

# **Bullying in School: Case Study of Prevention and Psycho-Pedagogical Correction**

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The purpose of the study was the theoretical justification and experimental verification of content, complex forms and methods to ensure effective prevention and psycho-pedagogical correction of bullying in school. 53 teenage students from Kazan took part in the experiment. A complex of diagnostic techniques for the detection of violence and bullying in the school environment was used: «Questionnaire for diagnosis of violence and bullying at school» by Su-Jeong Kim (V. R. Petrosyants's modification), The Buss-Durkee Hostility Inventory (BDI), Emotional Empathic Tendency Scale (EETS) by A. Mehrabian & N. Epstein. Based on the results of ascertaining experiment, a program containing the forms and methods of prevention and psycho-pedagogical correction of bullying among younger teenagers in school was developed. Statistical analysis of empirical research was carried out by standard techniques of mathematical statistics (t-Student's t test, Pearson's correlation coefficient).

*Keywords:* bullying, prevention, correction, school, younger teenager

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Relevance of the problem**

The problem of violence and aggression is studied for many years, and these phenomena reach enormous proportions. Teachers and school psychologists are increasingly turning their attention to the problem of violence among students. In Russia, the violence at school was called baiting. Foreign researchers call this phenomenon bullying, which now began to take root in the Russian pedagogy.

In spite of the new term, bullying describes the old phenomenon: children's cruelty. To date, this phenomenon has acquired special urgency. Educators and psychologists around the world are seriously alarmed by the problem of violence in children's groups. In early adolescence the problem of bullying is particularly important because, at this age, having learned certain kind of behavior, such as the behavior of a "victim", the person may have to follow it in the future. It should be noted that the situation of bullying negatively affects not only the "victims", but also the "persecutors". If the aggression demonstration has a satisfactory effect for the

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child, it can be fixed as the dominant style of behavior in later life. On this basis, it can be said that school violence (bullying) requires particular attention in the low teens.

In Russian psychological and pedagogical studies, the problem of bullying was not researched for a long time. There was not even a scientific term for this problem, since the concept of "baiting" can hardly be attributed to the term "bullying". In this regard, although bullying has extreme importance, it is difficult to find information about it in the Russian studies. While in the West, the problem of bullying has gained one of the dominant positions.

Some researches call bullying serious acts of aggression, others - any insults and threats. In any case it is clear that we are talking about a serious and widespread phenomenon.

The media often gives information about the complex situation in schools. We are all more often informed about children bullying teachers and classmates. But in this case the newspapers or TV show just the tip of the iceberg. Its main part will only appear in the global network or it remains unavailable to the masses. Though the problem is widely discussed, the real actions to solve it are not observed. According to E. N. Pronin (2008), violent relationships between students in our time are something common. Indeed, each school has at least one class, having this problem.

## **Problem statement**

The relevance of the chosen topic is determined by the fact that today the problem of bullying in the school environment becomes wider, affecting all parts of the school. Younger teens' problem of school bullying has its own characteristics. This age is very important for children's intimate-personal communication and strengthening their position in the team. In order to get the highest position among classmates, some students may use bullying (Kostyunina & Valeeva, 2015).

In the situation of bullying younger teens can take one of three forms of deviant behavior: conformal, victimization or aggression, and accordingly they assume the role of a witness, victim or persecutor (Tagunova et al., 2016). Children, who are victims of bullying from classmates, don't often speak about it. That's why the inner circle of the child should be alert to any changes in the child's behavior, as there are certain behavioral characteristics typical for victims of bullying.

The analysis of scientific literature shows that the prevention and investigation of the problem of psycho- pedagogical correction of bullying began in 1905, when the first works were published on the topic of school bullying. The pioneers in this area, who conducted the first systematic study of the bullying problems, are Scandinavian scientists D. Olweus (1978), E. Roland & E. Munthe (1989). Moreover, D. Olweus is the most influential researcher of the bullying problem. Later new researches appeared in the UK (Tattum & Lane, 1988). In the early nineties of the twentieth century particular attention to the problem of bullying is paid in the United States.

There is quite a wide variety of definitions of bullying. But there is no indicated, clearly formulated and universally accepted definition of the term. Authors studying this phenomenon, give the definition of bullying, based on their understanding.

For example, the therapist I. S. Berdyshev gives the following definition of bullying: "a conscious, sustained violence, not having the character of self-defense and coming from one or more persons" (Berdyshev, 2005, 3).

The sociologist I. S. Kon believes that bullying is "intimidation, physical or psychological terror that seeks to cause fear in another, and thus subjugate it" (Kon, 2006, 15).

C. M. Arora (1994) calls bullying the actions that are observable and have a place in the communication between young people at school and are the cause of resentment and stress.

V. E. Besag (1989) investigated the problem of bullying in schools, and concluded that bullying is a behavior which can be defined as repeated physical, psychological, verbal, or social attacks of those whose power is situational or formally above, on those who don't have the possibility to protect themselves, with the intent to cause suffering and to achieve personal satisfaction.

Based on the works of D. A. Lane (2001) and E. Roland (1989) the Russian scientist E. P. Ilyin (2014), defines bullying as a systematic long-term physical or mental violence, carried out by one person or group and directed against a person who is unable to defend himself in the actual situation with the conscious desire to hurt, frighten or to subject prolonged stress.

