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# Anatomy of Violence in Turkish Educational System: A Qualitative Analysis

Mustafa Gündüz<sup>1</sup> and Yunus Doğan<sup>2\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Yıldız Technical University, Faculty of Education, Department of Educational Sciences, Istanbul, Turkey.

<sup>2</sup>Firat University, School of Foreign Languages, Elazığ, Turkey.

## Authors' contributions

*This work was carried out in collaboration between both authors. Author MG designed the study, wrote the protocol and performed the statistical analyses. Author YD managed the literature search, analyses of the study and wrote the first draft of the manuscript. Both authors read and approved the final manuscript.*

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## ABSTRACT

In this study, a number of 300 senior student teachers reported, in written, incidents of violence which they had experienced or witnessed within educational settings thus far. The narrations were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. Classifications regarding the subjects, reasons, means, times and settings of the acts of violence the students had encountered were made. Moreover, some analyses were carried out on the typologies, perpetration kinds of and reactions to violence.

*Keywords: Turkish educational system; violence; school violence.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Violence is of the same age with human history as a manifestation of such instincts as rivalry, conflict, sovereignty and power struggle among people who are obliged to live together. According to Lorenz, Freud and Ardrey, aggression and violence are a part of human nature [1]. There is no common definition of violence which is exactly a multi-

\*Corresponding author: Email: [jonah.saidson@gmail.com](mailto:jonah.saidson@gmail.com);

dimensional phenomenon [2,3]. Violence [4] is a force or a pressure that is not based on voluntariness, and that is perpetrated physically or in another form in order to make something change into a different position, or to inhibit its movement towards change. Besides having many kinds and definitions, violence, in terms of the issue in question, can be defined as restriction of individual freedom with force, and use of force towards an individual for something that is not wanted by him/her [5,6]. Thus, many religious, social, cultural and juridical doctrines, precautions and sanctions have been regulated in order for those unwanted behaviors that are a part of humans not to emerge or to get minimized.

However, despite all the precautions and sanctions taken throughout history, it has been impossible to rule out violence. It has also been witnessed to reach up to very high levels and become a serious social problem from time to time. And even more interesting and inextricable dimension of this issue is that violence takes place at the very institutions established in order to remove violence, educate people, dispense justice and provide security. Especially, the increase in violence incidents within social institutions produced by modernity (school, police stations, hospitals, nurseries, factories, etc.) makes new researches inevitable. For instance, emergence of violence incidents in even such places as educational settings, juridical places, places belonging to law-enforcement officers, hospitals, and religious places makes humanity face a brand-new and serious problem. With this aspect, in fact, violence research is not only a problem of educational environments, but it is also one of the problematic areas of all other social, economic, etc. environments.

This paper dwells on a product of the industrial society "school-violence". School is a system established by governments and, on the very basis, for governments in order to control, direct and handle the new societal style brought by industrialization more easily, and thus to provide continuance of the socio-economic maintenance. Modern educational process compasses people's most critical period as a whole in terms of their physical, mental, social, moral, etc. developmental stages and in terms of learning and developing behaviors.

Designers of educational environments and curricula take numerous steps for teaching the pre-specified information, and for getting intended behaviors acquired. Instructional principles, regulations, pedagogical rudiments and disciplinary practices are the primary ones of these steps. Reward and punishment are carried out in different forms and types at every stage of education. Of course, the main aim of these is to have the information and behaviors intended by the school acquired. And in order to accomplish these goals, the principles for these target behaviors and information are determined. If any setbacks, violations or objections emerge during this process, it is also predetermined how to respond. These are called general discipline regulations, as well. Even though the discipline in educational environments is carried out most often in control of educators/teachers in accord with regulations, and purely for the good of students and the society, results which are quite the opposite of what has been planned and expected may come up as time and conditions change.

Within educational settings, many conditions, incidences and behaviors, etc. out of what is planned and foreseen can always emerge. For, social change affect, at the same time, education at all points, as well. In fact, in the event of weakness of education, social environment influences the student more powerfully, and drives him apart from school. And if educational environments and curricula do not change in parallel with social, cultural, political, etc. changes, there will always be contradictions. And in such cases, educators take initiatives, and most often individual preferences and practices become dominant. Thus, this initiates a process opposing the normative structure of instructional environments.

## **1.1 Violence within Educational Environments: Rapid Increase, Kinds and Reasons of Violence**

The problem of school violence [7] is in fact a casual, repeated and polymorphic problem of pressure. Comprehensive explanations [8] and assessments should be made [2] in order to understand what this poly-named problem is about. The fact that education and school are described as a setting for violence, and thus made a subject of a research is, in fact, an ironic and so tragicomic situation. But, just as it is natural for any trouble to come in almost any place where living together is a must, it may also be ordinary for violence to be seen within same places in different forms. Therefore, it is a reality that there has always been violence in educational environments “for the sake of education” since the earliest times of history. The history of school violence [9] is the story of a slow discovery of the victims, those “forgottens of history”, according to the nice word of Benoit Gamot [2]. School violence has a very distinct history [2].

Recently, like in some other countries [10,11,2], school violence has been on the rise in Turkey, too [12,13]. However, there are no sophisticated, highly representative researches and statistics on violence in educational environments<sup>1</sup>. What is more, official authorities do not have any large-scale and reliable statistics concerning this issue, either<sup>2</sup>. Yet, in an arrangement made for the sake of the importance of the issue<sup>3</sup>, sanctions to be taken against violence and an action plan were prepared.

Many different kinds of violence typologies and behaviors perpetrated for the so-called purpose of teaching, changing and correcting behaviors can be witnessed within educational environments [15]. Physical punishments are the main ones of these. There are numerous kinds of perpetration and means of physical violence, which is varied, very rife and dates back to the earliest times. And such punishments as affronting, using bad words, insulting, ridiculing, sniping, humiliating, exposing and kidding about physical appearances are the primary ones of verbal and psychological violence. Moreover, wearing badges or any symbols targeting one’s beliefs and ideals, and making drawings or signs for this purpose are symbolical kinds of violence, while assigning low grades, and giving negative conduct grades unduly and because of a personal reason are examples of institutional violence. Dispossessing someone of his/her money, restricting his/her opportunities and ways of spending, and selling something forcefully are kinds of economic violence, whereas sexual taction, caressing, and sniping, swearing and abuse are apparent examples of sexual violence.

While it is possible to categorize violence types under more different titles and in various ways, it is also possible to classify any behavior under various types. The essential point of these all is that the relevant individual is made to experience them, and they affect him in the short and long term, and they cause lasting harms and conduct the educational environments away from their ideal condition.

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<sup>1</sup> For a study touching on violence incidents within educational system partly in terms of its cultural-political aspects, see: [14].

<sup>2</sup> This goes for many other countries in the world. Moreover, official statistics are very inadequate and unreliable [2].

<sup>3</sup> The Prevention and Reduction of Violence in Educational Environments Strategical and Action Plan: 2006-2011, The Ministry of National Education, General Directorate of Guidance and Consultation Services, Ankara: 2006; Nothing further than an ideological rhetoric was achieved in a symposium held within the same year: Symposium of “Violence as a Social Problem” Final Declaration, 31st May 2006.

It is of great significance to investigate the reasons of school violence. As social and behavioral events and phenomena have more than one reason, it would not be appropriate to set only one target. In addition, violence has also some subjective realities changing from person to person. In this research, the students enunciate clearly why they were exposed to violence, and they make mention of very different situations. It is also crucial to know what reasons the other side (the perpetrator) shows for causing violence. However, this research does not give place to any data collected from perpetrators of violence.

Theoretically, the main reason for violence within educational environments is related to teaching and behavior change. Violence perpetrators would most probably say that "they did it for the student's or the others' benefit". While this presents a questionable validity, it seems to be largely "arbitrary" [16]. According to whom is violence necessary? Does an educator have a right to teach or to change behaviors by force? And how qualified is he/she in this sense? These all are the most controversial questions of the relevant study-field.

