VIOLENCES IN SCHOOLS:

EUROPEAN TRENDS IN RESEARCH

under the supervision of Cécile Carra and Maryse Esterle Hedibel
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INTRODUCTION

MARYSE ESTERLE, CESDIP, UNIVERSITE D’ARTOIS-IUFM

The texts which feature in this special issue with two IJVS numbers have been taken from a research conference focusing on disruption and violence in schools. This conference was organized by Cécile Carra and Maryse Esterle\(^1\) as part of the CRIMPREV program.

CRIMPREV is a coordination action deployed by a multidisciplinary consortium of 31 participants from 10 European countries, funded by the European Commission (PRCD-FP6). This project began in July 2006 and ended in July 2009\(^2\).

It was designed to produce comparative European added value, based on knowledge acquired in each national context and to identify factors (social, political, economic, legal, cultural) involved in the perceptions of crime, deviant behaviour, as well as examining the implications for delinquency prevention policies.

This project had four objectives:

- Producing knowledge added value systematically using comparisons within the European Union
- Disseminating the knowledge added value thus produced
- Developing a scientific interdisciplinary network
- Providing managers at various government levels with methodological expertise and guides for quantifying deviances and criminality, their perception and the assessment of public policies.

\(^1\) Cécile Carra and Maryse Esterle are CESDIP researchers, university lecturer and researcher teachers at Université d’Artois-IUFM, members of the RECIFES education research team.

\(^2\) [http://www.crimprev.eu./gern](http://www.crimprev.eu./gern) René Lévy, Research Director for CNRS, director of the European Group for Research into Normativeness - GERN (GDRE CNRS/Ministry for Justice/University of Versailles Saint-Quentin en Yvelines) and CESDIP researcher was responsible for the scientific coordination of the CRIMPREV project.
This project consisted of 5 themed workshops (WP, Work Packages) which addressed the various aspects of the call for papers:

- Deviant behaviour factors (WP 2)
- The criminalization process (WP 3)
- The perceptions of crime (WP 4)
- The links between illicit or socially deviant behaviour and organized crime (WP 5)
- Public prevention policies (WP 6).

An initial symposium enabled us to provide an overview of the state of knowledge in the different countries of the European Union and to discuss problems created by methodological comparison between the different countries. A final symposium held in June 2009 produced a statement of the added value resulting from coordinated action and established future prospects.

The texts presented here have been taken from thematic workshop 2 (WP2): «The factors of deviant behaviour»³. Five themes had been selected for the whole of the themed workshop:

- Crimes involving property
- Violence
- The use of illegal substances
- Disorders and delinquency associated with conflicts between social groups or community groups or between the latter and state authorities
- Disruption and violence in schools (covered here).

This 5th theme was the subject of a conference held in Paris from the 8th to the 10th January 2009. It brought together some fifteen researchers focusing on three major approaches:

³ Responsible for this WP2: Laurent Mucchielli (Cesdip-CNRS), France et Pieter Spierenburg (Erasmus University Rotterdam, Holland)
A REVIEW OF THE ISSUE AND OF THE PROCESSES IMPLEMENTED

The speakers took stock of the constructions of the object: how is deviance in the school environment defined in each country, what are the specificities, which changes are revealed by the analyses? How does the issue of violence in schools test a country’s relationship with its young people (children included) and with its schools? What connects deviance with violence, public security and violence in schools?

THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE OBJECT IN EACH COUNTRY.

The most commonly used concepts have been identified and vary depending on every social context.

Three types of approaches and of correlations were investigated and included in the debate:

- Violence and delinquency (security)
- Violence and populations at risk (risk factors)
- Institutional/symbolic violence: approached through the context (the establishment and its environment, the school climate, the teacher/pupil, pupil/student interactions, the issue of authority, teacher / student / parent relations).

The methodologies used have been the subject of debate, in particular on the matter of collecting data from children or adolescents, on the limits of quantitative methodologies and the cross-referencing between quantitative and qualitative data.

THE NATIONAL OR LOCAL POLICIES CARRIED OUT AGAINST VIOLENCE

Each approach gives rise to potential actions depending on local or national issues. In this connection, the validity of international comparisons on the issue of violence was questioned.
Some policies are more directly focused on the more preventive or more coercive approaches and different partners are mobilized to this effect. The different papers have addressed the question of the links between the police, the courts, the educational sector and schools. They raise fundamental questions: should the school be opened or closed? Integration or exclusion? The context surrounding the development of these policies and/or these experiences allows us to understand the different guidelines selected according to the countries concerned.

The symposium was concluded by putting the various communications and exchanges into perspective along the three approaches mentioned above.

Different contributors have addressed the issues of violence and deviances from various viewpoints, while retaining the guidelines referred to above. It is obvious that the qualification of deviances and violence in schools and the treatment applied to pupils involved in these phenomena vary from one country to another, even when similar concepts exist.

In the first number, Carol Hayden emphasises the concept of bullying, widely used in Great Britain, and makes the connection between the behaviour of children and their socio-economic lifestyles. Marek Fuchs questions, in the case of Germany, the connection between the research methodologies and the validity of the results, with emphasis on the individual variables used to explain violence phenomena. Georges Steffgen presents, for Luxembourg, the existing quantitative data and an assessment of public policies applied on these issues. Magdalena Kohout-Diaz develops the concept of sikana, a form of harassment among students, and questions the predominance of certain public theories and policies in the Czech Republic, in the field of prevention of violence in schools.

The second number will be published on December, and Susana Figueiró also quotes bullying as part of analysis in Portugal, as well as the lack of discipline, and stresses the importance of acquiring greater in-depth knowledge on the impact made by social factors on the development of violence. Marie Verhoeven highlights four intelligibility models of violence in schools, which refer to different views of social action and of deviance in French-speaking Belgium; she contrasts them with public action in which it is relatively disconnected from research results. Yves Montoya questions the link between the massive expansion of education in France and the development of violence in schools, whose manifestations depend in part of the «establishment effect», against a strong mediatisation of the phenomenon. Johan Declerck stresses the important place occupied by criminology in the analysis of violence in schools in Flemish Belgium, which is not without impact on the terms used to define criminology. The prevention
of violence in schools mobilizes a range of fields (education, teaching) and the
author submits an original model, the «prevention pyramid». Ana Rodriguez
Basanta undertakes an analysis of the changes affecting research work in
Spain, from a representation of young people as a dangerous class in schools
(work on harassment) to considering the impact of the social and educational
environment on the development of violence in schools. Finally, Cécile Carra
puts European trends in research on these issues into perspective and plots
the routes followed in this complex and changing field of research.

We hope that, through this CRIMPREV programme workshop, we have
been able to contribute to an enrichment and synthesis of knowledge on
deviance and violence in schools, in conjunction with all the societies in which
they take place and whose specific features explain and determine the
prevention programmes put in place. The publication of its main
contributions will make them known to all those, researchers, students,
interested entities involved in public policy or experiments and who take an
interest in these matters.

And now, happy reading....

Maryse Esterle
On behalf of Cécile Carra et Maryse Esterle,
coordinators of the both special numbers.
DEVIANCE AND VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS
A REVIEW OF THE EVIDENCE IN ENGLAND¹

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ABSTRACT

The article outlines the nature and development of the debate about deviance and violence in schools in England. It explains disciplinary differences in the use of terminology. The focus is on summarising the most recent evidence about the nature and extent of these issues. Policy and practice developments targeted at reducing problem behaviour in and around schools are discussed. The article concludes that there is a great deal of survey and monitoring data in England but a relative lack of in-depth and ethnographic research.

KEYWORDS

England, deviance and violence, schools

¹ The focus is on England, rather than Britain (England, Scotland and Wales) or the United Kingdom (which includes Northern Ireland). Although the four countries have the same government there is a degree of devolution of power that means that there are important differences in the way that the education systems are run, as well as differences in legal governance. The central government Department for Children Families and Schools (DCSF) covers England and Wales only. A few references include evidence from Wales, as well as England; there is one reference to an important longitudinal survey carried out in Scotland.
BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

FOCUS AND APPROACH OF THE REVIEW

This review is focused on England and on the most recent research and developments, referring to older research and reports only when they are considered to be landmark or seminal studies. As shorthand this paper will at times refer to ‘problem behaviour’ when not specifically referring to criminal behaviour (that is behaviour that breaks the criminal law) or specific types of behaviour that are clearly defined in research, as in the concept of bullying.

The approach taken in this review is inter-disciplinary, but it is most centrally informed by criminology, social policy and education research. The move to Children’s Departments in England in recent years has meant that a more inter-disciplinary approach is increasingly appropriate and particularly in relation to the focus of this review. It is acknowledged that there are mental health issues that may relate to the behaviour of young people in schools (Cowie et al, 2004) but this is not the main focus of this review. There is a great deal of research (Gillborn, 2008) as well as government monitoring data on ethnicity and schools (see for example, DfES, 2006). Monitoring gender and special educational need is an aspect of various annual national reports on schools and the educational system (see the www.dcsf.gov.uk for a range of relevant reports). Research on gender (Osler et al, 2001) and special educational need (Visser et al, 2001) is also plentiful. These are all highly complex issues that cannot be covered adequately in a single review.

The review was undertaken by updating existing reviews and collections (see for example Debarbieux and Blaya, 2001) on the subject of violence and various forms of ‘behaviour’ problems in schools in England (see relevant concepts and terminology in Figure 1). The social science bibliographic database ‘Assia’ was searched in order to located the most up-to-date published research. Research commissioned and published by the relevant government departments was located through their websites; as was that commissioned by the largest teaching unions.

TERMINOLOGY

The terminology used in England is quite complex and inevitably influenced by disciplinary, professional and political perspectives. ‘Deviance’ as a concept is strongly associated with criminology but is also recognised as including non-criminal infringements of social norms. ‘Deviance’ as a concept, in both popular and academic discourse in England, has been replaced to a large extent by the concept of ‘anti-social behaviour’ (Home
The use of the word ‘violence’ generally refers to physically aggressive or threatening behaviour in England (Wright and Keetley, 2003). Figure 1 gives an overview of the concepts and terminology used in this review.

Teachers and schools focus most on various pupil ‘behaviours’. Most often they refer to ‘disruptive’, ‘disaffected’ and ‘bullying’ behaviours, or sometimes behaviour is said to be ‘challenging.’ These terms are associated with the particular focus of the behavioural description: for example, ‘disruptive’ refers to the interruption of the work of the teacher and other pupils, or even the smooth working of the school; ‘disaffected’ relates to a range of behaviours that imply a lack of affection for school and may include disruptive behaviour and non-attendance. ‘Challenging’ or ‘inappropriate’ behaviour are other terms used by teachers in relation to how a behaviour impacts on them, or the school context. ‘Bullying’ behaviour is a strong and specific focus of research and campaigns in relation to pupil behaviour. Bullying is usually seen as a particular subset of aggressive and violent behaviours. The very serious nature of some bullying has led Hall and Hayden (2007) to debate whether some forms of bullying could be conceptualised as ‘hate crime.’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>‘Deviance’</th>
<th>‘Violence’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Breaks social norms or rules</td>
<td>Breaks more serious social norms or rules involving physical threat or contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behaviour that is described by teachers as ‘disruptive’, ‘challenging’, ‘disaffected’, ‘inappropriate’ or ‘unacceptable’</td>
<td>Behaviour that is described by teachers as ‘anti-social’ or ‘violent’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some forms of bullying (non-physical)</td>
<td>Bullying that involves threats of, or actual violence/physical contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some forms of non-attendance</td>
<td>Pushing, touching, unwanted physical contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offensive language</td>
<td>Offensive language (with threats of violence)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**BOUNDARIES BLURRING**

**The criminalisation of social policy?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criminal</th>
<th>BLURRING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All <em>without</em> threats or physical violence towards people</td>
<td>All <em>with</em> threats or physical violence towards people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theft, robbery and ‘break-ins’</td>
<td>Assault</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vandalism and criminal damage</td>
<td>Some forms of bullying as ‘hate crime’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weapons carrying (for ‘protection’)</td>
<td>Theft, robbery and ‘break-ins’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vandalism and criminal damage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Weapons carrying (for ‘threats’ or ‘attack’)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 1: Overview of the concepts and terminology used in this review**
This review will cover the key evidence about the various problematic behaviours (shown in Figure 1) that together make up the available research on ‘deviance’ and ‘violence’ in English schools. It should be borne in mind whilst reading this review that the boundaries between behaviours that break with social norms or rules and those that break the criminal law have become increasingly blurred in recent years in England. This has happened partly as a result of the focus on ‘crime prevention’ (and the criminalisation of social policy, Rodger, 2008) and, partly because there is in any case the possibility for interpreting actions in more than one way. For example, when does a playground ‘fight’ become ‘assault’?

**CONTEXT – DEVELOPMENT OF CONCERNS**

Although there is evidence of some concern about the behaviour of young people in school wherever there are historical records (see Tubbs, 1996). A more specific concern began to grow in England following the raising of the school leaving age in 1973. At the time this concern focussed on ‘disruptive’ behaviour and ‘discipline’ problems and led to a government enquiry, known as The Elton Report (DES/WO, 1989). The specific problem of bullying in schools was increasingly recognized during the 1990s and has been a focus of school based research and interventions ever since. In recent years there has been a national annual Anti-Bullying Week.

The Education Reform Act 1988 is often seen as a watershed in relation to how schools are evaluated and what teachers can do to motivate all pupils. Prior to this Act, teachers had more freedom in what they taught and could devise courses for young people who did not respond well to traditional academic study. The Act led to the imposition of a National Curriculum on schools, this resulted in direct comparisons of test results between schools and the creation of ‘league tables’ of school test and examination results. The lack of flexibility in curriculum design and the pressure to achieve test and exam results is associated with increased evidence of ‘disaffection’ in schools and a rising rate of exclusion from school. The publication of the first national data on exclusion from school in 1992 and subsequent annual data is one measure of the limits of teacher tolerance of young people’s behaviour.

Since the mid 1990s there have been broader concerns about safety in and around schools, following very varied and high profile events. For example, the fatal stabbing at the school gates of head teacher Philip Lawrence, by a teenager from another school, whilst trying to defend one of his pupils in 1995; ‘the Dunblane massacre’ (16 primary age children killed by an adult intruder in 1996); the fatal stabbing of Luke Walmsley, by another pupil, in a school corridor, in a rural secondary school in 2003; the abduction and murder of two schoolgirls by their school caretaker in 2002 (‘the Soham
murders’). More recently there has been a variety of high profile examples of children attacked by other children in and around schools (Lewis, 2005; Wainwright, 2005).

Crime prevention and reducing social exclusion have been key themes applied to various areas of social policy, since the election of a ‘New Labour’ government in 1997. From 1997 to date, work with schools and young people is a mix of crime prevention and attempts to open up opportunity through education. The increased focus on crime prevention through education and schools could be seen as part of the wider debate about the criminalisation of social policy (Rodger, 2008).

UNDERSTANDING PUPIL BEHAVIOUR: CHANGING EMPHASIS IN GOVERNMENT POLICY

Official explanations of problematic behaviour within schools have evolved rapidly in recent years. One of the last Conservative administrations saw the issue as Pupils with Problems (DfEE, 1994) – illustrating a belief in the individual nature and location of ‘the problem’. The first New Labour administration changed the focus to Social Inclusion: Pupil Support (DfEE, 1999) – in keeping with the strong policy emphasis on combating social exclusion (see for example SEU, 1998). More recent reviews and guidance emphasise the quality of the teaching and learning environment, raising levels of school attendance and expectations (Steer, 2005) – highlighting the role of teachers and schools. The Department for Children, Families and Schools (DCSF) website illustrates this latter perspective, referring to the behaviour and attendance strand of the Key Stage 3 strategy:

This programme will help schools promote positive behaviour and tackle the issue of low-level disruption. The aims are to ensure that all schools have the skills and support that they need to maintain creative and positive learning environments for all children to give support in developing positive behaviour throughout the school and to help schools to develop pro-active policies (DCSF, 2008a, para 1, my emphasis).

There have been several changes in the name of this government Department in the last twenty years: DES/WO (Department of Education and Science/Welsh Office); DfEE, (Department for Education and Employment); DfES (Department for Education and Skills). At the time of writing DCSF refers to the department that covers child and family welfare, as well as education in schools.

£470 million was made available from 2003, to support the development of this strategy. Key Stage 3, refers to the educational stage for 11-14 year olds.
There is some resistance to this emphasis on teaching and learning as the key to countering disruptive and violent behaviour in schools, from teaching unions, for example:

*Teachers cannot teach and pupils cannot learn in an environment where there is disruption and violence and where such behaviour occurs it cannot be explained away simply by attributing it to teachers’ ability to plan and deliver lessons appropriately (NAS/UWT, 2007, para 1).*

In the last few years, there is an increasing awareness of the need to have strategies in place to address the more extreme issues of weapons carrying and youth gangs in schools (see for example guidance to schools, DCSF, 2007a, 2008b; research sponsored by a teaching union, Broadhurst, Duffin and Taylor, 2008; and, academic research Hayden, 2008).