In order to disclose the essence of bullying, it is necessary to consider the "bullying-structure" suggested by E. Roland (1989). It is a social system that includes offenders (pursuers, aggressors, hooligans), and their victims and witnesses (observers).

#### "Offenders"

D. Olweus (1978) notes that "offenders" can be described as individuals with high potential of general aggression. They "attack" not only their victims, but also the family and teachers, and have more positive attitude toward aggression than the "witnesses" and "victims". They demonstrate lack of empathy for "victims" and have relatively high need to dominate over others. The "offenders" also have a strong need in the management of children and getting satisfaction from their subordination.

Any child can become a victim, but usually someone who is somehow different from the others or weaker is chosen. The most frequent victims of school violence are children who have weaknesses in physical development, specific appearance or behavior. Very often withdrawn children (phlegmatic and introverts) or, conversely, children with impulsive behavior become the victims of ridicule and aggression. Hyperactive children may act both as victims and offenders, and often at the same time here and there. School phobia, poor social skills, the lack of group interaction experience (home children), learning difficulties and low intelligence, some disease often make the children victims of bullying.

#### "Witnesses"

It's difficult to highlight characteristic features of a "witness". This is due to the fact that in situations of bullying, the majority of children in all its diversity and variety act as "witnesses". It was revealed that because of the feeling of their own helplessness, self-esteem of these children is markedly reduced. Outside observers often talk about their sense of powerlessness and guilt. S. Askew (1989) argues that in a situation of bullying not only the "victim" suffers, but surrounding people as well not having the strength and opportunity to rebuff abuser.

Numerous studies show that the manifestations of bullying in school are due primarily to the fact that school - is a universal arena, a place for children to release their accumulated home negative impulses. The school children set certain role relationships between "a leader and a rogue". Another factor that contributes to the vitality of bullying in school is the inability of teachers to work out this problem.

Researchers of school bullying define the following forms in which it is expressed. Thus, D. A. Lane (2001) speaks of physical and mental violence; I. S. Berdyshev (2005) asserts the existence of behavioral, verbal and actual aggressive bullying, with the presence of physical violence; T. S. Mertsalova (2000) emphasizes the existence of emotional, physical, verbal and mental abuse.

School bullying includes certain actions of the pursuer against a victim, but they are aimed, according to I. G. Malkina-Pykh (2005), to humiliation by physical, emotional or economic violence and aggression. Let us dwell on the content of each of the above mentioned types of violence.

Physical violence is the use of physical force against a student, classmate, resulting in possible severe physical injuries of varying severity. Physical violence includes striking, cuffs, beating, slapping, and property damage. As a result of these actions books, clothing and other personal belongings of the victims may be damaged, stolen or hidden. In some cases, they use of the weapon, for example knives. According to I. G. Malkina-Pykh (2005), this behavior is more common among boys. Very often physical violence is accompanied by emotions. The use of physical force may continue for a long time, thus causing the victims' traumatic experiences.

Emotional abuse, causing the victim's emotional stress, lowers his self-esteem and humiliates him. In this case, the main weapon is the voice. There are several types of emotional abuse:

- refusal of communication with the victim, isolation, rejection. As a rule, the use of this method initiates a bully. The victim is deliberately ignored by a part of a class or a class, he is expelled or isolated. It is often accompanied by humiliating slogans on the board or in public places, whispered insults that can be heard by the victim, the spread of the notes that have offensive content. In this case, they refuse to deal with a child, Don't play with him, don't invite him/her to birthday parties, do not want him to sit at the same desk, etc.;

- biased evaluation and endless notes, assigning nicknames, which are constantly turning to the child, thereby insulting and injuring him, ridicule, mockery, humiliation in front of other children, and so on. This kind of bullying is often used against the victims, having high or low academic performance, obvious differences in physical appearance, accent or voice features. Name-calling can also be in the form of hints about the student's alleged sexual orientation. The use of anonymous phone calls - quite a common form of verbal bullying, when not only students, but even teachers may become victims;

Economic violence presupposes the use of money to control another person. In this case the victim is demanded money, and if he/she does not give it immediately, threats followed. In school breakfasts, money or coupons for lunch can also be extorted. It is also possible to force the victim to steal property. This tactic is used solely to make blame fall on the victim.

Researcher O. A. Maltseva (2009) writes about a new kind of school bullying – cyber-bullying, i.e. victim receives abuse by e-mail or through other electronic devices.

Thus, bullying can be considered as intentional, repeated (long ), psychological or physical violence, not having the character of self-defense or authorized by regulations of the state, which comes from one person or group having certain advantages (administrative, psychological, physical) with respect to a person, and which occurs mainly in organized groups with a specific personal goal.

Bullying is largely hidden to others process, but because of its latency it is not less dangerous. Children, who are subjected to harassment, may receive psychological trauma of varying severity, with possible negative consequences. It does not matter whether it was physical or psychological bullying. Preventing school violence is one of the most important tasks of the teaching staff, as the cruel treatment of a child inevitably leads to serious consequences.

Analysis of the problem of bullying in psychological and pedagogical literature and practice made possible to reveal a contradiction between the increasing need for active work aimed at combating school violence and the insufficient development of the content, forms and methods of preventive and corrective work aimed at reducing bullying in school.

## **METHODS**

### **The tasks of the research**

The purpose of the study was the theoretical justification and experimental verification of content, complex forms and methods to ensure effective prevention and psycho-pedagogical correction of bullying in school.

