VIOLENCES in schools

MIRIAM ABRAMOVAY

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DEDICATION

For Lucas, a young adolescent who knows how to turn his dreams into reality
For Paulo, a young adolescent who taught us so much as adults

PREFACE
Violence and school: a rip in the fabric

The terrorist attack of September 11, 2001 that felled the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York illustrates one of the essential characteristics of the phenomenon of violence and that is its continual ability to appear in new and unimaginable forms.

One of the effects of the new forms of violence occurs in the world of thought. This is true because the theoretical repertoire that we use seems to be of little use to us in understanding the present time. For Hannah Arendt, this rupture occurred when a certain historic event confused the present, creating a void between the past and the future. To overcome this rupture it is vital to create a new theoretical repertoire, one that is able to manage the "new" present time and to offer viable alternatives for the construction of the future.

The International Right to Human Rights that emerged in 1945 together with the United Nations (UN) was the legal response of the international community to the two rupturing events: the concentration camps of a totalitarian state and the dropping of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The first event demonstrated that the human being was disposable. The second event made the possibility of the destruction of the planet concrete in the form of a new weapon. In response to these two events human rights established that a human being's dignity is intrinsic, independent of "race, color, sex, language, religion, political opinion or opinion of any other nature, national or social origin, wealth, birth, or any other condition.[1]"

[1] In accordance with article II of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948.

It must be assured that every man and woman has the right to receive legal protection and assistance from the international community in the event that the protection of his or her own country is denied. War must also be prohibited as a legal way of resolving conflicts[2] in that the new weapons have an unimaginable capacity for destruction. Establishing these new principles of the international right to human rights puts the right of counteracting violence with non-violence as a principle that has transformed the theory of law itself.

The study entitled Violence, AIDS, and Drugs in Schools, was developed by Miriam Abramovay (World Bank consultant) and Maria das Graças Rua (UNESCO consultant) in collaboration with Mary Garcia Castro (UNESCO researcher). It seeks to become part of the theoretical area. Violence, AIDS, and Drugs in Schools seeks to offer a broad empirical and theoretical reflection that will provide new tools for thinking about a phenomenon that confuses present time, splitting the past and the future. It is precisely from the perspective of thinking about a rupturing event that this study deserves to be commended. It is a pioneer project and an opportune one in that it will offer theoretical support for the development of new studies.

This study chose a broad concept of violence that includes both violence and the cause of the damage in the widest variety of dimensions identified by those that make up the universe of this study. This concept is positive because it aids in the understanding of a phenomenon that has a very complex nature.

One of the pioneers of studies on peace, Johan Galtung, offers us one of the broadest definitions of violence: it is everything that causes a difference between the potential and the actual, between what was and what is. In this sense a possible definition of violence is any action that impedes

[2] As established in the UN Charter article 2.

development or that makes development difficult. If we think of school as an opportune place for the development of violence, this represents the denial of the scholarly institution. In this sense violence and school create an unimaginably bad combination.

Threats and aggression of students against teachers, sexual violence among students, the use of guns, drug abuse, thefts, muggings and violence against the school buildings themselves have all invaded the school space. This compromises the very possibility of a pedagogical environment capable of "preparing the child to assume a responsible life in a free society with a spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, gender equality and friendship among all peoples, all ethnic, national, and religious groups and all indigenous peoples[3]."

The first step in confronting the problem is determining its true dimensions and this task has been accomplished by this study in a masterly fashion. The study was carried out in the elementary and secondary schools in the public municipal and state networks and in private schools in 14 large Brazilian cities in different states (Brasília (DF), Goiânia, Cuiabá, Manaus, Belém, Fortaleza, Recife, Maceió, Salvador, Vitória, Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Florianópolis and Porto Alegre) and was developed through two different approaches: extensive and comprehensive. The first aims to demonstrate the problem in terms of how it appears in the daily life of the school. The second is dedicated to studying the social manifestations collected through the study. These two approaches are to be found in the introductory chapter (chapter 1) in the study of Violence, AIDS, and Drugs in School in the national and international literature.