The reasons and factors of violence in educational environments are a good many. The major ones are: student factor, school factor, family factor, regulations factor, plans and programs factor, educational philosophy factor, concern for the future, media factor, sports factor, traditional values factor.

## **1.2 Historical Foundations of Violence and Punishment in the Turkish Educational System**

Many kinds of sanctions have been imposed on the individual so as to requite his wrong behaviors in the historical process. Physical violence (beating) and imprisonment are the primary ones of them. For instance, in the schools of Sumerian, Anatolian and Mesopotamian civilizations, there were educators charged with beating. S. Kramer points out that like today's children, the children of that time were afraid of being beaten, and their fathers scolded them and inflicted violence upon them [17]<sup>4</sup>.

After the 18th century, new punishment practices within educational settings came into question as an obligation brought by industrialization. In this period, rather than physical violence, an understanding of inclining towards individuals' souls developed [20]. And in the 19th century, alongside children's rights and responsibilities, the ways of punishing them were also reflected into the national and international written texts. There is the principle that "Children have the right to be protected from all forms of violence, abuse and neglect" in the 19th article of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1959).

There are lots of information and documents concerning the fact that there were punishments of every kind in the educational system of the Ottoman State, as well. *Falaka* (bastinado) or physical punishments in educational settings were for the first time officially banned with a *Nizamname* (regulation) dating 1847 [21,22]. Indeed, compared to the other states around the world, this date is quite an early one. It is clear that after the 1850s, there were diverse regulations, clamors and investigations of discipline and punishment carried out in both central organization and provincial organizations of the Ottoman educational system.

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<sup>4</sup> For research on educational punishment in the Phoenician, Indian, Chinese and other Asia Minor and Mesopotamian civilizations see: [18], [19].

Selim Sabit gives advices, which are close to the principles of the modern pedagogy, on violence and punishment in education in his work *Rehnümâ-yı muallimin* in 1870 [23]. In the second Constitutionalist period, lengthy discussions on punishment at schools were carried out on an academic level. Massive violence incidents and political fights within school environments mounted in this period [24]. Within that period, some new books on education were written, and punishment and reward were discussed in these books. The discussions were initiated between Satı Bey (1911/1918)<sup>5</sup> and Ziya Gökalp (1918)<sup>6</sup>, and continued thereafter.

Violence and punishment in education in the Ottoman period continued also in the early Republican period in different forms<sup>7</sup>. Physical violence was exactly banned in the discipline regulations made then<sup>8</sup>. However, despite all prohibitions, physical punishment typologies at school have gone on with all its varieties to date [27]. In spite of all regulations, many different punishment and violence incidences have occurred in the Republican period as well.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

This study is a qualitative research. In data collection, narrative technique of the qualitative research methods was used [28]. Reliable and valid information is strongly thought to be collected with this data-collection method. For, the data are kind of an inventory of personal experiences, and are sincere confessions in a sense, and they were collected based on voluntary participation.

The data of this research were collected from approximately 400 students studying at the faculty of education of Fırat University during the academic year of 2009-2010. The research participation rate is nearly 75%, and 300 people wrote anecdotes. When the data were collected, all the students were seniors. Although the research data were collected from only one school, these 300 people come from many different regions, and they graduated from various schools. As shown in Table 1, of the students of Fırat University 36% are from Elazığ, where the university is, and 31% of the students are from the Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia regions, while the rest are from other geographical regions of Turkey. This means that the study has managed to investigate the relevant problem in the Turkish educational system to a large extent across Turkey, thus its capacity for representation is quite high.

<sup>5</sup> Similar warnings and principles were made by the Ottoman educationalist S. Paşazâde Sami Bey, too: [25].

<sup>6</sup> For the complete work of Gökalp on punishment and reward in education, see: [26].

<sup>7</sup> "Lise ve Orta Mektepler Talimatnamesi (The Regulations for High and Secondary Schools)", *Resmi Gazete (Official Gazette)*, 17.10.1931, Issue 1701, p.178; "İlköğretmen okulları Disiplin Yönetmeliği (The Disciplinary regulations for the Primary teachers' Schools)", *Resmi Gazete(Official Gazette)*, Issue 12644, 11.07.1967, p.7.

<sup>8</sup> On the forbidden behaviors at schools and the punishments to be given to them in the disciplinary regulations for the early Republican period primary and secondary education, see: "Millî Eğitim Bakanlığına Bağlı Orta Dereceli Okulların Disiplin Yönetmeliği (The Disciplinary Regulations for the Secondary Schools of the Ministry of National Education)", *Resmi Gazete(Official Gazette)*, 3.11.1971, Issue 14004, pp.1-5; "Ortaokullar ve Ortaöğretim Kurumları Disiplin Yönetmeliği (The Disciplinary Regulations for the Secondary and High Schools)", *Resmi Gazete(Official Gazette)*, 12.10.1975, Issue 15410, p.4 ; "Millî Eğitim Bakanlığına Bağlı Temel Eğitim II. Kademe (Ortaokul) İle Ortaöğretim Kurumları Disiplin Yönetmeliği (The Disciplinary Regulations for the Elementary Education II. Stage (Secondary Schools) and High Schools)", *Resmi Gazete(Official Gazette)*, 21.10.1978, Issue 16441, p.6.

**Table 1. First University Students' Demographic Profile**

<b>Regions</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
Elazığ Province	6304	4304	10608	% 36
Eastern Anatolia	3065	1540	4605	% 16
Southeastern A. Mediterranean	2858	1681	4539	% 15
Marmara	1874	1156	3030	% 10
Central Anatolia	1919	625	2544	% 9
Black Sea	1251	504	1755	% 6
Aegean	931	312	1243	% 4
	820	262	1082	% 4

Within the course of Sociology of Education, there is the title "School and Violence". While dealing with this subject, the kinds of violence were theoretically lectured to the students with diverse dimensions of its. Then, the students were asked to write about any violence incident which they either experienced themselves or closely witnessed and thus were seriously affected by during their education from primary school to university. This task was carried out based completely on voluntariness. The students were told that as the researchers wanted to conduct a study on the relevant topic, they needed to collect data on it, thus the students were free to write or not to write. Moreover, the students were given options by announcing that "If you have not experienced any incident of violence, you can also narrate one someone else you know has experienced". Despite this second option, 98% of participants narrated what they themselves experienced. Although only four students told at first that they had never been exposed to violence during their education life, they wrote in the subsequent lines that they had somehow experienced violence.

It was announced to the students that writing their names, school-numbers or which classes they were in was also optional, but giving these information was significant for the research as a relevant statistics would be carried out. And, it was told most importantly that these data would not be shared with any third party, they would only be used in a scientific research, they would be analyzed by encoding, and some original quotations could be made. No criticisms or objections were made by any student to participate into the study, in fact all of the anecdote-writing students noted down their names, school-numbers, and which class they were in; moreover many told that their names also could be mentioned in the study. The number of participant departments and students is as shown in Table 2.

While analyzing the violence incidents the students witnessed or were personally exposed to, the following method was pursued: The data were at first sorted in terms of gender, and each paper was enumerated. And by putting the number of the relevant papers in front of the department-codes, as shown in Table 2, throughout the study, who the quotations belonged to was thus identified (For instance, *(TSI 3)* shows the number 3 student from the department of Teaching of Science-normal education; and *(II)* stands for the evening education of the relevant department).

Then, the kinds of violence were tabulated by using the following codes: Types of schools where the students were exposed to violence (primary, secondary, high schools and university), the information about the violence perpetrators (their gender, duties, which classes they taught, etc.), and the places reported as settings for violence, the reasons of violence. After giving this information, the relevant statistical data were made up under such sub-titles as kinds of violence, reasons of violence, means of violence, the students' responses to violence, the effects of violence on the students, the role of families and social

environment in violence, what was thought about the perpetrators of violence and original quotations. The distribution, similarities and differences of the data were determined and interpreted.

