

The Violent Student and His Social Exclusion within the School Environment

Bourdji Hana

Ahmed Ben Yahia El-Wancharissi University
Faculty of Letters and Languages – Department of Social Sciences

Email: h.bourdji@univ-tissemsilt.dz

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Abstract:

This study aims to shed light on the violent student and the extent of his social exclusion by the surrounding school environment, due to his violent behaviors that constitute an obstacle in his interaction with the school group as a whole, whether they are administrators, the school principal, classmates, or teachers themselves. Hence, forms of social exclusion appear in the school environment and are largely practiced against this category of violent students. This will be clarified in this study, which was conducted in an educational institution, namely Mohammed El-Zein Ben El-Madani Middle School in Alia El-Charkia, Biskra Province – Algeria – on a sample of violent students whose number reached 45 violent students within this institution suffering from school social exclusion. A structured interview was conducted with these students, and based on the descriptive method and statistical processing techniques, including the use of the coefficient of concordance to control the accuracy of the obtained results, in answering the problem raised: What are the most prominent manifestations of social exclusion practiced against the violent student within the school environment?

Keywords: student – violence – social exclusion – school environment

First axis: Research problem and objectives

1- Introduction:

The spread of violence in its various forms, whether verbal or physical, has witnessed a noticeable increase in Algerian society. It has almost become the dominant logic in the language of dialogue and understanding among Algerians of different genders, ages, and social classes. Today, hardly a few minutes pass without hearing or witnessing it: chaos, beating, killing, insults, kidnapping, assaults day and night, affecting every place from homes, stadiums, and public facilities to Algerian schools. Statistics have shown that the school, like other social institutions, also suffers from the phenomenon of violence in all its forms, which leads to various relational dysfunctions among members of the same school community. This phenomenon spreads within the school environment in all its aspects, and from here emerges the phenomenon of school social exclusion, which quickly became a threat to the structure of the school and the entire social system. This study attempts to explain an important aspect of its spread in the Algerian school, focusing on the violent student and his social exclusion within the school environment.

2- Problem statement:

The Algerian school is witnessing a terrible increase in the phenomenon of school violence. Studies conducted by the Ministry of National Education have indicated the multiplicity of forms of school violence and the impact of educational institutions by the social environment and criminal phenomena that have spread unprecedentedly in Algeria, in addition to the widespread presence of crime networks and drug trafficking in neighborhoods surrounding schools, not to mention family disintegration, poverty, disturbance of parental relations, and academic failure. The spread of drugs within the educational environment is considered clear evidence of the lack of supervision and inspection within educational institutions and the decline in the role of parents in raising and educating their children about the value and status of teachers (<http://www.elwassat.com/?p=574>). These causes and others have led to the emergence of various forms of social exclusion within the school environment. Social exclusion is a concept that may be new in our cultural vocabulary, which does not mean that social studies have not addressed it as a phenomenon worthy of attention. However, we still do not have any attempt to frame this phenomenon, study its dimensions, or monitor its negative effects on the structure of Algerian society, as there is no specialized unit in this field that has spread within Algerian society and its various institutions, especially the school, which has greatly suffered from exclusion. It is noticeable that the primary victim is the category of violent students. Returning to our local reality, anyone following educational policy can realize that the Algerian educational system early on recognized the oppression that social exclusion may cause, and the resulting conflict within the school environment, and the worsening and aggravation of the situation of the violent student, making it more difficult to control the phenomenon of violence and leading to its further spread and escalation within the school. Hence, the core question is: What are the most prominent manifestations of social exclusion practiced against the violent student within the school environment?

This raises the following sub-questions:

- Is deprivation practiced against the violent student a manifestation of social exclusion within the school environment?
- Is discriminatory treatment practiced against the violent student a manifestation of social exclusion within the school environment?

As for the hypotheses of the study, they were as follows:

- **General hypothesis:**
 - Both deprivation and discriminatory treatment are among the most prominent manifestations of social exclusion practiced against the violent student within the school environment.
- **Partial hypotheses:**
 - Deprivation practiced against the student is a manifestation of social exclusion within the school environment.
 - Discriminatory treatment practiced against the violent student is a manifestation of social exclusion within the school environment.

3- Objectives of the study:

The main objective of this study is to identify the manifestations of social exclusion in the school environment among students so that the student becomes an integrated individual in his performance and belonging.