The opportunity that comes with publishing this book is unquestionable. If violence is seen as a rash and thoughtless

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[3] Article 29, clause of the Children's Rights Convention of 1989.

action, then non-violence is another way of reacting. This work is familiar with the damage caused by violent action and does not intend to deny the existence of violence. Its goal is to create an alternative to violence. In this way a non-violent way of acting can become a reality. The first fundamental step towards this goal is diagnosing the problem. "Violence in the Schools" takes this first step, and begins a second in presenting a meaningful reflection on the differentiation of violent and non-violent schools in the last chapter of the book.

This study integrates UNESCO's primary goal: the creation of a culture of peace and non-violence. It is worth remembering the second commitment of the 2000 Manifesto developed by UNESCO: "To practice active non-violence, rejecting violence in all its forms: physical, sexual, psychological, economic and social, particularly that against the most deprived and the most vulnerable, such as children and adolescents."

Brasília, March, 2002

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PRESENTATION

This publication is one more result of UNESCO research on youths in school in Brazil. This research is based on the perceptions and the proposals of the diverse participants in the school community. The objective of these studies is to contribute to the construction of a culture of peace. The school is seen as a locale for reflection and debate. The school is seen as an institution capable of direct and decisive action for the benefit of the immediate community and Brazilian society as a whole.

For UNESCO, the construction of a culture of peace incorporates critical reflection and proposal analysis as strategic tools. This is done using education, science, technology, culture and communication as starting points. The power of survey and prospecting become extremely important when the theme is part of such a delicate context. This is especially true for the theme of violence in the schools, at once so shocking and surprising.

Whatever the demonstrations of violence in the schools may be, they represent a threat to the internationally recognized principles of education. In the first place they shake the four pillars of knowledge that are recognized by the International Commission on Education for the twenty-first century. These are learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and learning to be (Delors, 1998).

This represents damage not only for the present generation of youths and adults, but for future generations as well. The power of the emanating rays of education must be kept in mind. At the same time, violence in the school environment impose new challenges to the shaping of knowledge, especially in respect to teaching and the incorporation of "human ethics" and "human knowledge" (Morin, 2000).

Historically, academic debate and state of the art concepts about violence in the schools have varied over time. These elements have been experiencing growing interest over the past few years. This growth, while still quite concentrated in case studies, represents a gain for Brazilian society and this is reflected in the increase in titles in this field. Stimulus for broad debate generates mobilization that turns into practical actions that seek to concretely eliminate violence in schools in Brazil.

In this sense, the boldness and sensitivity of our partners in confronting this theme are noteworthy. It is a theme that has the capacity to bring about controversy. These partners' courage and sense of responsibility made them invest in a national project of this scale, involving a wide variety of academic centers and NGOs in collecting information. There was also wide bibliographic and empirical research that brought together a wide variety of reflective and programmatic perspectives concerning political policy.

The magnitude and complexity of this study are justified by the relevance of the theme and the complexity of the performance and alliances involved. In fact, there are still fluid connections between what is produced and reproduced in the school environment and what is lived and learned through other means. Violence in the schools is not just another item in a series of phenomena from a state of violence that is spread throughout society.

Violence in the schools has an identity of its own. It is expressed in common ways ranging from *de facto* violence that harms, wounds or kills to acts of incivility, prejudice or lack of consideration for others or for diversity. On the symbolic level this violence is expressed primarily when there is room for connections among the students. This form of violence runs the risk of becoming naturalized. Another antithesis is when this form of violence infiltrates the relationships the teachers have

among themselves, or with other staff members or with students. This study discusses how this creates a demand for closer examination of these and other social connections.

In fact, the reach of this phenomenon is such that it affects practically every possible relationship within the school environment. These include relationships among students, teachers, staff members and parents. Therefore, all of these participants and their social relationships should be taken into consideration as they have profound influence over the implantation of political policies that directly affect the school.