**Methodology and Sources of Evidence**

There is a wide variety of evidence that can inform this review. Some of the research is undertaken by independent academic researchers, some is undertaken for (and by) government departments, charitable organisations, as well as statutory agencies. Surveys of school pupils are common. Research into bullying behaviour has a long history with the annual ‘Anti-Bullying Week’ adding an additional impetus to all kinds of monitoring and research activities. Surveys have also been conducted within schools in relation to criminal and anti-social behaviour. Some national surveys have been repeated a number of times in recent years, allowing the accumulation of trend data on offending and victimisation: such as the cross-sectional survey for the Youth Justice Board, carried out six times between 1999-2008, see summary, MORI (2006) and most recent reports at the time of writing (MORI 2008a, 2008b). The MORI survey includes a mainstream pupil sample (11-16 year olds) and a sample of young people attending Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) and similar facilities for excluded pupils. There is also an ongoing annual survey of 10-25 year olds, undertaken by the Home Office, since 2003 (see for example Roe and Ashe, 2008). The Home Office survey includes a panel sample and a fresh sample each year, weighted to ensure that it is representative. Other research is longitudinal and tracks a cohort of over 4,000 secondary school children in one city (Edinburgh, Scotland), with a focus on youth transitions and crime (Smith and McVie, 2003). Key government-led enquiries about pupil behaviour that involve consultations with experts and practitioners have been undertaken at intervals: as in the Elton Report (DES/WO, 1989) and ongoing Steer Committee (see for example Steer, 2005). Interviews with teachers, pupils and parents are also relatively common (Hayden, 1997; Parsons, 1999; Hayden and Dunne, 2001). These
studies explore experience and perspective and provide insights into causes and potential solutions to problem behaviour.

There has been a range of government-led programmes and interventions, as well as initiatives led by individual institutions and organisations, aimed at preventing or responding to problem behaviour in and around schools in the last decade alongside a great deal of evaluative research. Such research is often multi-method and includes analysis of secondary (organisational) data, as well as primary data from questionnaire surveys, interviews and observations. Some of this research has been funded by government departments, sometimes by agencies and organisations running the programmes. There has been increasing pressure since the late 1990s in England to adopt a more rigorous approach to evaluation, within what has often been referred to as the ‘What Works’ debate (Davies et al, 2000).

Organisational and monitoring data is very plentiful in England, with a whole range of data being available as annual statistical reports: for example, data on exclusion from school is reported by special educational need and ethnicity; data on vulnerable groups such as children in care is also monitored and compared with the general school population in annual reports (see www.dcsf.gov.uk for a wide range of national statistical reports, as well as funded research reports). A great deal of data is available both at the local authority level and at that of the individual school. For example, inspection reports for individual schools are available on the internet – such reports include observations and information about pupil behaviour.

**KEY RESEARCH FINDINGS ON THE SCALE AND NATURE OF PROBLEM BEHAVIOUR**

There are various ways in which we might try to estimate how big an issue ‘deviant and violent’ behaviour is in schools, some of this behaviour could be viewed as criminal, some could be seen as anti-social whilst other behaviour may be simply part of the growing up process and ‘testing the boundaries’ with adults. It should also be emphasised that some of the behaviour that is viewed as problematic or ‘deviant’ in a school (such as ‘disruptive’ behaviour) may not be viewed in quite the same way in other settings. This section will review the evidence and indicators about a number of problem behaviours.

Differences in opinion are evident, between parents and teachers, about the extent to which a particular behaviour constitutes a problem severe enough (or deviant enough) to warrant school exclusion (Hayden and Dunne, 2001). Low-level disruption to lessons and harassment of teachers are a major feature of surveys focussing on pupil behaviour from the perspective of
teachers; but it is evident that pupils are reported to be the most frequent victims of the more severe events - physical violence, bullying and harassment in schools (DES/WO, 1989; Gill and Hearnshaw, 1997; Neill 2002; Wright and Keetley, 2003; Neill, 2008).

Neill (2002, 2008) has conducted a national survey of NUT (National Union of Teachers) members twice in recent years. Interestingly, in terms of his use of terminology, the first survey referred to ‘unacceptable behaviour’, the second survey refers to ‘disruptive behaviour’. Neill (2008) concluded that the overall pattern of behaviour was similar. Some serious behaviours did show an increase though: such as, pushing and touching teachers; teachers witnessing a pupil in possession of a weapon in school. Furthermore the tendency was for experiences of these sorts of behaviours to have polarised between 2001 and 2008, with some teachers experiencing more severe problems in 2008. Table 1 shows that disruption to lessons and offensive language are frequent experiences for teachers, with over 60% of teachers experiencing this form of behaviour weekly. On the other hand pushing, touching and other unwanted physical contact was not experienced by two-thirds of teachers, within a year; although 11.6% (in 2008) experienced this weekly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behaviour (frequency experienced by TEACHERS)</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disruption to lesson</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yearly</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Termly</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behaviour not reported</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offensive language</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yearly</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Termly</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>60.3</td>
<td>59.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behaviour not reported</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pushing/touching of the teacher/other unwanted contact</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yearly</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Termly</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behaviour not reported</td>
<td>63.1</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 1: Problem behaviour in schools - as reported by teachers (2001 and 2008)**

(Adapted from Neill, 2008, Appendix 2, pp.13-17)
Research into personal safety and ‘violence’ in schools (Gill and Hearnshaw, 1997) provides a picture of what a random sample of 3,986 schools experienced in one school year. This latter study was undertaken by criminologists and is one of the earliest examples of using the word ‘violence’ in relation to the behaviour of school pupils. Selected findings from this research are presented in Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of incident</th>
<th>% SCHOOLS reporting in the last school year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical violence – pupil to staff</td>
<td>18.7% (member of staff - hit, punched or kicked)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.9% (member of staff - hit with weapon or other object, stabbed or slashed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical violence – pupil to pupil</td>
<td>50.7% (pupil - hit, punched or kicked)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.9% (pupil - hit with weapon or other object, stabbed or slashed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theft with threats or actual violence</td>
<td>1.9% of schools</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Violence in Schools (at school level)
(Adapted from Gill and Hearnshaw, 1997, pp1-2)

Martin et al (2008) found that over two-thirds (68.3%) of teachers in a small scale survey had suffered some form of ‘physical assault’ at some point during their career. These ‘assaults’ included: being bitten, pushed, having chairs thrown at them, having doors slammed in their faces. Tables 1 and 2 (and the work of Martin et al, 2008) are examples of perceptions of the prevalence of certain deviant and violent behaviours from the teacher perspective.

Pupil-based self-report surveys present another perspective. Blaya (2002) reports an overall victimisation rate of 55% of pupils in a year, in a sample of English schools (within a comparative study of French and English schools in socially deprived areas). Recent MORI (2008 a, 2008b) surveys show similarly high rates of victimisations of school age pupils in their nationally representative samples: 51% of mainstream pupils and 61% of excluded pupils in PRUs had been a victim of a crime in the last twelve months. Again there are problems of definition and comparability across such surveys. For example, ‘physical violence, pupil to pupil’ (as referred to in Table 2) may be one-off acts of aggression; they may on the other hand be more sustained and may then be seen as ‘bullying’.

Research on bullying is highly pertinent to this review. Such research is very well established and defined in England. According to Smith (2002, 117-18) and based on the pioneering work of Olweus (1993) ‘bullying is a subset of aggressive behaviours, characterised by repetition and power imbalance’. Bullying takes various forms – physical, verbal, social exclusion and indirect forms such as spreading rumours. Technology is helping to increase the forms
bullying might take: for example ‘cyber- bullying’, where young people use text messages from mobile phones and the internet to bully others (DCSF, 2007b). Attacks on young people are sometimes filmed, again using mobile phones; these events may then be posted on the internet (these events are known as ‘happy slapping’). The MORI (2008a, 2008b) surveys show the high prevalence of threatening messages sent by voicemail or text (22%) and ‘happy slapping’ (16%) by mainstream pupils.

Table 3 illustrates how bullying surveys still produce fairly wide ranging estimates of prevalence, depending on the way questions are asked and the timescale involved. Although, overall, Smith and Myron-Wilson (1998, p.406) estimate that: ‘around 1 in 5 children are involved in bully-victim problems’ in the UK, with similar incidences reported in other countries. Furniss (2000) discusses whether some forms of bullying should be considered to be a crime, rather than as a school disciplinary matter. Furniss considers the issue both from the standpoint of existing legal provisions as well as from the point of view of the level of protection afforded to children. She points out that assaults on teachers (though less frequent than pupil to pupil assaults) are often reported to the police; whereas in pupil to pupil cases, parents are expected to make the decision about whether or not to involve the police.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>School type/age</th>
<th>Prevalence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whitney &amp; Smith</td>
<td>Sheffield (6,000 pupils)</td>
<td>Primary &amp; Secondary</td>
<td>During a school term: 27% primary and 10% secondary had been bullied; 12% primary and 6% secondary had bullied others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1993)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katz Buchanan &amp; Bream</td>
<td>UK (7,000 young people)</td>
<td>Secondary and young adults 13-19 years</td>
<td>More than 50% had ever been bullied: 13% boys; 12% girls were bullied ‘severely’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2001)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oliver &amp; Candappa</td>
<td>12 schools ‘in different parts of the country’ (953 pupils)</td>
<td>Primary (year 5) Secondary (year 8) 12-13 years</td>
<td>During a school term: 51% of primary and 28% had been bullied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2003)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hayden (2008)</td>
<td>Provincial city in England (1,426 pupils, 14 schools)</td>
<td>Secondary (year 10) 14-15 years</td>
<td>Bullied at school in the last 12 months: 4.9% ‘a lot’ 20.8% ‘a little’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 3: Bullying surveys**

Official data and research on exclusion from school tells us more about teacher and official responses to pupil behaviour. There has been a massive
amount of research on exclusion from school since the early 1990s, when government monitoring data became available (see for example Hayden, 1997; Parsons, 1999). When permanent exclusion figures are compared with surveys of teacher experience like the ones already noted, one might be surprised by the relatively small proportion of children who are permanently excluded, according to official statistics. Official data shows a reduction in the number of permanent exclusions from schools from the mid 1990s, to date.

Although the official figures for permanent exclusion represent a very small proportion of the school population (the rate of permanent exclusion was 12 per

<table>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Permanent (from a school subject to appeal)</td>
<td>12,500</td>
<td>8,680</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fixed period (up to 45 days in a school year)</td>
<td>Not collected</td>
<td>425,600</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Permanent and fixed period exclusions in England  
(Source of figures: www.dcsf.gov.uk)

10,000 school population in England or 0.12% in 2006-2007) there were many more fixed period exclusions. Fixed period exclusions (a matter of days usually) are now monitored annually and are much more numerous, as Table 4 illustrates. Existing evidence shows an increase in fixed period exclusions in the last few years. The most common single reason given for both permanent and fixed period exclusions is ‘persistent disruptive behaviour’ (31% of all permanent and 23% of fixed period exclusions). Physical assault against an adult accounted for 11.3% of permanent and 4.4% of fixed period exclusions. Physical assault against a pupil accounted for 15.6% of permanent and 18.6% of fixed period exclusions (DCSF, 2008c). The MORI (2006) surveys show that excluded children tend to have committed more criminal offences (and more serious offences) than children who have not been excluded from school.

Official records of non-attendance involve a much bigger proportion of the school population. Some form of non-attendance represent a form of ‘deviance’ others may be a response to ‘violence.’ The reasons for non-attendance are varied, but in some cases at least they represent disaffection or disinterest in schooling and in others avoidance of work pressures or bullying. Schools record ‘non-attendance’ which covers authorised absence (for example through sickness) and unauthorised absence (which may include a range of situations including truancy and being a young carer). ‘Truancy’ suggests an active choice not to go to school and is thus a particular form of absence. Official data shows some improvement in ‘authorised’ absence (that is where parents/carers provide a written explanation for the absence). There is a worsening of the situation in relation to ‘unauthorised’ absence.
(where no explanation is provided) since the mid 1990s, despite the massive investment of resources in following up pupil absence in recent years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% half days pf school missed</th>
<th>1995 – 1996</th>
<th>2006-2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authorised (by parent/carer)</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>5.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unauthorised (NOT authorised by parent/carer)</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: Non-attendance
(Source of figures: www.dcsf.gov.uk)

The most commonly quoted figure in government announcements is 50,000 school children truanting from school on any school day. Further, around 100,000 pupils were found to ‘disappear’ from the school roll between years 10 and 11 (between ages 15 and 16) in a one-year period of monitoring (Ofsted, 2003). That is these young people did not go back to school at some point between the ages of 14 and 16 years. There is a complex set of circumstances and reasons to explain why children are not in school or not benefiting from school. They all have their behavioural manifestations, although it tends to be the ‘acting out’ child that causes most consternation amongst teachers and parents because such behaviour demands attention.

Criminologists have a slightly different focus and many of the surveys conducted are more explicitly looking at the prevalence of offending behaviour and victimisation of young people of school age. The connection between disruptive behaviour in schools and crime was highlighted in a seminal study by Graham (1988). In more recent years self-report surveys conducted with school pupils, have provided us with a picture of young people’s overall involvement in criminal activity (as in the Youth Justice Board, MORI, 2006, and Home Office surveys, such as Roe and Ashe, 2008, noted earlier). However, there is very little research explicitly focussing specifically on criminal acts committed on the school site, presumably because of the extreme sensitivity of such data and the difficulties of gaining access to undertake the research. One self-report study of a sample of pupils from 20 state secondary schools (3,103 respondents) in Cardiff (South Wales) found that a fifth (20.3%) of all pupils reported involvement in one of five categories of offence on the school site in a one year period (Boxford, 2006).
Table 6 illustrates the differences in prevalence of offending behaviours between boys and girls. Interestingly, this study reports varying levels of impact on offending behaviour in relation to individual and lifestyle factors, with school context exercising a different level of relative protection in relation to these factors. The study confirms the importance of school climate (defined as encompassing school ethos, respect for authority and parental school interest) and adds to current understanding in the finding that pupil relations (defined as based on pupils’ social capital and school disorder) also have significant associations with pupils’ involvement in crime in schools. This sort of study is important in a number of ways: it illustrates the high level of offending that may be occurring in schools; it adds to the debate about the extent to which schools (in combination with other agencies) can address these issues and it reminds us that some of the acts dealt with as a within-school disciplinary issue could be treated as a criminal offence.

Weapons-carrying and gang related behaviour has been a major feature of newspaper headlines in England in recent years. Table 7 illustrates the varying estimates obtained from research. Often surveys (such as CtC, 2005; MORI, 2006; Roe and Ashe, 2008) do not specify where the weapons-carrying has taken place. Both the MORI and
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Area/sample size</th>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Prevalence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gill &amp; Hearnshaw</td>
<td>Random national sample: 3,986 schools</td>
<td>Secondary school teachers in 3,986 school</td>
<td>Weapons carried by pupils, on school site in the last year in 12.1% of schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1997)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>23% of pupils had carried a weapon anywhere (i.e. either in or outside school) in the last 12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CtC (2005)</td>
<td>Inner London schools: 11,400 pupils</td>
<td>Secondary school pupils</td>
<td>22.5% of teachers witnessed a pupil with an offensive weapon, during the last year (of which 5.2% did so monthly or weekly)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hayden (2008)</td>
<td>All 14 secondary schools in a provincial city in England 1,426 pupils</td>
<td>Secondary school pupils 14-15 years (year 10)</td>
<td>Pupils reporting carrying a weapon in school in the last 12 months: 3.4% knife; 2.0% gun, 2.8% ‘other’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 7: Weapons carrying in school**

Home Office surveys, referred to earlier, include questions on weapons carrying, but do not ask where. Research focusing on the school site has measured prevalence in different ways: by school, by teacher experience and by pupil self-report.

In a range of ways schools are also a place where adults, parents and former pupils may vent their anger and frustration. There are various ways that we can estimate the scale of this sort of problem. Sometimes people want to gain access to the school site for the purpose of vandalism, arson or theft of school property. Further, schools may also act as a site for ‘professional perpetrators’ to gain access to children (Sullivan and Beech 2002). Sullivan and Beech (2002) quote an estimate that about 400 teachers in the UK were suspended each year, following allegations of abusing pupils.

The need for better security for schools, as well as screening of school staff, has been highlighted in the public imagination by the events referred to earlier in this article; such as ‘the Dunblane massacre’, ‘the Soham murders’ and other deaths and woundings. More common security problems for schools include the destruction or theft of property. These issues raise very different security problems for schools. Security firms offer schemes such as ‘School Watch’ over the summer holiday period. These firms tend to focus very much on property and damage from arson, vandalism and graffiti, rather than harm to people (see www.chubb.co.uk). The risk of arson and
vandalism is known to be higher in deprived urban areas, than elsewhere. However, whilst arson attacks against schools declined from over 1,100 in 1994 to just under 800 in 2000 there was an increase in the proportion of arson attacks occurring in school time. Around 250 of the 800 arson attacks in 2000 were during the school day when pupils are present (Arson Prevention Bureau, 2002). More generally schools in England now have tighter systems of control for people coming on to the school site and greater awareness of the need for careful background and police checks on adults in contact with children. The use of CCTV is commonplace as are keypad entry systems to buildings.

**Policy and Practice Development**

It is clear from the previous sections in this review that there is plenty of evidence about a range of problem behaviours presented on the school site. Current policy development for children in England emphasises schools as central to addressing broader issues of wellbeing and safety, as well as academic and vocational education. The key overarching framework for all of this is referred to as *Every Child Matters*.

**General Framework for Child Welfare**

In 2001 a National Service Framework was announced for children’s services, to set in place standards against which all services would be inspected. *Every Child Matters* (DfES, 2003) sets the overall agenda for what agencies working with children are aiming to do. Within this framework schools are centre stage as the main institution in touch with all children. This framework exemplifies the themes that are central to social policy under New Labour: reducing poverty and social exclusion, developing the role of schools, inter-agency co-operation, early intervention and a strong emphasis on supporting the role of parents and carers. Five key outcomes for all children are listed at the beginning of *Every Child Matters*, these are:

- **Being healthy** – enjoying good physical and mental health and living a healthy lifestyle.
- **Staying safe** – being protected from harm and neglect and growing up able to look after themselves.
- **Enjoying and achieving** – getting the most out of life and developing broad skills for adulthood.
- **Making a positive contribution** – to the community and to society and not engaging in anti-social or offending behaviour.
• Economic well-being – overcoming socio-economic disadvantages to achieve their full potential in life (Para 1.3).

