

The Manifestation of Adolescents' Intentions to React in Provoking Situations at School

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Abstract

During the course of history, the social development in Lithuania mainly depended on the common human and national values as fostered and preserved in the rural areas. Rapid changes taking place in the society as we know it today, however, were influenced by the processes of globalization and require an especially careful evaluation and improvement of the value-oriented education system of Lithuania, particularly, when facing issues of rural youth development, the latter making a significant impact on the prospects of further sustainable development in rural regions. It is worth mentioning that perhaps due to the imperfect education system and its long-running reform as well as the deteriorating educational situation in the country area, the young people experience limited opportunities regarding their professional knowledge and expression of human values and behaviour. Moreover, the problem of aggressive behaviour in schools has not been sufficiently analysed up to now. Although recent violence prevalence among Lithuanian students and factors which influence it have been studied extensively, the research on the reasons of aggressive behaviour in schools is still not complete. The aim of the study presented in the article is to investigate adolescent intentions to behave aggressively during disputes at school. Theoretical alternatives of adolescent intentions to react in provoking situations are presented in the article; methodological instruments of social research made as an outcome of this study are discussed. The data and conclusions of research analysis may be valuable when proceeding with the Reform on the Lithuanian education system, where the key issue is youth education in rural areas; also, when working on projects and programmes aimed at prevention of aggressive behaviour and bullying at school.

Keywords: violence, aggression, sneering, adolescents, provoking situations, youth education policy, sustainable development in rural regions.

Introduction

In the 21st century, despite the growing attention towards establishment of democratic processes which are taking place in the society and the development of human (children in particular) rights, quite a lot of the European Union countries that have chosen a new development path are facing difficulties in building a perfect education system for the young people. Aggression among children, adolescents and young adults in the school of today, is still a frequently encountered phenomenon varied in the extent and forms of expression (Xie et al., 2002; Palujanskienė, Uzdila, 2004; Zaborskis et al., 2005; Jankauskienė et al., 2008). The analysis of the problem of violence and bullying at school has revealed that once a child has joined the school community, he or she are encouraged and taught to hide their aggression, to keep control over their anger and fury (Palujanskienė, Uzdila, 2004). Hence, the primitive forms of aggression at school are gaining another level and form. Aggressive behaviour evolves; the open physical or emotional aggression is substituted by an indirect aggression. The conservative education system and the established values mostly acceptable among the older generation of society in rural areas are rapidly losing ground to their position in the new values and concepts, and, accordingly, to youth-oriented development systems. Unfortunately, with very limited deployment experience, in rural areas especially, and educational network optimisation (with significant contraction of the school network) practices, the youth development process does not justify the expectations of society and does not guarantee a sustainable development of rural regions, as well as the provision of adequate human resources (Dapkus, 2009). The increased public aggression and boosts of anger observed in the society should not always only be related to the accelerated pace of life and socio - material status of the family; gaps in the education system, failing to ensure the prevention of conflict situations.

Thus, various anger-provoking situations may be the cause of adolescent anger and aggressive behaviour. The impetus of justice or injustice being very important in adolescent and young people's communication, conflicts arise in case of the breach of it. Additionally, adolescents possess a typical desire to attract community's attention; consequently, the effects of show-off and aggressiveness may be easily encountered (Kairienė, 2000). The investigation of student reactions to conflicts allowed identifying the tendency of constructive judgement of arguments (Palujanskienė, Uzdila, 2004). The aspiration of collaboration and compromise, however, is expressed just moderately. Boys, more often than girls, tend to settle arguments by fighting (Palujanskienė, Uzdila, 2004). Furthermore, the interrelationship between adolescent frustration regarding values and demands, and conflicted behaviour with other students, as well as teachers and parents, is disclosed (Čiuladienė, 2006; 2007).

The problem of the study. Although already well known the degree of violence and bullying prevalence among the students in the country area, as well as elucidation of the influencing factors (Jankauskienė et al., 2008), the inciting conditions for aggressive behaviour are less studied. A few investigations embracing student behavioural expression under the conflicted circumstances have been discussed in scientific literature (Palujanskienė, Uzdila, 2004; Čiuladienė, 2006; 2007); the reasons provoking adolescent aggressiveness, however, have not been sufficiently analysed, and this fact is worth deeper focus than students' behaviour during the dispute. Cases at school provoking students' discontent or even aggression should be of special concern. Therefore, disclosure of such situations and adolescents' reaction to them remains an urgent scientific problem. To find an answer to this problematic issue particular research instruments must be created and scientific justification provided, study results analysed.