### **Theoretical and empirical methods**

In compliance with the goal, the following methods have been selected:

1) theoretical (study and analysis of pedagogical and psychological literature on the study, comparison, generalization),

2) empirical (notes forming, control experiment).

The results were processed with Student's t-criterion.

In order to identify violence and bullying in the school environment, "Questionnaire for diagnosis of violence and bullying at school" by Su-Jeong Kim (V. R. Petrosyants's modification) (Kim, 2004; Petrosyants, 2011), the Buss-Durkee Hostility Inventory (BDI) (Buss & Durkee, 1957), Emotional Empathic Tendency Scale (EETS) by A. Mehrabian & N. Epstein (Mehrabian & Epstein, 1972) were used.

Questionnaire for diagnosis of violence and bullying at school by Su-Jeong Kim (2004) (Petrosyants's (2011) modification) consists of two parts. The first part – "Violence in Schools" (12 points), the second – "The situation of bullying at school" (11 points). This modification provides an assessment of most of the indicators of bullying, we have reflected in the theoretical review. Its purpose is to study the frequency of violence (psychological and physical), experienced and shown by a child, as well as realizing himself a persecutor or a victim of psychological / physical violence. The questionnaire addresses issues that evaluate experience in bullying and are taken from the questionnaire by T. Kwak & S. Lee (1988), some questions were added by the author from the modified version. Furthermore, V. R. Petrosyants (2011) took questions about the frequency of bullying by different methods (7 points) from the D. Olweus's questionnaire (Olweus, 1978). Methods passed the procedure of checking the validity and reliability of the questionnaire.

«Questionnaire for diagnosis of violence and bullying at school» by Su-Jeong Kim (2004) (Petrosyants's (2011) modification) reveals the following levels of bullying among students:

100-71 points – a high level of the bullying problem. Children point out the presence of violence in school, a variety of types of bullying in relation to the students. Children experience negative emotions, fear, hatred, anger, horror, depression, apathy. Children note the presence of physical and mental violence.

70-40 points – the average level is characterized by the presence of violence in school; children experience negative emotions and the desire to respond in the same way; physical violence is dominating.

39-0 points – the lowest level is characterized by stable emotional atmosphere, the lack of physical and mental violence, the absence of negative emotions.

The Buss-Durkee Hostility Inventory (BDI) (Buss & Durkee, 1957) reveals the following reactions: physical aggression (the use of physical force against another person); indirect aggression aimed detour to another person; irritation (a willingness to manifest negative feelings at the slightest excitation (temper, rudeness); negativism (opposition in the manner of behavior from passive to active struggle against the established customs and laws); resentment (envy and hatred of the real and imaginary deeds); suspicion (from mistrust and caution in relation to the others to the belief that other people are planning to bring harm); verbal aggression (verbal expression of negative feelings); guilt expressing the person's

conviction- being a bad man that went wrong, as well as his pricks of conscience. The technique also allows you to allocate the index of hostility (resentment and suspicion) and the index of aggression (physical aggression, anger, verbal aggression).

Emotional Empathic Tendency Scale (EETS) by A. Mehrabian & N. Epstein (1972) consists of 33 proposals, approvals. During the study of the younger teens' capacity for empathy, four groups were distinguished: a high level of empathic tendencies, the average level of empathic tendencies, low empathic tendencies, very low level of empathic tendencies.

## **The trial infrastructure and stages of the research**

An empirical study was conducted on the basis of the Gymnasium № 40 in Kazan (Republic of Tatarstan, Russia). 53 junior teenagers took part in the experiment. The study was conducted in three stages: ascertaining, formative and controlling.

The aim of ascertaining experiment was to determine the baseline empathic tendencies, indicators of aggressiveness of adolescents, the level of bullying, and the overall presence of bullying in a group. Based on these results the program was developed containing a variety of forms and methods of prevention and psycho-pedagogical correction of bullying in school.

The purpose of the formative experiment was testing the program "Hand in Hand", aimed at the prevention and psycho-pedagogical correction of bullying in school. In the control phase of our experiment, we evaluated the effectiveness of the forms and methods of prevention and psycho-pedagogical correction of younger teenagers' bullying. At this stage, we have identified the level of all the studied parameters and studied their dynamics.

Comparing the results that were obtained on ascertaining and control stages of the experiment, it was found out whether the correct forms and methods of psycho-pedagogical correction were applied and how they had reduced the situation of bullying in school. The experimental study was carried out in natural conditions of the educational process of the school.

## **Experimental procedure and its description**

Initially, respondents were asked to answer the "Questionnaire for diagnosis of violence and bullying at school" by Su-Jeong Kim (V. R. Petrosyants's modification) (Kim, 2004; Petrosyants, 2011).

With this technique, we identified particular manifestations of bullying in school, how respondents react in the situation of bullying, their attitudes, as well as how often they exposed bullying.

Next to that, we used the Buss-Durkee Hostility Inventory (BDI) (Buss & Durkee, 1957) to identify different types of aggression, characteristic of teenagers.