The youths are crucial participants in the schools and understanding them requires a special viewpoint. This is true not only because of the special identity they have when questioning one of the principal foundations of democracy – education. It is true as well because of the strategic importance they have in terms of cultural and social capital. If school is the place where youths are trained and provided with information, then violence represents, in and of itself, an element that demands special attention in the socialization process. Therefore, dealing with this theme represents working towards the deconstruction of the sources of violence. It also represents deconstructing multiplication of the violence in other places and in other time frames. This is violence that puts today at risk as well as tomorrow.

In selecting the perceptions of the students, their parents, teachers and other members of the school community, the objective was to identify and characterize the multiple forms of violence in the schools. This research intertwines various narratives and points of view in a way that describes the state of what is known. This research describes what is perceived, what is expressed and what is silenced in a way that warns against the possibilities and risks involved in allowing violence in the school environment to become banal.

The strategy of highlighting the perceptions is justified in

light of the fact that in order to deal with violence in the schools it is necessary to deal with the students and the members of the school communities as subjects. Sophisticated analyses were used that were both quantitative and qualitative. The study encompasses fourteen capital cities in Brazil. In light of this, however, we must point out that we are dealing with perceptions here. Some of these perceptions may appear to be more or less severe in relation to values, references and social models of non-violence.

In this fashion, a capital with lower rates of registered incidences of violence in school is not necessarily more or less violent than another one with higher rates. This research deals with more than just neutral measurements. This survey deals with the significance of all data and takes into consideration the magnitude of these data as well. This is all part of the idea that a violent occurrence is serious because it occurred and because of what it means to those directly involved. This is true because it weakens the school as a place for dialogue and the construction of knowledge of solidarity and what it is to be a human being.

The research identifies and proposes methods for combating violence in schools, using a wide range of national and international specialized literature as a foundation in addition to the voices of the students, the pedagogical specialists and the parents. The testimonies demonstrate political good will for a culture of peace and announce the desire for responses from the distinct agencies involved on the decision-making level.

For UNESCO and for the partners in this task, and for the researchers directly involved in this study, the indignation found in the testimonies must be emphasized. These testimonies accentuate the gratification that comes in verifying that the collected perceptions highlight a warning and a desire for change. This demonstrates a consensus in terms of the legitimacy of political policy being put into action when faced with diverse types of violence. The testimonies also stress that prevention,

pedagogical revision and revisions of school management are essential. This revision must focus especially on the common formulas of repression and blaming the youths.

The formulation of effective high impact political policy focusing on decreasing violence in Brazilian schools requires understanding the actual school context and understanding the perceptions of the participants themselves about the phenomenon. We are certain that the publication of this book represents a large step in getting to know the current phenomenon, supplying fundamental input for political debate and effective action in this area.

Jorge Werthein
Director of UNESCO Brazil

INTRODUCTION

All over the western world, the occurrence of violence in the schools is not a recent phenomenon. Beyond being an important issue for reflection, this violence constitutes a serious social problem above all else.

Since the first studies were developed on this subject in the United States in the nineteen-fifties, various dimensions of this phenomenon have undergone huge changes and the resulting problems have taken on a more serious nature. Some of the most notable transformations have been the appearance of weapons and guns in the schools, widespread drug use and the expansion of gangs. These elements have influenced the school routine and are eventually associated with drug trafficking. Another great change that has taken place is a result of the fact that the schools and their surrounding areas have ceased to be protected or preserved areas and have become elements that have been incorporated into the daily violence of urban spaces. Above all, school has ceased to represent a safe and secure place for the students and has lost a huge part of its ties to the community.

The focus of analysis of the phenomenon could not help but change as well in comparison with the first studies. Initially, violence in school was treated simply as a question of discipline. Later, it began to be analyzed as a demonstration of juvenile delinquency, a manifestation of anti-social behavior. Today, this violence is seen in a much broader way from the perspective of phenomena like globalization and social exclusion. These issues require analyses that are not restricted to transgressions practiced by the youths as students or to the violence in the social relationships among them.

