

Applied Social Research Programme

Perception and Practice of School Violence

Tendencies in Georgian Schools based on Students Surveys

(Working Paper)

Diana Bogishvili

Affiliated Fellow

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1. Introduction

The phenomenon of violence among adolescents, especially in schools, has attracted particular attention of pedagogy and social sciences since 1990s. Number of international studies confirms that violence, as a behavior model, can be explained with various motives. According to the studies the main reason and bases of violent behavior is a lack of family socialization, medial world and a process of alienation caused by it, and the influence of peers and school as an educational institution.¹ Violent behavior most frequently is expressed between ages 12 and 24. The violence among adolescents is important since this phase of personality development is particularly significant for a human being. At this stage of socialization a person absorbs essential values for civil cohabitation, and gets engaged with ethical and moral standards. Aggressive and criminal behavior expressed at this particular stage of life gets reflected in person's future. A young person is in the process of development, of finding his/her self-image and construing his/her identity. Herewith, it should be noted that besides the aforementioned, the socio-economic problems, social inequality and poverty are also named as causes of violence in developing countries.

The survey conducted in spring 2011 among Georgian schoolchildren is a part of doctoral dissertation. It aims at displaying how teenagers percept violence, how frequent it is in schools during last year. The research is based on the data analysis received through the survey.

The survey is based on a project "Violence in schools – problem analysis and educational prevention" conducted by Bielefeld University in late 90s in Germany.² The project director is Professor Klaus-Jürgen Tillmann. The main objective of Tillmann is to display the central factors causing violence in schools and prepare the preventive educational strategy suitable for the school environment. The Bielefeld research focused on violence expressed by adolescents and general conditions causing this behavior. Main concentration was on institutional structure of a school, e.g. pressure emerged as a result of school educational program and a failure caused by it. The research focuses on physical and psychological violence. Interactive context was discussed as a basis of violent behavior, in particular, the process of emerging aggressive behavior in the face-to-face interaction. The positions of pupils as oppressors, victims and observers were recorded.

¹ Melzer, W. 2006, S.11

² Tillmann, K.-J.; Holler-Nowitzki, B.; Holtappels, H.G.; Meier, U.; Popp, U. (2007): „Schülegewalt als Schulproblem. Verursachende Bedingungen, Erscheinungsformen und pädagogische Handlungsperspektiven“.

Terminological definition of research phenomena is necessary before starting the social research. There are number of theories for explaining the motives of aggressive and violent behavior in psychology and sociology. In psychology term “aggression” is used, while “deviant behavior” is more accepted in sociological tradition. Besides the deviant behavior, term “violence” is also widely spread in sociology. In educational theories both terms are used, though “aggression” is more preferred. In educational theories, that mainly research schools, term “violence in schools” is used recently.³

Violence among adolescents is a civil and pedagogical problem. The study is based on a socio-ecological (ecosystem) systems theory of Urie Bronfenbrenner that responds to a question about what effect the environment (school, family, social contexts) has on adolescent’s social behavior.

The study aims at showing students attitudes towards the structural and social environment of school, as well as what effect students’ attitudes towards school, school structure, practical work at school and interdependence among students have on social, and especially, on aggressive behavior. The second part comprises a brief review of theoretical basis of the study.

2. Theoretical Basis of the Study

The research is based on different theoretical approaches towards the socialization and interactive process between a human being and an environment, as well as the theories about development of aggressive-violent behavior. Bandura’s social learning theoretical model, Bronfenbrenner’s socio-ecological socialization model, Parsons structural-functionalism and Mead interactive concepts, anomie and labeling theories will be used and discussed.

According to the contemporary theories about personality development, civil (environmental) and mental (people) factors have great effect on the process of personality development. Communication between people and between people and the outside world are revealed on the basis of complex interactions. Children, adolescents and adults are the

³ Schubart, W. 2000, S. 13-14

creators of their inner and outer reality, social and subjective world. Education and personality development is a lifelong process in individual's life.⁴

According to socialization theories, that have a particular role in the adolescent research, an important factor is interaction among people based on their common experience. An important place for socialization is family, school and peers.

In his social learning theory Bandura discusses "learning" as an active, controlled and cognitive process of experience. He believes that, on the one hand, a person does not react to determinant processes around him with an automatic behavior, but as a result of a well planned, active process based on his/her motives, emotions and thinking. On the other hand, Bandura discusses a human as a social being that observes the behavior of other humans and based on this observation develops a cognitive picture of this or that behavior, that is afterwards used in his/her own process of activities.

In regards to aggressive behavior in his theoretical model Bandura discusses how a child "learns" specific forms of aggressive behavior. He names "observations" as one of the important reasons for it. According to him, the more familiar the child is with aggressive behavior, more he/she absorbs it.⁵

As it was mentioned earlier, on the one hand, an individual interacts with natural and social environment in the process of socialization, and on the other, affects this environment with his/her behavior.

