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### Teachers insights on adolescent NSSI: Knowledge, attitudes, and barriers to student support

#### Abstract:

Non-suicidal self-injury (NSSI) refers to a deliberate injury of one's own body, with no suicidal intentions nor socially accepted aims. Teachers are in a unique position to identify adolescents who injure themselves, to encourage them to seek help and to prevent exacerbation of their distress further on. Hence, the present research has examined the connection between teachers' knowledge and attitudes towards adolescents' NSSI, their perception of their role as well as barriers in their work in relation to students' mental health care, and these teachers' response. This cross-sectional study included 203 teachers from middle-schools and high-schools all over the country. The data was collected during 2023, through six validated questionnaires: (1) personal demographic data; (2) knowledge regarding NSSI; (3) attitudes towards NSSI; (4) perception of one's role; (5) barriers at work; responding to the adolescents coping with NSSI. The study's findings show that higher levels of knowledge, attitudes and perception of one's role are conducive to greater efficiency regarding the response to NSSI and mindful coping with the phenomenon. However, as the level of barriers increases, response become less efficient. In addition, a positive correlation was found between role perception and knowledge and attitudes, while a negative correlation was found between barriers at work and attitudes and role perception. Conversely, no connection was found between knowledge and attitudes and barriers in the teachers' work. The research findings also shed light on the need for programs to reduce the barriers encountered by teachers at work. Increasing knowledge and support for teachers working with this population will help them identify students coping with the phenomenon, and grant them the appropriate response, while maintaining the well-being of both teachers and students.

#### Biography

**Inbar Levkovich**, Ph.D., is Associate Professor and Head of the Unit for Theses and Final Research Projects in the Faculty of Graduate Studies, at Oranim Academic College, Israel. Received her PhD from the Faculty of Social Welfare and Health Sciences, at Haifa University. Completed her Postdoctoral at the School of Social Work, Bar-Ilan University. She served as the head of the research unit at the Division of Family Medicine, The Ruth & Bruce Rappaport Faculty of Medicine in the Israel Institute of Technology. Main areas of research are Stress, coping and mental health. She published more than ninety papers in refereed journals and several chapters in edited books.