**Table 2. Participant Students' departments, class-sizes and genders**

Codes	Departments	Participant students			
		Class size	Female	Male	Total
(TSI)	Teaching of Science I	40	15	17	32
(TSII)	Teaching of Science II	40	19	8	27
(CT)	Classroom Teaching	35	13	14	27
(TTI)	Teaching of Turkish I	35	13	16	29
(TTII)	Teaching of Turkish II	35	16	9	25
(TM)	Teaching of Maths	30	12	18	20
(CEITI)	Computer Education & Instructional Technology I	50	21	18	39
(CEITII)	Computer Education & Instructional Technology II	50	11	32	43
(SSTI)	Social Science Teaching I	40	13	14	27
(SSTII)	Social Science Teaching II	40	13	19	32
<b>10</b>	<b>General Total</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>300</b>

The students were first asked to narrate any violence incident they had experienced at school from primary-school to university. Majority of those responding narrated at least one incident, while some narrated two, three and even four incidents. While most students wrote only one page, some narrated three pages long, and some others narrated four pages long violence incidents. Moreover, while some students wrote with broad brush strokes about the violence incidents they had experienced, the great majority of them narrated what they had experienced in detail. The incidents of violence narrated in this study had been experienced, on the average, between the years of 1997–2010. Therefore, they are the anecdotes of a very recent history. Both parties of the violence incidents are still in educational environments.

## 4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Periods and Settings of Violence

The relevant information about the educational periods when the narrated violence incidents were experienced is as given in Table 3. Some students did not give any details of place and time of violence in their anecdotes. There are some examples in which it was reported that the violence incidents were experienced in the primary-school of a village or a town. It is more probable that most of the narrated violence incidents took place in the urban schools. According to the data drawn from the narrations, the most of the violence incidents took place in primary-schools (105), 99 incidents in secondary-schools, 38 incidents in high-schools, and 3 of them in universities<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>9</sup>In fact, many incidents with political content occurred at Turkish universities recently, especially after 1968, but they all came to an end after 1980. For violence at Turkish universities see: [29].

It is obvious that there is an inverse proportion between the incidents of violence and the level of education. As the level of education increases, the incidence of violence decreases. The fact that the most narrated incidents of violence were from the primary and secondary schools is a reality that can also be explained with remembering and the effects of the incidents on individuals. And most of the narrated incidents of violence that took place in primary-schools seem to center upon the earlier grades. The main reasons for this can be the fact that the primary-schools are the first schooling environments for children, and thus leave deep traces on children's personality, self and future.

There is a clear differentiation among the educational periods also in terms of the kinds and reasons of violence. While physical violence seems to have taken place more at primary and secondary schools, multi-lateral incidents with serious injury and fighting were narrated to have been experienced at high-schools. And at universities, it is apparent that economic and power-exercising kinds of violence took place.

**Table 3. Types of Schools reported as Settings for Violence**

<b>School gender</b>	<b>Primary</b>	<b>Secondary</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>University</b>
Females	67	52	17	2
Males	38	47	21	1
Total	105	99	38	3

The students give many details about the places in which they were exposed to violence. Naturally, class and its nearby are the main ones of the places where violence is experienced. School-corridors, teachers' rooms (*TSI, 24*), principal's office, vice-principal's office, school-garden, playgrounds, libraries, laboratories and ceremonial grounds are the places in which violence takes place most. Apart from these, homes, streets, school-dorms (*TSI,10,25*) and the Koran courses (*TSI,25*) are among the settings for violence as well. 10 students narrate the violence they were subjected to in the Regional Primary Boarding Schools (YİBO)<sup>10</sup>. They say they were exposed to violence here in such places as refectories, dormitories, conveniences, bathrooms, reading halls. A student tells that as a seventh-grade student, he went into the principal's room for the first time to get a beating (*TTII,21*).

## 4.2 Perpetrators of Violence

As in P. Freire's evaluation "violence is latently present in every kind of attempt which helps the government of the dominant minority continue, and hinders the questioning of the system by force of this help" (2006), not only the dominant minority but also those who act in their names perpetrate violence. And these are teachers and other staff in educational environments.

Different information about who the violence had been perpetrated by was obtained from the narrations. It was understood that violence had been perpetrated by teachers most. While 65 students told that they had been exposed to violence by their teachers, 41 students narrated they had been subjected to violence by the school-principals, and 31 students experienced violence from the vice-principals. Thus, it can actually be said that school administrators

<sup>10</sup> Regional Primary Boarding School (YİBO) is an educational institution, in the Turkish Educational system, which gathers the students living in the geographical areas that are dispersedly located but very close to each other at a certain center, and offers boarding education.



perpetrated more violence than teachers. However, while violence was perpetrated on the whole by teachers at primary-schools, it was done more by the school-administrators at secondary and high schools. Furthermore, hall-monitor teachers, classmates, and school janitors also perpetrated violence. There was almost no mention of school bullying, but there were only narrations of two incidents<sup>11</sup>.

**Table 4. Perpetrators of Violence**

<b>Perpetrators reporters</b>	<b>Female teacher</b>	<b>Male teacher</b>	<b>Principal</b>	<b>Vice-principal</b>	<b>Hall monitor teacher</b>	<b>Peer</b>	<b>Janitor</b>
Females	11	22	17	13		3	2
Males	9	23	24	18	3	-	-
Total	20	45	41	31	3	3	2

### 4.3 Classes Reported as Settings for Violence

101 of the students do not identify by the teacher of which lesson they were subjected to violence. As shown in Table 5, violence is reported to have been perpetrated most by Turkish (25) and Maths (24) teachers. And classes of Science (13) and English (10) follow them. And violence incidences experienced in other classes are below 10. The violence experienced during the primary-school is reported to have been inflicted by the classroom teacher, and the rate of this is quite high.

Among the reasons for the fact that violence was experienced most in the afore-mentioned four classes can be the weekly teaching hours, the importance and the difficulty levels of these classes. Especially at primary and secondary schools, the weekly teaching hours, the significance and the difficulty levels of the classes of Turkish, Maths, Science and English equal to almost the whole of the others. Teachers, students and parents generally care most about these classes. Therefore, there are great difficulties in teaching and learning these classes. And teaching and learning situations are among the primary reasons of violence. Thus, this has brought about a concentration on the classes in question because of their difficulty.

Moreover, the times when violence was perpetrated most were the idle class sessions which were not attended by the teachers. At such times, noise and fuss in class peak. And in this case, a teacher, principal or vice-principal come and try to maintain the order intemperately. Whenever a class is unattended, it most probably ends up with violence.

### 4. 4 Violence and Psychologically Troubled Teachers and Administrators

In the narrations, the teachers' psychological conditions, behaviors and even health were mentioned as one of the interesting details about the reasons of violence. Most students described the teacher who had perpetrated violence as someone psychologically ill and showing behavioral disorders. For instance, a teacher asks a question, and when a student answers it he ribaldly says "Who the hell asked you?", and slaps the answerer in the face (CT,25). In another case, a student asks "Can you repeat it?", and the teacher yells "get out, you're talking too much and for nothing", and dismisses that student from the class (CEITI,34).

<sup>11</sup> Whereas, this rate is quite high in other countries [2].