The subject of the study is students' reaction to conflict-provoking situations at school.

The aim of the study is to investigate the manifestation of adolescent possible intentions to behave aggressively in anger-provoking situations at school.

Theoretical background of research methodology

O'Connor, Archer and Wu (2001) state that it is quite complicated to record and evaluate the manifestation of human aggression in daily life situations. Research on aggressive behaviour performed by using the observation method exposes possibly the biggest sociological validity. Such type of research, however, is relatively rare because it is difficult to carry out and apply in practice. So most often, as the above authors mentioned, aggressiveness is studied by applying indirect methods, which can be split into two groups. One group embraces research carried out under laboratory conditions by building or simulating various provocative life situations of aggression. The other group involves studies where the frequency of aggressive actions or inclination to behave that way is assessed with the help of different scales and questionnaires. The latter include the widely used Buss and Perry or Buss Darkee questionnaires on aggression. Research on human reaction to anger-provoking hypothetical situations also belongs to that group; here survey participants are inquired about their possible behavioural motives and choices. According to the authors of this work, their method of investigation allowed to evaluate students' intentions to act in hypothetical cases, which can lead to discontent and rage in the academic environment.

Primarily, to be able to analyse students' behaviour in frustrating cases at school, it was necessary to build the hypothetical situations themselves. In construction of those situations, the data of another research on the issues of adolescent and young people's violence, bullying, and conflicted behaviour were used (Jankauskienė et al., 2008; Čiudalienė, 2006; 2007; Targamadžė, Valeckienė, 2007; Winstok, Enosh, 2007). Additionally, other researchers and trainers working on students' behaviour problems were consulted. Consequently, direct physical aggression experienced by students, attempts to damage their personal belongings, or shared property, public gossip about the members of school community, false accusations of them in front of other students, etc. are described in student discontent and anger-provoking cases.

The discussion about discontent-provoking situations among students was also linked with the alternative selections of responsive behaviour. Anger is considered a basic human emotion (Smith et al., 1998), which may vary in intensity from mild irritation to unfettered rage (Spielberger, 1988 – cited by Smith et al., 1998). Saarni (1999 – cited by Champion, Clay, 2007) states that the function of anger is to motivate and organize resistance to frustration and displays of dominance. Thus, the direct expression of anger serves to assert dominance and/or remove a frustrating circumstance. Some theorists suggested that the anger construct includes not only an emotional component, but cognitive and behavioural aspects, too (Spielberger, 1988 – cited by Smith et al., 1998). A cognitive component underlines one's interpretation of potential anger-provoking situations and the behavioural component describes one's characteristic manner of responding to anger-inducing events. Hereby, adolescents and young people may simply feel anger in such situations but not necessarily react to aggression, which, in its turn, may be one of behavioural alternatives. Thus, anger is the first alternative of reaction in anger-inducing cases.

Aggression is regarded as any behaviour (physical or verbal) that is performed with the intention to harm someone (either physically or psychologically) (Berkowitz, 1987). This definition, however, is not sole. Bražienė, Mockienė, and Bružienė (2008), having carried out theoretical analysis of the conception of aggressive behaviour, noticed that aggression is mainly linked to offensive actions and seldom with responsive ones when some obstacles, physical or verbal human actions, etc. occur. In addition, it can be noticed that aggression is not a unitary construct and there exist different forms of it (Xie et al., 2002). Some aggressive behaviour is prototypic, such as physical and verbal aggression. Other forms are less prototypic, but have the potential to produce pain. These include hurtful acts that are less open, more disguised, indirect, and manipulative. Effectiveness of some forms of aggression is not dependent upon the mediation of other individuals in the social networks (as confrontational aggression); some depend on it (as non-confrontational aggression). It should be pointed out that various types of aggression could be differentiated: instrumental, reactive, physical, verbal, etc. ones (Bražienė et al., 2008). Despite the fact that some forms are more typical and may manifest more frequently (physical and verbal aggression), and others are not so typical - all of them are potentially harmful. In addition, other persons (Xie et al., 2002) incite not all types of aggression. Aggressive behaviour being possibly one of the ways of students' reaction in annoyance-induced cases, particularly physical and verbal types of aggression, as a second selected alternative, were chosen to formulate replies to the questionnaire. Some scientists claim that aggression is not just a negative behaviour, and they speak about non-destructive aggression, which is defined as a persistent, benign behaviour of self-defence aimed at the target (Паренс, 1997 – cited by Bražienė et al., 2008). This is an innate personality mechanism that helps to adapt, to meet the wishes of achieving cognitive goals, and rely on themselves to compete in the environment, as well as to protect their rights (ibid.). Moreover, there are scientists who do not consider such behaviour aggressive at all (Parry, 2002). It may be assumed that some of the students in frustrating situations may react exactly this way, i.e. to choose self-defence behaviour.

