

IMPACT OF SOCIAL COMPETENCE AS A PROTECTIVE FACTOR FOR VIOLENCE RESILIENCY

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ABSTRACT

This investigation focused on the elements of social competence as potential protective factors for violence resiliency. Using both quantitative and qualitative methods, this study utilized a case design to identify adolescent males who shared similar risk factors in order to explore the relationship between risk factors and the elements of social competence and violence resiliency. Data were collected through surveys, open-ended interviews with the participants, and focused interviews with selected school personnel.

Findings indicate that several elements of social competence were positively associated with violence resiliency, including a sense of humor; development of positive relationships with parents, school personnel and friends; and empathy. Additionally, school connectedness, a sense of future, and helping behaviors emerged as potential protective factors for violence resiliency. Of importance is that young males who have accumulated significant risk factors related to the development of violent and aggressive tendencies can rebound and demonstrate violence resiliency.