Sub-objectives include:

- Manifestations of social exclusion.
- Highlighting violent students within the school environment.
- Revealing the extent of suffering of this group from discrimination and deprivation that may increase their violence.
- Understanding the reality of violence within school environments.

4- Definition of concepts and terms of the study:

4-1 Student:

The student is the most important element in the educational process and must be treated as part of society, not as an independent unit or separate entity from the environment, as the latter may have a significant impact on shaping his school experiences. Thus, the student has gained great importance in the structure of the school as a whole.

4-2 Violence:

It is defined as the use of force, coercion, or the threat of using it to cause harm and damage to persons or property in order to achieve illegal or unacceptable goals. (Khalil Wadi Shukr, 1997, p. 31)

4-3 Social exclusion:

It refers to the process of partial or complete exclusion of individuals or groups from full participation in the society in which they live. Thus, social exclusion is the opposite of social integration. It places the individual in a disadvantaged position compared to others, affecting his social, economic, and political rights, weakening his ability to access goods and services, and hindering his participation as an active member of society. (Mahmoud Abdel Fadil, 2005)

4-4 School environment:

It is the space in which those involved in the educational process move and interact with each other according to the components and requirements of this space, which includes social, organizational, and material environments. (Ahmed Al-Naklawi, 1988, p. 227)

Thus, it is the school space where students, teachers, and school staff are present, including the courtyard and especially classrooms.

Chapter Two: The theoretical framework of the study

Violence and social exclusion:

The phenomenon of violence occupies an important place among psychologists and sociologists due to its serious effects within society and the resulting cases of deviance and maladaptive social behavior. The school has not been immune to violence, as manifestations of conflict, tension, and relational crises appear among members of the school group. If violence has multiple directions within the school environment, the most prominent is violence directed from the student toward other parties, whether classmates, teachers, or administrative staff. This has led to aversion toward this group, an aversion referred to as social exclusion, which may be a new term in our social vocabulary but has a profound impact on social structure and cohesion. Anthony Giddens defined it as follows:

“It refers to the phenomenon of social exclusion as a set of conditions and factors in which the link between individuals and groups is severed on the one hand, and their participation in the

activities of the wider society on the other. The deterioration of school conditions deprives them of opportunities for advancement as the majority in society do.” (Anthony Giddens, 2004, p. 403)

Social exclusion also refers to a rupture in the social contract upon which the welfare state is based, and to the weakness or complete absence of social policies, as well as the absence of institutional networks capable of promoting social progress. (UNICEF reports, p. 3)

In any case, when we want to talk about exclusion or social exclusion using new concepts, we must take into account many aspects of the citizen’s social, political, and cultural life. Exclusion or marginalization, as understood by sociologists, political scientists, and economists, is based on tangible elements within human society, because this exclusion or marginalization cannot be addressed in isolation from society. Most modern researchers today replace the concept of the “oppressed class” with the idea of “social exclusion.” Sociologists were the first to establish the foundations of this concept, but politicians have been using this term more than others in recent times to refer to one of the main sources of inequality. This concept refers to the ways in which the paths are blocked for large numbers of individuals from fully participating in broader social life.

The group of adolescent students in schools has not been immune to the effects of psychological pressure, as they are subjected to family conditions, school and social factors, and the circumstances of the environment in which they live. Psychological pressure expresses tension, disturbance, and a state of imbalance felt by the student as a result of problems, difficulties, and obstacles—whether family, school, social, or environmental—that hinder his way in satisfying his biological or psychological needs. The intensity, severity, and nature of psychological pressure differ from one person to another and from one environment to another according to the stressful situations in which the individual lives. Students have found in the space of educational institutions an appropriate framework to express their rejection of the reality in which they live, and their protest against the pressures imposed by certain aspects of social life. Thus emerged violence within the school environment, which has recently increased in a way that is surprising in the school community. From this perspective, and believing in the importance of the educational climate in enhancing the educational act, and given the prevailing conditions in educational institutions due to the worsening phenomenon of violence that threatens the existence of the school society and its negative effects on society as a whole, this study came to shed light on the consequences of these violent behaviors, which have appeared and multiplied, including the emergence of what was previously mentioned, namely social exclusion, which has become a concern for this category of students. The field study of Mohammed El-Zein Ben El-Madani Middle School – Alia El-Charkia – Biskra as the field of the current study will reveal part of this reality.