Although most often, it is likely that frustrating situations may arouse anger or make a person act aggressively, or, otherwise, defend themselves without using any aggression, there exist two more alternative choices. In such situations, some young people may decide to retreat, and some of them may ignore the conflict completely, and consequently not react to it at all.

To sum up the analysed theoretical outcomes, five probable alternatives related to intentions of behaviour in provoking situations were selected: doing nothing (silence), retreat, anger (annoyance without passing on specific actions), self-defensive behaviour, and aggressive behaviour.

Research data in scientific literature show that physical aggression is more characteristic for boys than for girls (Taper, Bulton, 2004; Xie et al., 2002). In provoking situations, young men are also apt to respond by aggressive actions more often (Champion, Clay, 2007). Hence, the **Hypothesis (H1)** was put forward in the research embodying the idea *that in anger-provoking situations at school, boys would prefer aggressive feedback as a form of response more*. Considering lack of research analysis on adolescent aggressive behaviour in frustrating situations, the study was carried out containing differences in reactions in various cases by age; however, no particular hypothesis was raised in this context. **Hypothesis 2 (H2)** was checked, and it indicates *that more frequent aggressive respondents in provoking situation are regularly exercising students*. This assumption is urgent considering the abundant number of students going to workouts; moreover, today more and more students are choosing various branches of martial arts training (Šukys, 2008). This assumption was determined by the aim to increase students' employment in a variety of after school sports clubs activities and the expansion of them, as well as a multiplicity of scientific publications that discuss the aggression in sports and the aggressive behaviour of athletes (Conroy et al., 2001; Hoffman, 2006; Chow et al., 2009; Gardner et al., 2009)

Research methodology

The investigation of student behaviour in resentment-provoking situations was implemented in four stages. In the process, student anger-provoking cases were constructed, the reliability and validity of the questionnaire assessed, and data on student behaviour under particular conditions analysed.

The first stage of the survey. In order to investigate students' potential intention to act aggressively in frustrating situations, first, situations of conflict were constructed. It is situations, rather than the selection of questions, that determined the nature of the existing questionnaire, which was adapted to investigate adult reactions to provocative situations (O'Connor et al., 2001). Because it was designed for adults, directly built situations could not be applicable for children. Thus, based on existing studies on violence and bullying at school, and by consulting other researchers as well as educators, 25 situations have been developed. To verify how close to reality the situations were, a survey by interviewing 100 students was carried out. Students were asked to evaluate the cases by articulating their personal views about how often they themselves had to deal with the similar situations; they were to rate situations by choosing one of five response options from *very often* to *never*. Afterwards, the same target group was asked to express their opinion as to how often other students could encounter such situations (the realism of the case was a priority) by selecting one of five response options from *never* to *very often*. At the end of the questionnaire, students were required to point out other cases (not mentioned in the survey) that caused or could cause their frustration.

When analysis of the preliminary survey data was done, the researchers decided to reject several situations and replace them with a few new ones. Situations were denied if at least 25 per cent of students insisted they had never personally faced such cases and argued that the rest students could not have met them, too. Additionally, several possible cases were withdrawn when it was decided they were not directly related to the school environment. New situations were included if they were mentioned by more than 25 per cent of the surveyed students. A questionnaire embracing 15 situations was compiled.