**Table 5. Classes reported as Settings for Violence**

Classes	Turkish	Maths	Science	English	Social Sciences	Physical Education	Literature	Geography	History, Art, Religion & Ethics, Physics	Music, Bussiness Education, Chemistry, Computer education, Citizenship	Biology, Agriculture, Rhetoric, Science of Life, Writing, History of Revolution, Health
<b>f</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>

It was understood that some teachers had clearly reflected their personal or familial problems to their students as violence. While it was told in one of the narrations that “the teacher had had some marital conflicts, thus she sometimes put her head on the table and blacked out there” (TSI,15), it was narrated in another one that “the principal had some familial problems” (CEITI,24), and “the principal stayed at school in the evenings because of his family” (TSI,28). And in yet another one, an interesting situation was narrated by noting that “after the teacher had beaten us, he put his head on the table, and did not lift it for a long time and felt sorry” (TSI,5). A substantial number of teachers were narrated to have come to school boozily (CEITI,24). And it was narrated that such teachers had always perpetrated psychological violence (CT,4). One of the students wrote that “a depressed teacher of her had committed suicide at his flat” (TTII,11). In another case, including personality disorders, it was narrated that a male teacher had fallen in love with one of his female students, and when the affair became too annoying, he was reported and thus was sent to another school (SSTII,15).

#### 4.5 Apparent Reasons of School Violence

On examining the relevant literature on school and violence, it can be seen that many different conditions are reported as possible reasons of violence. For instance according to Rousseau, one of the main reasons of violence is inequality among people [30]. In some studies [31,2], there are mostly the findings that economic inequality leads to violence.

There are detailed items in the school discipline regulations on what behavior is to be punished by what method. Although these regulations may change in due course, some items have always kept their chair. Though the victims of violence in this study narrated their experiences rather in a siege mentality, there are still many obvious details about the reasons of violence in them. Almost all the students gave information about the reasons of violence they had been exposed to in different ways. Table 6 lines up the most repeated reasons of violence. It can accordingly be said that the reasons of school-violence are actually rather ordinary and simple. On looking at the most repeated first 10 items in Table 6, it can be seen due to how simple reasons the students were exposed to violence. And on examining the rest of the items, it can be observed that the majority concentrates on behavioral patterns. Moreover, having been subjected to violence owing to educational activities is less common.

**Table 6. Most reported reasons of violence**

Reasons for student exposure to violence	f	Reasons for student exposure to violence	f
Making noise	17	Coming to school late	3
Failure to do homework, or doing it wrong	14	Having long hair or sideburns	3
Cheating	11	Teasing friends	3
Smoking	7	Failure to bring school-books	3
Not being able to answer the questions	7	Playing ball in the garden, school-corridor, etc.	3
Making noise during unattended classes	6	Polluting the classroom	2
Fighting with friends	6	Failure to get ready for the class	2
Being reported by the class-representative	5	Low exam marks	2
Breaking classroom windows	5	Coming to classes late	3
Turning back, or chatting with the desk mate	5	Failure to do any work given	2
Being disrespectful during the national anthem ceremony	3	Dirty hands and nails	2

In addition to the data in Table 6, some other different and interesting ways of punishment had also been perpetrated. For instance, these following so-called misbehaviors were narrated to have ended up with various punishments: the students' wetting each other in the restrooms or leaving the restrooms dirty, bringing dirty handkerchiefs, failure to maintain order during exams, leaving the school territory without permission, throwing pieces of paper at each other in the class, wearing out the school-reports, not cleaning the blackboard, failure to bring the necessary school materials (different materials for the art and science classes, workout suits and training shoes for the PE classes), complaints from peers. These punishments seem to have left lasting effects on the students.

In one of the narrations (*TM, 15*), it was reported that a group of students had brought alcohol to school. Upon being caught drinking, these students were strictly punished. While, according to the regulations, these students should have been rusticated from school for a time, they were instead beaten. And another group of students were narrated to have been punished by the school-administration on attempting to bring a stereo tape player for having some fun in one of the last days of the school term.

Among the reasons for perpetrating violence, the deficiencies, failures and negligence in educational activities seem to be on the top. There are some students who narrated that they were slapped because they couldn't draw a straight line or write properly at the first grade of the primary-school (*TSI, 16*). There are others who can't forget being punished because they couldn't punctuate correctly (*SSTI, 14*). And there are many who narrated that they were beaten only because they couldn't answer the teacher's question. In fact, many wrote in this regard: "Although I knew it, I couldn't answer as I was either excited or afraid, and thus I was exposed to violence". Not doing one's homework or doing it improperly seems to have always been a pretext for violence. What's more, a student's grudgingly saying "oh, no. homework again!" also caused him to be subjected to violence (*TM, 6*). And, another student's disobedience upon being told to "bring" his exam-paper to the teacher during the exam led to his punishment (*CEITI, 19*).

In addition, there was one who narrated that he was exposed to violence because he had not done his homework, but showed one of his friend's instead, and he thought the teacher was right (*SSTI, 8*). Especially failures to do some recitations (the National Anthem

*CEITII,10*), Poems, Ataturk's Address to Youth, etc.) were most of the time punished with beatings (*TSII,6*).

The undesired aspects of the in-class relations often ended up with violence as well. "Breaking the blackboard" due to naughtiness (*CEITI,3*), or "loosening the classroom bulbs" just for fun (*SSTII,15*) was also narrated to have caused violence. There were some other narrated examples of this: a student's failure to make up with a friend she was cross with (*TTI,6*), teasing someone allergic to lemons (*TSII,1*), treading out the grass in the garden (*TSI,28*), escaping from school because of routine school vaccination (*SST,25*), truancy (*SSTI,19*), not attending the oath-taking ceremony (*CEITI,6*), failure to keep still at the morning ceremonies (*TM,7*), or laughing loudly during these ceremonies (*CEITI,1*). As these misbehaviors were punished publicly, the punishments had more lasting and deep effects. Again, a group of students' skipping school and going to an internet-cafe (*CEITII,23*), and another one's saying "I just used my right of excused absence" upon his truancy (*CEITI,15*) simply drove the school-administrators mad, and thus caused the students to be beaten up. When a teacher told "call your fathers forth to school", one of the students went against this (*CEITI,8*). And the teacher slapped that student badly.

Besides, clothes and hair seem to have caused violence as well. As is seen in Table 7, 7 students narrated that they were exposed to violence just because they had had long hair. Those who had long hair or sideburns were at times subjected to either physical or symbolical and emotional punishments. Some were even exposed publicly and had their hair cut with a scissors. A female student's using a colorful scarf (*CT,2*), another one's coming to school with a headscarf (*TTI,11*), or putting on nail varnish (*CEITI,23*) were also punished by the school administration.

3 narrating students exemplified in a sense the economic violence by writing that they were forced to buy some books, and exposed to violence when they did not buy them (*TSII,3*; *CEITII,35*). And some other students told that they were once subjected to an economic punishment by their parents by being bereft of their pocket-money.

Some students attending the YİBO schools were either beaten or threatened just because they talked during the evening homework sessions (*TSI,10*), or because they took some bread from the refectory (*SSTII,28*). Another student attending the YİBO told "I did not have a single day without violence" by writing that he experienced violence both at school and dormitory every day (*TTI,25*).

What's more, some other students were exposed to violence due to some interesting reasons. For instance, a student told that while he was playing ball in the garden, the ball touched the school principal's foot, and the principal got angry and slapped him (*CEITI,28*). A similar incident occurred while snowballing (*CEITII,1*). In another narration, while the teachers and the students were walking in the garden, one of the teachers told a student "Have you ever been beaten by me?". When the student said "no", the teacher said to that student "then take it!" and slapped the student and said "bug off now!" (*SSTI,16*). Again in another incident, a teacher asked the students during the morning school ceremony "who will come and recite the student-oath?". When there was no answer from the students, the teacher chose one of the students and told him "you recite it!". And after the student recited the student-oath, the teacher told "how come? You said you didn't know it" and slapped the student (*CEITI,31*). And in another narration, a teacher slapped a student, telling her "why are looking at my foot, anything wrong?" (*SSTII,25*). Moreover, there were some students who narrated that they were reprimanded by the school janitors, and they were highly scared

and affected by these janitors especially at kinder-garden (*TTI,8*) and primary-school periods (*SSTI,5*).