Chapter Three: Methodological procedures of the study:

Conducting any scientific research and verifying its hypotheses on the ground must be based on the theoretical framework of the study and field investigation to find answers to the research question. Thus, any researcher in the field of social sciences must present the methodological procedures used in his empirical study, including the method, study fields, tools used, and

statistical methods. All of this facilitates the process of analysis and interpretation and linking results to the theoretical framework presented.

1- Spatial and human field:

Based on data obtained from the Directorate of Education of the Wilaya of Biskra, Mohammed Zine Ben El-Madani Middle School – Alia El-Charkia – Biskra was selected, as it met the suitable conditions for the chosen sample. As for the research population, it consists of students who have shown aggressive behavior and are enrolled in Mohammed Zine Ben El-Madani Middle School, the field of study, in order to examine their educational and social conditions within the school environment.

2- Study sample:

A purposive intentional sampling method was used, where the research instrument questions were directed to violent students in the middle school, whose number was estimated at 45 students.

3- Data collection tools:

The objective of the study or the hypotheses to be verified lead the researcher to use a set of tools, choosing one or more according to the research process. This is due to the complexity of phenomena and the interaction of multiple indicators, as: “Every scientific research requires specific tools for data collection that are consistent with the subject and its objective, which is itself linked to the research methodology” (1976, p. 333, Madeleine Gravit).

In this study, the following tools were used:

- **Observation:** It is a direct examination of behavioral subjects and obtaining information in natural situations (Belkacem Salatnia, 2003/2004, p. 71).

The use of this tool took place during exploratory visits conducted to collect data that could help decode manifestations of exclusion practiced against violent students.

- **Interview:** This tool is no less important than observation, as it helps collect specific information and gives it a formal and serious character. It also allows the elicitation of many data. Since the subject of the study concerns the violent student and his social exclusion within the school environment, an open (unstructured) interview was used, where several questions consistent with the nature of the subject were asked, and answers were recorded by the researcher.

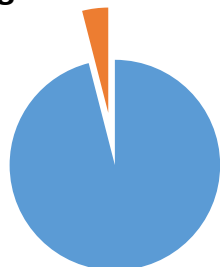
Chapter Four: Presentation, analysis, and interpretation of study results.

After covering the study theoretically comes the second stage, the field stage, which confirms or rejects the validity of the research hypotheses, starting from general data of the study and data related to each of the three hypotheses, leading to the results, as explained below:

1- Presentation, interpretation, and analysis of general data of the study:

1 Distribution of sample units according to gender:

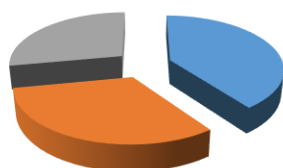
distribution of samples based on gender



This graphical representation of the study sample according to gender shows that most of the sample units were male. It can be said that the study population is a male population. This is due to one reason, namely the nature of violent traits that appear more quickly in males than in females on whom the research interview was conducted.

Distribution of sample units according to the social conditions of the student:

distribuion based on the social status



The general data of this study required examining the social conditions of the violent student in order to determine the extent of their later relationship with aggressive behavior. These conditions varied between good, medium, and weak, as shown in the graphical representation, and will be further explained in the research hypothesis related to social conditions and their relationship to citizenship as follows:

Statements	Yes	%	No	%	Mean	Standard deviation
You attended school regularly without interruption	12	26.67	33	73.33	1.7333	0.200
You benefited from the scholarship provided at the beginning of each year	18	40	27	60	1.6000	0.245
You benefited from borrowing school textbooks	18	40	27	60	1.6000	0.245
You participated in some cultural and artistic activities in middle school	32	71.11	13	28.89	1.7111	0.210
You are prevented from attending the first class if you arrive a few minutes late	35	77.78	10	22.22	1.7778	0.177

Statements	Yes	%	No	%	Mean	Standard deviation
Your friends helped you in revision and exam preparation	3	6.67	42	93.33	1.9333	0.064
You believe you suffer deprivation in your school environment	40	88.89	5	11.11	1.8889	0.101
Your teachers treat you well	10	22.22	35	77.78	1.7778	0.177
The principal and educational assistants treat you well	25	55.56	20	44.44	1.7778	0.177
Teachers listen to your opinions during class participation	29	64.44	16	35.56	1.6444	0.234
Your teachers embarrass you with words in front of classmates	30	66.67	15	33.33	1.6667	0.227
You believe you suffer discrimination in middle school	28	62.22	17	37.78	1.6222	0.240

Source: SPSS statistical analysis results.