The rest of the document focuses mainly on children most at risk, within a framework of universal services and the rights and responsibilities agenda.

The thrust of the approach is around multi-disciplinary teams carrying out assessments under a common framework co-located around schools, Sure Start centres and primary care (community based health services). Schools are the focus as universal support centres and education is the organizing principle around which children’s services are organised. The Children Act 2004 provides the legislative spine for the wider strategy for improving children’s lives. The Act sets out to be enabling rather than prescriptive, so that local authorities have a considerable amount of flexibility in the way they implement its provisions. The overall aim is to encourage integrated planning, commissioning and delivery of services as well as improve multi-disciplinary working, remove duplication, increase accountability and improve the coordination of individual and joint inspections in local authorities. Whilst the specifics of this vision are more complex, these ideals make sense at the strategic level.

**Behaviour in schools**

Behaviour within schools is now largely seen as primarily related to the quality and appropriateness of teaching and learning, for the great majority of children. The Steer Committee (2005) also recognises that certain problematic aspects of pupil behaviour in schools are new: such as the general availability of technology like mobile phones, which are used by pupils in new forms of bullying and to record assaults and humiliations or to summon angry parents into the school at the behest of a pupil who has been disciplined. Furthermore the uncertainty about the meaning and application of *in loco parentis* is highlighted for contemporary teachers. It is noted by Steer (2005), as well as by the Elton Committee in 1989, that the legal judgements supporting this concept are very old and that the principle is based on an ancient doctrine of common law. This is seen as problematic in a context in which ‘the trend for parents to challenge schools at law, noted in the Elton Report, has continued and intensified’ (Steer, 2005, p.80).

At the school level, ‘school ethos’ was first recognised as an important influence on pupil behaviour and particularly delinquency in the seminal study by Rutter *et al* (1979). Although much of the focus is about ‘managing’

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4 *In loco parentis:* this concept gives teachers the same authority over their pupils as parents have over their own children
or ‘improving’ pupil behaviour, most of the strategies and training packages
developed for schools require adults and institutions to include how they
‘manage’ or ‘improve’ behaviour, in essence how they build relationships and
relate to pupils and colleagues. In short the issue of the ‘whole school climate’
and more specifically ‘school ethos’ is recognised as central to managing or
improving behaviour in schools. At the same time, it is well recognised that
issues may be complex at the level of the individual pupil: behaviour
interpreted as disaffection may relate to a number of issues including child
abuse and poor parenting; disrupted and stressful living circumstances; the
disruptions associated with being ‘looked after’ (being ‘in care’); relative
poverty; special educational needs (or learning needs not met) and so on.
However, disaffection, whatever the various causes is only one explanation
for not attending school or behaving in a problematic way. Furthermore
common issues relating to non-attendance are varied: such as, academic
pressure and fear of failure; bullying; young carers; travelling families.

Figure 2 illustrates that there is a wide range of responses to problem
behaviour in schools in England. Whole school approaches recognise that
school ethos and climate is crucial in promoting positive behaviour. The
whole school approach is apparent in a raft of policies, agreements and
strategies that are expected in all schools in England: such as behaviour
management, anti-bullying, anti-harassment and equal opportunities policies;
home-school agreements and particular strategies or approaches to realising
these policies and agreements. The use of the curriculum to promote pro-
social values, for example through citizenship education, and through
teaching and learning strategies are yet another part of what all schools are
expected to do. Individual pupils have ‘targets’ they are trying to achieve in
relation to their behaviour (as well as academic learning) and some have
individual plans for
**Off site provision** (Targetted at: the minority of children who will not go back to mainstream school, following major difficulties or exclusion from school)

Pupil Referral Units (PRUs), home tuition, vocational and other provision in further education (FE) colleges. Special projects and provisions run by independent and charitable organisations in some local authorities. Residential special school placements. Connexions-Personal Advisors.

**Combination and Re-integration Programmes** (Targetted at: children who have had major difficulties with, or been excluded from, full-time school)

Part-time at school, part-time at a PRU or FE college. Sometimes with a view to full re-integration into mainstream school. Connexions-Personal Advisors.

**In-school and More Intensive Support** (Targetted at: more vulnerable children in school)

Withdrawal rooms or ‘learning support units’ (LSU); group work and individual work – can come from core services such as Educational Welfare or Psychology, and from a wide variety of special and time-limited projects, such as Behaviour Support Teams. Learning mentors. Connexions-Personal Advisors.

**Whole School Approaches** (Targetted at: all children)

*Policies and strategies:* behaviour, bullying, harassment, equal opportunities, special educational needs provision, teaching and learning. Safer School Partnerships (with Police and other agencies).

*Agreements:* home-school agreements.

*Individual pupils:* all have educational targets and expectations about behaviour set. Some individuals in need of further support may have individual behaviour plans (IBPs); pastoral support plans (PSPs) and all ‘looked after’ children should have personal education plans (PEPs).

*The curriculum:* personal, social and health education (PSHE); citizenship education; teaching and learning strategies.

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**Figure 2: Responses to problematic pupil behaviour in schools in England**

behavioural and social reasons. In school and more intensive support is provided for individual pupils based on an assessment of their educational and social needs. Other provision is partly or wholly provided off the mainstream school site; these provisions focus on the most problematic or vulnerable children. We might conceptualise support for pupils in four tiers, with ‘Out of School provision’ being at the apex and ‘Whole School’ being at the base of a pyramid (in Figure 2). These provisions are in place with varying degrees of efficacy nationally. ‘In-school and more intensive support’; as well as ‘Combination and Re-integration Programmes’ are not readily available in some schools. In general, cities and the poorer areas of England have gained most additional resources under New Labour, albeit with strings attached.
Thus vulnerable children in more affluent areas have fewer options between being in and out of school. This raises important issues of equity in educational provision and support for all vulnerable children.

**Schools, Safety and Crime Prevention**

Schools are expected to consider risk and safety in a number of different ways: in terms of access to the school site from intruders, through vetting the suitability of their staff and in their everyday relations with children and adults who attend, work or visit the school. Schools were awarded £10 million in 2002-2003 to increase security measures through the Capital Modernisation Fund. Research intended to inform the development of policy and practice in this field was undertaken at the same time (Lloyd and Ching, 2003). Interestingly, this latter research identified external threats such as intruders, arson and burglary as greater concerns than internal threats from within the school community. The dynamic nature of school security is highlighted by this research, with pupil behaviour issues only emerging after the external threats already noted.

*Safer Schools* programmes have developed since 2002. These programmes involve the police and other agencies working with schools, initially in high crime area. *Safer Schools* has now become a national programme, but varies a great deal in how it is run in individual schools. More recent concern about weapons carrying and gang culture entering the school environment has led to both legislative changes and new guidance to schools (DCSF, 2007a). The Violent Crime Reduction Act 2006 introduced the power for members of school staff to search pupils for weapons if they have ‘reasonable grounds’ for suspecting that a pupil is carrying a weapon (with effect from October 1st 2007). Staff have the power to use ‘such force as is reasonable in the circumstances for exercising that power.’ It should be emphasised that school staff have a power, not a duty in these respects. The police have grounds for searching a school for weapons if they ‘suspect’ that they may find weapons, prior to this Act they had to ‘believe’ this to be the case.

Commenting on the guidance issued to schools on gangs, a spokesperson for the National Union of Teachers (NUT) said:

*The Government’s guidance on gangs is a compilation of good sense and practical advice. Our evidence shows that there are a minority of schools which face increasing difficulties from weapons brought on to school premises. These schools need all the support they can get* (NUT, 2008, para 1).

Parents are also an important focus in government policy in relation to youth crime prevention. More coercive measures are being used towards
parents in a number of ways. The first parent was jailed in 2002 for failing to ensure that her teenage daughters attended school. In relation to behaviour in school as well as attendance, parenting contracts have been available to schools in England and Wales since early 2004 through the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003. The Steer report (2005) adds support to the use of parenting contracts as well as parenting orders in highlighting the need for a ‘more immediate and consistent response to schools dealing with violent or abusive parents’ (p.95). Schools have been able to apply directly to the courts for parenting orders since 2007.

**Effective Responses to Problem Behaviour**

Certain basic principles and indicators of effective ways of responding to children who present problem behaviour are well known, if highly debated, in terms of how these principles are put into practice. For example, it is well established that early behavioural problems in pre-school children are indicative of the likelihood of developing more problematic and entrenched difficulties later in life. The costs of intervening early are known to outweigh those of responding later (Sutton *et al*., 2004). These are the kinds of principles that have informed the development of *Sure Start* and now Children’s Centres. At the same time it is recognised that there can be dangers in intervening in children’s lives too early. For example, DSRU (2004) cautions against ‘net-widening’, or drawing families into services when they could sort things out for themselves.

Evidence about the kinds of programme that produce positive effects on children’s behaviour are well known by policy makers in England: for example, early education programmes in the United States such as High/Scope and Head Start have been well evaluated and demonstrate clear gains for disadvantaged children. Structured parenting programmes, such as that developed by Webster-Stratton, have also been found to be effective in improving parenting skills and in turn children’s behaviour. Cognitive behavioural methods have generally been shown to be effective in a wide range of circumstances (Falshaw *et al*., 2003). Overall, these programmes have been influential in England (Hayden, 2007).

However, most evaluations of interventions for children presenting problem behaviour in England are relatively small scale and do not meet the scientific criteria required by ‘what works’ enthusiasts⁵. Most are too short-term to follow through the longer-term impact (if any) of an intervention. It

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⁵ See for example, Wilson and Lipsey’s (2006) meta-analysis of 219 school–based violence prevention programs which shows that universal programmes were generally effective in reducing the more common types of pupil behaviours, and especially in relation to ‘high risk’ pupils.
is impossible to conclude in some instances whether or not any improvements indicated may simply be due to more resources and attention paid to an issue. Nevertheless, there are some useful advisory materials, produced for decision-makers, that provide a gateway to the very numerous sources of expertise and different approaches to combating violence and aggression in schools (see for example Gittins, 2005).

Many new initiatives working with schools are based on the principle of sustainability. That is, it is assumed that after a period of funding an initiative the lessons learned can become part of mainstream professional practice. The expectation is that mainstream practice can either change or accommodate the work (vis-à-vis other pressures and that the new ways of working are compatible with performance management targets – the latter being a very strong feature of the public sector in England). Furthermore it is assumed that staff are willing and able to change their practice. This may well be the case in behaviour management and parenting programmes (as a particular way of doing something that a practitioner already has to do); but some initiatives set out to add value to existing services through the provision of more individual or small group opportunities for children. Furthermore, projects aimed at the prevention end of the continuum may well uncover more (unmet) need for services (DSRU, 2004, p.26).

The possibility that some ‘preventative’ services might actually uncover unmet need is a particularly pertinent issue to consider in relation to the focus of this review. ‘Behaviour problems’, ‘special educational need’ and ‘mental health issues’ can each be seen as on a continuum and at least one in five children will experience one or more of these problems in the course of growing up. Behaviours may present as ‘deviant’ or ‘violent’ but the underlying causes may be any one (or a combination) of these latter issues. However, levels of need are very unevenly spread in communities, with higher levels of need being apparent in poorer areas. The potential scale of the need for more help, particularly in poorer areas, alongside the widespread level of anxiety and concern, from parents, politicians and the media, means that additional support for schools makes sense as a response to broader concerns about anti-social and criminal behaviour from young people.

There is now much wider recognition of the need to advise and support parents in general on how to respond to and manage their children’s behaviour. Indeed there have been a number of television series focussed on the issue in recent years. Media images of out of control and anti-social ‘youths’ and stories about very disruptive and aggressive behaviour in schools can be influential in constructing popular perceptions and explanations of the issues to be addressed. It is common for various organisations, interest groups and the media to call for some issue to do with children’s behaviour to
be addressed by ‘parenting programmes’ and initiatives in schools. Yet the behavioural expectations that are presented as the norm are at odds with sub-cultural differences and realities; this means that some schools may be at odds with the dominant norms of the communities they serve.

Schools in England are now viewed as the universal service for all children and as a key service around which other children’s services might be co-located and planned. It is a vision with a great deal to commend it; although it is a vision that may take time to realise. Some key areas of instability are apparent in this vision. Quite apart from workload concerns, there are other practical problems such as space, particularly in some inner city primary schools. Further, the availability of appropriately trained and skilled personnel varies by area – specifically the evidence of teachers leaving the profession and of the drift of those who move jobs from the schools in the most adverse circumstances, to those that are easier places to work (Smithers and Robinson, 2005). Simply, schools that need staff most have difficulties in recruitment. Inclusive schools are self evidently better for individual children, as well as the communities they serve. However, it is plain that the ability of schools to be inclusive varies. Indeed the ongoing concern about behaviour in schools is evidence of the problems of coping with the ‘core business’ that already exist (Hayden, 2007).

CONCLUSIONS

Research evidence and monitoring data on the nature and prevalence of ‘deviance’ and ‘violence’ in schools is plentiful in England. In particular there are a plethora of self-report surveys from school pupils. Overall the evidence suggests that some forms of behaviour are very common, particularly disruptive behaviour, offensive language, bullying and other forms of aggression. Behaviour that would warrant the label ‘violent’ in England is less common, but there are indications of an increase in the more extreme behaviours and particularly in individual schools, many of which are in poorer socio-economic circumstances. A great deal of additional resources have gone into schools since New Labour came into power in 1997 and there has been a reduction in official records of permanent exclusion, as well as authorised absence, more training opportunities and support in behaviour management for teachers and so on. However, a major task remains; a task that is most strongly focused in inner cities and areas of social housing. The increasing socio-economic disparities in England during this same time period, as well as increasing parental choice over access to state schools has left some schools behind. In such schools the connection between problem behaviour and an environment in which it is difficult for teachers to teach and pupils to learn is all too apparent.
A key gap in contemporary school-based research in England is in the more time-consuming and in-depth ethnographic studies that focus on the dynamics of problem behaviour in schools in the most difficult circumstances. We need a more realistic assessment of how to educate the most problematic young people in a way that gives them the best opportunity for a positive future, alongside addressing the needs of the other young people with whom they share their schooling.
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Deviance and Violence in Education Environments and Their Development in the Czech Republic

CRIMPREV Report

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Abstract

Having established the framework covering the application of the šikana [harassment] concept which predominates in the approach to deviance and violence in Czech Republic schools, this article defines the epistemological field within which this concept is located. The results provided by four touchstone surveys are then described and analysed together with their spin-offs in terms of fighting violence in schools. Findings recommend undertaking specific inquiries into teaching practices and the effects of school choices within a given context.

Keywords

Czech Republic, violence, harassment, insolence, choice of school.
ŠIKANA [PEER HARASSMENT], SUCCESS ACHIEVED BY A CONCEPT

From the media viewpoint and in public opinion, violence in Czech Republic schools mainly takes the form of šikana i.e. harassment (bullying, intimidation, Vlasák, 2002). Media coverage of the phenomenon mainly refers to four inquiries which form the basis of this report (Říčan, 1994; Havlinová, Kolář, 2001; Kraus, Vacek, Juráčková, 2003; Kohout-Diaz, 2006).

The word šikana (from the French chicane) illustrates a particularly massive import of foreign (conceptual, ideological) terms into the Czech technical and specialist language since 1989. This provides us with the opportunity of carrying out a detailed examination of a phenomenon’s social structure and of the ideological tensions it represents. Accordingly, the language has (im)ported totalitarian dogma between 1948 and 1989 (Fidelius, 1989, Seriot, 1991). When a foreign word is adopted, this causes it to be regarded by public opinion as a technical term (specialist language) and it will then refer to a precise ideological connotation (in the case in point, termed «from the West», «neo-liberal»).

Šikana was used for the first time by a Prague psychiatrist, P. Příhoda (1939-) in connection with the harassment suffered by the Czech socialist army’s new recruits during the Normalisation period («the reinstatement of true socialism» [reálný socialismus]) which followed the «Prague springtime» soviet repression of revolutionary movements of the 21st August 1968. The start of the decade of the 70s was marked by the strengthened social and political repression implemented by a reborn Czech Communist Party [KSČ] which became the centralized, bureaucratic organization that followed the dictates of Moscow, under its president, G. Husák. The Party then underwent massive cleansing (half a million members were excluded) and the 1968 reformers were muzzled and even persecuted. Any mass opposition movement was inhibited by the fear of reprisals and a true regime of terror emerged combined with popular disinterest (politically encouraged) in social and political life and citizens focusing on their private lives. However, this repression also marked the birth of an opposition group (mainly intellectuals) whose illegal activities (in particular, the publication of samizdat) would lead to the «Charter 77» movement in support of Human Rights, especially promoted by V. Havel and which played a major role in the 1989 Velvet Revolution.

When defining šikana, Czech authors regularly quote its French etymology [chicaner] (Říčan, 1995, p.25). However, in French, the term is mainly used in
the legal sense («suing» and «raising obstacles designed to create confusion in a legal case»). It has become common currency with pejorative overtones as in «squeabbling over nothing» and «bickering» with the concept of a «devious plot» linked to a «confusing case» (Rey, 1992). Therefore, paradoxically, if we stay close to its French meaning, a certain underestimation of the facts seems to be implicit in the very term that was originally selected to designate these facts.

However, in most Czech scientific publications, this etymology has undergone ad hoc development: in French and «chicaner» would appear to mean «spiteful disturbance, torture, hounding as well as a bureaucratic compliance to the letter with instructions such as when, for example, employees make citizens wait unnecessarily, demand pointless stamps [on documents] etc.» (Říčan, 1995, p.25, Walterová, 2004, T2, p.342). Násilí [violence] then translates into «aggression» [agrese] (another imported term, mainly used in psychology) of which šikana [harassment] is a type. Violence becomes aggression and harassment a sort of bureaucratic persecution and/or torture in contrast with the common use made of the term in the French language.