Brazilian society has been hit with the increase of violence in the schools. There have been diverse incidents involving the participants in the school community in episodes of verbal, physical and symbolic aggression. This situation has alerted the attention of a variety of governmental agencies as well as international agencies and civil society[4].

Since 1997, UNESCO Brazil has initiated a series of studies focusing on the themes of Youth, Violence and Citizenship, providing concrete proposals for political policies in order to contribute to the search for solutions for the problems that affect youth. The emphases of these studies include issues such as social exclusion, the job market, family, education, social participation and the youth as protagonist.

The importance of this theme brought about a partnership with institutions that have been active in combating violence through actions directed towards identifying the mechanisms to prevent this phenomenon with emphasis on the theme as a priority issue. These institutions include: the Ayrton Senna Institute; the United Nations Programme on HIV/Aids (UNAIDS); the World Bank; United States Agency for International Development (USAID); the Ford Foundation; the National Council of State Secretariats of Education (CONSED) and Municipal Directors of Education Union (UNDIME).

This research finds itself in the sphere of preoccupations and corresponding efforts involved with this issue. The objectives

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[4] In 1999 the federal government created a commission of specialists, coordinated by Ilanud, with the objective of developing framework guidelines to confront the problem. In the same manner, MEC, in conjunction with other agencies, organized a national campaign of *Educação para a Paz* (Education for Peace). Civil society, in turn, organized projects like: Se Liga , Galera, (Get Involved, Crew) Paz (Peace), *Construa seu Grêmio* (Form a Student Group) and campaigns like the *Sou da Paz* (I'm from Peace) campaign. UNESCO, with the program *Abrindo Espaço - Educação e Cultura para a Paz* (Making Room – Education and Culture for Peace), advocates a strategy for a national program for opening schools on the weekend, making available alternative spaces for the construction of spaces for citizenship that can become possibilities for reverting the situation of violence.

of this research may be described in the broadest sense as analyzing the perceptions of the students, the technical-pedagogical staff and the parents about violence in the schools and the causes of that violence. This research describes the frequency and gravity of the incidents and evaluates the impact of violence on the learning process. It also identifies the mechanisms adopted and/or recommendable for the prevention, reduction and eradication of the problem

In order to carry out this study a wide-reaching concept of violence was adopted. This concept incorporated not only the idea of brutality and the use of force and intimidation, but also included socio-cultural aspects of the current state of the phenomenon, in addition to its symbolic significance. However, it must be stressed that violence in the schools should not be seen as just another form of juvenile violence. The occurrence of this type of violence represents the intersection of three sets of independent variables: institutional (school and family), social (sex, race, job, socio-spatial origin, religion, level of schooling of parents, socio-economic status) and behavioral (information, sociability, attitudes and opinions).

In a search to refer to the plurality of the involved dimensions, this project adopted the expression "violence in the schools". This phrase has the additional advantage of situating the phenomenon somewhere other than an institutional system considered in a generic fashion. This phrase allows for an approach that includes the space and time specificities of each and every unit. It is possible to think about multiple demonstrations that justify talking about "violences" in this way. It is also acceptable to think about the place these incidents have in establishments – "schools" – where they can vary in terms of intensity, magnitude, permanence and gravity.

Focusing on providing a better understanding of the theme, this book was divided into six chapters. In the first chapter there

is an approach to the literature that deals with violence in the schools. A number of the different meanings that are given to this type of violence are described in addition to the distinct hypotheses that exist about this phenomenon.

In the second chapter the school environment was examined. This examination began with the school surroundings – a description of the neighborhood, the streets, the crosswalks, lighting, the presence of bars in the area, monitoring and checking at the entrance and exits, any alterations in the school routine owing to the presence of gangs or drug dealers in the proximity and the forms of security that might exist. The examination then took in the state of the physical equipment and supplies and the quality of the services offered by the establishments to the school communities.