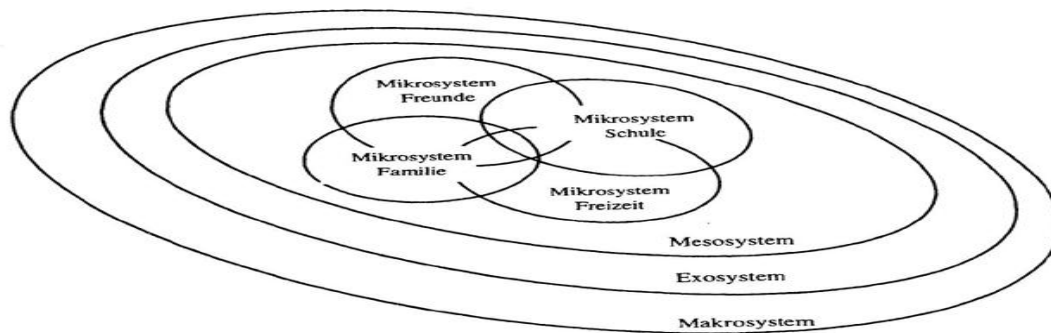
In his long-term research program developed in 60s, Urie Bronfenbrenner represents a developmental model of ecologically oriented person. Term "ecology" is defined in socio-ecological socialization research as a "world of life". According to Bronfenbrenner, in the process of development person gets used to the environment around him/her, acquires different competences in the lifelong process of socialization that help him/her determine his/her own behavior. Bronfenbrenner's socialization is an open process where an individual has an interchangeable relationship with the environmental world around. In the word "world" he unites "arranged" ecological systems, i.e. organizations that directly or indirectly affect his/her behavior. Bronfenbrenner represents the following systems:

1. Microsystem: individual's relationship, e.g. with family, school;

⁴ Hurrelmann, K. 1993, S.26

⁵ Otten, S., Mummendey, A. 2002, S.202-203

2. Mesosystem: interaction of different systems, e.g. interaction between school and family;
3. Exosystem: system where individual does not participate, but it affects his/her life, e.g. workplace of a mother or a father.
4. Macrosystem: combination of civil systems, their ideologies, values, norms, traditions, laws.⁶



Pic. 1 Bronfenbrenner Socio-Ecological Socialization Model

In the eternal process of human development, their civil roles are increasing together with the experience. Dislocation in ecological space, where a human being takes different roles, is named an “ecological transition” (ökologische Übergänge) by Bronfenbrenner. In different ecological spaces (organizations) everyday participation and relationship between people requires meeting new challenges based on which an individual can differentially percept and actively cope with the world.⁷

Among the theories of socialization, the structural-functional theory of American sociologist Talcott Parsons is distinguished. Parsons correlates microperspectives of individual-psychological dynamics with macroperspectives of social structures of society. He discusses social behavior of individuals not as separate phenomena, but in relation with social systems. Active individual has social roles in social system that are determined by normative expectations towards members of social group as well as social systems. Parsons defines

⁶ Grundmann, M. 2000, S.18-31

⁷ Grundmann, M. 2000, S.45

socialization as the process of internalization of the norms of these social roles in the social world.⁸

The approach of G.H. Mead about socialization processes is also to be considered. In his interactive theory he discusses the process of acceptance-adoption of the perspectives of other subjects by an individual. Mead believes that humans, different from animals, have certain expectations towards other humans, and at the same time, they know that others have similar feelings towards them as well. This is explained by the argument that we virtually take place of other people and perceive ourselves and the situation this way. The medium of this process is language or interaction: if we say something, we are not only the authors of the pronounced words, but the listeners at the same time, and thus, feel what is said just like the others do. This accepted perception of others' expectation is what Mead calls socialization, when we can accept/understand others' perspectives, while others can accept ours. Mead calls them "generalized other". Language is not individually subjective for every participant, but inter-subjective. Language has a constructivist function as gives common meaning to the world for us and for others.⁹

The word "anomie" comes from Greek word "Nomos" and means "law" or "rule". In sociology it means "absence of norms". The term "anomie" was established in sociology in 1893 by a French sociologist Emile Durkheim. According to him, anomie is a social disintegration. Durkheim believes that the recognition of social norms and civil moral authorities is a necessary prerequisite for regulating the human needs. In unstable relationships the safety of norms is lost and the state of anomie is created. Thus, anomie is revealed in the lack of general normative rules that is the basis of deviant behavior.

In 1968 an American sociologist Robert Merton developed Durkheim's anomie theory – he distinguished "cultural" and "civil" structures. Cultural structure means culturally determined objectives and legitimate means of realization of objectives. According to ideological equality every member of the society has a right to acquire wealth as a culturally determined objective. This means moving from lower social class to the upper one. Anomic condition of society, i.e. lack of norms, supports the development of deviant behavior, i.e.

⁸ Hurrelmann, K. 1993, S. 42

⁹ Geulen, D. 2002, S. 94

members of society try to reach their objectives, to be exact acquire wealth, with illegal means.¹⁰

Wilfred Schubarth, Professor of the University of Potsdam, tries to explain in his research the reasons of deviant behavior among adolescents based on theory of anomie. Schubarth believes adolescents are very sensitive when talking about their vocational education. It is highly important for them to finish school with merits. Schubarth declares that when adolescents see and feel every day how important being successful, having wealth and prestige is for the society, but they cannot achieve it themselves, they feel marginalized and neglected by the society, and become aggressive and violent.¹¹

The anomie theory lets us describe well what effect social, cultural and economic conditions have on development of violent behavior of young people. According to Schubarth, the reasons causing violence in adolescents should be looked for in schools and not in students. We should analyze in what conditions students live and study.¹²

Schubarth summarizes the importance of anomie theory for preventing violence:

1. Anomie situations should be eliminated; it can be achieved by reducing social inequality, i.e. equality is important, so that adolescents have access to education;
2. Concrete conflict situations should be resolved by involvement and support of teachers.