Násilí [violence] is very rarely applied, including in scientific literature, in the school context. In our survey, students only reported a very precise situation: the unfair down marking by the Head teacher of their behaviour on the grounds of inappropriate behaviour [nevhodné chování] to adults (Kohout-Diaz, 2006). In most cases, this refers to non-conformist behaviour: peer harassment does enter into this but inappropriate behaviour mainly consists in offence perpetrated against the institution and its representatives. While adults highlight violent behaviour between students (harassment), the latter tend to point to an inappropriate educational response (which would mainly appear to be generated by a repressive logic, exogenous ethics, restraint, stigmatization and conformism).

While the issue of education standards that have been changing since 1989 appears to be central to problems typical of the Czech elementary school especially regarding student insolence [neslušnost] to the school’s adult population (Kohout-Diaz, 2006), the study of deviancy [úchylnost, odchylnost] in the school context is not examined in its own right.

Additionally, even if, since the Velvet Revolution, educational inequalities [vzdělanostní nerovnosti] created by the very early segmentation applied to compulsory schooling have been regularly raised by international assessments (OECD, 1996 and 1999) and national research (Walterová, 2004, T2, Greger, 2005, Matějů, Straková, 2006), they do not make the media or praxeology headlines. However, this is one of the prevalent forms of violence in schools occurring in the Czech Republic (Matějů, Straková, 2006).
Educational context and disciplinary approaches used: from psychology to specialist education and to sociological critique

The Czech educational system

Regarding the Czech Republic, it would seem particularly inappropriate to separate the study of deviancy and violence in schools from that of the changes affecting the educational system following the events of 1989. A sequence of three reforms (1991, 2001, 2004) has mainly addressed not only the removal of Marxism references from the curricula, granting establishments their independence and the development of a more participative governance but also the restoration of an early and positive school segmentation.

Czech elementary schools take in 6 to 15 year old pupils for a 9-year period. Therefore, in the same establishment, the system has first level pupils (6 to 11 year olds, years 1 to 5) and second level pupils (7 to 16 year olds, years 6 to 9). The pupils regarded as «the most talented» are selected at the age of 8 years and attend more intensive classes (at the elementary school) and at the age of 11 years for the prestigious gymnasion (Greger, 2005).

The Czech gymnasion represents the survival of an elitist and hyper selective educational system inherited from the Austro-Hungarian educational system (Walterová, 2004). The communist regime endeavoured to limit the influence of these establishments without, however, being able to close them down. Until 1991, a child could not apply to the gymnasion until he had completed his elementary schooling (and, therefore, there was no competition). Since then, partially privatized, the gymnasion offers 8 years of education (starting in the 5th year, 6 years (starting in the 7th year) or 4 years (starting in the 9th year). Therefore, children can apply three times and can do so not on completion of but during their elementary schooling. Faced with these changes, the image of elementary schools deteriorated («rejects», zůstávající) and establishments have put strategies in place designed to keep the best pupils within their walls by calling themselves «specialist establishments»¹, (languages, mathematics or technology) or by at least offering specialist classes or systems. These new approaches have made elementary schools a step in the educational system that is particularly propitious to socio-economic and/or ethnic selection (segregation of the Romany). Violence then becomes a violence of exclusion (Debarbieux, 2006).

¹ Also called «with options » or «with streaming».
**Extent**

In the Czech Republic, dealing with the šikana phenomenon mainly relies on three disciplines: psychopathology and mental health (psychiatry, psychology, psychotherapy), raising moral standards on non-conformity across all disciplines (with, if necessary, a spiritual connotation), specialist teaching and education. The sociological approach is beginning to emerge.

As previously stated, šikana was initially used in adult psychiatry. However, in that context, the term was redolent with ideological and political connotations. A vehicle for protests against the totalitarian regime, accused of encouraging anti-democratic violence (Dvořák, 2005), it was used by a Normalised regime to criticize relations formed in the army, the Party’s key organization. The repression exercised by true socialism (that claims to be a popular democracy) has led to this harassment which, to a certain extent reveals its true nature. A foreign term supports this dispute.

At present, within the scholastic environment, this term continues to be associated with changes affecting the socio-economic and political context and is poised over the meeting point of the different concepts applicable to changes in the Czech educational system, condensing the tensions linking the conservative trend to the radical change trend (Walterová, 2004, T1, p.68 and foll.). Accordingly, it is found in a number of presentations where its main function consists in:

- inserting it into the context of European education problems (reinstating continuity with Western countries) by highlighting shared issues. In this instance, the aim consists in obtaining funds to combat peer harassment (devoting the funds to reinstating the educational link would appear to be, as we shall demonstrate further on, the most urgent requirement).

- highlighting the so-called «catastrophic» results of communism (deterioration of ethical and civil values, of social relations, Prokop, 2003) and the need for a quick and radical break with the past. This break is impossible unless we analyse the processes involved in this transition. However, this task is frequently sidestepped. In the field of research, this sidestepping can also be found in European scientific projects/programmes.

- paradoxically: highlighting the deleterious repercussions of neo liberalism and of the socio-economical and political transformation (emphasising how new values have become warped following the entry into a breakneck consumer logic, Prokop, 2003) and translating the desire to return to either the values of the pre-communist era school
(First Republic, 1918-1948) or to the communist directivity (1948-1989) supported by the conservative movement.

- focusing attention on pupils and sidestepping the issue of the educational responsibility of adults in the school or that of the segregating effect of education policies.

Sikana was applied for the first time to relations between school children as part of a comparative study into the psychology of type (Říčan, 1995) which relates šikana to aggression during infancy and, based on a fairly vague scientific methodology, mixes psychological description with educational advice and the raising of moral standards. Nevertheless, these early works claiming to be based on Northern European works on school bullying (Olweus, 1993) are recognized as constituting a fundamental scientific reference on šikana which they consider as a psychological problem affecting the individual child (Říčan, 1993).

In parallel, following on from the Velvet Revolution, the transformation of the Czech education system is gradually being linked to a rebirth of research into education which is, in turn, progressively opening up to international comparatism (Walterová, 2004, T1). International assessments were carried out during the 90s with the purpose of typifying both the real environment reigning in education establishments as well as the initial effects of the transformations implemented. As part of these surveys into the school environment, analyses of šikana confirmed that the concept is founded in special teaching (Havlínová, Kolář, 2001), where there is a mixture of ethical, literary, medical, psychological, sociological and educational references. Metaphors (medical, political and ethical) abound in the interpretation: for example, the group is termed «sick», «contaminated», requiring «care», compared to a cell where the healthy parts are fighting against the diseased parts. Sikana is an «epidemic», a «virus» and, reaching an extreme stage, «totalitarianism» [totalita] (Kolář, 2001).

In the Czech Republic, dealing with bullying in the school forms part of a specialist educational discipline designated «etopaedia» (the Greek letter h from the Greek word ethos having disappeared, defined as «an aspect of the special teaching method that addresses the development, education and teaching of pupils and young people who display social disorders» (Sovák, 1986)². These

²Etopaedía refers precisely to defectology [defectologie] or special teaching [speciální pedagogika] which, in the Czech Republic, was constituted at the start of the 20th century and which is divided into six disciplines:

Etopaedía (which includes bullying) which focuses on re-educating deviant, pre-delinquent, delinquent and also disobedient conduct
social disorders are wide and varied. They range from disobedience, disturbed behaviour or lying called «defensive» to aggression, attempted suicide or addictions. By turns, this discipline qualifies as «difficult to teach», «morally disturbed», showing signs of «behavioural disorders», «a problem child», «difficult to control» or «undisciplined» any child showing signs of «inappropriate behaviour patterns» or «bad habits», «who is disobedient or provoking up to the point of being negative» or even «who lies» (Procházková, 1998). These characteristics are given as the prelude to future delinquency. This list includes a diagnosis of bullying: it is caused by poor education or inadequate manners. Therefore, rapidly gave rise to national educational action programmes and still appears to refer rather to the field of psycho educational (and even therapeutic) praxis than to that of research into education.

A critical sociological identification of the environment in schools and of victimisation is emerging (Kraus, Vacek, Juráčková, 2001, Matějů, Straková, 2006, Kohout-Diaz, 2006) which rends rather towards a moderate extension of the bullying phenomenon and to querying the quality of relations between the pupils and the adults in the school as well as the significant segregation effect found in elementary schooling.

THE METHODS USED: THE LEVEL OF SCIENTIFIC ACCURACY REQUIRED

Four surveys appear to be decisive with regard to the study of violence in schools in the Czech Republic. The first of these surveys, the founding survey, was undertaken in Prague in 1994 with a sample of 2,000 elementary school pupils (5th and 6th years). This research was undertaken by the Institute of Psychology of the Czech Republic Academy of Sciences and addressed aggression [agrese] in the school. It was funded by the Gender Studies world organisation and by the Czech Ministry for education [MSMT]. It was

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Surdopædia: education designed for children who are hard of hearing
Tyflopaedia: education designed for partially sighted children
Somatopædia: education designed for children suffering from illness and/or physical handicaps
Psychopædia: education designed for children suffering from psychological disorders
Logopædia: education designed for children with language difficulties

The origins of this classification and the first use of etopædia remain obscure. Our research focused on the works of one of the assistants of the sovient pedagogue A.S. Makarenko, I.A. Kairov.

3 French CM2 and 1st year of secondary schooling.
organized with the participation of the White Circle of Safety [Biely kruh bezpeci] 4.

Using a modified form of the D. Olweus (1993) questionnaire, the survey attempted to compare the numbers of male and female victims and aggressors (Rican, 1994). The survey explicitly did not deal with bullying. The aim of the project consisted in correlating three dimensions: behaviour in the school, education in the family, the child’s personality. The methodology can be described succinctly: observation of the «behaviour» [behavioralni] of 13 year old boys and girls in elementary schools, a «systematic» [systematicky] study of family relations, aggression «diagnosed» using representative methods [reprezentativni metody].

Critically opposing the recommendations delivered by the Rican survey (see chapter 4 following), the second survey (Havlínová, Kolář, 2001) remains rooted in psychology but links the study to an assessment of the environment in elementary schools and tends towards specialist education systems. This nationwide research led to a Ministry [MŠMT] initiative designed to check the effectiveness of the Czech «Healthy school» [Zdrava škola] programme derived from the British project, The Healthy School (designed by I. Young and T. Williams between 1989 and 1991) which inspired the European Health Promoting School 5 project. Its purpose consists in finding out if the programme prevents the development of social diseases, including šikana. Accordingly, the survey compared the environment in 33 elementary schools that deploy this programme with 33 control schools. The sample comprises 4,088 pupils, exclusively from the second level, without any mention of the vertical segmentation effect (Ringer, 2003, p.9) that is particularly prevalent in the Czech education system. The perception of the environment in schools is appraised using the Trickkett, Moos (1973) and Fraser (1982) CES [Classroom Environment Scale] questionnaires translated and modified by Lašek and Mareš (1988) on the one hand and, on the other, a specific questionnaire dealing with šikana (Kolář, 2001).

More specifically, the combination of questions on the environment in schools and pupil wellbeing helped to typify bullying. In fact, the term «šikana» was not used in the questionnaires (because it was regarded as «foreign, specialist and in danger of being misconstrued»). The assessment of bullying starts with the following question: «Has anybody hurt you in school? How? » (multiple choice closed question, 9 possible answers).

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The third survey (Kraus, Vacek, Juráčková, 2003) was undertaken in 2001 by the Institute of Social Studies from the teaching faculty of the Hradec Králové University whose work focuses on the «social analysis of young people in the Eastern region of the country». As part of a survey into the prevention of social deviancy, this research set itself the purpose of describing the main signs of šikana in elementary and secondary schools, both urban and rural, in the Hradec Králové region. Researches stressed that very few of the many questionnaires, adapted from English versions (Smith Sharp, 1995), sent to schools for distribution to pupils, were returned. This fact was not analysed. Ultimately, the sample would consist of 1,935 pupils from the 5th to the 9th years (CM2 to 3ème [4th year of secondary schooling] in the French system) and 992 pupils from other secondary schooling sectors. There were as many boys as there were girls. This survey directly studied bullying, explicitly using «šikana» in the questionnaire: «Have you been the victim of bullying during the past six months? How often? » or «Have you bullied during the past six months? How often? By whom? About what? How? »

The fourth survey carried out (Kohout-Diaz, 2006), comparatively and on an international scale, consisted in the completion of School Environment Index and victimization questionnaires (Debarbieux, 1996) by 1,638 first and second level pupils from 15 Czech elementary schools in Prague, Olomouc (Moravia) and their suburbs. These data were then compared with French data (sample of 6,268 pupils aged 8 to 16 years from primary and secondary schools, Debarbieux, 2003) as part of the European Observatory on Violence in Schools. The survey was also enriched by 63 semi-probing interviews carried out on site with teachers or other of the school’s adult staff (mainly head teachers) and by ethnological observations. This is the first survey of this type carried out in the ex Eastern block.

The Czech questionnaire comprised 32 items designed to assess 3 types of variables: the social environment (quality of relations, quality of learning, justice, nature and frequency of punishments meted out), the perception of violence and victimization as well as the perception of delinquency. Accordingly, the School Environment Index (Debarbieux, 1996, p.125) was calculated using the following variables: an overall assessment of the school, of the quality of relations between pupils, between pupils and teaching staff, between pupils and other adults in the school, pupil aggression towards teachers, the quality of the teaching. The school environment is also typified using a comparison of the French and Czech pupils’ attitude to school. An automatic classification system was used to calculate this variable based on parameters typifying the school environment (general environment, quality of relations between pupils, between pupils and teaching staff, between pupils and other adults in the school, pupil aggression towards teachers, the quality of the teaching, the School Environment Index) which involve four responses
representing pupil views («everything's bad», «everything's OK», «average», «aggression towards teachers»).

Therefore, bullying is linked to work addressing the environment, victimization and violence. «Sikana» is not raised in the questionnaire even though questions are posed concerning violence («Is there any violence [násilí] in your school?»), racketeering, theft, insults. The Havlíčová, Kolář, 2001 question is included for comparison purposes («Has anybody at school hurt you? How?»), the survey's primary objective consisting in checking that statement according to which the environment in secondary schools is first and foremost typified by the so called «epidemic» prevalence of šikana, (Havlínová, Kolář, 2001), based on an exclusively psychopathological and psycho-educational interpretation of this problem. On the contrary, the contextual dimension of the environment and violence in schools as linked to social exclusion has now been confirmed by research carried out in France (Debarbieux, 2006) or in the USA (Gottfredson, 2001 or Benbenishty & Astor, 2006) for example.

THE MAIN RESULTS: RECONSIDERING THE PREVALENCE OF ŠIKANA AND QUESTIONING THE QUALITY OF RELATIONS BETWEEN PUPILS AND ADULTS IN THE SCHOOL

The original survey produced a victimization rate of 18% for boys and 15% for girls which was deemed «alarming» (Říčan, 1994). The origins of šikana is linked to weakened teacher authority caused by the greater number of women teachers entering the profession, by the recruitment of personnel designated «significantly incapable» (financial motivation not being an issue), by the poor quality of teacher training and by the post totalitarian liberalisation of the school (Říčan, 1995, p.75 and foll.). This diagnosis has no scientific basis as the author admitted to being more concerned with submitting solutions to the problem rather than with research.

Based on a «revival of Christian moral values», the concept of «teaching about violence» has been put forward in order to teach children to hit and be hit («for instance, by hitting their father in the chest: hit me here, as hard as you can!») so that «they are neither afraid of hitting or being hit. One of the aims of physical education is to ensure that the child can win a physical contest in the same way as fencing had once been a fundamental part of the education of young aristocrats» (Říčan, 1995, p.91). What is paradoxically termed the «democratisation of violence» should first be practiced in the family circle even if the child's body is a little «shaken by surprise». «Treating it as a game» but in
the knowledge that, one day, the child will be involved in a real fight. At the same time, it is still a good thing to teach about compassion, concludes the author, for instance, by teaching the child to care for «fledglings that have fallen out of their nest».

This type of approach to violence at least queries the level of scientific requirement in Czech social sciences. Surprisingly, it is not questioned on a local level whether with regard to its scientific quality or on a moral plane. It is only discussed by Havlínová, Kolář, (2001) and then only insofar as it follows the Olweus suggestions for discussions with aggressors (1993). Quite the opposite, these works constitute a fundamental reference that is systematically raised whenever bullying and violence in the Czech Republic school are discussed.

The main result of the national enquiry into the school environment (Havlínová, Kolář, 2001), indicates that 41% of school children answer «yes» to the question has «anybody» already «hurt you at school». According to the authors, this result finds in favour of a dramatic bullying «epidemic» between peers in elementary schools. However, other information provided by the survey has shown that pupils in «healthy» schools feel less bullied than those from control schools. As far as the researchers are concerned, the apparent paradox lies in the fact that pupils from «healthy» schools have been made aware of injustice: therefore, they would find it easier to admit to being bullied, eagerly qualifying in this way relations that «are considered normal elsewhere». What is not clear is that the survey revealed that pupils displayed significant persistence of conformism and inhibition of verbal expression.

Still objecting to scientific rigour, the authors then extrapolated the number of victims to the entire elementary school and gymnasium population constituting an «armada of 1.5 million tortured children» (please refer to the contrast with the definition of violence as «causing hurt» or as «normal»). And this leads us to the ad hoc conclusion that «bullying is the most frequent cause of trauma in our children. Generally speaking, it can be said that relations between peer pupils in schools tend to be destructive and warlike. Efforts made to deploy the «Healthy School» programme in our schools are very relevant today» (Havlínová, Kolář, 2001).