Responses are measured on eight scales as follows:

1. Physical aggression: "yes" = 1, "no" = 0: 1, 25, 31, 41, 48, 55, 62, 68; "no" = 1, "да" = 0: 9 и 7.
2. Indirect aggression: "yes" = 1, "no" = 0: 2, 10, 18, 34, 42, 56, 63; "no" = 1 "no" = 0: 26, 49.
3. Irritation: "yes" = 1, "no" = 0: 3, 19, 27, 43, 50, 57, 64, 72; "no" = 1, "yes" = 0: 11, 35, 69.
4. Negativism: "yes" = 1, "no" = 0: 4, 12, 20, 28; "no" = 1, "yes" = 0: 36.
5. Resentment: "yes" = 1, "no" = 0: 5, 13, 21, 29, 37, 44, 51, 58.
6. Suspiciousness: "yes" = 1, "no" = 0: 6, 14, 22, 30, 38, 45, 52, 59; "yes" = 0, "no" = 1: 33, 66, 74, 75.

7. Verbal aggression: "yes" = 1, "no" = 0: 7, 15, 23, 31, 46, 53, 60, 71, 73; "yes" = 0, "no" = 1: 33, 66, 74, 75.

8. Feeling guilty: "yes" = 1, "no" = 0: 5, 8, 16, 24, 32, 40, 47, 54, 61, 67.

Hostility index includes 5 and 6 of the scale and the aggressiveness index (straight or motivational) includes a scale 1, 3, 7 - S.

The norm value of aggression index is equal to  $18 - 21 \pm 4$ , and hostility -  $6.5 - 7 \pm 3$ . At the same time it demonstrates the possibility of reaching a certain size, showing the degree of aggressiveness manifestation.

To determine the teenagers' level of empathy the Emotional Empathic Tendency Scale (EETS) by A. Mehrabian & N. Epstein (Mehrabian & Epstein, 1972) was used.

Since we need to define a common indicator of the presence of bullying in a group test, we conducted a mathematical process of counting. When dividing the sample into three groups as central subgroups we divided the subjects for which the indicator value  $x_i$  is within  $x_{cp} \pm \sigma_x$

The availability of bullying in adolescents is defined as follows: the low level 1-5 score average: 11.6 points, the highest level: 12-15 points.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

During testing of the study group, a high level of empathic tendencies in the ascertaining stage of the study (from 33 to 26 points – for boys, from 33 to 30 points – for girls) was identified in 8 teenagers, accounting for 15.1% of the total number. The average level of empathic tendencies (from 25 to 17 points – for boys, from 29 to 23 points – for girls) was detected in 15 children, accounting for 28.3% of the total number. Low level of empathic tendencies (from 16 to 8 points – for boys; 22 to 17 points – for girls) was detected in 25 teenagers, accounting for 47.2% of the total number of participants. Very low level of empathic tendencies (7 to 0 points – for boys; 16 to 0 points – for girls) was detected in 5 people, or 9.4% of the total number of children.

Thus, if in the aggregate to take into account the low and very low level of empathic tendencies in the studied group of teens, low level of empathy dominated. The boys say that people exaggerate the animals' ability to feel and experience; if a friend or girlfriend begin to discuss their problems, they try to turn the conversation to another topic; it is frustrating when people watching a movie sigh and cry; someone's laughter does not infect them; when they make a decision, the opinion of other people, as a rule, does not matter. So there is a necessity of special work to increase the young adolescents' level of empathy.

The next stage of our study was to investigate the aggressive reactions of adolescents in the ascertaining phase of the experiment. The dominant aggressive reactions in the group of teenagers is suspicion (12.8), ranging from mistrust and caution against people to the belief that other people are harmful; verbal aggression (10.2), as the expression of negative feelings through the form (a cry, squeal), and through the verbal content of the responses (curses, threats); offense (5.6), jealousy and hatred of others for real and imaginary action; guilt (5.6) expresses the possible conviction of the child that he is a bad man acting badly, as well as his feel remorse.

52.8% of participants say that they know what people are saying about them behind their backs; 60.4% of teens say that they stay cautious with people who treat them a little more friendly than they are expected; 62.3% think that many people do not like them; 49.1% believe that many people envy them; 45.3% of participants think that they are laughed at; 37.7% of teens say that their principle is "Never trust strangers".

41.5% of the participants said that, if they do not approve their friends' behavior, then they let them feel it; 34% of the children often do not agree with the people; 49.1% of them could not resist the dispute, if people do not agree with them; 67.9%

of adolescents require people to respect them; 77.4% of teens say that if someone annoys them, they will talk about it; 73.6% of participants say that when someone cries, they start screaming in response; 32.1% of adolescents swear only by anger; 45.3% of teens often only threaten people, although they are not going to execute the threat; 71.7% of adolescents in the dispute often raise their voices.

86.8% of teens say they do not always get what they are entitled to; 88.7% of participants say that others are almost always able to use favorable circumstances; 39.6% of teens say they are a little bit distressed by their fate; 83% of participants say that almost every week meet someone they do not like; 30.2% of teens say that they are sometimes consumed with envy although they don't show it; 45.3% of teens say that if everyone knew what they felt they would consider them a person who is not easy to get along with; 71.7% of adolescents sometimes feel that life goes with them unfairly.

49.1% of teens say that when they happened to deceive anyone, they have experienced a painful remorse; 37.7 % of teens say that sometimes they come to thoughts they are ashamed of; 32.1% of children are upset of doing little for their parents; 28.3% of participants say they are doing a lot of things they regret about later; 43.4% of teens say that they are distressed by failure; 45.3% of the teens point out that when they do wrong, they feel moral qualms.

In addition, we found out that aggressiveness index in the group was 47.2%, while the index of hostility – 52.8%. Thus, the aggressive reactions of the subjects in the group are high, as well as the level of aggression.