Schubarth believes the school should be organized the way that every student has an equal opportunity to get education. He says, that school, as a “fair organization” is obliged to create a social environment for students where they have freedom of speech and will not be afraid of school.”¹³

According to Labeling Approach there are two types of deviation: primary (primär) and secondary (sekundär). Primary deviation is explained by various reasons, while secondary deviation is explained by role assigned, labeled by the social environment.

¹⁰ Schubarth, W. 2000, S.28

¹¹ Schubarth, W. 2000,S.29

¹² Melzer, W., Schubarth, W. et al., 2004, S.64

¹³ Melzer, W., Schubarth, W. et al., 2004, S.64-65

Professor of Dortmund University, Dr. Heinz Gunter Holtappels, who works on school and its development, believes that labeling theory is important for explaining the violence among adolescents. He thinks that those students who seem negative at school at the first sight, become victims of stigmatization. Thus, the negative identity of a student in social interaction, in the end, pushes him/her towards the deviant behavior.¹⁴

According to Schubarth and Melzer, the cases of labeling students observe in schools should be eliminated from the beginning. For this, it is essential for teachers to eliminate every case and process of stigmatization, i.e. negative characterization of students should be stopped and the forms of positive motivation should be established.¹⁵

3. Studies about Violence at Schools

As discussed in the previous chapter, the process of socialization is defined by the environment. The researcher of socialization processes, Dieter Geullen identifies “environment” as “social world”, “subcultural world”, “family”, “peers”, “street”, “school”, etc. of a human being. He determines three life conditions for human:

1. Material condition, e.g. house, toy, nature, building, etc.
2. Cultural condition, e.g. book and all types of medial means;
3. Social condition, experience of interacting with others.¹⁶

While researching the violence, these conditions are distributed in the following way: the external and internal socialization of school. The external socialization means the influence of family, peers and media on young people. The internal socialization means the influence of socio-ecological and interactive context on adolescents.

According to Schubarth (2000) very few studies were conducted on violence in schools in Germany before 90s. The research of Heinz Gunter Holtappels should be mentioned which studies the forms of students problems and deviant behavior from the students’ position and perspective. Holtappels thinks that the structure of society is very well revealed in school. The causes of violent behavior are often discussed in regards to external factors (family,

¹⁴ Schubarth, W. 2000, S.34

¹⁵ Melzer, W., Schubarth, W. et al., 2004, S.67

¹⁶ Geulen, D. 2002, S.84

peers, media) that cannot be reduced by school. According to Holtappels, the violent students are not born violent, but are developed in the process of socialization. According to his thesis, the adolescents from the families in existential crisis express aggressive-violent behavior more.¹⁷

In sociological empirical study of deviation in schools, which Holtappels was conducting during fifteen years, he discusses the effects of socialization in the situational and interactive context; at the same time, he pays attention to the explanation of process of socialization of children and adolescents. The study concerns the deviant behavior and the conditions causing the problems of students that occur in school. The research is based on stressing the students' perspective. According to Holtappels, the academic process, compulsion to be successful and adapted, as well as controlling the students, affect the development of their identity and their qualification, practical and cognitive skills and competencies; it increases professional and civil opportunities and perspectives. The main question of the research is: what effect does the certain conditions at school, i.e. school environment, students' individual condition at school, internal control of school and student labeling, have on students and their problems, in particular, the process of combating everyday life? The students are discussed not as objects that need to be raised, but as subjects interacting with the environment with their behavior and having individual relationship with school. Quantitative and qualitative methodology is used in the study.¹⁸

According to Holtappels institutional norms and structural functions of the school develop the social experience and competencies of students. Holtappels identifies the following structural functions typical to school:

- Compulsory nature of school;
- School as an educational institution;
- Domination of the principle of success;
- Hierarchical nature of school;
- Public nature of school.¹⁹

¹⁷ Schubarth, W.2000, S.68

¹⁸ Holtappels, H.-G. 1987, S.12

¹⁹ Holtappels, H.-G. 1987, S.18

The students' reaction to everyday problematic situations at school is adaptation, or distancing, pulling back, or resisting. Therefore, Holtappels study is based on two main indicators:

1. Perception of the problem and students' experience at school;
2. Combating everyday life at school and problem-solving by students.

The following questions emerged in regards to the first indicator:

- How students describe and evaluate their school environment?
- What subjective problems are identified by students in everyday life at school and what problematic situations are perceived?
- How do students describe various controlling forms? How do they evaluate the preventive measures at school and the activities of a social worker?

The following questions emerged in regards to the second indicator:

- How do students manage to overcome problems in everyday life, i.e. what methods do they have?
- What are students' attitudes towards school rules and norms? How do they define "a normal day at school" and "deviant behavior"?
- How do students react to the labeling process?²⁰

The research showed that the type of a student and his/her attitude towards everyday life of school developed by students contradicts the school as an institution and its norms and requirements. Students perceive school according to their opinion; they search for the balancing ways for their identity, and develop various orientations and behavioral strategies for overcoming the school requirements.²¹ Besides, the study results showed that unfavorably organized school environment and structural functions of school supports the development of deviant views among students, increases the fear of success and deepens the distance between student and school. Social control and student labeling creates and intensifies the school problems. The research showed how a positive school environment can affect deviant

²⁰ Holtappels, H.-G. 1987, S.29

²¹ Holtappels, H.-G. 1987, S.346

behavior and reduction of numbers of labeling. Holtappels evaluates his research the following way: “the study results show that school problems and deviation are tightly connected; however, it should be noted that the school also promotes number of problems that should be eliminated with certain measures.”²²

The sphere of research was particularly enhanced by the end of 90s. Schubarth names three reasons for this:

1. Necessity to study violence as social problem;
2. Preparation of theoretical basis in order to explain the problem and collecting the empirical data based on various theoretical concepts;
3. Preparation of possible changes for a certain social problem.