Another of the main results of this work has been the identification of a specific five-stage bullying typology which is a national reference on this issue and which progresses from ostracism through physical aggression and manipulation (2\textsuperscript{nd} stage), «training the core aggressors » (3\textsuperscript{rd} stage), «aggressor standards adopted by a majority» (4\textsuperscript{th} stage) to the 5\textsuperscript{th} stage which is «totalitarianism or comprehensive bullying [which] strongly reminds us of fascist
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It should be added that one of the authors, a current national specialist in šikana, a psychotherapist, education specialist and etopaedia (Kolář, 2001) has himself designed and disseminated a programme for fighting bullying (Kolář, 2003) which was developed both publically and privately as a result of the survey (see chapter 5 following).

The figures published in respect of the third major survey into the prevalence of šikana (Kraus, Vacek, Juráčková, 2003) strongly disputes the 41% level of victims reported by Havlínová and Kolář in 2001. Thus, 80.9% of elementary school pupils state that they had not been bullied during the previous six months while 67.6% of second level pupils reported that they had never been bullied during their school days. The survey shows that the extent is not epidemic, that it is mainly proximity violence that is involved, exercised as a group and linked to a «particularly low level of trust in educators». However, the conclusion may seem surprising: «we believe that we need to demythologize šikana. More precisely, the “refinement” of the aggressors. Our findings have also revealed that there are not many who are truly «unremitting bullies» or «corrupt» who spontaneously and deliberately attack others (approximately 5% at most). There is no need to go in heavy-handed, even when dealing with these focal points of «evil» (…) » (Kraus, Vacek and Juráčková, 2003, p.264). The argument upholds, even if per negation, the idea of using physical force against the aggressor, «focal points of evil» that cannot be educated, while finally aiming for a trivialization of violence.

Our own survey (Kohout-Diaz, 2006) confirmed above all that school bullying is a complex and multi-factor phenomenon (Debarbieux, 2006). The environment in the Czech elementary school cannot be typified by peer bullying in the situation in point. All the results obtained tend to lead towards the hypothesis of a difficult change in the behavioural standards of adults and of pupils against a background of tension between, on the one hand, reproduction mechanisms, at/by the school, of totalitarian conformist habitus (Bourdieu, 1970) and, on the other, ultra liberalization, segmentation (Matějů, Straková, 2006) and the corruption of the education system (Prokop, 2003) after 1989.

Compared with French results, the relational environment between Czech elementary pupils seems to be very good. When calculating the School Environment Index, this is in fact the only criterion that did not appear to be negative in any of the 15 establishments visited. On the contrary, several questions (quality of relations, changes sought, teaching quality, amending relations with teachers) revealed a quality of relations with teachers and other
adults in the deprived school that typify the deterioration of the overall school environment. Compared with France, the relations with the school are typified by Czech pupil aggression/insolence to their teachers, especially at the second level.

The only situation explicitly described as «violent» is when the Head Teacher downgrades the mark given for behaviour. This practice, designed to achieve compliance with a poorly defined school label, [etiketa] is in fact one of the main indicators of school segregation of these so-called «deviants». By cross-referencing the variables studied, it has been possible to demonstrate that the relations with teachers deteriorate in direct proportion to the impact made by selecting pupils who tend to be serious and to conform, who appear to adjust easily to adult behaviour standards (politeness, exogenous morals) and who believe that they are succeeding in their studies but who are not selected to attend prestigious establishments (high profile schools or classes) when they could aspire to these. Losing out in the socio-economic and cultural selection procedure applicable to the new education market, the proportion of these pupils has been on the increase over the years whereas their chances of joining the so-called education elite at the gymnasium are dwindling. Insolence towards teaching staff is on the increase and the assessment of learning qualities is worsening.

Each of the four approaches includes relevant and valuable descriptive elements whereas even viewed from other scientific and ethical standpoints, they remain debatable. The elements we need to remember are above all the excessive pointing up of peer bullying, the emerging freedom of pupils to criticise and also their conformism, their serious loss of trust in the adults in the school, the ambiguous role of teaching staff faced with socio-economic, cultural and ethnic selection, their ongoing problems with regard to changing the teacher-pupil relation, to understand how democratic laws work and to encourage the development of a critical mind, the keystone to an active citizenship.

**Spin-offs in the Field: Deployment of Programmes Designed to Combat School Bullying, the Culmination of a Strategic Journey**

The main positive spin-offs concern the national survey on elementary education (which is, in fact, a survey into the «Healthy school» programme, Havlinová, Kolář, 2001). There are five spin-offs.
The first is the **Methodology recommended by the minister for education, youth and sports for preventing and dealing with bullying between pupils in schools and education establishments**, of the 8th December 2000. This directive which came into effect on the 1st January 2001, can be accessed on the Ministry [MŠMT] site. Its main purpose is the institutional recognition of the existence of šikana. It defines the phenomenon and its manifestations, the preventive steps taken in schools (by the teaching team, the head teachers and the specialist centres), the methods used to deal with the phenomenon, the educational means used and finally, frameworks for school collaboration with parents and/or other institutions which could even be specialised.

This directive constitutes a first step towards action for preventing and resolving bullying related problems. It does not constitute, in the strict sense, a programme. It stresses the different forms of bullying (broadly speaking that range from ostracism to physical violence) and their danger levels. The text details the forms used to express bullying on the basis of the following categories: verbal/physical, direct/indirect, active/passive. The active role played by the school (teachers, management, education centres) in prevention is highlighted. For instances, emphasis is placed on the need for each establishment to recruit a specially trained teacher who specializes in the prevention of bullying or on the need to deploy true communication between the various partners involved in the children or yet again, the need to maintain contact with the police departments on the hardest cases of violence (especially via the specialist intermediary). It details the methods used to identify bullying (interviews, witnesses, checks), the initial steps to be taken in the event of lynching (interviews, reports, protecting the victim) as well as longer term education measures (downgraded mark for behaviour and other formal sanctions, relocating the offender into another class or school, treatment follow-up options). The key role played by collaboration between parents and professionals in the fields of education and health and in other institutions (paediatricians, police, social services) is stressed. The directive is accompanied by appended reports on direct and indirect bullying that are specially intended for parents; two specimens of information/prevention leaflets intended for pupils and a bibliography. This material can be found on line on the ministry’s [MŠMT] site and directly targets everybody involved whether pupils, professionals or parents.

Following on from the national survey quoted above (Havlínová, Kolář, 2001), one of the authors devised a **Specific programme for dealing with bullying**

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and violence in schools and education establishments. This programme is also accessible on the Ministry’s [MŠMT] site and repeats information taken from the aforementioned directive (2000), detailing the information and supporting it with the results of the survey carried out in 2001 on «Healthy schools» which demonstrate its effectiveness. The document ends with a recommendation in favour of deploying an «intensive» inter-professional training policy applicable to each establishment’s team and an «extensive» training policy for teams grouped by profession at a national level.

More specifically, the programme contains 13 moments/elements, referring to the works of both Olweus (1993) and of Smith and Sharp (1995), including a major preventive component:

- Training and supervision common to an establishment’s entire team (national level)
- A team comprising a limited number of specialists travels to different establishments (teachers, head teachers coordinated by a supervisor)
- Assessment of the local situation and of education staff motivation levels with regard to implementing changes
- Preparation of a specific joint policy for fighting bullying in the establishment (tailored to meet local requirements)
- Prevention during lessons, during school hours
- Prevention during school life outside lessons
- Definition of a pupil protection regime
- Collaboration with parents
- Role played by school advisory services
- Collaboration with specialist establishments
- Collaboration with neighbouring schools
- Programme assessment

The above give rise to a further two mechanisms: on the one hand, specific course modules on bullying available at the Université Charles (initial teacher training in the education faculty) provided each year since 2003 by Mr. Kolár.

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8 http://www.sikana.org/ (12/08/2008)
on the other, specific training for teams (for each establishment requesting this facility) designated MIŠ has been developed nationally since 2005. This project will be carried out over a total of 3 years and consists in deploying the 2003 programme in 20 establishments: its purpose consists in paving the way to the systematic implementation of the 2003 programme. This programme has been deployed by the O2 foundation and by the private company, AISIS, who have agreed to list requests when information seminars are held in establishments, to group together training requests from each region and then to apply to the European Social Fund for finance for each regional project. Mr. Kolář vouches for the scientific nature of the programme.

A new text has recently superseded the 2000 Methodology directive. Like the previous version, the main purpose of this document consists in stressing the severity of the phenomenon and, accordingly, quotes its three main lines. However, it does include significant characteristics. For instance, it refers to bullying that makes use of new technologies [kyberšikana] as an emerging aspect.

Additionally, the text heavily stresses the responsibility of establishments. That of head teachers and teaching staff is specifically mentioned. They have a duty of prevention and of training. It should be remembered that they are liable to criminal sanctions if they fail to report the phenomenon (failure to assist a person in danger, the approval or incitement to cause harm are also mentioned). Starting from the principle that the phenomenon exists «in virtually every establishment», each is invited to devise a specific programme for preventing and overcoming bullying. The main component of this programme must be a «crisis plan» [krizový plán] centering on two types of scenario: situations where a school resolves the problems «using its own resources» and those which require the intervention of external assistance (psycho-education advisory centre, education centre, organization responsible for providing children with social assistance, the police).

Among the «educational measures» [výchovná opatření], those recommended with regard to aggressors make up the essential part of the remarks and may surprise: these are either formal sanctions (warnings, marks allocated for behaviour) or exclusions from the class or school or the perpetrator even being banned from continuing with secondary studies [střední škola] and, finally, child fostering. The text finishes with a reminder of

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the role played by the Czech school inspectorate [Česká Školní Inspekce] should an establishment fail to resolve bullying problems (the head teacher’s failure to take action [nečinnost] is explicitly quoted)\textsuperscript{11}.

**IN CONCLUSION: ENCOURAGE THE USE OF RIGOROUS SURVEYS INTO THE EDUCATION AND TEACHING PRACTICES OF TEACHING STAFF AND OTHER ADULTS IN A SCHOOL AND CONTINUED RESEARCH INTO THE EFFECTS OF EARLY SELECTION**

Over recent years, the survey and action taken to prevent or overcome school bullying has undergone relative stagnation at Czech Republic public policy levels (Kolář, 2004). Other aspects of violence in schools have yet to be explored.

A more accurate state of play could be produced, primarily addressing changes in relation to the behaviour and education standard as part of the post-communist transformation of the Czech education system (Průcha, 2007) involving both adults in a school and its pupils. The insolence to teachers and administration staff reported by pupils can in fact be construed as the persistence of formal, conformist and exogenous education criteria [etiketa] but also as the emergence of a new freedom of expression available to pupils even when it occurs against the background of old behaviour categorization, whose relevance should, in fact, be questioned by research. There is no sociological and critical description of education and teaching practices (Průcha, 2002), whether as part of direct studies or as fundamental components of the school environment (Grecmanová, 2003). This area of study is burdened by a taboo. The conditions applicable to the deployment of true pupil training in the use of critical approaches and in freedom of expression, the founding elements of democratic civil practices, are struggling to find a definition and if this does not occur, then the various programmes deployed will strengthen conformist habitus. On a teaching and a didactic level, after having surveyed the practices, critical and constructive professional training could be provided to teaching staff, especially with

regard to the teaching methods used and to team work, which is virtually non-existent according to our survey (Kohout-Diaz, 2006).

On a systemic level, an exploration of the impact made by early vertical segmentation in classes/establishments where options are available, could affect Romany children and because it works through the raising of medical and/or moral awareness of education and behavioural standards.

On a more fundamental note, at the epistemological level, the critical and qualitative rebirth of social sciences is demanding support and the maintenance of increased vigilance with regard to the impact made by behavioural and quantitative concepts and methodologies that are taking over from the positivist methodologies and pseudo-scientific processes deployed by the «official science » during the totalitarian era (Špalová, 2006).
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VIOLENCE IN PORTUGUESE SCHOOLS
NATIONAL REPORT

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ABSTRACT

The present article presents the situation of violence in schools in Portugal. It aims to provide a revision of the literature with regards to both official statistics and research studies conducted in the areas of violence, such as delinquency, aggression, bullying, and indiscipline in the educational system. It reports the major conclusions from Portuguese experts in the field of school violence and implications for community-based prevention programs to be developed in this regard. Finally, the paper points toward future directions for further studies in order to deepen our knowledge and ability to prevent violence in schools.

KEYWORDS

Violence, schools, Portugal, prevention strategies.
INTRODUCTION

The present article presents the situation of violence in schools in Portugal. A Group of Experts – from academia and professional fields - was created to assist and discuss the state of the art in Portugal, focusing specifically on this report. The authors also had the chance to present and review the draft with HEC Research Group of CIS.

Portugal is a relatively small, south-European country with a population of approximately 10.5 million people. According to the National Institute of Statistics (Instituto Nacional de Estatística, 2008), over 1.6 million are aged 14 or under and 600 thousand have ages ranging from 15 to 19.

In Portugal, the Educational System subdivides schooling into the following categories: (1) pre-school education (which involves children aged 3 to 5); (2) basic school education (which comprises elementary school for children aged 6-10 in the 1st to 4th grades, middle school for children in 5th and 6th grades, and junior high for teenagers in the 7th to 9th grades); (3) secondary school education (which involves high school adolescents, mostly aged 15-18, attending 10th to 12th grades); and (4) higher education in universities and colleges.

Both state and private schools exist at all levels of education. Attendance to pre-school is optional, and may take place in settings that are exclusively dedicated to education in pre-school years such as kindergartens, or within schools that also comprise elementary education. Conversely, basic school education is mandatory, comprising 9 years. It is, therefore, universal and free (within the public system). Secondary school education is, on the other hand, also optional. It involves 3 years of schooling and/or training that may be directed at (a) deepening the knowledge base in order for the student to apply for higher education (university), or at (b) improving technical, professional and/or artistic skills in order for the student to begin an active work life. Parallel to this regular school system, there are Youth Education Centres, from Ministry of Justice, where adolescents (aged 12 to 16 years old) who committed a crime may complete their education.

1 Beatriz Pereira, IEC-UM; Carlos Neto, FMH-UTL; Feliciano Veiga, FC-UL; Fernanda Asseiceira, Comissão Parlamentar Educação e Ciência; Helena Sampaias, APAV; Isabel Correia, ISCTE; Isabel Freire, FPCE-UL; João Amado, FPCE-UC; José Alberto Correia, FPCE-UP; Maria Benedicta Monteiro, ISCTE; Maria de S. José Tavares, APARECE; Maria Emília Costa, FPCE-UP; Maria José Martins, ESE Portalegre; Sónia Fanico, Agrupamento Escolas Prof. Agostinho da Silva; Sónia Seixas, ESE Santarém

2 Quality of social life: Health, Environment and the Community (HEC)
According to the report produced by the Office of Education Statistics and Planning of the Ministry of Education (GEPE, 2008), in the academic year of 2006/2007, nearly 1.8 million children and adolescents were enrolled in public (82%) or private schools (18%), of the pre-school (15%), basic (65%) or secondary levels (20%). Overall, 49% of these children and adolescents were female; while this percentage appeared to hold true for pre- and basic schooling, females approached 53% among high school students.

In the 2006/2007 academic year, the Education System Network comprised over 6800 pre-schools (1/3 private), over 6800 elementary schools (less than 8% private), over 2500 middle high and junior high schools (20% private), and over 900 secondary schools (1/3 private). This Education System Network involved all 7 geographical regions of Portugal (North, Centre, Lisbon area, Alentejo, Algarve, Azores Islands, and Madeira Islands), and employed approximately 76,000 non-teaching staff and approximately 180,000 teachers that year.

The 1986 Law of the Education System, which stipulated that all children must complete nine years of schooling, gave many children access to school. The number of students in the mandatory education system increased 27.5% between 1991 and 1997, and the dropout rates decreased from 12.5% in 1991 to 2.7% in 2001 (Ministério da Educação, 2001).

While this education accessibility had a very strong equity ideal, some difficulties arise regarding this increase in student population and current resources. Firstly, an increase in grade retention due to the longer length of compulsory schooling and greater number of children were associated with school failure. Secondly, families and parental educational styles and socioeconomic backgrounds were more diversified. Thirdly, the preparation of physical resources and the training of teachers and other educational professionals were needed in order to deal with a variety of academic and social problems at school.

Although in Portugal, the percentage of GDP (Gross Domestic Product) devoted to education was higher than the European Union average in 1999 and 2000, the educational results achieved were lower (Eurostat, 2003), thus suggesting a low effectiveness of the Portuguese education system.

Public awareness and intolerance of school violence has greatly increased over the last ten years, and today it is on political agenda, especially due to recent public debates after some student-student and student-teacher incidents were broadcasted by the mass media.
DEFINITIONS AND CONCEPTS

In Portugal, the research on violence in schools has been conducted systematically since the mid-90’s, by official authorities and scientific community. However, little consensus exists with regards to the definitions used.

Violence in schools encloses a very broad range of behaviours such as aggression, bullying, intimidation, threatening, offences to integrity, fighting, theft, and vandalism. These actions may occur within or outside schools, and among different dyads (i.e. student-student, student-teacher, teacher-student). Furthermore, school staff, former students and other persons not belonging to school can be involved either as victims or as perpetrators. Weapon carrying and use of drugs and alcohol are also considered risk-behaviours. A deviant life style can be considered when different risk-behaviours are present.