The next stage of our study was to determine the level of bullying in the group on the ascertaining stage of the study. We found out that a high level of bullying is dominated in the group (49.1% - 26 adolescents). Children point out the presence of violence in schools, a variety of types of bullying in interrelation, negative emotions. Children experience fear, hatred, anger, horror, depression, apathy; they note the presence of physical and mental violence.

The average level of bullying in the group amounted to 32.1% (17 adolescents). The average level is characterized by the presence of violence in school, children experience negative emotions and the desire to respond in the same way, physical violence is dominating.

The low level bullying in the group before the experiment was 18.8% (10 adolescents). It is characterized by the stability of the emotional atmosphere, the lack of physical and mental violence, the absence of negative emotions.

45.3% of the children believe that the problem of school violence does exist. Among the most common forms of violence they called rudeness (60.4%), mockery (52.8%) and humiliation (49.1%). Among the less common – deliberate destruction of another's property (9.4%), isolation (6.5%), and pushing down the stairs (4.3%). Moreover, 62.3% of children have a desire to respond in the same way. As for the children's sense of security in school, 67.9% answered that it depended on circumstances, and 32.1% called it total. 49.1% of students experienced physical violence once or twice, 28.3% – once a month. As for psychological violence, 71.7% of respondents felt it once or twice, 32.1% once a month, and 17% – once a week. 30.2% of children said that during the current half-year they were subjected to harassment once a week, 60.4% – several times over the same period. At the same time 17% do not know why they are bullied by other students, 9.4% believe that it is due to the fact that they ignore them and the teacher likes them more, 18.8% think it's because they often quarrel with others, and 3.8% see the reason in the their financial position, in the specificity of the appearance and because they consider themselves better than the other students. 20.8% of bullied pupils pretend that nothing happened, 28.3% avoid places where it occurs, 15.1% don't talk anyone, and 8.6% are trying to explain that one cannot act this way and 3.8% miss school.



Among the methods used by the students to solve the problem of harassment, they call harassment opposition and talking about it with parents (28.3%), talking with the teachers (24.5%), and patience (18.8%). 62.3% of students witnessed bullying in the classroom, 43.3% of them tried to help the victim, 25.9% did not do anything, but they had a desire to help, and 30.8% did not do anything, as they found that it is not their business.

39.6% of the students admitted that several times participated in the harassment of another student, and 22.6% – two or three times a month. When baiting, 26.4% of teens used abuse and neglect, 20.8% – physical force, and 37.7% – mocking appearance. All this is done several times. 15.1% of respondents spread false rumors about other once a week, and 9.4% several times a week ignored a classmate and excluded him from the joint venture.

The next stage of the study was to determine the relationship between indicators of bullying, empathy and aggression. For this purpose we used Pearson's correlation coefficient.

When a sample of 53 people at a critical value of  $r$  with  $p = 0,05$  equal to 0.27, with  $p = 0,01$  is 0.35., we identified black with yellow filling the significance level of  $p = 0,01$ , and we identified with bold the level of significance  $p = 0,05$ . Based on these data, we check the value of the Pearson's correlation coefficient, i.e., the accuracy of its difference from zero.

As a result of the Pearson's correlation coefficient, we found that there is a reliable indicator of a direct link between empathy and bullying ( $r_{xy} = 0,48$ ) at a significance level of  $p = 0,01$ , and a reliable feedback from indicators of physical aggression ( $r_{xy} = -0,35$ ) at a significance level of  $p = 0,01$ , indirect aggression ( $r_{xy} = -0,32$ ) at a significance level of  $p = 0,05$ , suspicion ( $r_{xy} = -0,85$ ) at a significance level of  $p = 0,01$ .

We found significant direct relationship between indicators of bullying and indirect aggression ( $r_{xy} = 0,4$ ) at a significance level of  $p = 0,01$ , aggressiveness index ( $r_{xy} = 0,31$ ) at a significance level of  $p = 0,05$ , significant direct correlation with the index of irritability ( $r_{xy} = -0,6$ ) at level of significance  $p = 0,01$ . This suggests that the higher the bullying, the higher indirect aggression index, and the lower irritability and aggressiveness.

We found a direct link between reliable indicators of physical and indirect aggression ( $r_{xy} = 0,41$ ) at a significance level of  $p = 0,01$ , indirect aggression and negativism ( $r_{xy} = 0,28$ ) at a significance level of  $p = 0,05$ .

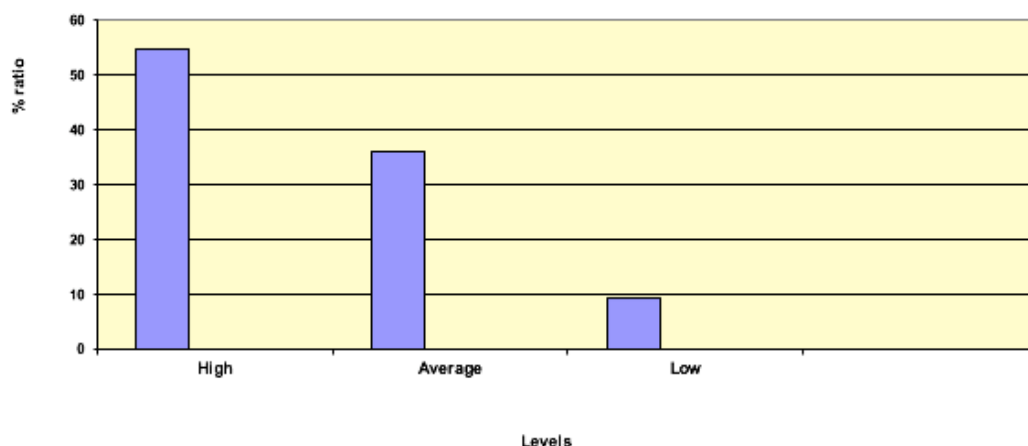
A significant inverse relationship between rates of irritability and negativity ( $r_{xy} = -0,29$ ) at a significance level of  $p = 0,05$ , we have identified a direct link between reliable indicators of negativity and resentment ( $r_{xy} = 0,28$ ) at a significance level of  $p = 0,05$  and significant inverse relationship between rates of negativity and aggressiveness index ( $r_{xy} = -0,3$ ) at a significance level of  $p = 0,05$ .

