**Purpose**

My research topic will be a comparative study of groups of children from two populations, one likely a refugee or lower socioeconomic neighborhood or community with statistically high crime rates, and the other with statistically lower crime rates and possibly a higher socioeconomic status. The purpose would be to determine the effects of everyday violence, as a product of structural violence, on young children, and to determine how that violence is normalized.

**Methodology**

One effective method for the proposed study stated would be to survey children in two or four carefully selected elementary schools. The locations would necessarily have to be carefully selected if the study is to provide a decent comparison of neighborhoods, including ones with very high crime rates and low socioeconomic statuses and ones with low crime rates and high socioeconomic statuses. Neighborhood type could be determined by using city records, police records, census data, and other sources of valid and reliable information. From the selected schools, students of the same grades would take a survey. Since they are children, the survey might need to be simplified and done in such a way that children not only understand, but can also respond to. As in the Raviv et al. (2001) study, the Violence Exposure Scale for Children, or a comparable scale, using pictures depicting violent events with a simple rating system while conducting one-on-one interviews could be used.

The survey would include questions about whether the children have witnessed or been a victim of certain kinds of violence, such as someone being hit in the face or a shooting. Children might also be asked about their exposure to violence on television. Children would be asked about their reactions to their experiences with violence, such as whether they felt negatively, indifferent, or positively about the violence when witnessing it. Another example of a question that might be asked would be: "Do you think that hitting people to get something you want is okay?" However, depending on how old the children are, that may not be feasible. Having the parents fill out a questionnaire about their children’s behavior and violence in their home environment, either online, on paper, or over the phone, could also add a relevant perspective.

**Literature Review**

Several studies have looked at the effects of violence on adults and children. Those studies have differed in methodology, and in how and what they measure.

One such study in Israel used a questionnaire that involved showing children pictures of mild violence (yelling, slapping, pushing, throwing objects) and severe violence (shootings, robberies, arrests), along with a questionnaire for the children’s mothers, to determine the effects of being a victim of violence and of witnessing violence on behavioral problems among children. This was done as a comparative study between two schools and two groups of children of the same age groups from each school (Raviv et al., 2001).

A separate study in Afghanistan was done to assess mental health and social functioning in relation to traumatic experiences using multi-informant and self-reporting questionnaires and a checklist to evaluate the exposure to, and nature of, traumatic experiences. In this study, traumatic experiences included accidents, medical treatment, domestic violence, and war-related events (Panter-Brick, 2009).

The two aforementioned studies show that there are several ways to go about finding relationships between exposure to violence and its effects. Both studies, however, used several methods of gathering data. What both studies failed to measure is how positively or negatively children react to violent ideas. The ethnography by Bourgois, while not a study in the sense that it did not attempt to measure anything, showed a relationship between everyday violence and acceptance of that violence to the point where acts such as rape were expected and young people admitted to potentially participating in them sometime in the future (2001).

This study will combine the methods used in the studies with the theoretic approach of Bourgois by incorporating his theories of everyday structural violence.

**Research Question**

My research question is: Are children who have been exposed to violence more likely than others more likely to exhibit strong positive or negative attitudes toward violence?

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**Bibliography**