The second stage of the survey. It was a second trial to test the reliability of the questionnaire situations that caused students' discontent. The form was presented to one hundred of 8 – 9 grade students. By assessing each situation separately, the students could choose one of five possible behavioural alternatives. These alternatives have been adapted to the specific situation; in their sense, however, they expressed the following response forms: silence (to be ignored, do nothing in the situation), anger/frustration (for example, a response option *"I'd be angry with the teacher for a false accusation"*), retreat (for example, a response option *"I would change the seat somewhere further away in the room"*), self-defence behaviour (for example, a response option *"I'd stop and turn around by saying to stop pushing me"*), and finally, physical or verbal aggression (for example, a response option *"By turning around, I'd push the guy closest to me"*). The survey was repeated with the same students after a month. During the process of assessment of the intentions to act in frustrating situations, the recurrence of a possible corresponding behavioural alternative (one of five) in all 15 situations was recorded. Reliability was assessed by making calculations on the difference between the data of the first and second surveys. The statistically unreliable difference was determined in the assessment of all behavioural options ($p > 0.05$).

The third stage of research. In this stage, in order to determine the validity of the questionnaire construct in the rural Kaunas District, 404 eighth- eleventh grade students were polled (200 young men and 204 young women participated in the survey). When assessing each of the 15 situations, students were to select one of five alternatives of potential behaviour. For the analysis of the data, cumulative scores of corresponding response options for the assessment of all situations were calculated.

In this survey stage, students were assessing every situation, and additionally, they were asked to evaluate those cases on anger and dismay scales, i.e., how much anger it would cause (starting with 0 – not angry at all, finishing with

4 – mad, angry very much) and how upset they could be (from 0 – not upset, to 4 – deeply upset). The assessment of anger and dismay scales provides an adequate internal consistency score (Cronbach's alpha - 0,89 and 0,93).

Questionnaire on aggression consisting of 29 statements was also presented to the students (Buss, Perry, 1992); earlier, the form was used to investigate children (Dumčienė, Klizas, 2010), and adults (Česniene, Kašinska, 2011). This form reveals four types of aggression: physical aggression, verbal aggression, anger, and hostility. The students had to assess each statement on a five-point scale: from one – this is not typical of me, to five – this is very typical of me. When working on the results of the survey, the cumulative score of every type of aggression was calculated. Internal consistency index Cronbach's alpha of subscales ranged from 0.59 (verbal aggression) to 0.73 (physical aggression).

While assessing the validity of the questionnaire on potential behaviour in provoking situations, the correlation between the two behavioural options (self-defensive behaviour and aggressive behaviour), and between the aggression questionnaire and anger and dismay scales results were tested. The criterion of the questionnaire validity was considered to be the positive correlation between the potentially aggressive behaviour in anger-provoking situations and aggression scales and the aggression questionnaire results, and, correspondingly, weak correlation between the behaviour of self-defence, and the anger and aggression questionnaire results. Correlation was tested by calculating the Spearman's rank correlation coefficient.

The fourth stage of the survey. The expression of student potential behaviour in anger-provoking situations at school was aimed at in this stage of the survey.

Participants. During the survey, a randomly drawn sample of rural Kaunas district seventh - tenth-grade students was taken, the volume of which was calculated as based on the number of students in the definite population. With the 95 per cent reliability and 0.05 per cent error, the volume of the sample was calculated for the seventh ($n = 288$), eighth ($n = 285$), ninth–first high school grades ($n=285$), and tenth-second high school grades ($n = 296$). Thus, the whole study volume of the sample embodied 1154 students. Students were selected by cluster sampling, i.e., by randomly selecting schools from a list of schools that interviewed one grade of each age group. The total number of students surveyed was 1192, but excluding 61 questionnaire form, there were 1131 (569 girls and 562 boys) student data analysed in the work.

Methods of investigation. The survey method of writing was used in the research. The student potential behaviour in frustrating situations was investigated by applying the already described schedule of 15 situations. In assessing the likely response for experimental situations, recurrence of a specific response (one out of five possible) in all 15 situations is calculated. Survey students were also asked to indicate their gender and grade.

Students' exercising was studied by asking a question with three response alternatives, "Yes, I attend sports training, seek results in sports, and desire to participate in competitions"; "I exercise in my free time to keep fit, but do not go to sports training, do not aim at high sports results", and "I keep exercising and play sports just in physical education classes". When analysing the data, the students were divided into two groups: active training (those who chose the first alternative response) and non-active athletes (they included those students who chose the second or the third variant). In addition, students were asked to indicate the sport they were going in for and how long they had done that.