According to Schubarth it is hard to determine whether violence was a social problem before 90s. Public discussion of this problem started in late 90s in Germany that served as a basis for development of research on this phenomenon. Studies are mainly based on three orientation questions:

1. Volume (quantity) of violence and forms of its expression;
2. Causes and conditions of violence;
3. Necessity to develop preventive programs.

Reviews of the following theories serve as theoretical basis of the research: modernization, individualization, anomie, socio-ecological, constructive-ethnomethodological and interactionism. Besides, socio-cognitive and cognitive-psychological approaches about social roles, personality development and identity crisis were used. Mainly the studies are based on the method of standard interview. Based on the data, students' perceptions of violence, development of victims and oppressors' views and experiences on violence were interpreted.²³

²² Holtappels, H.-G. 1987, S.349

²³ Schubarth, W. 2000, S.68

Bielefeld project on “Violence in schools – problem analysis and educational prevention” was conducted in 1994-1997. The project is directed by Professor Klaus-Jürgen Tillmann and Professor Heinz-Gunter Holtappels.

The project covered three spheres of research of the conditions causing violent behavior:

1. External socialization of school and personality development of students (family, peers, media);
2. Academic and educational environment inside the school;
3. Interactive context and socialization of school.

The study results give us information on the forms and quantity of violent behavior. It also became obvious, that the facts of violence increased after 70s. Step-by-step discussion of causing conditions helps us determine whether the violence in school was imported or developed. The first part of the research describes the forms of expression: what forms of violence and quantities of facts were revealed? In which forms (Hauptschule²⁴, Realschule²⁵, Gymnasium²⁶) and classes? In boys or girls? The second part discusses the living conditions of students outside the school: what kind of biographical experience, family context, and friends do the students have and do they affect the forms of violent behavior? The third part studies the situation in schools: how do the school practical working forms, school environment, teachers’ bias affect the school violence? In the end, the main research question can be formulated as follows: since the problem causing structures are outside the school, is the school violence imported externally, or school with its internal interactive environment also contributes to the development of violent behavior?

In 1994-1997 multilevel interviews were conducted: in 1994 – standard interview of school administration; in 1995 – standard interviews of VI-X grade students; in 1997 the research results were extended by interviews of qualitative methodology.

The students’ interviews showed that instead of violent behavior, examples of students’ “difficult” behavior are manifested, such as: egoistic orientations of students, avoiding

²⁴ *Hauptschule*: junior high school in Germany, with comprehensive educational program from fifth to tenth grade (student can continue studying only in technical college).

²⁵ *Realschule*: school form in Germany with advanced comprehensive educational program from fifth to twelfth grade (student can continue studying in vocational institution and in case of success even in university).

²⁶ *Gymnasium*: school form in Germany with advanced comprehensive educational program from fifth to thirteenth grade (diploma is a prerequisite for admission to university).

collective responsibility, intolerance. These are not the forms of violent behavior, but deficits in social behavior.²⁷

The first stage of the research *comprises external socialization of school and personality development of students* (family, peers, media). During the study of issues concerning family socialization, the following hypotheses were formed, which were later confirmed by the research:

- *Possibility of violent behavior in students is high:*
 - If the family is in bad economical situation (e.g. unemployment);
 - If methods of raising are restrictive in the family;
 - If the well-being index of the family is low;
 - If violence is prevalent in the family.

Also, regarding the influence of peer-grouping the following hypotheses were formed and proved:

- *Possibility of violent behavior in students is high:*
 - If the sharing of values from peers is low;
 - If students got in the environment with violent and intolerant peers;
 - If the circle of friends consist only of boys.²⁸

The research also confirmed the influence of media. The length of media usage was studied. The research also studies how frequently parents forbid children to watch TV and what the thematic of watched TV programs are. The results show that adolescents are more violent, the more they watch TV and use other electronic media, and the more their parents forbid them to use media. It was also evident that the more the number of violent scenes in the TV programs, more violent the adolescents become.²⁹

²⁷ Tillmann, K.J./Meier, U. 2000, S.37

²⁸ Tillmann, K.-J. et al (2007), S.52

²⁹ Tillmann, K.-J. et al (2007), S.56

The second part of the study is dedicated to the *academic and educational environment inside the school* and its influence on students' violent behavior. The school environment was defined as socio-economic environment. The following indicators and dimensions were distinguished:

- Structural-organizational conditions of school
 - ⇒ Shape of school;
 - ⇒ Size of school;
 - ⇒ Region school is located in.

- Academic culture:
 - ⇒ Teachers' bias in academic process;
 - ⇒ Didactic-methodological quality of the lesson;
 - ⇒ Teaching program adjusting to the reality;
 - ⇒ Methodological multilateralism of the lesson;
 - ⇒ Whether teachers support the students in learning process or not;
 - ⇒ Extracurricular activities;
 - ⇒ Conditions of the school building and classrooms.