Thus, we found out that the studied parameters are interconnected; our findings suggest that there is a link between indicators of bullying, empathy and aggression in younger teens.

Results of the study of the general level of bullying in a group of teens before the experiment are shown in Figure 1.

As a result of ascertaining experiment, it was found out that the high overall level of bullying in a group was dominating (54.7% - 29 adolescents), the overall average level is 35.9% (19 infants), the low overall level is 9.4% (5 teens). Our findings suggest the need for remedial work to reduce bullying among teenagers.

On the basis of the results to the ascertaining stage of the experiment, we have developed and put into practice a program "Hand in Hand" aimed at prevention and psycho-pedagogical correction of bullying in school.



**Figure 1.** The total level of bullying in a group of teens before the experiment

The goal of the program is prevention and psycho-pedagogical correction of bullying in school.

Objectives of the program:

- 1) To develop the skills of self-analyzing actions and events, being aware of their relationship to the world, being responsible for their actions;
- 2) To develop readiness to help when it's necessary, ability to listen to others, to empathize;
- 3) To remove the fear of an independent statement, to develop communication skills;
- 4) To develop the skills of behavior in conflict situations;
- 5) To develop initiative and activity, feeling joy of sharing work and creativity.

With the help of correctional program "Hand in Hand" we created conditions for the prevention and psycho-pedagogical correction of bullying, leading to the solution of these problems.

Based on the objectives, we have allocated 5 blocks that make up the program:

- Block of non-aggressive behavior formation;
- Generating unit of empathy and tolerance;
- Block of self-confidence formation;
- Generating unit of readiness to overcome conflicts formation;
- Block of creativity formation.

Each unit includes 3-5 sessions (45 minutes each). Classes are held in stages, following the logic of a block. We followed the following principles in the development of the program: achieving emotional comfort, activation of the group members; reliance on social and emotional experience of the group members; individual approach to every child.

Classes are organized so that every teenager "lives" different situations, determines his ability to support and recognize the merits of the other, to defend his own position, to organize himself and others, to be creative and to understand and accept each other.

Algorithm of each class is as follows:

- The ritual greeting. It helps to unite the group, to create the atmosphere of trust and acceptance;
- Warming-up. Adjusts the participants for productive group activities, allows establishing contact, activating members of the group, cheering up, and removing emotional excitement. Warming-up is carried out not only at the beginning of the classes, and between the individual exercises if there is a need to somehow change the emotional state of the participants. The warming-up exercises are chosen in accordance with the current status of the group and objectives of future activities;

- Basic content of the lesson. It is a set of forms and methods of pedagogical influence aimed at the development of competences, alleged by each unit;
- Relaxation. It involves the removal of the psycho-emotional stress, which can occur when performing certain exercises;
- Discussion of the session. It assumes exchange of views and feelings about holding classes.

We also used exercises-energizers during classes. In the course of joint activity, participants periodically experience decreased energy. The exercise-energizer (mobile game) can serve as means of overcoming the recession energy, helping to activate various analyzers and updating the different abilities of teenagers.

During the training we used psychotherapeutic methods of influence on the person:

1. "Self-disclosure", when teenage shares personal feelings and experiences;
2. "Advice - wish" – the doctrine of how to act in a given situation;
3. "Experience - Interpretation" – offers a new vision of life situation, based on theory or personal experience;
4. "Desensitization of fears" – the opportunity to experience less anxiety, worry, tension in important situations;
5. "The emotional reflection" – "rejection" of negative emotions, i.e. transferring them to a conditional plan in the image of the game, thus, the release of past traumatic experiences.

In implementing the program, the leader's position varies depending on the purpose of employment (the expert, informant, equal participant, and psychologist).

During the classes different life situations were highlighted and the students played them, discussed, and made the appropriate conclusions. Thanks to playing situations, younger teens learn positive interaction with others; find their own ways of solving conflicts. At the beginning of our classes, some students showed aggression toward classmates, often communicated in a raised voice. After a series of classes, the behavior of these students has changed; during the exercises they are fairly calm and defended their points of view using arguments without resorting to insults to the interlocutor.

The specific of this program is that it is not implemented separately with victims and offenders, but together. This allows them to solve most deeply the issues of interaction in society and gain valuable experience of the study of their personality, habits, beliefs, as well as interpersonal skills. Implementation of the program "Hand in Hand" helps teens to look at themselves through the eyes of others, to live through difficult life situations, which are modeled in the classroom, react and express their experiences, and discuss current issues.