The survey procedure. The survey of students was arranged with the Education Centre of Kaunas District, school headmasters. The selected schools were visited under the timing of interviews. The survey took place in the class during the school time. A school social trainer or a psychologist took part in the interviewing of students. Before the start of the survey, students were always instructed about the purpose of research, as well as they were provided with information on form filling. The anonymity and possibility to refuse participation in the survey was always emphasized.

Statistical analysis. While processing the survey data, the arithmetic mean (M) and the standard deviation (SD), as well as percentage distribution, were calculated. To determine the relationship between the variables, the Spearman's rank correlation coefficient was applied. Testing hypotheses about group equality, the Mann -Whitney U test and the chi-square test (χ^2) were applied. Statistical analysis was performed using SPSS 13.0 for Windows programme.

Research results

The data presented in Table 1, show a reliable correlation between potential reactions to aggression-provoking situations. The strongest correlation was established between the aggressive behaviour and physical aggression scale ($r = 0.45$). It also established a reliable correlation between aggressive behaviour and anger-frustration-provoking situations ($r = 0.35$). Accordingly, there was observed a negative correlation between aggressive behaviour and self-defensive behaviour ($r = -0.28$). So, assumptions regarding the existing correlations between the intended behaviour in discontent-provoking situations, experienced anger, and aggression questionnaire data were confirmed.

The analysis of student intentions to behave aggressively in frustrating situations at school, allowed to identify that self-defensive behaviour (M (SD) = 3.74 (2.31)) or reaction by aggression (M (SD) = 3.51 (2.93)) would be used most often. Students' retreat (M (SD) = 0.72 (0.98)), in such cases, would be least expected. Speaking about the potential behaviour of students in particular cases, it should be noted that students would react more aggressively if other learners spoiled their personal belongings (52.0 %), if they suffered from direct physical aggression near school (46.7 %), if they experienced indirect physical aggression in class (40.2 %), if they were slandered in public (37.6 %), and when the teacher wrongly accused them in the face of the other students in the classroom (37.6%).

Table 1. Data on descriptive statistics of anger, dismay scales, and types of aggression, and correlation of students' potential reactions by aggressive self-defence behaviour in discontent-provoking situations

Investigated features	Features Mean M(SD)	Degree of correlation among the features of research							
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Self-defensive behaviour	3.36 (2.50)	-							
2. Aggressive behaviour	4.31 (3.43)	-0.28**	-						
3. General anger	28.87 (11.03)	0.14**	0.35**	-					
4. General dismay	14.48 (12.58)	0.13*	0.02	0.39**	-				
5. Physical aggression	24.76 (6.90)	-0.19**	0.45**	0.19**	-0.07	-			
6. Verbal aggression	14.47 (3.94)	0.03	0.23**	0.15**	-0.01	0.47**	-		
7. Anger	18.84 (5.27)	-0.02	0.27**	0.21**	0.01	0.59**	0.56**	-	
8. Hostility	21.41 (5.49)	0.02	0.14**	0.24**	.11*	0.39**	0.45**	0.48**	-

Note: * - p<0.05; ** - p<0.01.

It was established that boys and girls would react differently in the following situations (see Table 2). Self-defensive behaviour is more characteristic for girls (U = 103449.5; p = 0.001), aggressive behaviour is more typical of boys (U = 103777.0; p = 0.001). Only one statistically significant difference was distinguished when assessing the survey results in different age groups – self-defensive behaviour is more characteristic for the young adults from senior grades (especially typical of ninth- grade learners) (programme ($\chi^2 = 11.03$ (3); p = 0.01).

Table 2. Distribution of the students' potential reactions in discontent-provoking situations by gender and age.

Investigated features	Gender		Age			
	Boys	Girls	7th grades	8th grades	9th grades	10th grades
	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)
Silent reaction	2.52 (2.23)	2.37 (2.26)	2.50 (2.23)	2.39 (2.32)	2.40 (2.29)	2.47 (2.14)
Anger	1.37 (1.56)	1.80 (1.57)**	1.62 (1.60)	1.52 (1.60)	1.58 (1.46)	1.62 (1.64)
Retreat	0.66 (0.95)	0.77 (1.01)*	0.90 (1.19)	0.65 (0.90)	0.72 (0.97)	0.60 (0.81)
Self-defensive behaviour	3.05 (2.13)	4.43 (2.27)**	3.38 (2.23)	3.79 (2.28)	3.99 (2.43)	3.84 (2.26)**
Aggressive behaviour	4.41 (3.02)	2.63 (2.54)**	3.59 (3.04)	3.66 (2.96)	3.31 (2.72)	3.48 (2.96)

Note: * - p<0.05; ** - p<0.01; *** - p<0.001.