The following hypotheses were formed in regards to the academic culture:

- *Possibility of violent behavior in students is high*:
 - If the school building and classrooms are less comfortable;
 - If the usage of educational program in the real life is less possible;
 - If the lesson is methodological not multilateral;
 - If teachers do not support students;
 - If students are afraid that they would be unable to cover the study program and they feel disappointment for not bring successful.

- Social climate:
 - ⇒ Communicational world of school;
 - ⇒ Forms of interaction with teacher;
 - ⇒ Students' relationships.

The following hypotheses were formed in regards to the social climate:

- *Possibility of violent behavior in students is high:*
 - If they have bad relationship with teacher;
 - If the pressure of discipline is high;
 - If teachers are using restrictive educational methods;
 - If students have lesser possibility to participate in school life and lessons;
 - If students' social connection is not intensive.³⁰

The study results showed that in school were the culture and range is high, e.g. a gymnasium, the index of violence is low. The situation is vice versa in schools of lower range (Hauptschule, Realschule). As for mental abuse, the coefficient of difference is low. Besides, the results showed that the cases of violence are more frequent in schools where the study process is difficult for students. Thus, it became clear that there is a correlation between the form of school (Hauptschule, Realschule, Gymnasium) and the violence. No correlation was found between the size of school and the violence.³¹

As for the academic culture, visible but not strong correlation was found with the violent behavior. Student oriented lesson has a significant influence on reduction of violence. The proximity of educational materials with the reality is named as a tool reducing mental abuse. In order to eliminate physical abuse, development of extracurricular activities is recommended. Restrictive educational methods are having negative effect in school of any kind and form, in regards to both mental and physical abuse. At the same time, recognition of students by teachers is proved to have a violence reducing effect. It was also proved that a class, as a successful group, influences the low indicator of violence. Based on the

³⁰ Tillmann, K.-J. et al (2007), S.57-59

³¹ Tillmann, K.-J. et al (2007), S.237

summarizing analysis, it was concluded that positively arranged socio-ecological environment of school is significantly correlated with violence.³²

The third part of the research concerns *interactive context of school*, in particular, the forms of interaction and labeling process in conflict situations. The following hypotheses were formulated:

- *Possibility of violent behavior in students is high:*
 - If because of low academic performance they are enlisted as “backward” students;
 - If they realize that are socially labeled at school.

The study results proved the truthfulness of these hypotheses. Besides, the research also revealed that the boys from lower social class, especially from working class, studying at the schools of lower range (Hauptschule, Realschule) are particularly exposed to social labeling. Based on the results it was concluded that the possibility of labeled students to get in the list of “backward” students is very high.³³ Based on the empirical data of the research, special preventive programs were developed to improve social and academic environment of school.

Research of a Swedish psychologist Dan Olweus regarding the violence in Norwegian school and its preventive programs is noteworthy. Olweus uses the term “bullying” instead of “violence” in his studies. He studies not general problems of violence at schools, but discusses the relationships between “oppressor” and “victim”, as that of actors.³⁴ He defined the term “bullying” as: “student is being bullied when he/she becomes a victim of continued negative behavior from another student”. Negative behavior can be expressed by using physical force, as well the words and gestures. Spreading rumors and marginalization are also regarded as negative behavior. 130,000 Norwegian students were interviewed regarding bullying. The results were summarized in the following way: study conducted in 700 Norwegian schools showed that the size of the class and the school does not affect the bullying behavior. Different from studies conducted in German schools, Olweus’ research showed that there is a small correlation between bullying behavior and unsuccessful performance at school. There is absolutely no correlation between student’s appearance and bullying behavior. The study

³² Tillmann, K.-J. et al (2007), S.238

³³ Tillmann, K.-J. et al (2007), S.272

³⁴ Olweus, D. 2009, S.281

shows very well the personalities of the “victims” and the “oppressors” of bullying. According to Olweus, student in the role of “victim” creates a negative context of his/her “self-image”. They feel lonely and marginalized at school, are not distinguished with aggressive character, do not have any friends in class, and are mostly unnoticed.

According to Olweus, one of the characteristic features of an “oppressor” is aggression towards peers, teachers and parents. They have an image of “fearless”. Olweus believes that students can become “oppressors” accidentally, e.g. when they unintentionally repeat the aggressive behavior of their friends or participate in it.³⁵ The merit of Dan Olweus in this sphere is important for his preventive programs as well, which were developed based on the study results.

4. Methodology of the Research and Review of Results

Research Methodology

After we discussed theoretical and empirical basis of the research in previous two chapters, the following chapter will focus on the research methodology and a brief review of the tendencies of the results.

As already mentioned in the introduction, the research aims at displaying how adolescents perceive violence, how frequent it was in Georgian schools during last 1 year. The research also aims at identifying the factors causing school violence. The violence conducted by the adolescents was displayed within the scope of research, as well as the general causes of this behavior. Particular attention was paid to the institutional structure of the school, e.g. pressure developed as a result of its educational program and a failure based on this pressure. The research is focused on physical and psychological violence. Besides, interactive context is discussed as a basis for violence, as a behavior, and in particular, how “face-to-face” violent behavior is developed in the process of interaction. The positions of students, as oppressors, victims and observers were identified.

