

Pupils' risk behavior in the lower secondary school

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Martínková, M. (2014). Pupils' risk behavior in the secondary school. Czech-Polish Historical and Pedagogical Journal, 6/2, 14–20.
doi: 10.247/cphpj-2014-0014

Bullying and violence at school belong to the risk behavior and represent a topic often discussed in scientific community. For some research workers this topic is populist, however in practice it is serious and still relevant, because a big part of the teachers is still vulnerable against bullying and, if it occurs, they cannot deal with it in due time and properly way. This paper focuses on selected factors closely related to bullying such as the form and frequency of bullying that are put into context with other variables.

Key words: *risk behavior; bullying; victim; aggressor; form of violence; frequency of violence*

The concept of risk behavior means that it is such a behavior that results in significant increase of health, social, educational and other risks for an individual or society. In education the term risk behavior is gradually replaced by the concept of socio-pathological phenomenon that is seen in the wider context, in particular in the field of sociology. Due to the great emphasis on the social norm this name is too stigmatizing for the phenomena. The formula of the risk behavior can be considered as a set of phenomena whose existence and consequences can be subjected to scientific inspection and that can influence the preventive and therapeutic interventions.¹

Bullying and violence at schools, including other forms of the extremely aggressive behavior, truancy, the use of addictive substances, another specific addictions (gambling, netholismus), the use of anabolic and steroids, criminal conduct, sexual-risk behavior, vandalism, xenophobia, racism, intolerance and anti-semitism, the commercial exploitation of children, hazing and abuse, risk behavior in the transport sector and the negative effects of sects most often fall into the concept of risk behavior.

¹ Miovský, M. – Zapletalová, J. (2006). Primární prevence rizikového chování na rozcestí: specializace versus integrace. In *Sborník abstrakt konference Primární prevence rizikového chování specializace versus integrace*. Praha. p. 21.

In the current school prophylaxis nine areas of prevention of risk behavior can be distinguished.²

- Truancy
- Bullying and extreme aggression
- Danger sports and risk behavior in transport
- Racism, xenophobia
- Negative effects of sect
- Sexual risk behavior
- Prevention in addictology
- Eating disorders
- Disorders and problems associated with the syndrome CAN

Due to the defined risk behavior, the text will pay attention to bullying in the second level of elementary school. The concept of bullying comes from the French word “chicane” and it means harassment, abuse, hazing and persecution. According to the methodological instruction of the ministry of education 22294/2013-1 bullying is “any behavior, whose intent is to harm, threaten or intimidate a pupil, or a group of pupils. Bullying lies in targeted and repeated physical and psychic attack of individual or group against the individual or group of pupils who cannot defend for various reasons. It includes both physical attacks e.g. in the form of beatings, extortion, robbery, damage to things, and attacks in the form of verbal attacks, insults, slander, threaten or humiliation. Bullying is also manifested in the indirect form e.g. a demonstrative disregard and ignore the pupil or pupils of class or another group of classmates. It may also be carried out by means of electronic communication, it is called cyberbullying. “Bullying can take various forms, frequent separation of physical bullying include (active and passive), and psychological bullying (active and passive), which are further divided into direct and indirect form (see Table 1a, 1b, 2a, 2b).³

Table 1a: Bullying physical active

Direct	Indirect
Physical assault of the victim by the aggressor (hitting, kicking)	The aggressor has helpers who carry out an aggression for him (the destruction of things the victim)

² Miovský, M. – Skácelová, L. – Zapletalová, J. – Novák, P. (2010). *Primární prevence rizikového chování ve školství*. Praha: Sdružení SCAN, 77 pp.

³ Kolář, M. (2001). *Bolest šikanování*. Praha, 32 pp.

Table 1b: Bullying physical passive

Direct	Indirect
The aggressor physically prevents the victims achieve their goals (he will not allow the victim to sit down at your place)	The aggressor is refusing to comply with the requirements of the victim (he rejects the request of the victims go to the toilet)

Table 2a: Bullying psychological active

Direct	Indirect
Swearing, insulting, ridiculing	Dispense of slander Symbolic aggression expressed in paintings, poems

Table 2b: Bullying psychological passive

Direct	Indirect
Do not respond to greetings or question	Classmates do not defend victim in false accusation