The survey revealed that 35.5 % of students attend sports training regularly. 21.8 % of students exercise only in physical education classes, and the rest (42.8 %) go in for sports by themselves or with their friends in their leisure time; however, these activities are irregular, those students do not aim at any achievements in sports. It should be noted that boys are more active in exercising than girls (correspondingly, 45.4 and 25.5 % attend sports training, and 12.5 and 31.1 % respectively are only exercising in physical education classes, ($\chi^2 = 76.77$ (2); p = 0.001). Student exercising varies according to age ($\chi^2 = 19.28$; (6); p = 0.01). Going into the research data, however, the fact may be pointed out that this difference is dominated by the higher number of active seventh grade athletes.

When checking the second hypothesis that was raised at the beginning of the survey, the data about active athletes and passive students were compared. The data presented in Table 3 demonstrate that actively exercising students are aggressive in discontent-provoking situations at school more often (U = 11999.5; p = 0.001). Respectively, those who rarely attend gym classes would not react in such situations at all (U = 133328.5; p = 0.01). The assessment of the survey results in the groups of girls and boys separately, singled out similar trends. Attention should be paid, however, to actively training girls who, compared to non-athletes, would behave aggressively in presented situations much more often (respectively, M (SD) = 3.1 (2.81) and 2.43 (2.41) accordingly, U = 25760.0; p = 0.003). The same tendency has been determined among the boys.

Table 3. Distribution of the students' potential behaviour in discontent-provoking situations by their exercising and experience in sports

Investigated features	Participation in sports		Experience in sports	
	Athletes M (SD)	Non- athletes M (SD)	<3 years M (SD)	≥3 years M (SD)
Silent reaction	2.25 (2.24)	2.54 (2.24)**	2.10 (2.09)	2.49 (2.38)
Anger	1.33 (1.56)	1.73 (1.57)**	1.39 (1.65)	1.28 (1.53)
Retreat	0.70 (1.01)	0.72 (0.97)	0.81 (1.11)	0.57 (0.88)*
Self-defensive behaviour	3.60 (2.32)	3.83 (2.30)	3.62 (2.24)	3.62 (2.36)
Aggressive behaviour	4.12 (3.08)	3.18 (2.79)**	4.07 (3.05)	4.05 (3.04)

Note: * - p<0.05; ** - p<0.01; *** - p<0.001.

As the student sport experience in a chosen field of sports is different, they were divided into two groups (according to the median length of sports): athletes training less than three years (49.2%) and students training three years and longer (50.8%). While doing analysis of the students' intentions to react in frustrating situations at school, different sport experience was taken into account, and the results showed that students with longer sporting experience demonstrate less willingness to retreat in those particular cases compared to students with less sporting experience (U = 15501.5; p = 0.03) (Table 3). Additionally, the student research results by their fields of sports were compared.

Considering the fact that students attend workouts in different fields of sports (totally, there were 12 fields of sports mentioned), they were divided into three groups: team sports (e.g., basketball, football, volleyball, etc.), combat sports (boxing, karate, judo, etc.), and individual sports (e.g., track and field athletics, swim, etc.). The analysis of the survey results, however, did not bring out statistically significant differences in the student behaviour regarding discontent-provoking situations at school, when students, who train in different sports, were compared. It is noteworthy, that students engaged in playing sports tend to behave more aggressively in these situations, those training in combat sports are less aggressive, and the students occupied in individual sports training are least aggressive.

Discussion

The aim of the research was to find out students' potential intentions to behave in discontent-provoking situations at school. By using a questionnaire of 15 positions, the typical reactions of students were determined: aggression or self-defence. Such results are not a surprise; investigations carried out earlier by other scientists (Xie et al., 2002) also revealed that most students consider aggression as an appropriate form of behaviour in the cases of conflict; nevertheless, when interrogated personally, only every fifth student confessed they would act aggressively. The survey disclosed that boys, more often than girls in such situations, would respond by aggressive actions, and this fact just helped to confirm the first hypothesis presented at the beginning of the survey. It is important to note that, in provoking situations, it is typical of girls to react by demonstrating self-defensive behaviour, i.e. they put efforts to defend themselves, to protect their rights, but they act without aggression. This approach coincides with the data of other investigators, witnessing that boys are provoked to act aggressively by other students' behaviour more often (Tapper, Boulton, 2004; Champion, Clay, 2007).