General results:

The results showed that deprivation practiced against violent students is a manifestation of social exclusion in the school environment, as this group did not attend school regularly and did not benefit from scholarships or anything related to indicators of deprivation in the school environment.

Discrimination practiced against them in their school environment appears through poor treatment by teachers, educational assistants, and also by their classmates. This has a negative impact on the serious phenomenon inside classrooms and its repercussions on the components of the teaching and learning process, and leads to the worsening of the psychological and social situation of the violent student and its pedagogical consequences.

Middle school represents one of the stages most affected by the phenomenon of violence, considering that the age stage of students at this level coincides with adolescence, which is characterized by physiological changes accompanied by behavioral disturbances.

The lack of participation in school activities, poor treatment by teachers and administrative staff, and the deprivation of these violent students from some rights such as benefiting from books and being prevented from attending classes in case of late arrival negatively affect their school adjustment, since school activity is an important educational aspect and an integral part of the educational process.

Opinions, attitudes, and ways of dealing with others are determined through the type of groups that form the individual's social field, meaning the social environment within which the person interacts. There are groups to which the individual actually belongs, and reference groups that determine whether he joins them or not. The belonging group is the group to which the individual belongs and within which his personality is formed, carrying the characteristics of

the group, such as the family, which is a belonging group for children, raising and socializing them and qualifying them to become active members of society.

The reference group is the one to which the individual refers in evaluating his social behavior and takes as a reference for his thoughts and behavior. The individual may belong to it, but may not wish to belong to it. In both cases, he is keen on the approval of the group. The reference group has a strong influence on its members, especially if membership is voluntary, as individuals in such groups strive to make maximum effort to gain acceptance from other members, and thus tend to adhere more to the values of the reference group. Students limiting their relationships to peers makes them more vulnerable to deprivation in their school environment.

The violent student is deprived of dealing with classmates, teachers, and administrators, and thus becomes withdrawn within the school environment, which leads to poor adjustment and social integration.

As “Mohamed Abdel Rahman” states in this regard: school adjustment among students is one of the complex processes that is difficult to explain theoretically, while practical evidence from classrooms or school groups shows many manifestations of dysfunction resulting from this process. This is reflected, for example, in absenteeism or continued school attendance in relation to the reciprocal relationship between students and their schools and their academic achievement levels. (Abdullah Mohamed Abdel Rahman, 1997, p. 68)

The ill-treatment that the violent pupil is subjected to, and his lack of a sense of equality compared with other ordinary pupils, increasingly intensifies his violence.

- From the above, it can be said that:
- The deprivation practiced against the violent pupil is a manifestation of social exclusion within the school environment.
- The discriminatory treatment practiced against the violent pupil is a manifestation of social exclusion within the school environment.

Conclusion:

The issue of violence and social exclusion in the school environment is among the important topics that should receive the attention of researchers and scholars in the sociology of education. The importance of equality of educational opportunities stems from its connection to equality of life opportunities itself and to all requirements of social justice. Here, educational democracy is primarily defined as the necessity of opening the doors of education at all its stages to the widest possible segments of society, particularly to groups suffering from violence, and attempting to find solutions for them and to work on integrating them rather than excluding and marginalizing them from the school environment, because the latter will further intensify violence. It is also necessary to strive to provide all educational requirements for the pupil in order to reduce the phenomenon of social exclusion in the school environment.

Therefore, this study represents a simple model of this concern, although in reality such a topic requires larger-scale and more comprehensive studies in terms of level and scope of interest.

This study is considered a preliminary contribution to a scientific understanding of the subject under study, which helps in identifying some aspects of the consequences of school violence,

its intensity, and the emergence of social exclusion and its main indicators in the school environment, as well as finding solutions to the expected educational failure of violent and socially excluded pupils, by drawing the attention of stakeholders. In general, this is the objective of scientific studies on social and educational issues alike. This is what this study has sought to achieve, and the field remains open for further research and investigation in this area. This study may be a real starting point for another research topic, or a continuation of this topic addressed within the available possibilities.

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