There are people who ethnically identify themselves as Kurds and whose mother tongue is Kurdish in mostly the eastern regions of Turkey. However, the medium of instruction is Turkish in these regions, too. As some of the students attending the primary-school here do not know any languages other than their mother tongue, the primary-school teachers teach them Turkish at first. But, this is highly difficult, and violence is experienced too much during this process. In one of the narrations, a Kurdish student wrote in his long story that one day he saw his mother passing in front of the school and called her in Kurdish as “mama, I’m starving”. The teacher heard this and, as he had banned speaking of any language other than Turkish at school, slapped the student, saying “why on earth are you speaking Kurdish?” (*TM,17*). In fact, that student pointed to a very interesting situation by writing “I could have indeed said it in Turkish, but my mother did not know any Turkish”. A similar narration was made by another student (*SSTII 16*); however this student could only imply that he had experienced very painful things by writing “I wish you knew what we had really experienced during this process”.

#### **4.6 The Role of Families in Exposure to Violence**

It is suggested that there is a relationship between school-violence and family<sup>12</sup>. Some students stated that their families played a part in the violence they had experienced. The student who told “My family sent me to school by force” (*TSI,31*) put this obligation forth as the reason for his having experienced violence. Another student narrated that the economic condition of his family led to violence, and the violence within family redounded on school (*CT,9*). And a student from the department of teaching of Turkish wrote that his family always compared him with very successful peers of his, which he saw as a violence perpetrated upon him (*TTI,1*). In another narration, it is seen that a student was exposed to violence by one of his peers. Then this student’s mother came to the school the following day, and beat that student in front of other students. Thus, this student was ashamed of his mother’s behavior in the name of his beaten friend, and got very sorry for this (*SSTI,7*).

#### **4.7 Kinds of School Violence (Expanded Violence Typologies)**

It is easily observable that there is a high level of diversity in terms of reasons of violence in the Turkish educational system. There is a quantitative increase at the same time [33,12]. While there is an ever-increasing variety in terms of school violence [34], it is also suggested that children are treating each other more and more atrociously [35]. The data in Table 8 present the most narrated kinds of violence. As is seen, the physical violence is in the lead. Verbal insults and contempt seem to rank third among the kinds of violence. What is most notable here is that none of the violence kinds the students punished for various reasons were exposed to are related to the disciplinary rules as written in the school regulations. No kinds of physical, verbal, psychological, emotional or symbolical violence seems to have been allowed in the disciplinary regulations that were effective during the narrated incidents of violence. They only made mention of some institutional sanctions. However, the only institutional sanctions the students narrated to have been imposed upon were being threatened with low –marks and being sent to the disciplinary board of school.

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<sup>12</sup> On the role of families in being exposed to violence, very high numbers were found out in these research studies [9], [32], [2].

**Table 7. Most reported kinds of Violence**

<b>Kinds of violence</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>Kinds of violence</b>	<b>f</b>
Slapping in the face	71	Pulling student's ear and levitating	4
Beating the whole class	47	Beating hands with a stick	4
Insulting verbally	35	Kidding about bodily traits	3
Beating and kicking	26	Dismissing from the class	3
Beating heads, knees and wrists with a ruler	13	Hitting face with a book, or notebook	3
Beating hands with a ruler	12	Mocking	3
Ear pulling	10	Exposing student at parades	2
Getting another student to beat	8	Hair-pulling and twisting	2
Discrimination	6	Making student do cleaning in the garden	2
Hitting student's head on the blackboard	6	Reprimanding, Using bad words	2
Making student stand on one foot	5	Teacher's swearing	2
Giving or threatening to give low marks	5	Making student collect the garbage	2

When the kinds of violence perpetrated are examined, it is clear that they were narrated to have left deep traces on the students' mental, psychological and emotional worlds. All the students remembered the violence they had experienced in details, and they all told that it caused great harm in terms of their psychology. It was observed that the rate of arbitrariness in the violence perpetrated was, as also stated by Arendt [16], quite high. This is a kind of appearance of the "voluntary fascism" as called by Charles Melman. This is not a kind of fascism imposed by any leading doctrine, but an authority desire to soothe the paradox of values including worry [36,35].

The most narrated kinds of physical violence at school are slapping, running the gauntlet, kicking and hitting, hitting any part of the body with a ruler or another kind of object, pulling ears/hair/arms, head butting, making the student stand on one foot. The number of those who were subjected to these kinds of violence is more than 176. The examples of the physical violence some students were exposed to are as follow: "The teacher hit my hands and legs with a stick" (TSII,11), "the teacher hit my head with a notebook" (CT,1), "the teacher hit my knees and heels with a stick" (TTII,3), "the teacher head butted me" (CEITI,15), "the teacher kicked in my tummy"(CEITI,7), "He turned my arm down, and kept it that way for a while" (CT,4), "he punched my head" (CT 2), "he threw a book at me, it cut my face, and my face was sutured" (CEITII,35). "The teacher hit my head with a stick" (CEITII,3), "she hit my head with a flute" (SSTII,5), "the teacher threw his chair at me" (SSTII,10), "he kicked my knee" (SSTII,14), "he kicked my back" (SSTII,24), "the teacher boxed me" (SSTII,26), "he knocked my head together with another student's" (SSTI,13). "He kicked and clubbed my legs" (TSI,8), "the teacher hit my head with a keyring" (TSII,12), "he punched my head" (CEITI,4), "he pulled my hair and lifted it" (TSI,16). "The teacher pinched my ear-lobe, and hit my forehead with his palm" (TSII,26), "he hit my hand with a stick as many times as the number of the continents I couldn't then memorize; as I was the class-representative, he hit me still more" (TSII,6).

As is seen in Tables 7 and 8, *verbal violence* ranks number two. In this kind of violence, the behaviors such as humiliating, scolding, insulting students, and even swearing them can be observed. To give some examples: one of the students was highly affected by the fact that he was publicly shouted at as "you cad!" (TSI,13). A teacher's saying to a student: "you know nothing" (TSII,5) or "I don't trust you anymore" (CEITII,4) seems to have affected the student profoundly and s/he was embarrassed of it. In another example, a kindergarten student got afraid of a school janitor's shouting at him, and never wanted to go to school again from then

on (TTI,8). All this shows that the verbal violence is very common and effective. The reasons of this can be the fact that it is generally perpetrated in front of all the school children and during school ceremonies or parades. Most of the narrations in this study are from collective ceremonial places. And the students narrated that they were affected by this kind of violence as much as from the physical violence, and they still bear lasting traces.

**Table 8. Classified distribution of acts of violence**

Categories of Violence	Physical	Verbal	Psychological	Institutional	Sexual	Economic	Emotional	Symbolical	Physical-Psychological	Emotional-Psychological	Emotional-Verbal	Symbolical-Psychological	Physical-Emotional	Psychological-Verbal
f	176	39	11	8	8	5	4	2	12	9	6	4	3	2

Right after the physical and verbal violence comes the psychological violence as the most narrated one which also seems to have left some significant impacts on individuals. There were also interesting incidents of this kind of violence. One of the students, while attending the primary-school, was made to sit down on the dustbin in order for him to take a lesson as he had been naughty, another one was hung from his jacket to the coat hanger in the class (TTII,3). One of the students, while attending the secondary-school, was forced to bray like a donkey as he had made noise (CEITI,5). And in another incident, the teacher mockingly said to an overweight female student “and you tell us about potatoes and what they are for” (CEITI,37). And another female student narrated that she had experienced psychological violence, writing “Just because I talked aloud, he made every insult, about my weight, and about my ugliness...” (TTI,12).

