In times of war, adolescents do not fall silent: Teacher–student social network communication in wartime

# Details

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## Sample

Participants were 208 Israeli adolescents who reside within 45 km from the Israel-Gaza border. They were recruited from the largest national panel of adolescents in Israel. The remaining 201 adolescents (119 female) aged between 13 and 18 yrs old

## Implications For Educators About

Other

# Abstract

Exposure to war is associated with psychological disturbances, but ongoing communication
between adolescents and teachers may contribute to adolescents' resilience. This study
examined the extent and nature of teacher-student communication on Social Network Sites
(SNS) during the 2014 Israel-Gaza war. Israeli adolescents (N ¼ 208, 13e18 yrs) completed
information about SNS communication. A subset of these (N¼145) completed questionnaires
on social rejection and distress sharing on SNS. More than half (56%) of the respondents
communicated with teachers via SNS. The main content category was ‘emotional support.
Adolescents' perceived benefits from SNS communication with teachers were associated with
distress sharing. Social rejection was negatively associated with emotional support and
perceived benefits from SNS communication. We conclude that SNS communication between
teachers and students may provide students with easy access to human connections and
emotional support, which is likely to contribute to adolescents' resilience in times of war.

# Outcome

Ophir, Rosenberg and Asterhan (2016) found that more than half of the adolescent participants who live in the war-afflicted areas reported to communicate with their teachers via SNSs during the war (mainly through WhatsApp); and that (b) the main purpose of this communication was to lend and receive emotional support. Moreover, the majority of participating adolescents expressed their appreciation of this communication and believed it to be helpful. It was found that individuals who communicated with their teachers had higher SOS-scores than individuals who did not communicate with their teachers. Among students who do communicate with teachers, individual differences in distress sharing on SNS distress were not associated with the frequency or the content of teacher-student SNS communication. among
individuals who are less inclined to share their personal distress on SNS, social rejection and perceived benefits of student-teacher SNS communication were also negatively associated