The questionnaire prepared by Professor Tillmann and his group was adjusted to the Georgian reality and used as a research instrument. There are 233 items in the questionnaire. The questionnaire is formed according to the following indicators:

³⁵ Olweus, D. 2009, S.286

- *Socialization condition of family*, comprising the following index of elements: positive family environment, restrictive behavior of parents, parents' aggressive method of raising, participation in family decisions, parents' indifference;
- *Index of socialization conditions of peers*: circle of friends, school friends, circle of friends according to sex, tolerance of the circle of friends, aggressive orientation of the circle of friends, benevolence of the circle of friends;
- *Index of socialization conditions of media*: capability to use electric equipment, TV channels, time spent in front of TV, parents forbidding the usage of electric equipment;
- *Index of academic environment of school*: proximity of educational materials with the real life, teachers' professionalism, fear of overcoming the learning materials, teacher's support, condition of the school building and the classroom, extracurricular activities;
- *Index of social environment of school*: students' conformism and solidarity, possibility to express one's own views;
- *Index of students' social behavior and relationships*: school rules and the code of student behavior, relationship between students and teachers (contact, trust, recognition), relationship between students (unity, competition and disintegration);
- *Index of interactive environment of school*: labeling and marginalization;
- *Index of students' self-evaluation*: positive and negative self-criticism, self-control;
- *Fear of school*;
- *Parents' level of education, profession and financial situation*.

At the first stage the descriptive analysis of the mentioned elements and indicators was performed. The second stage comprises the correlative checking of the same indicators. As mentioned earlier, "violence" is discussed from the perspective of oppressor, victim and observer. Both mental and physical abuse is discussed. The indicator of students and teachers' intervention during the act of violence is counted.

The data in schools was collected in April-May of 2011. The schools were selected according to the following factors:

- Location: cities and small towns, settlements and villages;
- School size according to the number of students;
- School type: public and private;
- Grades: from 8th to 12th grade.

1178 students were interviewed. After selection (incomplete questionnaires were removed) the number comprised 998. The interviews were conducted according to classes and comprised one academic hour. Thirteen public and three private schools were sampled, out of which 6 public schools are located in the capital city (Tbilisi), the rest of the schools are located in Kutaisi, Chiatura, Sachkhere and Surami, in order to show a difference. Two schools located in villages of Imereti were also selected.

Since the research has not been yet finished and the data has not been calculated and rechecked, in order to show a trend the 10% of interviewed students (99 students) were selected by using random sampling method. 2 students were selected for each class (VIII, IX, X, XI and XII grades) of each school, i.e. 5 girls and 5 boys from each school. The data were entered in SPSS and analyzed. First of all, the tendencies of perception of physical and mental abuse from the perspective of oppressor, victim and observer will be presented. Besides, the paper will discuss how students perceive and evaluate the conditions of internal and external socialization, and the tendencies of how these factors affect the violent behavior of students will be shown.

Indicators of trends of physical and mental abuse in Georgian schools

Physical abuse from the *observer's* perspective

	During last 12 months how many times have you seen	never	Once per several months	many times per month	Many times per week	Almost everyday
111	Damaging of school inventory	36,4%	44,4%	10,1%	5,1%	4%
115	Fight between two boys (beating)	33,3%	36,4%	19,2%	5,1%	6,1%
116	Fight between two girls (beating)	56,6%	31,3%	6,1%	2%	4%
118	Fight between two groups of	47,5%	41,4%	8,1%	1%	2%

	students (beating)					
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According to the trend the cases of physical and mental abuse (“*students assaulting each other*”) has been noticed either never, or once per several months. Damaging of school inventory is observed by boys more frequently than by girls; this is contrary to the tendency of observing physical abuse between boys and girls – girls observe these facts more frequently. As for the fight between two groups, this is noticed more by boys. The cases of physical abuse have been observed in IX and X grades.

Physical abuse from the *oppressor’s* perspective

	During last 12 month how many times have you done?	never	Once per several months	many times per month	Many times per week	Almost everyday
130	Have Damaged objects in the school building	73,7%	18,2%	6,1%	1%	1%
132	Ambushed and threatened somebody in the school yard	90,9%	6,1%	1%	2%	0%

According to the trend, the percentage of physical abuse is evident: 90.9% of interviewed students report that has never ambushed to threaten anyone in the school yard, while 73.7% of interviewed students deny damaging of school objects. The oppressors of physical abuse are mostly boys (130, 132), though the indicator is very low since the cases has been observed once per several months.

	During last 12 month how many times have you done?	never	Once per several months	many times per month	Many times per week	Almost everyday
135	Have irritated other students during the lesson	49,5%	31,3%	11,1%	7,1%	1%
140	Purposefully interfered the lesson	68,7%	18,2%	8,1%	4%	1%

The index of mental abuse varies between “never” and “once per several months”. As in case of physical abuse, the oppressors of mental abuse are also mostly boys.

Physical abuse from the *victim's* perspective

	During last 12 months how many times	never	Once per several months	many times per month	Many times per week	Almost everyday
144	Have you been beaten by others	90,9%	7,1%	1%	0%	1%
145	Others have mocked or irritated you	53,5%	37,4%	6,1%	2%	1%
149	You have been deprived of something by others	86,9%	10,1%	1%	1%	1%

According to the trend revealed, the index of mental abuse (145) is higher compared to the physical abuse. However, this may be caused by the fact that according to the majority of students, mocking is part of joke. Number of male and female victims of physical and mental abuse is equal.

How do the students evaluate “violence” as behavior?