Another kind of school violence is sexual violence and molestation. This kind of violence is especially experienced by female students. While the victims of the sexual violence are not only girls [2], all of the narrators that wrote about the sexual violence in this study are girls. The primary reason of the sexual violence is related to the perpetrator’s psychological condition. Although there has not been much emphasis on incidents of the sexual violence in the history of Turkish education, there are examples, though very scarce, suggesting that this kind of violence has long been present [37].

And in this study, 7 students narrated that they had experienced the sexual violence. All victims of this violence kind are female students, and incidents were told to have taken place at primary and secondary schools. All of these incidents of sexual violence, except one, were perpetrated by teachers and in class. (CT,11). These teachers were considered to be psychologically-troubled by the narrating students. While one of these students just sufficed to say “the teacher used to molestate us” (CT,24), another one wrote that her teacher used sexually explicit and implicit expressions (TM,2). And yet another one narrated that her teacher called the girls to the chalkboard and ogled them. And it was narrated in a similar story that “the teacher used to call beautiful girls to the blackboard and caress them in front

of everybody" (*SSTII,8*). It was also narrated that there were teachers who fell in love with their students and disturb others (*SSTII,15*). These kinds of teachers are generally warned by the school-administration and people as well. One of the female narrators wrote that male students molested her (*CEITI,25*). While narrating about her science teacher's behaviors, a student expressed her hatred by noting "the girls were at their developmental period then. The rascal teacher used to touch the girls' back and make sure whether they wore bras or not. He used to first touch and if they had bras, he pulled the bras over their clothes and made the girls feel embarrassed" (*TTII,9*).

It seems that what the narrators of the sexual violence incidents narrated was just a very tiny piece of what they may have wished to tell. For in these narrations, such sentences with deep feelings as "I won't tell about the rest", "she didn't talk about what had happened next", "I feel as if I was still experiencing it" followed each other.

Teachers' discriminating or classifying the students according to their different characteristics was reported as another kind of school-violence. These classification or discrimination seems to have mostly been done as poor-rich (*CEITII,16*), peasant-urban (*SSTI,10*) or hardworking-lazy. One of the students was sent to a desk which was allotted for the lazy, or was made to sit together with someone who was known to be lazy when he didn't do his homework, or couldn't answer the teacher's question. Thus, he was made to lose his credit (*CEITII,38;TSII,5*). What's more, those sitting at that kind of desks are valued by neither the teacher nor the other students. And, making the student change his place was also very effective on him (*CEITI 39*). One of the students narrated that her teacher discriminated even with his facial expressions, and they were worried about it (*TSII,19*). In the study, such discrimination-based kinds of school-violence as ostracism, xenophobia, bullying, and racial/sectarian/religious discrimination were not reported<sup>13</sup>.

Some other kinds of the *physical and psychological* violence were reported as making a student who was late for school wait outside in cold weather (*TTI,13*), treading a student's foot with a court-shoe (*SSTII,5*), trying to insert a notebook into a student's mouth as he didn't do his homework (*SSTII,13*), cutting a student's hair unevenly as he had grown hair (*TSI,31*), taking a student to in front of another class or the teachers' room and beating him there (*SSTII,24*).

Another most reported kind of school-violence is the one which the psychological, physical and emotional ones are interwoven. The primary one of these is having the students beaten by each other: older by younger, boys by girls, lazier by hardworking, etc. The students not only forgot this kind of violence forever, but they also always felt very negative things towards both the perpetrator of this violence and the teacher. A student's expression "the teacher always had us beaten by his favorite student" (*CEITI,2*) points to a bilateral emotional negativity. It is apparent that the teacher distinctly discriminated among his students. And another expression "the teacher got the younger students to beat us" (*CEITI,16*) explains the same thing. Moreover, a teacher's beating and then spitting in one of the students' face upon his failure to answer the question (*CT,19*) shows that he overwhelmed his student physically, psychologically and emotionally. Again, another kind of the emotional violence that the students never forgave and couldn't still get over is the teacher's showing his dislike with facial expressions (*TSII,19*).

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<sup>13</sup> Whereas, there are very different and high results in terms of the same topic in Debarbieux [2]. For instance, The black people are exposed to violence more than the whites in the USA [9], [32].



The violence and punishments committed by some teachers are quite interesting and are unique examples of the symbolical-psychological violence. For instance, a teacher was narrated to have rubbed his shoe over his student's head just because he hadn't done his homework (CEITI,14). Another teacher made his student carry a chair on his head (TTI,5). And yet another one bound his naughty student to the radiator-pipe from his tie (CEITI,5). A teacher at a high-school threatened the students who couldn't answer his questions as "I will make you wear pinafores and let other classes see this (CT,4). The female student who narrated this told that this threat left deep traces on her, writing "when I heard this, I just wanted to curl up and die, and quivered with fear".

Some of the students were forced to buy some books by teachers or school-administrators. In fact, some narrated the perpetration of violence by noting "I didn't have any money, otherwise I would have wanted to buy, yet the teacher gave me a lower grade as I didn't buy the book" (TSII,14). Another most experienced kind of the economic violence at schools was making students pay for the broken windows or other school materials (TTI,3,11). Furthermore, a kind of violence in which the *economic violence* was mixed with the *emotional* and *psychological violence* was forcing students buy presents for special occasions (CEITI,35). The students narrated that they felt depressed while trying to buy presents to their teachers on the teachers' day; and when they didn't have money, they really felt embarrassed. Particularly, what one of the students narrated was really interesting: a teacher's scolding a student who bought a teapot as a present for the teachers' day as "what am I supposed to do with this? Why didn't you buy something better? And look, it is broken" (TTI,11) caused a deep wound in this female student's personality. And what's more, this teacher offended some other students that bought him flowers, and humiliated all those who brought presents and those who didn't by saying "look at those bringing flowers... what will I do with the flowers? Why didn't you behave more thoughtfully and buy me at least a gold as other classes did for their teachers".

It is clear that as the *institutional* kind of violence, there were incidents of threatening with low-marks or giving lower marks. This kind of violence was exemplified by many students in this study. There were even those whose exam-papers were taken earlier and forcefully by the teachers just to make an example for the other students (CEITII,7). When the teachers could not cope, or when there was a very serious situation, they consulted the disciplinary-board of the school (SSTII 3). In another example, some students wrote a petition in the name of a student, this issue was carried to the disciplinary-board (TSI 22,23). After long investigations, the writers of that petition were found out, and thus the calumniated student was acquitted.

#### 4.8 Violence Materials

In the violence narrations, many students provided information about which materials had been used during their exposure to violence. In this regard, the most repeated means of violence is the materials which are rather used in the Maths and Science classes. The primary ones are metal tools of measurement, measuring sticks, rulers and beating sticks. Apart from these, the most narrated ones are cleaning materials, brushes, brush stick, stoups, sticks, keys and keyrings, strips, pieces of wood, wooden spoon, wired sticks, flutes and teacher's chairs. In addition, such means as scissors, shoes, vases, school uniforms, ties, balls, pencils, books, notebooks, blackboards, heater pipes, chalks, pieces of paper, coins, dustbins and spittle were also reported to have been used while perpetrating violence.

#### 4.9 Reactions to Violence

According to an American adage, “the best defense is a good offense” [38]. There is always a resistance or a response in case of violence. However, this resistance occurs in diverse ways. While the most violent one is physical counter attack, the softest is to harbor ill-wills. Although it is expected that the problems will be settled as anger, greed and violence increase, it is not possible to generate any solutions for problems through violence. Let alone solutions, emergence of new problems is unavoidable [39].

All of these unclassifiable statements undermentioned vividly depict the unhealthy communication among the school, teachers and students. Some examples are as follow: After having been slapped, one of the students narrated as “I still feel the warmth of that slap” (*CT,16*), while some others narrated as “I was getting more obstinate as he hit me”(*TTI,5*), “just to spite him, I went on keeping my sideburns long”(*CEITII,10*).