Overall, with regards to violence in school context, quite a lot of studies were found that took indiscipline as a starting point for analysis (e.g., Amado & Freire, 2002), aggression (e.g. Costa & Vale, 1998; Negreiros, 2003), and bullying (e.g. Almeida, Pereira & Valente, 1995; Carvalhosa, Lima & Matos, 2001; Seixas, 2005). The official statistics report delinquent behaviour (Programa Escola Segura, 2006). In the present report, the following four different concepts will be used:

Delinquency: Delinquency is a legal construct for actions against the law. Criminal incidents are bomb threats, theft, possession/use of weapons, vandalism/damage to property, threats or injuries to the physical integrity, possession/consumption of drugs and sexual offences. The official statistics associated to violence in schools relay on safety.

Aggression: The concept involves any form of physical, verbal or psychological behaviour intended to hurt, inflict pain or injury to another person, to himself or to an object. Aggressive behaviours can be direct or indirect, and different functions are considered - reactive/emotional and proactive/instrumental.

Bullying: The definition proposed by Dan Olweus (1993) involves intentionality of behavior, repetition over time and abuse of power between students. The negative actions can be verbal (e.g. name calling), physical (e.g. hitting), and social (e.g. exclusion). In our native language, there is no exact word equivalent to “bullying.” The term used is the original word in English, or “provocação” (provocation), or “intimidação” (intimidation).
Indiscipline: It can be a deviant behaviour regarding an expressed or implied standard, punished in school or in the community. Indiscipline in the school involves the deviance from the rules of work in class, such as making noise, leaving the place without permission, participating out of turn, and also involves the problems of teacher-student relationship, such as disobedience and verbal attacks.

THE SELECTED DISCIPLINARY APPROACHES AND THE FIELDS UNDER STUDY

Studies have been conducted within two major frameworks. First, an approach of violence in school considers it as a criminal behaviour (Criminology and Victimology), aiming toward its evaluation and monitoring at a national level. It is mainly conducted by the Safe School Programme (Programa Escola Segura). The Safe School Programme is a joint initiative of the Ministries of Home Affairs and Education, since 1992. Their action covers public and private schools, violence within and outside the physical grounds of the school, from primary school to university, in the main land and the islands. A second approach concerns research on Social Sciences, aiming to understand how and why violent behaviour occurs within and outside schools, and what are the consequences to individuals, groups and society.

Several fields have been considered: Health, Education, Justice and Human Development. The associations between violent behaviour in school and three types of variables have been explored: community/societal variables (e.g., inequality, ethnic and socioeconomic status, school environment), relationship variables (e.g., family and peer support), and individual variables (e.g., age, gender, weapon use, dropout of school, psychological traits).

THE METHODOLOGY

In the process of building this national report, several databases were searched, focusing on data from 1995 to the present. At the end, the following material was analysed: official statistics since 2001, 9 scientific published papers, 12 academic books, 4 book chapters, 5 papers presented in scientific events, 8 reports published and 2 unpublished reports provided by the Group of Experts. From these, only 2 studies used a representative sample of the Portuguese population.

The research studies developed by the scientific community have considered two methodological approaches – quantitative and qualitative. Surveys represent a fundamental component in the methodology of
researching violence in schools and they are essential in making available information about the prevalence, incidence and pattern of violence. Additionally to national surveys (Carvalhosa, 2008; Costa & Vale, 1998), there are a number of studies which are smaller in scale, which have been important in developing the research about violence in schools. Some other issues are important to consider, such as the context of the survey (within a broad survey or specific to the topic), the sampling methods, the type of participants, and the way that definitions were operationalised.

Self-reporting questionnaires filled out by students is the most common type of data collection instrument used, as the Olweus’ Bully/Victim Questionnaire. Freire, Simão and Ferreira (2006) developed a self-report questionnaire to address aggressive behaviours among peers. In addition, nomination by peers is frequently used (e.g. Seixas, 2005).

There are only a few longitudinal studies (e.g., Formosinho, Taborda & Fonseca, 2008; Pereira, 2008), observations with video recordings (e.g., Marques & Neto, 2008), case studies (e.g., Freire & Amado, 2008), semi-structured interviews (e.g., Sebastião, Alves & Campos, 2003) and focus groups (Carvalhosa, 2007).

There are two main official statistics reports, collected systematically, that are undertaken with the purpose of promoting safety in schools. The sources of information available, at a national level, are the Safe School Programme and The Observatory for Safety in School (Observatório de Segurança na Escola). The data collected by the Safe School Programme is based on the complaints to or the reports by the program staff. They use a questionnaire that must be filled out by the program staff.

In summary, the methodologies used are largely those of the social sciences, in particular psychology, education science and sociology. That agrees with the notion that violence in schools relates as much to individuals and interpersonal relationships, as to contexts, and that school is shaped by social, political and economic conditions.

THE MAIN FINDINGS

DELINQUENCY

Regarding delinquency, the public reports of the Safe School Programme are available from 2001 until 2006. These data report the actions against goods (theft, vandalism, fire) and against people (body and sexual injury, harassment, violation, threats, trafficking/drug consumption, bomb threats,
weapons carrying, traffic accidents, other actions), and are presented in the
Graph 1. It is important to note that the number of schools involved in the
Programme may differ across years. Therefore, a trend interpretation should
be cautious.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Goods</th>
<th>People</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>528</td>
<td>221</td>
</tr>
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<td>2003</td>
<td>452</td>
<td>107</td>
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<td>2004</td>
<td>317</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>288</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Graph 1 – Absolute frequencies of actions against goods and people

(source: Programa Escola Segura, 2006)

Another large scale study was conducted by the Portuguese Association for
the Defence of the Consumers (DECO, 2006). Their goal was to identify and
assess security problems and crime in schools, through the perception of
students and teachers. It was completed in 2006, with a sample of 36,902
students from 7th to 12th grade, and 9,233 teachers, among 204 Portuguese
schools (public, private, professional and artistic). The results showed that
37% of the students and 18% of the teachers had been victims of violence or
physical or psychological crimes, within or near the school. As a consequence,
8% of students and teachers said that this had affected their performance in
school. Injuries caused by violent situations (confrontations, assaults, etc.) led
to absenteeism in 1% of the students. A quarter of the students reported they
did not know of the Safe School Programme, and more than one quarter of
the teachers did not know whether their school was covered by that
Programme or not. Overall, teachers believed that the effectiveness of the
Safe School Programme was “average”. In addition, DECO argued that there is
a direct relationship between security and facilities, such as infrastructures,
personnel and organization.

In 2007, the APAV (Portuguese Association for Victim Support) recorded
39 complaints of victimization in schools, which corresponded to 72 crimes,
namely: 47 crimes against people and humanity, 17 crimes of domestic
violence (cases that occur specifically in the school), 5 crimes against property
and 3 other crimes (Sampaio, 2008). In the northern region of Portugal, a
study with students from 7th to 11th grade revealed that 4% had stolen, 14%
had physically harassed someone, and 7% had destroyed or damaged things on purpose (Negreiros, 2003).

AGGRESSION

In the 1995/96 academic year, Costa and Vale (1998) developed a national survey concerning aggression with a representative sample of students from 8th and 11th grade. Regarding physical aggression, 64% had been pushed, 29% had been hit, and 7% had been threatened with a weapon. This type of aggression was reported most frequently by students from the Centre (coast) region and Lisbon area (only when threatened with a weapon). With regards to verbal aggression, 68% had been insulted and 55% threatened with words, and it was most frequently reported by Centre (coast) students. Concerning sexual aggression, 42% had been touched against their will and 20% had been a target of exhibitionism. Sexual aggression was most frequently reported in the countryside of North and in the Centre region (touching) and Centre coast (exhibitionism). For all forms of aggression, 8th grade students were more victimized than 11th grade students, boys were more victimized than girls (except for sexual aggression, in which an opposite difference was found).

As outlined, verbal aggression was the most frequent type of aggressive behaviour, younger students and boys were more frequently the victims. Furthermore, Martins (2005) revealed that spreading rumours was the behaviour most reported by victims, aggressors and bystanders, in the southeast of Portugal.

According to the international report from the Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) in the 2001/02 and 2005/06 surveys (Currie et al., 2004, 2008), the prevalence of physical fighting, at least three times in the last 12 months, is presented in Table I and Graph 2.
As reported, the prevalence of physical fighting was higher among younger students, and boys were more involved than girls. Still, rates from 2006 seemed lower than previously reported in 2002, with an exception for older students (15 years old). Children involved in fighting (play and real) are usually nominated by peers as aggressive victims, they typically have less or no friends in their class, and their teachers frequently see them in more negative ways and do not have high expectations about their future (Marques & Neto, 2008).

The different profiles of aggressive and non-aggressive rejected students were explored (Musitu, Veiga, Herrero, & Lila, in press), in a sample of 1069 adolescents (12 to 16 years old). The results showed that aggressive and rejected students differed (they have poorer levels of personal, family, social, and school functioning) from the control group and other non-aggressive-rejected students. Additionally, a moderate level of adjustment was found among the nonaggressive/rejected students, when comparing with the control group.

During one academic year, an intervention program using dance was implemented with 10 problematic youth from a school in Lisbon (Batalha & Soares, 2008). The referral was made by their teachers, parents and school professionals, and the comparison pre-post showed improvement of non
aggressive behaviours. Another program was developed by Raimundo, Pinto and Lima (2008). They implemented and evaluated a social and emotional learning program, in 4 schools with students from 4th grade. The authors concluded that the program was effective.

**Bullying**

In the north of Portugal, the prevalence of bullying in Braga and Guimarães district public schools was assessed (Almeida, 1999; Almeida, Pereira & Valente, 1995; Pereira, Almeida, Valente & Mendonça, 1996). Students from 1st to 6th grade (N=6197) reported that, in the last term, 22% had been bullied three or more times. Concerning the grade of the students, the authors found that 20% (years 1-4) and 15% (years 5-6) had bullied others three or more times. The most frequent type of bullying was physical (e.g. hitting) in primary schools, and verbal (e.g. calling names) in 5th to 6th grade. Boys were more involved than girls and the frequency of bullying decreased with age. Bullying had taken place mainly in playgrounds (78%). This study was replicated including schools from Lisbon area (Pereira, Mendonça, Neto, Valente & Smith, 2004). Students (5th and 6th grade) reported that 20% had been bullied and 16% had bullied others, three or more times in the last term. No differences were found in the prevalence between Lisbon and Braga schools. Regarding the type of bullying, the most common was verbal and occurred mainly in playgrounds.

According to the HBSC data (Currie et al., 2004, 2008), the prevalence of bullying (being bullied and bullying others), at least twice in the past couple of months, is presented in Tables II and III and in Graphs 3 and 4, respectively.
The prevalence of being bullied, as shown, decreased with age, and boys were more involved than girls.

**Table II & Graph 3- Prevalence of being bullied**

*(source: HBSC 2001,02 and 2005,06)*

The prevalence of being bullied, as shown, decreased with age, and boys were more involved than girls.

**Table III & Graph 4- Prevalence of bullied others**

*(source: HBSC 2001,02 and 2005,06)*
As shown, the prevalence of bullying others increased from 11 to 13 years old and then decreased. Boys were also more involved than girls. On the basis of the data available, one can estimate that around 1 in 5 students in basic schools in Portugal were involved in bullying situations. However, it is always important to take into account the gap between experienced, recorded and reported as occurring phenomena.

The HBSC data set was re-analyzed and the sample was divided into four different sub-groups – bullies, victims, bully/victims and those non-involved in bullying situations. Carvalhosa (2005) described the trend of bullying behaviours and variations across gender and age in Portuguese schools. The author found that the frequency of being a victim and bullying others, once a week or more, had increased since 1998 to 2002. In another study (Carvalhosa, 2008), it was found that 13% of students were victims, 5% were bullies, and 6% were bully/victims. Subjective health complaints, health perceptions, worst life satisfaction, more injuries, weapon-carrying, and fighting were associated with all groups involved in bullying, compared to those not involved. The verbal bullying was the most frequent type of bullying. Bullies were often characterized as distant from the family and the school, with more consumption of substances as alcohol and drugs, and more physical and psychological complaints and depression. Victims frequently showed distance from the school, problems in relationships with peers, physical and psychological symptoms and depression. Bully-victims usually reported distance from the family and the school, problems in relationships with peers, and physical and psychological symptoms and depression (Carvalhosa, Lima & Matos 2001). Carvalhosa, Samdal and Hetland (Carvalhosa, 2008) built a model for the relationship between bullying and perceived social support, in nationally representative samples of Austrian, Lithuanian, Norwegian, and Portuguese students. The results showed that, for Portugal, compared with those not involved in bullying, within school, victims and bully/victims reported lower levels of support from their classmates, and bullies and bully/victims reported lower levels of support from their teachers. Outside school, victims reported lower levels of support from friends, and bullies reported lower levels of support from family, than did the non-involved group. Involvement in bullying correlated with other forms of anti-social behaviour (Formosinho, Taborda & Fonseca, 2008).

In a comparison between measures used, self-report questionnaire vs. peer nomination, in a sample of 680 students (aged 12 to 17 years old), Seixas (2005) found that 12% of youth reported they had been bullied (once in the last term) vs. 15% nominated by peers, 30% reported they had been bullied vs. 15%, and 24% reported they had been bully-victims vs. 6%. The author concluded that self-report measures seemed better able to identify victimized
students and peer nomination measures seemed better able to identify aggressive students.

In a recent study, Almeida, Correia, Esteves, Gomes, Garcia and Marinho (2008) explored cyberbullying. Using the phone, 6% of girls and 3% of boys reported being involved as victims and 3% and 5%, respectively, as bullies. Via the internet, 6% of girls and 4% of boys reported being involved as victims and 2% and 4%, respectively, as bullies.

Concerning the association between macro-level indicators and bullying behaviours, a U-shaped curve relating GDP and the number of bullies or victims was found for all age groups in a study developed by Carvalhosa, Samdal and Hetland (Carvalhosa, 2008). Countries with low and high GDP showed a higher prevalence of bullying behaviour reported by both victims and bullies, whereas countries with a middle range of GDP showed a lower prevalence of bullying behaviour. These results suggest that there is a relationship between bullying and the economic development of countries.

**INDISCIPLINE**

With regards to indiscipline behaviors, the results have shown a higher self-concept among adolescent students who are less undisciplined, whose socio-economic level (SEL) is medium-high and who live on the coast (Veiga, 1995). This study also found that indiscipline was less frequent in the female, rural and medium-high SEL groups. In 2000, Veiga developed a study on indiscipline and violence as a function of family variables, where he argues that prevention programs focused in indiscipline and violence should “focus on strengthening the sources of support, particularly those supplied by parents and brothers and sisters, but also by teachers”.

In a comparison between students’ and teachers’ perceptions about indiscipline (Caiero & Delgado, 2005), the first group revealed that harming the teacher is considered the most serious attitude that a student can have at school. Both students and teachers identified causes of indiscipline in the family context, in the student-teacher and student-peers relationship, and also identified individual factors.

In 2001, Amado developed an ethnographic and longitudinal study in a school with students from 7th grade in year 1, 8th grade in year 2 and 8th and 9th grade in year 3. He explored the factors associated with indiscipline such as teacher’, student’ and institution’ responsibility and also social and familiar variables. These results also suggest the multidimensional nature of indiscipline in school.
OTHERS DOMAINS OF VIOLENCE BEHAVIOR

It was also deemed important to refer some official statistics of the Child Protection System, given its relation to schools as a referring party and to child behaviour, including at school. According to the National Report of the Child Protection System (CNPCJR, 2006), concerning 2006, there was a total of approximately 25,000 new reported cases, involving maltreatment and/or neglect. More male children and adolescents were referred to the child protective system (53%), with 6-10 years old (25%), 13-14 years old (16%) and 15-17 years old (15%) being the most represented age groups. Dropout and truancy were present as a referral reason for all age groups. Nonetheless, these problems appeared to have a greater importance for teenagers aged 13 and older. Still, 3% of children aged 6 to 10 years and 3% of children aged 11-12 did not attend school systematically, whereas 4% and 13% of teenagers 13-14 and 15 and older, respectively, did not attend school at all. The number of new cases represented an increase of 60% from 2005, and represents a steady increasing trend every year in the last decade. Most of the new cases in 2006 were referred by schools, comprising over 21% of all referring parties (after police forces, health centres, parents and the legal/justice system).

Within a systemic framework, a study was conducted in 2005 aiming to describe absenteeism and school dropout, together with school outcome and school violence (Sales, Quintas, Machado & Faisca, 2006). A convenience sample of 557 severe absenteeees was identified by their teachers (N=272) in 78 schools, from 12 districts, mainly in rural interior regions of the country and Madeira island. Absenteeism was positively and significantly correlated with negative outcomes, especially during the first six grades. A discrepancy between the age of the student and the class was found to lead to lack of adaptation and indiscipline within the class, thus suggesting the inclusion of this measure of age-grade discrepancy in school violence or indiscipline studies (Sales, 2007). The role of the family seemed to be crucial: reduction of the absenteeism happened significantly more when families had more contact with school. When family-school contact did not exist or was obstructed, network intervention in collaboration with other professionals (police, social services, youth justice services) was the most effective approach.

Using focus groups with students from 9th to 12th grade in 3 public schools and one Education Centre, Carvalhosa (2007) found that, according to participants, “violence generates violence” and is caused mainly by social inequalities, by feelings such as fear, and by behaviours such as a response to violence. A majority said that, in order to prevent violence, good education at home is crucial, as well as a good climate at school, teacher support, and change in peer attitudes towards violence (zero tolerance). According to them, more training is needed, as well as more supervision at recess. They also
referred the need for places to talk with friends and teachers, in confidence, and also more awareness of the importance of reporting the incidents. Consequently and after collecting some narratives, a theatre-forum play (enabling protagonists and audience to discuss what they have seen and help one another to create the solution to the story) was built based on their stories, in a partnership between academia and Aparece (Appears) – Centre for Adolescents Health and USINA - Association of Social Intervention. The play was presented in a Conference for Young People and is being disseminated in some Portuguese schools.

