

The Psychology of School Shooters and the Need for Improved Threat Assessment Guides

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Abstract

This paper investigates the growing problem of school shootings while examining current remedies such as that relate to text-based analysis and threat assessment guides. Drawing on the background of school shooters, three types of perpetrators are identified: traumatized, psychotic, and psychopathic. It was found that traumatized shooters were influenced while psychotic and psychopathic shooters had psychological disorders. An analysis of the manifestos of school shooters, which presented existential concerns, showed that many shooters turn to murder-suicide to feel powerful, and yet, end the pain that they feel. By studying these letters, psychologists are able to understand the mind of a school shooter. To address school shootings, it is important to consider prevention problems. Threat assessment guides could aid in determining potential threats as shown through the “Networks Against School Shootings”. NETWASS offers a solution through its prevention program by training teachers to identify warning signs in order to implement early mediation of student psychological problems. For this literature review, scholarly journal articles were examined for further analysis. Articles were taken from *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, *Frontiers In Psychiatry*, and *Child Development*. Official reports were also used for additional information.

Keywords: school shooters, psychotic, psychopathic, traumatized, threat assessment guide