The third chapter deals with the rules and punishment mechanisms used to discipline the members of the school community in terms of how they get along on a daily basis. In the same fashion, the perceptions of these participants are explored in terms of how they view the learning process and the school. The focus then moves towards forms of interaction in the school environment, identifying the ways that the context of the situation can influence the relationships of the involved individuals.

In chapter four the aspects related to the imaginative concept of the meaning of school are approached. This takes into account evaluations of the quality of teaching and variations in performance that may definitively affect entering a university and/or the job market. There are numerous impressions of the schools and differentiation is made between the public schools and the private schools, as well as between the students themselves. These take into account the differences in the students' own groups in addition to socio-economic differences, social exclusion and racial discrimination.

In the fifth chapter the violences in the schools are focused

on directly and three distinct socio-organizational dimensions are associated to them. These are the degradation of the school environment, external violence that penetrates the school and the internal component related to the specificities of each establishment. The necessity of categorizing the demonstrations of the phenomenon are also identified according to the viewpoints of the interviewed parties. This was seen as the best way to understand the issue, providing a broad spectrum of the concepts of violence. This indicates the multiplicity of the experiences that the youths and the technical/pedagogical staff have with violent situations – threats, fights, assaults, robberies, sexual harassment and guns.

The last chapter offers a profound study of the reasons the various schools appear to be more or less affected by the violence. This is followed by proposals for combat and prevention based on the data collected for this research project as well as other proposals found in the specialized literature and UNESCO publications. There are a series of recommendations in the areas of leisure, school/family/community/media interaction, and activities as well as valorization and organization of the youths and others.

METHODOLOGY

DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY

This study employed two complementary approaches in terms of both the adopted strategies and the results. These were the extensive approach and the comprehensive approach. These were used in conjunction in a way that linked the respective beneficiaries and overcame the limitations of each one. In order to accomplish this goal closed questionnaires were given to the students, parents and teachers. Focus group interviews with students, parents and teachers were also used in addition to open individual interviews with school principals and members of the technical/pedagogical staff. Other focus group interviews included police officers, security officers, guards and discipline agents/coordinators. The observation evaluations of the surveyed schools were also considered.

The first of the above mentioned approaches focuses on becoming familiar with the magnitude of the issue and is based on the representative quality and inferential ability of the data. It is characterized by survey research.

A quantitative sampling was included of private (101) and public (239) establishments, dedicated to the offer of primary and secondary school in day and night shifts. The total was 340 school establishments.

Four different types of data collection instruments were distributed in schools in fourteen Brazilian capitals. These were: Manaus and Belém in the North; Fortaleza, Recife, Maceió and Salvador in the Northeast; the Federal District, Goiânia and

Cuiabá in the Central West; Vitória, Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo in the Southeast; and Porto Alegre and Florianópolis in the South[5].

Chart 1
Capitals included in the study, with indication of Federal Unit and Abbreviation

Capital	Federal Unit	Abbreviation
Goiânia	Goiás	GO
Cuiabá	Mato Grosso	MT
Manaus	Amazonas	AM
Belém	Pará	PA
Fortaleza	Ceará	CE
Recife	Pernambuco	PE
Maceió	Alagoas	AL
Salvador	Bahia	BA
Vitória	Espírito Santo	ES
Rio de Janeiro	Rio de Janeiro	RJ
São Paulo	São Paulo	SP
Florianópolis	Santa Catarina	SC
Porto Alegre	Rio Grande do Sul	RS

The students and the parents received a questionnaire that was composed of a first set of questions directed at identifying the characteristics of the interviewed party. This was then followed by questions involving violence and demonstrations of violence in the school space. The teachers received a broader questionnaire that included investigation of violence and other themes as well such as sexual and reproductive health.

The set of interviewed parties totaled 33,655 students,

[4] Due to space and format limitations, the references to state capitals in the tables in this survey will be identified by Federal Unit. This corresponds to data collected in the municipality systems of the state capitals and the Federal District as well.