In summary, violence in schools has been associated with (1) individual factors: gender, age, school achievement, age-grade discrepancy, abuse of alcohol and drugs, subjective health complaints, life satisfaction, expectations about future, injuries, and weapon use; (2) familiar factors: familiar support and functioning; (3) peer factors: number of friends, support from peers within and outside school, rejection, friend’s attitudes toward violence; (4) school factors: teacher support and perceptions, school functioning; and (5) social/political factors – country region, socioeconomic status, GDP.

ANY POSSIBLE REPERCUSSIONS ON THE FIELD (RANGING FROM PUBLIC POLICY TO LOCAL PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES)

The main findings reported provide support to the ecological model, wherein violence in schools was associated with macro-level factors, micro-level factors as by individual-level factors. Violence in schools is, therefore, a serious problem, not only for those directly involved, but also for the total community because of its impact on the ecology of human development. It is, thus, important to promote good relationships within and between families, peers, schools and communities, for extended periods of time.

Within a systemic approach, the impact on the field ranges from national policies to local practices, concerning different prevention strategies: universal (address the entire population), selective (target subsets of the total population that are deemed to be at risk) and indicated (high-risk groups or individuals who are showing early danger signs).

- Universal Prevention Strategies: Equipa de Missão para a Segurança Escolar (Mission Team for School Security); Estatuto do Aluno do Ensino Não Superior (Student’s Rules for non-High Education); Curriculum module “Cidadania e Segurança” (Citizenship and Security) mandatory in 5th grade; the selection of school violence as a priority for research
by the Attorney General’s Office, under the new Criminal Law Policy; the violence in schools’ theme has been included in programs of continuing education for teachers; the use of magnetic card to identify students and as a substitute of money inside school; the design of the recreational areas within schools; the creation of the line SOS teacher; the Visionary project\(^3\); Aparece and USINA project; GerAcções\(^4\) project – Generate Actions Across Generations.

- Selective Prevention Strategies: Safe School Programme; APAV\(^5\) projects; School mediation, carried out by the Offices of Student Support and Family from Instituto de Apoio à Criança (Institute for the Child Support).

- Indicated Prevention Strategies: Territórios Educativos de Intervenção Prioritária (Educational Priority Areas of Intervention); Comissão de Protecção de Crianças e Jovens em Risco (Comission for the Protection of Children and Youth at Risk); Programa Escolhas (Program Choices); PETI (Program for Prevention and Elimination of Child Labour Exploitation); Observatory for Bullying to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered children and youth by Rede Ex Aequo and the Ministry of Education in 2006.

When planning prevention policies and programs, it is important to consider the stage of development of a given country, the relationships with peers, families and communities, and the life style of people involved.

**The dimensions which remain to be explored or require further study**

There are a number of areas for improvement - Theory, Methodology and Intervention.

Concerning theory background, there is a clear lack in the literature. Whereas descriptive research exists, as well as some intervention studies, an integration and explanation of violence in schools within theories of human behaviour is still poor. It is our belief that the theoretical framing of the

\(^3\) The project aims the creation of an internet portal for collect and structure information and for networking. Amado and Freire collaborated in Visionary project (Jäger, Bradley & Rasmussen, 2003).

\(^4\) Community intervention project in Santa Maria de Belém, Lisbon, that aims preventing violence through community engagement (Carvalhosa, Domingos & Sequeira, 2008).

\(^5\) APAV developed several projects associated with school violence, e.g. IUNO and MUSAS.
research on violence in schools will only result in strengthening our understanding and intervention capabilities in this area. A number of theories seem to be readily available and adjusted to this purpose. First, we highlight the importance of the work from Kurt Lewin, according to whom Behaviour is a function (dependence between) of the Person and his or her Environment: B = f (P, E). Second, the social facilitation theory (Zajonc, 1965) is also important, according to which the presence of others can have a positive effect in the individual achievement, and it is related to the audience effect, in which the passive bystanders affect the performance of an individual. Third, we stress the effect of the bystanders (Latane & Darley, 1970), that is related to two theories: the diffusion of responsibility, in which the more bystanders the less individual responsibility, and the pluralistic ignorance, according to which if no one else acts, the individuals do not see the situation as one requiring action. Finally, the systemic and ecological approach (Bronfenbrenner, 1997) is an area of investigation that needs to be extended, especially regarding the association with meso- and exo-level factors.

Regarding methodology, violence has been viewed from a developmental ecological systems perspective based upon Bronfenbrenner’s research. This can be achieved by using Participatory Action Research (PAR), that is, research which involves all relevant parties in actively examining together the current action (which they experience as problematic) in order to change and improve it. The use of empirically robust instruments (e.g., Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire) is also recommended. In addition, it would be essential to develop a meta-analysis to synthesise all the studies.

Since school is permeable to the environment, especially to the economic, family and social grounds of students, disturbances within school, such as poor outcome, absenteeism, dropout, or violence, are often associated with and a mirror of psycho-sociological problems. It is, therefore, recommended that research designs of violence studies also include other variables of school-related disturbances, and also contextual variables.

When facing violence and other disturbances associated with psychosocial problems, Portuguese schools often engage in multiagency networks, such as the Child Protection System and the Police. It is recommended to conduct research aiming to describe how this collaborative intervention is conducted and how it is systematically evaluated. In particular, it would be important to know the professionals’ point of view and their suggestions for an effective integration of processes.

Even though most violence occurs within schools, its prevention and intervention should focus on the entire community. Everyone has an important role to play: children and young people, family, schools, and the
community. On the topic of Intervention, a comprehensive-community approach (across settings, involving peers, family, school, and community) should be adopted. An assumption of one-size-fits-all in prevention programs can delay their effectiveness and the duration of intervention should be extended. For example, the use of a theatre-forum can be used to empower children and youth, and the community. Interventions should focus on the transfer of responsibility for prevention to the involved groups and should emphasise the evaluation methodology. One goal that needs more investment is the development of guidelines to train adults, such as teachers and other professionals, parents and community leaders.

Several local and national level initiatives are taking place in Portugal for overcoming violence in schools, which are conducted by highly experienced and trained professionals (teachers, and professional network peers). Following a Positive Psychology framework (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), we suggest conducting research in order to learn from positive experiences and to integrate this knowledge in future actions, for instance, to explore the factors associated with discipline, low violent-schools in disturbed communities or social exclusion contexts.

Ensuring the ecological validity and potential sustainability of the violence prevention programs seems extremely important. The concept of ecological validity refers most narrowly to the degree to which the definition of a unit of analysis reflects the way that unit is defined in real life by people or natural features. A broader, more fundamental use of ecological validity is the idea that research should attend fully and carefully to the many contexts of phenomena, including multiple levels of analysis, various environmental domains (socio-cultural, physical, economic, political), and the dynamic context of capturing change over time. Regarding the potential sustainability, mobilization of all the stakeholders groups is essential for successful implementation and sustainability of the project. Involvement is critical for implementation and sustainability of a violence prevention project.

Finally, research in Portugal should also focus on social inequalities, minority groups (such as immigrant children and adolescents; and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender children and adolescents), cyberbullying, negotiation and conflict mediation, quality of human resources, and the dissemination of Good Practices⁶.

⁶ Aiming at developing consistent and high standards, the Society for Prevention Research, in 2004, appointed a task force to establish criteria for prevention programs and policies that can be considered efficacious, effective, or ready for dissemination.
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VIOLENCE AT GERMAN SCHOOLS
FINDINGS AND OPEN QUESTIONS

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ABSTRACT

This paper provides a summary description of findings regarding school violence in Germany. After a discussion of key concepts underlying in this line of research and a discussion of the methods used to measure school violence in Germany, a review of the prevalence of school violence in Germany since the early 1990s is given. Differences by gender, age groups and school types are reported. In addition, we summarize correlates, causes and theoretical explanations for school violence in Germany. Here, individual level as well as contextual explanations and correlates are considered. Also, we provide a short overview of intervention and prevention programs utilized in Germany. Finally, we discuss shortcomings und future challenges of the research on school violence.

KEY WORDS

School violence; prevalence; methodology; explanation; prevention; Germany.
ORIGINS OF THE CURRENT RESEARCH ON VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS

The current line of research on violence at schools initiated in the early 1990s after an expertise mandated by the German federal government on violence in society stated that the knowledge regarding violence at schools – among other facets – was rather unsatisfactory (Schwind et al. 1990). Also, several intensively violent incidences at German schools, that caught the attention of the media, and which raised questions from the general public as well as from the regional ministries of education on the extent of violence at German schools, contributed to increased research activities in this field (Schubarth 1999).

Nevertheless, the evolving discussion on violence at schools in the early 1990s has not been new. Since the 1970s several studies have focused on school violence in single municipalities or individual schools (e.g. Brusten & Hurrelmann 1973; Fend et al. 1975; Holtappels 1983) and on certain facets of violence, especially vandalism (e.g., Klockhaus & Habermann-Morbey 1986; Klockhaus & Trapp-Michel 1988). Prior to this phase of research, the problem has rather been addressed in the context of school discipline problems. Since the 1970s, the focus on pupils as violent perpetrators has characterized the research on violence at schools. While in other countries primary and secondary school students have been addressed as victims of school violence, in the German context they were predominantly seen as offenders. This specific focus has consequences for the selection of the theoretical models used. Today, most theoretical reasoning is taken from the literature on juvenile delinquency and criminology (see section 3 for details).

The scientific discussion on violence at schools is not directly connected to the assessment of discipline problems during class hours or to school achievement research and also only loosely related to indicators on the students’ health. So far, the majority of the studies assess violence at schools as youth-specific delinquent behavior which breaches general societal rules. Thus, school violence has been addressed as a serious social problem because if juvenile delinquency would penetrate key socialization institutions, like schools, it would endanger the continuance of basic societal norms and values. Also, the general public has feared that students who were raised in a violent school setting would adopt violent patterns and behaviors for future live.
DEFINITIONS AND CONCEPTS OF VIOLENCE AT SCHOOL

Even though, the various scientific enterprises and public discourses on this topic make use of similar terminology (“violence at schools”), it should be pointed out, that violence at schools is a heterogeneous phenomenon in the German discussion (Nunner-Winkler 2004). The research topics cover a wide range of behaviors: from intentional physical attacks including the use of weapons (Funk 1995; Fuchs, 1995), gang violence (Fuchs 1995a; 1 Wetzstein et al., 2003) and sexual assaults to less serious behaviors like beating and slapping, to relatively harmless kicks and puffs (Tillmann et al. 1999; Fuchs et al., 1996, 2001, 2008). In addition to physical violence against fellow students, various types of damage to property and vandalism at school as well as verbal aggression and other non-physical types of aggression are included in respective studies, like harassment, coercion, and mobbing. The focus of the existing literature is predominantly on lighter forms of penologic behaviors as well as on behaviors below the threshold of the criminal law. Some studies make use of a definition by Lösel and colleagues (1999), others rely the bullying concept (Olweus, 2004); however, the majority of the studies have developed their own definitions and concepts. In part, this heterogeneity strengthens the validity of the findings: Even when using a multiplicity of concepts and instruments most studies report similar low levels of violence in German schools (indicating that these finding are not bound to the specifics of a particular study). In addition to the lack of a common concept and definition of violence at schools, there is no consensus regarding the definition of high intensity perpetrators who are responsible for most of the violent incidence in German schools (see also Krumm 1997). However, in order to allow comparisons across states, regions and points in time a universal concept of violence in schools seems desirable (see also section 8 of this paper).

Most studies focus on violence conducted inside the school limits; only a few include violent student behaviors on the way to school or at other places outside schools (2Wetzels et al. 2000). Most definitions of school violence share the common component according to which violence leads to a physical or psychological harm or damage in a victim or object. The proper delineation of the physical or psychological damage is a key challenge for researchers interested in the incidence and prevalence of violence in schools. While a narrow concept of violence (e. g. with a focus on physical violence against fellow students) amplifies the risk that other serious violent phenomenon are excluded and neglected, a wider concept (e. g. one that includes psychological
harm, verbal aggression and damage to property as well) implies the danger of a catch-all concept that comprises almost every youth-specific behavior with little specificity. Accordingly, some studies have overestimated the prevalence of violence because of a wide definition of the concept, while others who restrict their narrow concept to physical violence have neglected several violent behaviors which in turn lead to lower prevalence rates.

School bullying (Schuster 1999; Scheithauer et al. 2003; Schäfer & Albrecht 2004) and other terminologies (which imply alternative theoretical concepts) have been used as well, however, predominantly in psychological research on violence in schools. In addition, a few projects and publications have adopted alternative perspectives. E.g., the German HBSC project (Becker 2002) has included several items on violence at schools and has linked the results of health indicators. Also the PISA study (Kunter et al. 2002) as well as the IGLU Study (Valitin et al. 2005) have included an item battery on violence at schools. However, both studies were predominantly designed as an assessment of competencies and thus, have reserved only small portions of the questionnaire for violence at schools. In sum, the majority of the projects on school violence in Germany has adopted a rather extensive understanding of violence at schools and has focused on this phenomenon as a variety of juvenile delinquency.

THEORETICAL CONCEPTS AND DISCIPLINES CONTRIBUTING TO THE RESEARCH

In the early phase of the current line of research since the early 1990s, most studies were concerned with the extent of violence at schools in order to complement the media flurry with empirical data on the prevalence and incidence of violence at schools. As a consequence, some of the early studies lacked ambitious theoretical concepts and proper methodology. Over the years, however, the methodological and theoretical approaches of the research enterprises have improved (we will address several of these achievements below).

Currently, empirical research is mostly done in sociology, criminology and educational research (Holtappels 2004). Criminology and sociological research focuses on the individual, contextual and societal causes of violence and includes violent incidences below the threshold of the criminal law (Tillmann et al. 1999; Fuchs et al. 1996; 2001; 2008). Also, this line of research has promoted a view on violence at schools that takes the students’
families (Pfeiffer & Wetzels 1997; Bussmann 2001), their peer group (Fuchs 1995a), the socio-economic background and the socio-economic characteristics of their living quarters (Fuchs 2009; Fuchs & Schmalz 2009) into account. Heavily violent subgroups of students have been identified who are responsible for a large share of the recorded violence, e.g. male juveniles from disadvantaged social backgrounds. However, these analyses have not been integrated into a comprehensive theoretical model. By contrast, educational research was mostly concerned with the impact of school climate as well as with prevention and intervention strategies (Tillmann et al. 1999; Schubarth 1999; Arbeitsgruppe Schulevaluation 1998). In the light of this latter research violence originates considerably within schools or is at least increased by poor organizational conditions and the neglect of a positive social climate within a class or school.

**Methodological properties of research on violence in schools**

Observational data of violent incidences is rarely used in this field. Instead, most studies rely on self reports of students regarding violent behaviors and victimization (Baier & Pfeiffer 2006; Tillmann et al. 1999; Schubarth 2003; Fuchs et al. 1996, 2001; 2008). Even though this approach might lead to biased estimates of the prevalence and incidence of violence due to social desirability distortion or group dynamic processes during assessment in a class room setting, other approaches have proven to be even less reliable: Observations of violent incidences by teachers or other school personnel are limited to those violent behaviors that come to the attention of the observer. Also, the observation of violence is usually biased since the attention for violent acts and the threshold for noticeable events is heavily driven by individual levels of sensitivity and changing social norms. Thus, a comparison of observed frequencies of violent incidences over time is prone to multiple sources of error. Also, statistical data from insurance companies and local authorities regarding the number of violent incidences are usually not considered since the willingness of victims to report violent events to the police or to insurance companies is an unpredictable source of error related to this data.

Most studies apply a survey design methodology asking violent and non-violent students in a class room setting to fill in paper questionnaires. The surveys are usually administered by the principal or a teacher who gets
detailed instructions regarding the selection of the specific class and the administration of the survey. However, doubts have been raised that teachers or principals interfere with the survey in order to make their school look either more peaceful or more violent than it actually is. Most studies focus on secondary schools, since violence at schools is usually discussed as a youth-specific phenomenon. However, some studies were conducted in elementary schools as well (Schäfer & Albrecht 2004); tertiary educational institutions have not been included so far.

In the early days of this line of research many projects were conducted swiftly under the pressure of dooming media coverage and the general public’s perceptions of dramatic violent excesses at schools and also in order to satisfy the school administration’s need for data on the prevalence and incidence of violence at schools. Thus, several projects were conducted with less than optimal sampling plans or were otherwise limited in terms of their methodology. Since then, the quality of the projects has improved. Today most studies are designed and conducted with diligence and attention to standard data quality indicators. Usually they achieve high response rates and they apply carefully designed disproportionally stratified cluster sampling plans in order to obtain representative samples of students for a given municipality or state.

Also the questionnaire design has improved. While in the beginning school violence was measured using a few selected indicators only, today the measurement of this concept is usually based on scales that are comprised of multiple indicators for each dimension measured. Nevertheless, the scales used today could benefit from a rigorous evaluation – the validity and the reliability of the items used are seldom assessed. Especially longitudinal studies that started out many years ago and still use their initial measurement instrument in order to allow for comparisons of the prevalence of violence at schools over time are questionable with respect to the quality of measurement instruments.

As long as regional school authorities supported the research agenda on violence at schools, typically school principals were motivated to adhere to the researchers’ requests to take part in the surveys, resulting in high response rate on the school level. Since principals asked their teachers to comply with the research requests and teachers encouraged students and parents to take part in the surveys most studies achieve high response rates on the individually level as well. However, with more and more surveys conducted in schools, the cooperation rate has dropped considerably. In
recent years, schools got overwhelmed by research projects asking for permission to conduct surveys and other studies. In addition, another factor contributes to the declining response rates: In the past, parents’ consent for underage students could be acquired passively – they were informed in writing and if they did not refuse on behalf of their children the students took part in the survey. However, recent studies had to actively seek written consent from parents which harms response rates significantly.