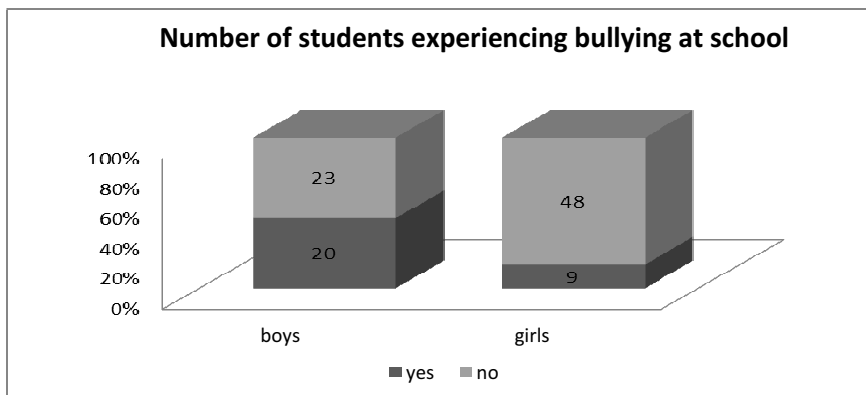
Currently around 30–40% of pupils experience bullying during school attendance, which attests to the results of the research investigation for example.⁴ It shows that the problem of bullying moves into lower ages, bullying is recorded even in pre-school age. For all age groups is intensifying ruthlessness, brutality and increased aggression.

In the years 2012–2013 research investigation was carried out on 5 elementary schools in the 3 regions of the Czech Republic. Respondents were pupils of 8–9th classes in second grade of elementary school. The research sample consisted of a total of 292 respondents, of which 134 boys and 158 girls whose age ranged between 13–16 years old. In the scope of the research investigation, the attention was focused on the

⁴ Havlíková, M. – Kolář, M. (2001). *Sociální klima v prostředí základních škol ČR*. Praha: MŠMT ČR; Rážová – Czemy – Provazníková – Sovinová: Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children. In *WHO Cross-National Study (HBSC)*; Lovasová, L. (2006). *Šikana*. Praha: Sdružení linka bezpečí, p. 28; Public Health Agency of Canada [online]. [cit. 10th november 2013]. Available at WWW: <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/publicat/sars-sras/naylor/3-eng.php>

selected factors closely related to bullying, the sex of the aggressor, the number of aggressors, the most common location of the attack, frequency and form of bullying, etc.

In a research investigation 29% of respondents met direct bullying, more often boys and almost always in repeated form (see Graph 1). The findings confirm the results of similar surveys, where meeting with bullying admits 20–40% of the respondents (more frequently boys), depending on extend and the country where the research was conducted.⁴ Victims of bullying are often seen as pupils with a very good advantage. In the research investigation, it was found that respondents from the group with the best results (45%), i.e. with rated excellent or excellent with a combination of commendably, and met bullying in 55%. Detected facts worth for more detailed examination. The author is aware that there may be multiple variables such as different rating at individual schools.

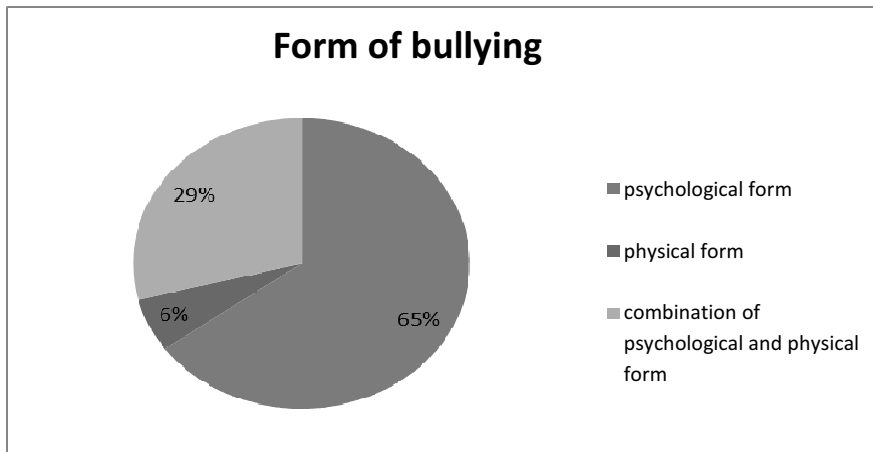


Graph 1

In the scope of the research investigation, the students most frequently met the psychological form of bullying and then combined form of bullying (see Graph 2). Among the most common psychological forms of bullying the respondents included defamation, insults, mockery and humiliation. To the most common physical forms of bullying the respondents identified smacking, destruction of goods and hitting by fist. Often bullying starts in the form of psychological bullying and gradually it connects the physical form that is gaining strength as the aggressors start to be addicted on the violence. It is also one of the reasons for the ever-escalating aggression in the area of bullying in the case that there is

no timely intervention of impartial persons. Therefore, in the scope of prevention, it is necessary to intervene at an early stage, when it starts to manifest psychological form of bullying. More than half of the respondents from the research investigation were met with initial form of bullying and half of these victims attempted to intervene against it in some way, but unsuccessfully.