The hypothesis about the dependence of student intentions to react in anger-provoking situations and their age was not brought forward in the survey. The investigation regarding age impact, however, was carried out in the survey; the results did not reveal essential differences in potential reactions in definite situations, considering different age groups. Nevertheless, it should be noted that senior students do not tend to react by aggressive behaviour in provoking situations. On the other hand, adolescent students – seventh grade pupils - do not practise self-defensive behaviour much. This allows assuming that younger students frequently behave aggressively, instead of reacting in a more socially adaptable way and keep their self-esteem. Teachers should pay particular attention to the behaviour of students of different ages in various situations of conflict and teach socially desirable behaviour. Additionally, every third student would react aggressively (verbal aggression) to the teacher's injustice against them, especially, done in the eyes of other students. The fact indicates the importance of the teacher's responsible behaviour with students. Quite often, students would react aggressively if other adolescents impinged upon spoiling their personal belongings, as well as students experiencing not only direct but also indirect physical aggression, i.e., when other students behaved unintentionally and did not want to cause pain or harm. Consequently, educators should not stay indifferent in situations of conflict, as well as in, seemingly, common daily situations (e.g., when too much noise in the class disturbs students, and they cannot concentrate, etc.).

The survey repeats the data from other research, which states that every third student on average attends sport training, this activity is more popular among young men (Šukys, 2008). The research data on student potential behaviour in discontent-provoking situations confirmed the hypothesis at the beginning of the survey that regularly exercising students would react more aggressively in those particular situations than their non-athlete peers. Sporty students may be incited to react aggressively in provoking situations because of their physical strength developed at workouts, as well as the learnt behaviour in sports to seek their aim with the help of force and aggression (Gard, Meyenn, 2000). The aggressiveness of athletes may be also explained by characteristic egocentric behavioural solutions (Berdemeier, Shields, 2001). Thus, in the investigated cases, athletes may have thought the following: "You have done some wrong to me, so I will teach you." Notwithstanding the fact, the data about exercising students does not allow affirm they are generally more aggressive in a daily life. Potential behaviour of students with different sport experience in the investigated cases brings to specific reflections. The length of sport experience was not a determining factor to assess students' intentions react aggressively in the presented cases.

To summarise the survey results, we should point out the fact that, for the first time, a questionnaire form was created and used in the research. The reliability and validity of the questionnaire was proven in the pilot studies, however, some aspects of the survey need particular attention. Already in the first, and especially in the second pilot survey, the students often noticed, that their possible behaviour in definite situations would depend on the age of provoking students. In the presented situations, it was written "other students." So, at the start of the third and fourth survey we used to emphasise to the participants that those "other students" were to be viewed as the same age students. If other researchers use this questionnaire, they ought to pay attention to this factor or underline it in particular situations.

Conclusions

The reform of education and educational institutions optimise the network in rural areas, which is particularly relevant when assessing the consequences of the quality of acquired knowledge, also shaping the behaviour of the young people.

The research data showed that in anger-provoking situations at school students would most likely decide on aggressive or self-defensive behaviour. Most often, the aggressive behaviour of students may be induced by the situations when there is any threat to their personal belongings, when the students face direct or indirect physical aggression, when the students are publicly slandered or the educator breaches the principles of justice in communication in the presence of other students.

The course of the survey confirmed the hypothesis (*H1*) that in these situations, boys would react by aggressive behaviour more often, and girls are prone to self-defensive behaviour. None statistically essential differences were established between various age groups of students, when the assessment of reactions followed by aggressive behaviour in the cases of discontent was carried out.

The research data also confirmed the hypothesis (*H2*) that students who are engaged in sports are more apt to behave aggressively in anger-provoking situations at school. The relationship between the cultivated sport and student intentions to behave aggressively in investigated cases was not identified. Similarly, no differences were found between intentions of the students with different sports experience to behave aggressively, with the exception that more exercising students are less likely to retreat in discontent-provoking situations.

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