In addition to the considerable number of regional and local studies, representative samples for various states of Germany have been conducted (Niebel et al. 1993; Baier et al. 2006; Fuchs et al. 1996; 2001; Becker 2002). Also some longitudinal studies have been introduced (Sturzenbecher 2001). This provides reliable data concerning the long-term development of the prevalence rates. The most extended trend study in Germany covers 10 years (1994 to 2004) for the state of Bavaria (Fuchs et al. 2008).

Also, in recent studies sophisticated statistical models have been applied in the analysis. These models did not only consider the cluster design of the sample in the computation of standard errors but also took into account contextual effects and causes for the prevalence and incidence of violence in multilevel analyses (Simonson 2008; Fuchs 2009; Fuchs & Schmalz 2009). Even though, these multilevel model seem to be especially fruitful with respect to the development of advanced explanatory theories, the measurement procedures for contextual variables remain to be improved – this is one of the key methodological challenges since future studies will not only rely on responses from the individual students in order to determine the characteristics of the classes, schools, living quarters, neighborhoods, but also on administrative data regarding these entities from external sources. Proper procedures that protect the privacy of respondents when matching contextual data to the individual survey responses are not yet fully developed.

**Key Findings – The Prevalence and Incidence of Violence in German Schools**

(1) *Prevalence:* The available literature documents a wide range of consistent findings regarding the prevalence of violence at schools in Germany (Sturzenbecher 2001; Baier & Wetzels 2006; Fuchs et al. 1996; 2001; 2008; Wetzels et al. 1999; Tillmann et al. 1999). Generally speaking the prevalence of violent behaviors is rather low, at least far lower than expected based on the considerable attention devoted to this topic in the media and in
the general public. Also, findings suggest no sustainable increase of the violence over the past 15 years (Fuchs et al. 2008) – especially not for severe physical violence (Lamnek 2000) – which is also in contrast to the general public’s perception.

By contrast, according to subjective perceptions of teachers and other school personnel the proportion of violent students and the intensity of their violent acts have increased (Hanewinkel & Eichler 1999). However, these subjective perceptions contradict not only results of the surveys in the student population mentioned above but also findings from an analysis of insurance data which suggests a decreasing prevalence of violence at schools over the course of 1993 through 2003 (Bundesverband Unfallkassen 2005).

(2) Types of violence: Using a wide definition of violence at schools that includes verbal aggression, bullying and vandalism in addition to physical violence, the majority of the students is somehow actively involved in violence at schools. Only about 15% of the students are not related to any kind of violence (Fuchs et al. 2008). However, this is predominantly due to the high prevalence of verbal aggression and rude language. By contrast, physical violence occurs less often – about 50% of the students refrains completely from physical violence (Rostampour & Schubarth 1997; Fuchs et al. 2001). This is especially true for serious violent behaviors; only about 5% are involved in serious fights or other forms of violent behavior that have the potential to seriously harm fellow students (Schwind et al. 1990). Nevertheless significant portions of the students participate in studio wrestling, show fights and other not so serious physical encounters (Fuchs et al. 2008).

(3) Intensive Perpetrators: Research has identified a small group of serious offenders that is responsible for the majority of the serious violent acts. The size of this group varies depending on the definitions applied. However, several studies have estimated this group to consist of 3% to 9% of German students (Wetzels et al. 1999; Fuchs et al. 2001).

(4) Gender: Almost every study has pointed out, that male students are more violent compared to female students (Möller, 2001; Fuchs & Luedtke, 2003; Luedtke, 2008). This is especially true for physical violence; in the case of verbal aggression the difference is smaller, nevertheless it is still visible. Surely female students are not only involved as victims, however, the more serious the violence gets, the smaller their proportion among the perpetrators (Popp 2004; Fuchs et al. 2001; 2008). This is in part due to traditional
masculine role stereotypes in the lower educational classes (Möller 2008), but also due to gender-specific reactions to social change: Males more often exhibit physical violence when challenged in their traditional masculinity, e.g., by transformations in the educational system or on the labor market (Findeisen & Kersten 1999). Also, it has been assumed that violence is a mechanism among young males to restore their reputation and honor when it was damaged or impaired, e.g., by a verbal offense – especially among children and juveniles with immigrant background (Kersten 1998; Tertilt 1997). Recently, Meuser (2008) proposed that physical violence is an integral component of male role play in order to establish and maintain hierarchies (see also Luedtke 2008). Currently, the discussion of male and female students in the context of violence at schools has been reframed: Males are no longer seen as aggressive perpetrators only and females are no longer assumed to be victims. Instead, the specifics of violence conducted by female students have been analyzed in greater detail (Lamnek & Boatcă 2003; Bruhns 2003; Heiland 2003).

(5) Differences by school type: The German educational system is a tracked system with respect to secondary schools. The lower and intermediate secondary school tracks lead to apprenticeships while the upper track secondary schools provide higher education entry qualification. Admission to upper track secondary schools is highly socially selective – children whose parents hold an academic degree have far better educational chances. Violence occurs more often in schools on the lower educational track, while the grammar schools and other types of upper track schools are less prone to it – even though they are not free from violence. Especially when it comes to physical violence, lower track schools show higher prevalence rates while for verbal aggression fewer differences occur (Tillmann et al. 1999; Lösel et al. 1999). Several explanations for this effect are offered in the literature: (a) It is assumed that higher track schools execute more control and thus leave less room for violent student behaviors (Heitmeyer & Ulbrich-Herrmann 2004). (b) By contrast, it has been argued that the composition of the student body in the lower track schools is characterized by a higher proportion of children and juveniles from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds which in turn evokes higher levels of violence (Tillmann et al. 1999; Reißig 2001).

(6) Age: Violence at schools is a passage – like many other forms of violence and deviant behaviors. Beginning at the age 12 the prevalence of violence at schools increases. It reaches its maximum around age 16; afterwards the rate drops slowly to a lower level (Meier & Tillman 2000; Fuchs et al. 2008). Only
for a small portion of the violent students violence consolidates into an everyday patter (Eckert 2000), most violent students refrain from violence once they get older and they leave school.

(7) Reciprocal violence: Typically, violence – especially physical violence against fellow student – is reciprocal. Those who attack others become victims themselves or have been prone to victimization before. Also, several studies have demonstrated a correlation of the number and the intensity of the violent behaviors conducted by students and the frequency and intensity of their victimization at schools (Wetzels et al. 1999; Mansel 2001; Fuchs et al. 2008).

CORRELATES, CAUSES AND EXPLANATIONS

Several studies have assessed the impact of individual characteristics of the perpetrator on the prevalence of violence at schools. In fact, most of the research has assumed a rather etiologic stand since they focused on these individual characteristics as key causes of violence at schools. Following is a list of selected causes that have been associated with the occurrence of violent school behavior:

(1) Violence in the family: Domestic violence has been identified to stimulate violence at school. This correlation has been demonstrated for aggressive patterns among the parents and also – even more pronounced – for parental violence against their children (Mansel, 2001; Fuchs & Schmalz, 2009).

(2) Socio-economic status: Children of families in severely underprivileged socio-economic conditions have been proven to be more violent than children raised in better-off families (Fuchs & Schmalz, 2009a). This is especially true for children whose parents are out of work or draw local welfare support. However, given the literature at hand it is not clear whether this effect results directly from the absolute socio-economic disadvantage or whether the relative deprivation compared to better-off class mates stimulates violent behaviors by these children.

(3) Youth-specific norms and cultures: Several studies have demonstrated the impact of external factors, of violence intruding the school from the outside. In particular, the schools are increasingly faced with invading juvenile sub-cultures and norms. The clash of school-specific and youth-specific values,
norms and cultures is perceived to be more severe since schools are opening up to the students' free time activities (Zinnecker, 2004).

(4) **Gangs and violent peer groups:** Several of the highly violent students are members of a violent peer groups (Fuchs, 1995a; Wetzstein et al., 2003; Fuchs & Luedtke, 2008). This has raised the question to what extent the interaction with a gang might stimulate violent behaviors at school (Luedtke 2001). However, it should be noted that the causal direction is not yet confirmed – it might also well be that violent students chose to enter a violent peer group because they themselves are prone to aggressive behaviors.

(5) **Impact of the media:** Since the early days of the research on violence at schools, the consumption of or exposure to violent content in TV programs has been assessed (Kristen 2005; Pfeiffer & Kleinmann 2006). In recent years, online gaming and game pads have been included in the analysis (Baier & Peiffer 2007). However, this research focuses on violence at schools as a consequence of violent media content is still in its infancies (Frindte & Obwexer 2003; Baier et al. 2006). Also, the respective studies have problems determining the causal direction (Fuchs 2003). Given the research designs at hand it is hard to prove that the consumption of violent media content actually evokes individual violent behavior. It might well be, that student who are violent because of other reasons are especially interested in violent PC games or aggressive online. This issue remains to be resolved in future research.

(6) **Integration of immigrant students:** The prevalence of school violence among students with an immigrant background has been assessed in several studies (Baier & Pfeiffer 2008; Feltes & Goldberg 2006). Overall the findings suggest a moderately higher prevalence rate of immigrant students with respect to vandalism (Funk 1995; Fuchs 2004); for other aspects of school violence heterogeneous findings exist. However, dominantly it is assumed that immigrant students – especially male students – are prone to higher prevalence rates of physical violence (Pfeiffer & Wetzels 2000; Toprak 2008). The higher average degrees of domestic violence in these families, the higher likelihood of authoritarian family structures as well as a lack of social and economic integration have been identified as relevant factors contributing to the higher prevalence of school violence among juvenile immigrants (Halm 2000). However, the key problem in this assessment is the lack of proper control variables in the analyses. Since autochthon and immigrant students differ with respect to multiple socio-economic and individual characteristics, for a proper comparison the respective variables should be included in the
analyses as controls. Like for the general crime rate, this is hard to achieve in the context of studies on school violence.

(7) **Macro-social developments:** In addition to the micro-social factors mentioned so far, several macro-social processes and general societal developments have been identified to contribute to violence at schools. (a) Among others it has been stated that juveniles in present day Germany gain more independency from adults compared to previous generations. They decide more independently on personal issues, such as dress code, free time activities, friends and peers and they possess significant amounts of money. Thus, the relative impact of the adult society on the norms and values on juvenile lifestyle declines and gives room for behaviors that are considered deviant by adults. (b) Also, unemployment and poverty have lead to social disintegration of certain subgroups in the population which in turn has caused uncertainty regarding social goals and behaviors. In light of this disintegration theory, violence has become a strategy that allegedly provides certainty when dealing with problems and challenges (Heitmeyer et al. 1995). (c) Finally, anomie theory has been applied to explain the occurrence of school violence. Based on this theory it has been proposed that students from less privileged families lack the resources and skills in order to achieve the social goals in terms of educational achievements, in terms of expensive displays and also more generally in terms of success in live (Fuchs 2003a). Because these students lack proper means and resources for achieving these societal goals they try to overcome the discrepancy using alternative strategies including violent patterns. In light of this theoretical approach school violence by juveniles would be a reaction to the mismatch of societal goals and resources available.

In recent years, a few studies have emerged that aim at identifying the impact of contextual properties on the prevalence and incidence of violence at German schools (e.g., Funk & Passenberg 2004; Simonson 2008; Fuchs 009). In these studies it is assumed that perpetrators do not only act violently based on individual characteristics, instead violence evolves in interaction with the properties of the social environment and also with other individuals (Fuchs & Schmalz 2009). For example, in a socially integrated setting a low intensity violent behavior or provocation by one student might well be absorbed by fellow students who are not familiar with violent conflict solving strategies. By contrast, in a more violent social setting the very same behavior might be answered by a violent response by another student which in turn will wind up the level of violence until excessive aggression occurs. Thus, the
micro-social context of the individual violent offenders is seen as a potentially boosting or alleviative factor. This view is supported by findings from the HBSC study which has demonstrated that violence and small crime is related to social disintegration in the neighborhood and the living quarters of juveniles (Feltes, 2003; Hermann & Laue, 2003). In this line of the research on contextual factor two relevant levels of the micro-social context are differentiated:

(1) *School climate:* Most importantly, the social climate in class and in school is assumed to have a significant effect on the prevalence of violence (Arbeitsgruppe Schulevaluation 1998; Tillmann et al. 1999; Nunner-Winkler et al. 2005). Also, given the gender-specific differences in the individual propensity to act violently, it could be shown that classes with a high proportion of female students function as an absorbing context, reducing the likelihood of violent behaviors by both male and female individuals (Fuchs 2009). Finally, it has been demonstrated that the proportion of students in a class who have experienced parental violence significant affects individual violence (Fuchs & Schmalz 2009).

(2) *Living quarter and municipality:* In addition, properties of the wider school context were considered. It has been proven that the students’ behavior is affected by the overall presence of crime and violence in the surroundings of the school (Simonson 2008; Fuchs 2009). Other aspects of social disintegration in the living quarters and municipalities – like the activities of the Youth Welfare Office, the support of local authorities for juveniles free time activities, and social neglect – have also been assessed.

**INTERVENTION AND PREVENTION PROGRAMS**

Since the late 1990s, the discussion on intervention and prevention programs regarding school violence has intensified (see Melzer, Schubarth & Ehninger 2004 for an overview). The discussion of school violence has become part of further training session for teachers and schools are generally more open to adopt intervention and prevention programs – earlier they were reluctant to adopt such strategies since this would give the impression that a particular school exhibits high levels of school violence. Today, several programs that address teachers are available (Dann, 2004; Hinsch & Ueberschar 1998) in addition to programs that aim at an improvement of the organizational culture in a given school as a whole (Melzer & Ehninger, 2002).
Also, school development has been seen as a factor reducing the prevalence of school violence (Melzer, 2000; Schubarth, 2000).

With respect to the violence offenders, several programs have been developed ranging from professional social workers at schools (Klees, Marz & Moning-Konter, 2003) to networking approaches (Balser, Schrewe & Schaal, 2001). Even though, the Olweus program has been implemented at several schools (Olweus, 2004; Hanewinkel & Knaack, 2004), it has not gained predominance like in other countries. In Germany, rather a wider range of trainings and programs has been used: Anti-aggression trainings and confrontational programs (Pöhlker, 1999), coolness trainings (Weidner, Kilb & Jehn 2003) and mediation programs (Walker, 2001; Simsa & Schubarth, 2001).

**SHORTCOMINGS OF CURRENT RESEARCH AND FUTURE CHALLENGES**

So far, the research on violence at schools lacks a clear theoretical model. Even though a rational choice approach (Funk 1995; Krumm 2004) and also disintegration theory (Heitmeyer et al. 1995) have been pursued in several studies, many research projects have limited themselves to a detailed and reliable description of the extent of school violence. A comprehensive theory-based explanation that includes variables beyond gender, age, socio-economic status and educational aspiration is not yet fully developed. The use of contextual factors in the explanation of violence at schools is currently the most promising approach, since it suggests that violence – like other societal problems, too – evolves within a micro-social setting and might be affected by factors beyond the individual perpetrator’s characteristics.

In addition, from an empirical point of view, many analyses conducted so far lack a proper modeling of the sample design typically being used in school-based surveys. Due to cost constraints and lack of a reasonable sampling frame for simple random sampling, two-stage cluster samples are usually drawn in order to collect survey responses from large numbers of students at reasonable cost: First, schools are drawn at random from a list (primary sampling units). Then, all students from the selected schools or a subsample of them (typically one or multiple classes within each school) are asked to fill in a questionnaire including self-reports on violence and victimization. This type of data requires analysts to consider design effects when estimating parameters and testing for significance. Since the sampling variance is used to
determine standard errors, both, the size of confidence limits of point estimates and correlations as well as significance testing are affected by design effects larger than 1.0. Typically, the design effects of these cluster samples are in the range of 2.0 to 3.0 which has a dramatic effect of the variance estimation and on the effective sample size (see Fuchs 2009 for a more detailed discussion). Even though several studies already apply proper statistical modeling and testing this should be adopted as a standard procedure. This is especially valuable, since cluster samples also provide researchers with the opportunity to assess the effects of contextual factors on the prevalence of school violence (see Funk & Passenberger 2004; Simonson 2009 and Fuchs & Schmalz 2009 for examples).

In recent years many studies on school violence have been conducted in various parts of Germany. Unfortunately, most studies adopted their own concept of violence and thus make use of a questionnaire that does not allow full comparisons with other studies across geographic areas and point in time (see section 2 of this paper). Also, some studies have focused on special school types and have neglected others. Thus, the overview given in this paper is based on multiple studies with diverse theoretical approaches and methodological designs. This limits the scope and generalizability of results. Accordingly, a national study would be desirable that makes use of a comprehensive standard instrument for the measurement of violence at schools and that covers the whole territory and all types of schools.

In addition, only a few studies have adopted a longitudinal approach, thus our knowledge regarding the development of violence over time is weak. Even though, some trend studies are available, they usually do not cover extended periods of time and typically just one state or even smaller areas.

Finally, not all prevention and intervention strategies adopted by schools underwent serious evaluation studies in the field. A key challenge for the proper selection of reasonable intervention programs is its reliable assessment in a German context – results of evaluations studies conducted abroad should not by assumed valid for the German context without further replication. Some evaluation studies do not even apply an experimental design or on a pre-post design. Other evaluation studies rely on subjective indicators, like retrospective satisfaction of participants with the prevention program. Thus, the research on the prevalence and incidence of violence at schools should be integrated with an evaluative approach of intervention and prevention programs.
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