	Please define whether you agree or disagree with the following statements?	Completely agree	agree	Partially agree and partially disagree	disagree	Completely disagree
169	Violence is part of human nature	15,2%	26,3%	35,4%	15,2%	8,1%
171	One can use violence in order to protect his/her own views	7,1%	13,1%	34,3%	27,3%	18,2%

As it is shown by the trend, the evaluation of “violence” by students as a behavior is intermediate. Furthermore, 26.3% of students believe that violence is part of the human nature, while 27.3% believes that one must not use violence in order to protect own opinion. Thus, it can be stated that the students’ opinion about violence is intermediate, and, at the same time, it is regarded as a natural feature. However, the students exclude the possibility to use violence in order to protect their ideas. The index of students’ intervention, compared to teachers’ intervention, is low.

Socialization conditions of a family and their influence on violence

According to the data, the majority of interviewees evaluate the family environment (19) as positive. They believe that their parents partially determine their behavior (20) and their opinion is important for their parents (29). The coefficient of parents’ indifference is very low (30). The perception of positive family environment slightly reduces with the increase of

age. Most part of boys, with slight difference, appraises restricting and aggressive. Most students appraise the parents' raising methods as nonaggressive (24).

	N =99	Complete ly agree	agree	Partially agree and partially disagree	disagree	Completely disagree
19	I feel well at home	68%	18,2%	10,1%	3%	0%
20	As a rule my parents determine how I should behave or what to do	16%	19,2%	38,4%	21,2%	5,1%
24	I have been beaten couple of times at home	5%	26%	12%	31%	25%
29	My opinion is important for my parents	31%	41%	21%	5,1%	1%
30	My parents do not care about what I am doing	1%	5,1%	4%	31,3%	58%

From the socio-ecological perspective, it is assumed that the socialization conditions of family and social experience adolescents get at home influence their behavior that is later revealed at school through aggressive and violent actions. Three research hypotheses were formulated to show how the family environment affects the development of violent behavior of adolescents:

1. *Parents' restrictive methods of raising causes development of aggression in adolescents;*
2. *If adolescents do not feel comfortable at home, they become aggressive;*
3. *The often adolescents come across violence at home more they are expected to behave violently.*

According to the trend, the positive family environment is in a negative correlation with mental and physical abuse. As for the parents' restrictive methods of raising, it is in a positive, though very light correlation with violent behavior of adolescents.

Socialization conditions of peers and their influence on violence

One of the important phenomena in social sciences is peer influence on adolescents. In this phase of development gaining friends and integration in circles of friends are important for them. They try to escape from parents' "claws" and develop a tendency of expressing their

own views. According to the survey, Georgian adolescents have many friends. The circle of their friends is not confined by schoolmates. The index of their tolerance (13), aggression (15) and benevolence (18) towards their friends has been calculated:

	N =99	Completely agree	agree	Partially agree and partially disagree	disagree	Completely disagree
13	We don't make friends with those always grumbling and criticizing others	16,2%	18,2%	48,2%	11,1%	6,1%
15	We have fought with other groups during last year	6,1%	13,1%	15,2%	42,4%	23,2%
18	I feel comfortable in my circle of friends	69,1%	25,3%	1%	1%	3%

According to the tendency, the majority of students have critical attitude towards those always grumbling and criticizing others. It also should be noted that the index of tolerance of boys is much higher than that of girls. High coefficient of nonaggressive attitude towards other groups is observed, however indicator of aggressive behavior still can be observed. According to most students their circle of group is benevolent. The result shows that students' intolerant attitude towards their peers enhances violent behavior.

School academic environment and its influence on violence

School environment is the world where adolescents spend most part of their lives. They are not passive in the world around, in this case, in school; on the contrary, with their individual competencies they strongly affect it. The forthcoming part of this paper discusses the school environment perceived by students; in particular the following factors will be displayed: the proximity of educational materials with the reality (33, 34), teachers' professionalism (36, 37), fear of overcoming the educational materials (38, 39), teachers' support (46, 47, 49), condition of school building and classroom (53, 54), extracurricular activities (58).

	N =99	Completely agree	agree	Partially agree and partially disagree	disagree	Completely disagree
33	It seems to me that the most part of what we study at school will not be useful for my future career	8,1%	8,2%	39,4%	24,2%	10,1%

34	I am very much interested in the materials we study at school	9,1%	30,3%	49,5%	11,1%	0%
36	As a rule, teachers lead the lesson in an uninteresting manner	5,1%	15,2%	34,3%	36,4%	9,1%
37	Teachers construct the lesson quite understandably and clearly	12,1%	34,3%	43,4%	8,1%	2,1%
38	Often I have to pass many exams at the same time	19,2%	22,2%	24,2%	28,3%	6,1%
39	I think school materials are very easy	2%	16,2%	51,5%	22,2%	8,1%
46	Teachers often prefer lovely and successful students	16,2%	28,3%	33,3%	17,2%	5,1%
47	Most teachers try to get to know students closely	14,1%	47,5%	26,3%	6,1%	6,1%
48	Teachers care less for unsuccessful students	10,1%	15,2%	25,3%	38,4%	11,1%
53	Our classroom is arranged comfortably	13,1%	18,2%	34,3%	21,2%	3,1%
54	Our school is arranged quite nicely from inside	15,2%	31,3%	26,3%	21,2%	6,1%

General view of students in regards to school environment is showing a middle trend, it is not evaluated either completely positively or completely negatively; students find it difficult to define the knowledge acquired at school, whether they can use it in real life and in particular, in professional life. They think that they overcome the educational material without any problems, though they evaluate the material as moderate and “a bit difficult”. Teachers support has been evaluated positively, however, according to the majority of students, teachers mostly prefer lovely and successful students. A negative tendency is observed while assessing the classroom arrangement. 83,3% of students express discontent towards field trips, school celebrations, weekly projects. There are no classes for helping with homework at school, or discussion rooms, school yards are not arranged properly, and majority of schools, especially in the city center, does not have any yards at all.