A student who was slapped in the face because she had not done her homework narrated that she became hating doing homework in the end (*TTI,15*). While a student narrated that “I had decided not to go to school any longer” (*TM,3*), another one told that after the violence she had wanted to bury her head in the sand like an ostrich because of her embarrassment (*CEITI,22*). The sentences stating that the violence experienced at childhood is still felt are also numerous. Especially negative thoughts and dreams are in the lead (*CEITII,6*). While a student narrated that he had never wanted to meet the principal once again (*SSTII,11*), some others wrote as: “I’m still tussling with Maths at this age” (*SSTII,27*) “I began to feel as a loser”, (*SSTI,1*) “I was disgraced, and wanted to die at that age”. Despite all the years elapsed, there are still some students who narrated that “I still carry a grudge against the principal” (*CEITII,33*), “If I happen to see that teacher again, I’ll wreck him” (*SSTI,21*). Only one student wrote that “he drew a lesson from the violence he had been exposed to, and never was late to school once again” (*CEITII,9*).

The last paragraphs of the violence narrations are generally full with expressions that bear profound traces on body, soul and conscious. And, hatred, revenge, vexation and depression are the primary ones. The students further stated the wish that they would not follow suit.

**Table 9. Reactions to violence: feelings aroused and traces left**

<b>Expressions of reaction to violence</b>	<b>f</b>
I hated and took a dislike to school, I never wanted to go again	45
I hated the lesson	41
I hated the teacher	40
I didn’t like the teacher	20
I didn’t show participation, or talk any longer	15
My success decreased, I got a raw deal	7
I never participated or talked in class any more	5
I got depressed	5
I began to be prejudiced	4
I cursed the teacher	4
I got cross with the teacher	4
I began to develop a grudge	2

#### **4.9.1 Accepting and refusing violence**

The students exposed to violence stated, after narrations, that they faced something they mostly hadn't deserved, and they said they never accepted it. Only two of the students said "I really deserved it, that punishment served me right". The great majority narrated that the teacher or the principal had misunderstood them, thus they had unjustly been beaten. There is a concentration maybe just because this kind of incidents are the most remembered ones. The student does not consider something he/she already deserved as a violence or punishment, and thus accepts it.

While one of the students says "He punished me though I was not a bit guilty, now I won't forget it for good" (*TSII,10*), another one says "He mistook me, he hit me although it wasn't me who was talking" (*TSII,4*), (*SSTII,23*). Similarly the following kinds of expressions were often used in the narrations: "I was just passed the buck, the principal just beat me without ever questioning" (*CT,6*), "I was sent to the disciplinary board just because name-similarity" (*CT,22*), "one of my friends was beaten even though he hadn't stolen the money, and then it turned out that he hadn't done it" (*TTII,8*), "I was punished without reason" (*TTII,10*), "Though I hadn't thrown any rubbish, he thought as if I had done it, and punished me" (*TTII,18*), "the teacher just slandered me although I had never cheated during the exam" (*CEITII,2*), "the students had already been lined up, I just wasn't aware of it, yet the teacher on duty punished me" (*CEITII,39*), "the teacher unjustly accused me of having scratching out his car" (*SSTI,4*).

#### **4.9.2 Reacting to violence with violence: making the teacher apologize or beating him /her**

There is often an emotional reaction to violence at primary and secondary school periods. While there is no resistance, objection or complaint at first, such behaviors as both reaction and justice demand emerge within the forthcoming years. Some students narrated that they had complained about the violence they had experienced to an upper legal authority. Those who stated that resistance to violence just brought heavier violence narrated that they suffered more damage in this sense. There were also those expressing that appealing to an upper authority for the violence they experienced was meaningless, too. For according to them, any school-administration/principal is a party to the teacher, and does not believe in the student (*SSTI,26*), (*TTI,13*).

Even though it was narrated that appealing to an upper authority remained inconclusive and there was a protection of teachers, it is obvious that those who made a complaint mostly attained their desire. Most of the students thought of appealing to an upper authority for the violence they were subjected to, but only a few did it. Among 300 narrated incidents, only one person went to the provincial director of education to make a complaint, two students reported to their school principals, and four or five students told their parents about it. Only the two complaints made to the principals remained inconclusive. And for the other complaints, what was necessary was done.

A principal who had beaten a student unjustly was later reported to the provincial directorate of education by that student, and he was immediately appointed to another school (*CEITI,31*). In another incident, a teacher who had always been insulting female students

was reported to the provincial directorate of education and was sent away from the school<sup>14</sup>. In another anecdote, a soldier-teacher<sup>15</sup> reported to the authorities was found guilty. As he was a soldier then, the military authorities would have taken action on him, but upon the teacher's plea and apology the student dropped the charge (*SSTII,24*).

If the teacher was found guilty in a violence incident, he/she apologized from the student sometimes through the administration's push (*CEITI,32*), sometimes with his/her own will (*TTI 12,14*), or at times upon the pressure from parents and the social environment (*CEITI,7*). A student experiencing violence reported it to his father, and the father came to the school the following day and attempted to beat the teacher. When the school-principal intervened, the teacher apologized for it (*CEITI,7*). In another narration, the parents of a student who had been beaten with a nailed stick went to the school, and the principal apologized (*CEITI,8*). Similar examples were repeated in the narrations of (*CEITI,22*; *SSTI,15*).

The most severe and terrible aspect of reacting to school-violence was observed to be beating the teacher either individually or collectively, or even attempt to kill the teacher. In this kind of a reaction, thinking that someone was hard done by the teacher and being physically competent were two primary pretexts. All of such reactions as beating the teacher took place at high-schools. It was seen that a gradual fashion pursued in reacting to violence. The student first answers the teacher back verbally, and then it follows as holding the teacher's hand, pushing him/her and then attempting to beat him/her. And as a further action, such incidents as directly kicking and hitting the teacher, thrashing him/her soundly altogether in a gang, and stabbing the teacher occur.

In one of the narrations, the teacher was warned by the school principal, but the teacher neglected it and went on perpetrating violence. Then he first began quarrelling with the principal, and the principal beat him in front of the students (*TSI,2*). A female chemistry teacher teaching a ninth-grade high-school class first warned a male student as he was making too much noise. Then, she slapped the student. And the student first reacted scoffingly, and then began hitting the teacher (*SSTI,14*). In a similar incident, the student attempted to beat the teacher just because he said to the student "shut up!" (*TSI,25*).

The following narrations are very dangerous ones. A student brought a chopper to school to kill a teacher who had been beating him. When the teacher tried to beat him again, he took the chopper and began chasing the teacher. The other students and teachers rushed to prevent him. Then the student was expelled from the school (*TTI,17*). Another student took a knife from his pocket and walked up to the teacher when he was exposed to violence by that teacher (*SSTII,3*).

In another incident, the teacher who had perpetrated violence in class was then beaten publicly by the gang of that class in front of the school-gate (*TSI,2*). And it was further narrated about a similar incident that the students gathered and beat the teacher in the school-garden (*TTI,13*) and the teacher was stabbed (*TSI,3*). And yet in another one, the school principal was beaten by the students outside the school (*TTI,5*). To a vice-principal questioning a truant, the student bitingly said "I made use of my right to be absent". Getting

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<sup>14</sup> *Interesting enough, this teacher was later sent to a Girls' High-school! This is one of the tragicomical practices in the Turkish national education! (CEITI,21).*

<sup>15</sup> *In Turkey, male teachers have the opportunity to complete their military-service as a teacher in more undeveloped regions of the country.*

very angry, the vice-principal head butted and punched that student. The student told his father about this, and his father came to school and beat that principal (*CEITI, 15*).