In the control phase of the study, high level of empathic tendencies (from 33 to 26 points – for the boys, from 33 to 30 points – for the girls) was detected in 15 teens, accounting for 28.3% of the total number of respondents. The average level of empathic tendencies (from 25 to 17 points – for the boys, from 29 to 23 points – for the girls) was detected in 29 teens, accounting for 54.7% of the total number of respondents.

Low level of empathic tendencies (from 16 to 8 points – for boys; 22 to 17 points – for the girls) was identified in 8 teens, accounting for 15.1% of the total number of children. Very low level of empathic tendencies (7 to 0 points – for the boys; 16 to 0 points – for the girls) was detected in one person, which is 1.9% of the total number of respondents.

We found that a high level of empathic tendencies increased from 15.1% to 28.3% (13.2% change), the average level of empathic tendencies increased from 28.3% to 54.7% (26.4% change), low level of empathic tendencies decreased from 47.2 % to 15.1% (32.1% change), very low level of empathic tendencies decreased from 9.4% to 1.9% (7.5% change).

Thus, we can say that after the work carried out the average level of empathy dominates in the group. Children are more susceptible to others, more sensitive, responsive; emotionally react to other people's troubles and setbacks. The developed program has had a positive impact on the development of empathy in young adolescents.

In the control phase of the experiment parameters of aggressive reactions decreased significantly; there was dominating indirect aggression (8.1) in the range of mistrust and caution against people to the belief that other people plan and bring harm; irritability (8.4), aggression, in a roundabout way directed at any person or at no direction. However, after the experiment, these figures have become much less like all the others.

15.1% of participants note that they know what people are saying about them behind their backs; 28.3% of teens say that they stay cautious with people who treat them a little more friendly than they expect; 32.1% think that many people do not like them; 18.8% believe that many people envy them; 35.9% of participants think that they are laughed at; 18.8% of teens say that their principle is: "Never trust strangers".

9.4% of participants indicated that, if they don't approve their friends' behavior, they let them feel it; 28.3% of the teens do not often agree with people; 28.3% of the children could not resist the dispute, if people do not agree with them; 15.1% of adolescents require people to respect them; 28.3% of teens say that if someone annoys them, they are ready to say what they think; 49.1% of participants say that when someone cries, they start screaming in response; 15.1% of adolescents swear only by anger; 9.4% of respondents often only threaten people, although it is not going to result in the execution of the threat; 18.8% of adolescents often raise their voices in the dispute.

22.6% of teens say they do not always get what they are entitled to; 28.3% of participants say that others are able to use almost always favorable circumstances; 24.5% of teens say they are a little bit distressing by fate; 17% of participants say that almost every week they see someone whom they do not like; 18.8% of teens say that although this is not shown, they are sometimes consumed with envy; 26.4% of teens say that if everyone knew what they felt they would be considered a person not easy to get along with; 30.2% of adolescents sometimes feel that life goes with them unfair situations.

18.8% of teens say that when they happened to deceive anyone, they have experienced a painful remorse; 17% of teens say that sometimes they come to thoughts they are ashamed of; 15.1% of children are upset of doing little for their parents; 15.1% of participants say they are doing a lot of things they regret about later; 18.8% of teens say that they are distressed by failure; 17% of participants say that when they do wrong, they feel moral qualms.

In addition, we found out that aggressiveness index in the group was 18.8%, while the index of hostility – 20.8%. Thus, we see that the aggressive reactions in the group of subjects have low and average values; the level of aggression after the experiment in the group is average.

We found that after the experiment, the average level of bullying dominated in the group amounting to 49.1% (26 adolescents). Children note the presence of violence in school, they experience negative emotions and the desire to respond in the same way, physical violence dominates.

Low level of bullying in the group after the experiment was 26.4% (14 adolescents); low emotional atmosphere is characterized by stability, the lack of physical and mental violence, the absence of negative emotions.

High level of bullying after the experiment was 24.5% (13 adolescents). Children point out the presence of violence in schools, a variety of bullying types in relation to

the students, negative emotions. They experience fear, hatred, anger, horror, depression, apathy. Children note also the presence of physical and mental violence.

32.1% of the surveyed children believe that the problem of school violence does exist. Among the most common forms of violence still remains rudeness (52.8%), mockery (49.1%), among the less common – deliberate destruction of another's property (9.4%), isolation (5.7%), and pushing with stairs (1.9%).

