likely is it that the following events will happen to you during the 2000-2001 school year? (Please circle your answer.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Not At All Likely</th>
<th>Very Likely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Being verbally threatened with physical violence by a student</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being sexually harassed by a student</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having your possessions stolen by a student</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Having a student take your possessions or money through force or threat of force ........

Having your possessions destroyed by a student ........

Being punched or beaten by a single student .............

Being punched or beaten by a group of students ............

Being punched or beaten by a gang ..........................

Being knifed by a student ..........................

Being shot by a student ..........................

Being murdered by a student ..........................


© Demographic Information

What is your current age?

_____ Years

What is your sex?

☐ Male

☐ Female

* Please place this questionnaire in envelope “B.”

How many years have you been professionally teaching?

_____ Years

What is your race/ethnicity?

☐ Black

☐ White

☐ Asian

☐ Hispanic

☐ Other
School Violence Survey

The purpose of this research is to gain insight into the differences in high school teachers' perceptions of school violence. This questionnaire is being conducted in an effort to complete a Master of Arts Degree in Sociology.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary and the respondent may refuse to answer any specific question or cease participation at any time. In order to maintain anonymity the respondent should not place his or her name or leave any identifiable marks on the survey. By completing this survey, the respondent is giving the researcher consent to use any of the information in completion of his master's thesis and for publication purposes.

The information from this survey will be kept confidential and anonymous.

START HERE

1 In the past two years at this school, how many times has a member of your faculty... (Please circle your answer.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>0 Times</th>
<th>1 Time</th>
<th>2 Times</th>
<th>3 or More Times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reported gang violence?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reported a student with a firearm on school property?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reported a student with a knife on school property?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reported being physically assaulted by a student?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reported being verbally threatened with physical injury by a student?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reported an item taken through force or threat of force by a student?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reported sexual harassment by a student?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reported possessions damaged or destroyed by a student?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reported an item stolen by a student?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Does your school conduct or use... (Please check all that apply.)

_____ Metal detectors
_____ Security guards
_____ Random locker searches
_____ Security cameras
_____ Police presence in and around school
_____ Escorts
_____ Gates
_____ Other __________________________
Appendix C
Variable Indices

Fear of Victimization ($\alpha=.93$)
♦ Fear of being verbally threatened with physical violence by a student.
♦ Fear of being sexually harassed by a student.
♦ Fear of having your possessions stolen by a student.
♦ Fear of having a student take your possessions or money through force or threat of force.
♦ Fear of having your possessions destroyed by a student.
♦ Fear of being punched or beaten by a single student.
♦ Fear of being punched or beaten by a group of students.
♦ Fear of being punched or beaten by a gang.
♦ Fear of being knifed by a student.
♦ Fear of being shot by a student.
♦ Fear of being murdered by a student.

Perceived Risk of Victimization ($\alpha=.91$)
♦ Likelihood of being verbally threatened with physical violence by a student.
♦ Likelihood of being sexually harassed by a student.
♦ Likelihood of having your possessions stolen by a student.
♦ Likelihood of having a student take your possessions or money through force or threat of force.
♦ Likelihood of having your possessions destroyed by a student.
♦ Likelihood of being punched or beaten by a single student.
♦ Likelihood of being punched or beaten by a group of students.
♦ Likelihood of being punched or beaten by a gang.
♦ Likelihood of being knifed by a student.
♦ Likelihood of being shot by a student.
♦ Likelihood of being murdered by a student.

Perception of Seriousness of School Violence ($\alpha=.89$)
♦ To what extent are physical conflicts among students a problem?
♦ To what extent are thefts of personal items a problem?
To what extent are thefts of school items a problem?
To what extent is vandalism of school property a problem?
To what extent is student possession of handguns a problem?
To what extent is student possession of knives a problem?
To what extent is lack of respect for authority a problem?
To what extent are verbal threats of teachers by students a problem?
To what extent are verbal conflicts between students a problem?
To what extent are physical assaults of teachers by students a problem?
To what extent is group violence a problem?
To what extent is gang violence a problem?

Victimization Experience (α=.77)
- Observed gang violence?
- Observed group violence?
- Observed student with firearm on school property?
- Observed student with knife on school property?
- Been physically assaulted by a student?
- Been verbally threatened with physical injury by a student?
- Had an item taken through force or threat of force by a student?
- Been sexually harassed by a student?
- Had possessions damaged or destroyed by a student?
- Had an item stolen by a student?

Reported Victimization (α=.61)
- Reported gang violence.
- Reported a student with a firearm on school property.
- Reported a student with a knife on school property.
- Reported being physically assaulted by a student.
- Reported being verbally threatened with physical injury by a student.
- Reported an item taken through force or threat of force by a student.
- Reported sexual harassment by a student.
- Reported possessions damaged or destroyed by a student.
♦ Reported an item stolen by a student.

Security Measures ($\alpha=.73$)
♦ Use of metal detectors.
♦ Use of locker searches.
♦ Use of security cameras.
♦ Have police presence in and around the school.
References


Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 1999. "Facts
about Violence among Youth and Violence in Schools.”
prepared by the Media Relations Division. [WWW Web Site].