One of the most sorrowful stories of reaction to violence is as follows: a Physics teacher at a high-school slapped a ninth-grade student that had not done his homework. The student reacted to the teacher. As the student was powerful enough, he began chasing the teacher in class, and fighting continued in the school-corridor. Some teachers from other classes came out, and they all pounded the student. Then, the student was summoned to the disciplinary board, and was dismissed from the school within the same day. The student later stabbed the teacher outside the school, and the teacher was nearly taken to the hospital and was saved at the last minute. And the student was committed to prison for three years (*SSTII 32*).

#### **4.9.3 An inward-oriented naive reaction: teacher nicknamings**

Nick-naming teachers because of their various traits is a tradition that has been present since the earlier periods of the Turkish educational system. "The black David, the pain in the neck, Necmi the philosopher, Arif the gringo, Mister Plato" are well-known nick-named teacher characters. And the students in this study nicknamed the teachers who had perpetrated much violence. Of these, Celil the headsman, N. the concrete, H. the boxer, the black Şeyhmuz, Violencemus (*TTI, 25*), the despotic principal, the techy principal, the psycho are the primary ones. While one of the students wrote about his teacher as "he was a human-like monster" (*TTI, 25*), another one wrote that "he was a real psycho" (*SSTII, 11*). As the teachers who had perpetrated extreme violence left horrifying and lasting impressions on the students, they were thus given these nicknames.

#### **4.9.4 Praise to violence**

While violence is perpetrated by teachers with the intent of rehabilitation, fixing and amelioration, it is not the case with students most of the time. There is only one student, out of 300 violence victims, who had been exposed to violence but still narrated that he took lessons from it. One of the students approved his having got a beating in the Koran course by narrating that "I am so glad that I got that beating, otherwise I wouldn't have memorized the whole Koran" (*CEITI, 21*). Furthermore, 5 students who had been beaten by their parents, especially by their fathers, (*CEITII, 23, 25, 28, 42*), (*SSTI, 17*) stated that they had been guilty, and they thus praised the paternal violence. These students narrated that "we are so glad that our fathers had punished us, but for them, we wouldn't be at this point now", though they had been hit and kicked because of such reasons as low-marks and misbehaviors<sup>16</sup>.

### **5. CONCLUSION**

According to F. Engels, violence, which arises mostly as a result of a desire for dominance arbitrarily and by force, is an action that could only be explained by the fact that "domination over nature has been completed generally by means of only domineering humans". Violence, as a phenomenon, is a situation which is frequently encountered in every phase of life and in many different forms. And educational environments and violence have

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<sup>16</sup>Similar anecdotes are also available in the history of Turkish education. Hasan Âli Yücel (1897-1961), who served as a minister of national education longest, mentions his father's beating him with a great praise, writing "he just did what the modern English disciplining required" in his memories [40]; Another similar recollection belongs to Halide Nusret Zorlutuna, one of the important female writers in the Turkish Literature, who approves mothers' beating [41].

particularly been more intriguing and a topic of researches recently. Like in many other countries, there are no any recorded comprehensive and reliable statistics on violence incidents and reasons in the Turkish educational system, either. And as most of the sporadic studies seem to have been carried out by methods of either survey or theoretical literature review, they cannot present healthy information.

This research study differs from the similar ones done so far in terms of its method. By this method, the students were asked to narrate any violence incident they had experienced before. This process was totally based on voluntariness. 500 senior students from the faculty of education at Fırat University were asked to participate in this study, and 300 students narrated in written one or a few violence incidents they either experienced or witnessed. With this method, unlike many studies based on data collection with surveys, violence phenomenon was tried to be analyzed and described without digitizing. This shows the most important and original aspect of the study. Therefore, the theoretical literature review part of the study was not given a wide place. And it is thought that this kind of a method produced very original and healthy data.

As the researchers, we have virtually been within this educational system for nearly thirty years now, thus what was all narrated in this study is not unfamiliar to us. In fact, we have already either experienced personally or witnessed most of the afore-mentioned types and reasons of violence. In this regard, we are sure about the truth of all that was narrated.

The study bears both historical and classical and highly up-to-date qualifications. The data and both parties of violence are still alive, and most of them continue their lives in educational environments. Thus, the research results present significant data in order for the educational authorities to take future precautions and determine new educational policies.

In the narrations, there also seems to be a strongly felt impression about being in a defensive psychology against violence. There are such expressions as that violence had not been deserved; and the teacher had been guilty and behaved unsympathetically in most of the narrations. Certainly, the narrations wrote with the impact of this kind of a defensive position can not be totally trusted to explain the experienced violence with all of its aspects. Despite these all, there are efforts to manipulate violence.

Examining the numerical data of the narrations, it can be observed that violence is seen at every phase of educational environments ranging from primary-schools to universities. Violence is perpetrated at many different parts of an educational environment. However, most of it takes place in classrooms. Violence is quantitatively seen more at primary schools, and it shows a teacher-to-student pattern. Violence at this period leaves profound physical, psychological, moral, emotional and social traces on an individual. Therefore, students may carry deep negative feelings toward educational environments and authorities because of a violence they are exposed to.

At secondary-school period, the physical effect aspect of violence increases. And again, a quantitatively high level is a matter of fact. The violence perpetrators are almost everyone in educational environment. And nearly all teachers may cause violence. Moreover, there is not so much difference between the male and female teachers in terms of the number and kinds of violence they perpetrate.

When it comes to the reasons of violence in the Turkish educational system, an interesting situation emerges. Despite the findings that economic inequality creates violence [31,2], the

main reason of violence in this study is related to the teaching and learning situations and behavioral patterns. Nearly the whole reason for violence is the fact that the student shows an unwanted behavior, what is tried to be taught is not learned, and the failures shown in this respect. While violence is resorted to mostly because of behavioral disorders, learning and teacher inefficacies are also among the main reasons for violence. It can further be said that families, socio-cultural environments, economic conditions, genders and psychological conditions are of the leading motives for violence, as well. Thus, the reasons and results of violence are nearly boxed in only classrooms and teaching&learning situations.

However, the main concern and reason of violence here is the resistance shown against the static structure of the educational system and change, and against the difference. The main concern is the formation and transfixion of the behaviors in educational environments. This means transfixing the life itself. A behavior which once used to be regarded as a crime may soon be perceived differently. And while this gives teachers a chance to perpetrate violence, it causes traumas in students. The fact that the mentality change, the spirit of change is overlooked is the main bureaucratic reason of violence.

Although most of the narrated reasons for violence in this study were not the types of crimes that were mentioned as crimes in the disciplinary regulations of schools or classrooms, the students were still exposed to violence. While such behaviors as coming to school late, using a scarf with a different color, and laughing or looking back in the class, etc. are not defined as crimes anywhere, many students were subjected to violence merely because of such simple reasons. What's more, the disciplinary regulations do not authorize teachers to give punishments. If any criminal offense is committed, it is essential that the punishment is carried out gradually and officially by the disciplinary board. However, as it was identified in the study, 90% of the violence had been perpetrated by the teachers.

It is clear that violence has an extensive and deep effect no matter when and by whom it has been perpetrated. Especially the violence experienced at early childhood has lasting impacts on personality [42]. Violence of almost any kind brings about a reaction. This reaction emerges sometimes verbally, at times emotionally, and sometimes physically. Although violence has a "main function inhibiting the questioning of the rulership" [43], someone who reacts to violence with violence goes beyond his purpose, and thus causes greater problems. This can be witnessed in the ever-increasing violence against teachers in educational environments. In the narrations of the study, numerous violence incidents against teachers and school-administrators were also identified.

The fact that the teachers were reported to have been beaten by the students, to have been a target of dangerous assaults, to have been intimidated, insulted and punished by the families is at an extreme extent. When the students' complaints and the school-periods and the dates of the sanctions imposed on the teachers are examined, it is observed that there is a fast-growing and escalating indicator in this sense. And this is a development that endangers not only the teachers' esteem but also their own security.

## **COMPETING INTERESTS**

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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