The condition of school building and classrooms was discussed according to the school location. Students from the schools in the city center evaluate general condition of school positively, while students from suburbs and regions are not satisfied with it. No difference was observed in the evaluation of teachers' professionalism according to the location.

According to the bivariate correlation the trend confirmed a reliable correlation between the reality-related character of the educational materials (33, 34) and violence, the teachers' professionalism (36) and violence, quantity of exams (38) and violence, teachers' support (48) and violence, and the school location and violence. Thus, it can be assumed that the school environment significantly affect the development of students' behavior, and in particular, development of violent tendency.

School academic environment and its influence on violence

Within the research scope the students' subjective evaluation in regards to the school social environment was observed. "Social environment" envisages socio-interactive structure of school and pedagogical environment. This implies the social relationship between students, and between students and teachers that are built on normative expectation, e.g. disciplines requirements and rules of social behavior. While studying relationships between students, the following factors were displayed: support-solidarity (96), competition (99, 69, 72) and disintegration coefficient. In relationship between students and teachers the following factors were displayed: confession (87), restriction (81, 91) and participation (84).

	N =99	Completely agree	agree	Partially agree and partially disagree	disagree	Completely disagree
69	When it comes to grades, everyone thinks only about themselves	21,2%	44,4%	27,3%	5,1%	2%
72	There is a competition in our class about grades	8,1%	16,2%	26,3%	34,3%	15,2%
80	As a rule there is no point in fighting against the rules and restrictions in our school	5,1%	24,2%	40,4%	21,2%	9,1%
81	While judging the student, majority of teachers never ask about the reason of what happened	11,1%	19,2%	26,3%	28,3%	15,2%

84	If we don't like anything, teachers take this into account	11,1%	30,3%	41,4%	13,1%	4%
86	Teachers take into account our opinion as well in preparation of the educational plans and in decision-making	12,1%	26,3%	39,4%	10,1%	12,1
87	Teachers often characterize us badly if we have done something wrong	12,1%	36,4%	31,3%	19,2%	1%
91	Teachers give low grades to the students violating the school rules	17,2%	26,3%	29,3%	21,2%	6,1%
96	Majority of students are in a good relationship with each other	24,2%	47,5%	22,2%	3%	3%
99	Majority of students from our class envy the success of others	9,1%	7,1%	30,3%	35,4%	18,2%

Tendency of egoistic behavior of students has been observed in regards to grades. The majority of interviewees think that when it comes to grades, everyone thinks about themselves only. At the same time, the majority of students believe that they don't envy success of others. Also, 34% states that there is on competition about grades in the class. Majority of students are in a good relationship with each other.

There is an intermediate tendency in regards to freedom of expression about the school rules and restrictions. However, with slight difference, the majority of students think that there is no point in fighting against school rules and restrictions.

The big difference in the indicators of restrictive teachers (81, 91) is not observed. From students comments the reason of this can be the fact that they have different relationship with different teachers: with some of them they feel close, with some – a bit distance, and with some the relationship is based on fear. The intermediate tendency is also observed in regards to the question 84, the reason of which may be the same. It is interesting how the students perceive the teachers' method of authorization. According to the majority, in case of violating discipline, teachers characterize them negatively (labeling), and frequently, assign bad grades.

A minor correlation is observed between the index of school social environment and the violent behavior.

5. Conclusion

According to the tendency, the indicator of the observed violence is higher among two boys and two groups than in two girls and damaging of the school inventory. However, it should be noted here that the facts of violence are observed either “never” or “once per several month”. According to the 90,9% of interviewees that they have never been ambushed and threatened in the school yard. The boys are mainly observed as physical abusers. The indicator of mental abuse is higher than that of physical abuse.

Students’ attitude towards the school academic environment is intermediate. The majority find it difficult to identify the knowledge they received, whether or not they can use it in the real life, and in particular, in professional life. The influence of school academic environment on the development of violent behavior has been observed. School interactive environment plays an important role as well; high index of labeling and its affect on violence has been observed.

According to the tendencies discussed above, the result can be assessed ambivalently: on the one hand it has been proved that the pedagogical academic environment and social environment targeted on the interaction affects positively the development of behavior and attitudes of students. However, it should also be mentioned here, that only positive academic and social environment will not reduce the school violence. This is confirmed by the statistical data, since the indicator of their influence is quite low. The external socialization conditions (family, medial world, peers) are also necessary to be taken into consideration and studied in details, after which the appropriate preventive activities should be developed.

About the Author

Diana Bogishvili is a PhD student at the Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich, Faculty of Pedagogy. In 2008 she graduated from the Faculty of Sociology at the University of Munich, with MA in Sociology of Education and Organization. In 1998 she graduated from Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University, Faculty of Philosophy. Since 2009 Diana works at the public school of Munich as an extended learning teacher. Since 2011 she studies the problem of perception and act of violence among youth at school.

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