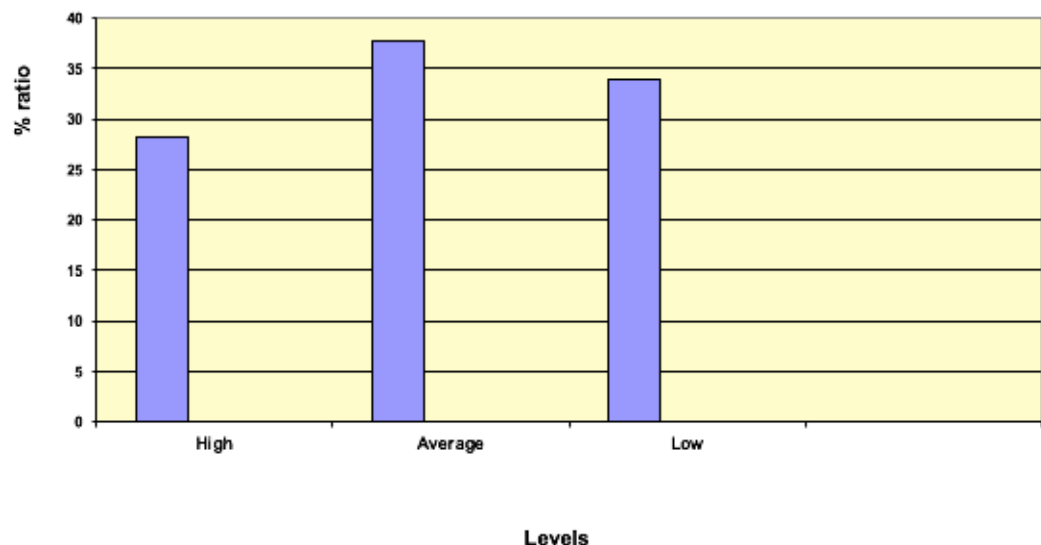
45.3% of children have a desire to respond in the same way. As for the children's sense of security in school, 49.1% answered that it depended on circumstances, and 50.9% called it total. As for psychological violence, 43.4% of students experienced it once or twice, 22.6% – once a month. As for psychological violence, 60.4% of respondents felt it for themselves once or twice, 24.5% once a month and 15.1% – once a week.

18.8% of children said that during the current half-year they were subjected to harassment once a week, 32.1% – several times over the same period. At the same time 15.1% did not know why they are bullied by other students, 5.6% believe that it is due to the fact that they ignore them and the teacher likes them more, 13.6% think it's because they often quarrel with others. 14.6% of the bullied pupils pretend that nothing happened, 18.8% avoid places where it occurs, 22.6% don't talk to anyone, 19.4% are trying to explain that one cannot act this way. Among the methods used by the students to solve the problem of harassment, harassment opposition appeared (17%), talking with the teachers (12.7%) and talking about it with parents (9.4%).

45.3% of students had witnessed bullying in the classroom, 63.2% of them have tried to help the victim, 18.5% did not do anything, but they have a desire to help, and 18.3% did not do anything, as they found that this was none of their business. 26.4% of the students admitted that several times participated in the harassment of another student, and 18.8% – two or three times a month. When baiting, 26.4% used ignoring, 17% – spreading false rumors. All this is done several times. 9.4% of respondents ridiculed and insulted once a week.

Analysis of the results of the study allows to say that the level of bullying in a group of younger teenagers has the following changes: a high level decreased from 49.1% to 24.5% (24.6% change), the average has risen from 32.1% to 49.1% (changes to 17%), the low level increased from 18.8% to 26.4% (7.6% change). Our findings suggest that the developed and implemented program of psycho-pedagogical correction of bullying in school was effective.

Results of the study of the general level of bullying in school after the experiment are presented in Figure 2.



**Figure 2.** Overall levels of bullying in a group after the experiment

Thus, as a result of a control experiment, we found out that the average level of bullying (37.7% - 20 children) dominated in a group, the low overall level is 34% (18 infants). The high level decreased from 54.7% to 28.3% (26.4% change), the average level increased from 35.9% to 37.7% (1.9% change), the low level increased from 9.4% to 34% (26.4% change). These results prove the effectiveness of the program of psycho-pedagogical correction of bullying in school "Hand in Hand".

To confirm the results of the study, we used the Student's t-test. Differences in average  $x_{cr1}$  and  $x_{cr2}$  are considered reliable if the empirical value of the Student's t-test exceeds the critical value of  $t_{cr}$ . It is located in the tables of critical values of the Student's t-test depending on the number of degrees of freedom.

The number of degrees of freedom in the case of definition for dependent samples t-test will be equal to  $n - 1$ .

In our case, for  $v = 53$  critical values will be equal to:  $t_{cr} = 2$  (at  $p = 0.05$ );  $t_{cr} = 2.67$  (at  $p = 0.01$ ). As a result of the Student's t-test, we obtained the following data: the difference between the mean values of empathy before the experiment and after the event is valid since  $t_{th} > t_{cr}$ . ( $t_{th} = -2.7$ ) at  $p = 0.01$ ; the difference between the mean values of bullying before the experiment and after the event is valid since  $t_{th} > t_{cr}$ . ( $t_{th} = 13.1$ ) at  $p = 0.01$ ; the differences between the mean values of the overall index of bullying before the experiment and after the event is valid since  $t_{th} > t_{cr}$ . ( $t_{th} = 4.9$ ) at  $p = 0.01$ . By all accounts we accept the hypothesis H1, that is, the identified differences in the studied parameters before and after the experiment, are authentic.

## CONCLUSIONS

The control study of younger teenagers showed that the use of the program "Hand in Hand", aimed at the prevention and psycho-pedagogical correction of bullying, is effective.

This conclusion is confirmed by the methods of mathematical statistics. The study confirmed the hypothesis, based on the assumption that the effectiveness of prevention and psycho-pedagogical correction of bullying among young adolescents would be beneficial if it is based on the essential characteristics of the concepts of "bullying", "bullying-structure"; to take into account the age-related aspects of the manifestations of bullying in early adolescence; to develop and implement a program of "Hand in Hand", which contains effective forms and methods of preventing bullying in school. These data were confirmed by mathematical processing, in particular, the Student t-criterion.

Thus, it can be concluded that the program "Hand in hand" with the use of such forms and methods of pedagogical influence as training, work with literature, games (role-playing, etc.), and exercise, is effective for the correction of bullying in school.

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