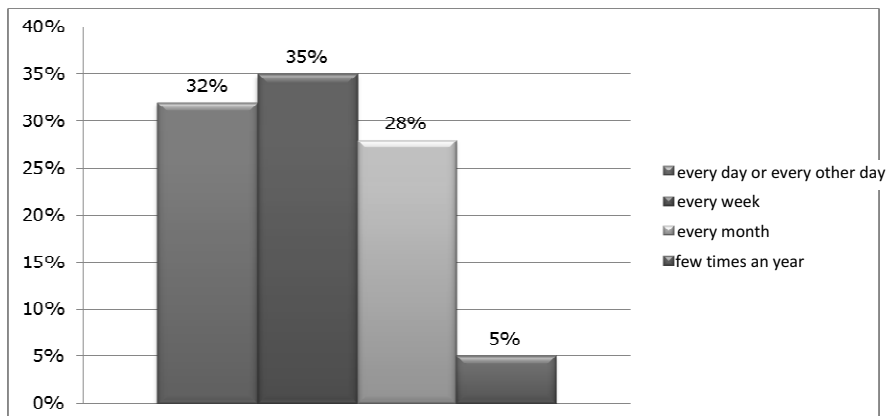
If the respondents met with physical bullying, most often it had occurred in the classroom, the locker room, the hallway and on the way to and from school. Teachers can use these findings to improve monitoring of the mentioned locations at schools, which are often underestimated.



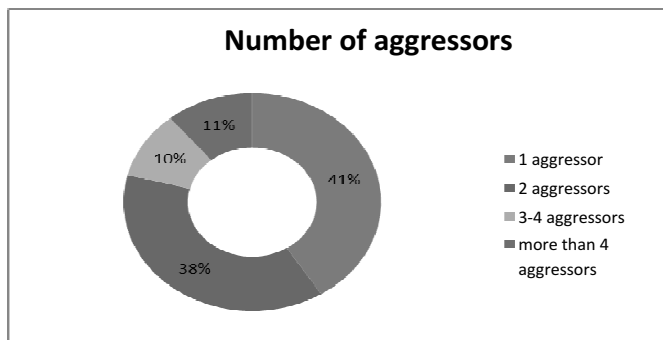
Graph 2

Bullying can be a one-off or recurring. In the vast majority of it is repeated, and even some authors states that it must be repeated. In the opposite case it is a one-time attack rather than bullying. In the research investigation, attention was focused on the frequency of attack in repeated bullying (see Graph 3). It was found that 32% of victims met bullying almost every day, 35% of victims every week, which is another reason for an immediate solution from the side of responsible persons.

What concerns the bullying in relation to sex, boys bully more often than girls (see Graph 4). German research from 2008, which was attended by pupils aged 10 to 18 years old, shows similar results: 69% of the cases a boy was an aggressor, in the remaining 31% a girl was an aggressor.⁵



Graph 3



Graph 4

Another question, to which the research investigation sought to find the answer, is the number of aggressors, who attack the victim. Is it often only by one individual or a group of aggressors? And if there are more aggressors, in which number they attack the victim? It was found that the victim is attacked by just one aggressor in 41% of cases. Unfortunately, more than half the cases indicate that the victims were attacked by more than one aggressor. The maximum number of attackers, which was recorded at the research investigation, was 7.

⁵ Presseserver der DAK-Gesundheit [online]. [cit. 20th november 2013]. Available at WWW: <http://www.presse.dak.de/ps.nsf/sbl/802CDF3D8604561FC12575D000352578?open>.

Conclusions

Bullying is a serious risk behavior that have a negative effect both on the individual actors, and other persons associated with it. It touches the classmates, parents and teachers, and using an inappropriate solution or even its disregarding the participants may cope with the consequences of this phenomenon throughout their lives. The victim has to cope with their trauma and scars on the soul and the body, the aggressor gets from around the complaint that such behavior is tolerated and permitted, other classmates lose illusions about good and evil and receive the signal that aggressive and reckless behavior is desirable and necessary for living in society. Teachers are experiencing feelings of helplessness, guilt, professional failure and the defenselessness of anything to do with the situation, which may lead to the stage of stupidity, indifference to burnout. In the case of teachers, there is one more factor and thus is the unknowingness of the issue and its significant understatement. This article should point out the fact that bullying during schooling meets around 30% of the pupils who are experiencing a recurring form of bullying from the psychic in the form of ignoring, insults, ridicule, after various forms of physical violence such as digging and bangs his fist. The attacks are often repetitive, intensifying and the intervals between them became shorter. In more than half the cases the victim is attacked by more of the aggressors attacking in groups, the maximum number of recorded attackers was 7. In the research investigation 32% of pupils reported that they meet with attacks in any form every day or every other day, and another 35% of pupils meet bullying at least once a week. Attacks occur often in busy places, such as a school classroom, hallway, cloakroom, toilets, playgrounds, but also at school cafeteria or gym.

Due to these facts the increased attention on the side of educators is necessary, not only in the area of monitoring of risky places at school, but also the increased sensitivity to the perception of the class as a group, observation and work with group dynamics and recording signals on the part of pupils-victims, who often call for help. Primary prevention and early intervention in the early stages of bullying can prevent the continuous violence at schools and warping social ties between the different actors.