3,099 teachers and 10,255 parents that responded to the questionnaires on violence in the schools.

This study intends to take into account various inferences and recognizes that the sampling may include a probability element. The data used for the selection of this sampling were registered by INEP-MEC, and were based on the School Census. This base was made up from the collected information from school censuses that are repeated annually. The adopted procedure is stratified samples selected by groups in two phases.

Atmosphere is a representative sub-set in the regular schools (primary and secondary). Public or private schools found in the municipal network of the capitals of the Federal Unit schools chosen to make up this study.

The secondary or observed elements are the grades/classes. Finally, the closing items are made up of the students and are distributed according to sections of public and private schools on the primary and secondary levels and for the day and night shifts. It is important to mention that all of the students in the selected classes were interviewed.

Information that is found within a situation is what inferences are based on. This makes it methodologically advisable to develop and expand the breadth of the obtained results to encompass the universe that the sampling intends to represent. The ample results presented here represent the universe of public and private schools of the municipal network of the state capitals.

The definition of the size of a sampling uses the parameter of the variance of school size measured by number of students in each capital. The databank utilized in the system of reference (School Census) does not include individualized information about the students. The lowest level of aggregation is the school, with respective numbers of classes and students per grade. School size is measured by the number of students and was fundamental in defining whether or not the school could be selected.

In order to define the number of participating schools for each capital, the size of the sampling was calculated utilizing the variance in the number of classes for each school. In this way a reliability coefficient was maintained at 95%. The error margin was 3%. This sub-set varied in each capital. The minimum was 19 schools in the Federal District and Vitória. The maximum was 46 schools in São Paulo.

Table 1.1

Number of schools by population and number of schools, classes, and students in the sample, grouped by capitals of the Federal Units – 2000.

Capital of Federal Unit	Number of schools by population and number of schools, classes and students in the sample			
	Population of Schools	Sample		
		Schools	Classes	Students
Federal District	597	16	81	1,626
Goiânia	483	27	135	2,699
Cuiabá	246	19	94	1,886
Manaus	478	22	109	2,177
Belém	280	29	145	2,893
Fortaleza	912	21	105	2,106
Recife	518	20	100	1,992
Maceió	760	16	79	2,591
Salvador	648	29	143	2,865
Vitória	124	13	66	1,314
Rio de Janeiro	1,487	15	77	1,541
São Paulo	2,757	37	183	3,657
Florianópolis	445	13	67	1,340
Porto Alegre	120	18	88	1,750
Total	**9,095**	**278**	**1,392**	**27,844**

Source:[1]School Census, INEP/MEC,1998.
[2]National Survey on Violence, AIDS and Drugs in the Schools. UNESCO, 2001.

A comprehensive approach seeks to work within the context of the subjects' lives. This context includes demonstrations of how they act socially as well as what their activities are.

Among the specialists that value the comprehensive approach, one of the most advantageous elements of this approach is the focus group. Focus groups were organized in addition to the on site observation in the schools and in the individual interviews. The focus groups and individual interviews took place in a meaningful fashion. The individual interviews included principals, coordinators, pedagogical supervisors, educational guidance counselors, police officers, security agents, guards and discipline inspectors/coordinators. The focus groups included teachers, parents and students.

In addition to the focus groups, another qualitative instrument that was utilized in the research was the semi-structured individual interviews. This element is one of the most widespread formats of interviewing in the world of Social Sciences. In this approach the interviewer uses a wide ranging interview script that covers various elements of the phenomenon that is the subject of the study. This means that those interviewed reveal their "thoughts" on their reality, their experiences and their basic perceptions by way of their answers. According to Kvale (1996), the interviews allow for the possibility to "understand the world beginning with the point of view of the subjects in order to reveal the meaning of their experiences and unmask the world they live in before providing scientific explanations."

The third technique that makes up this comprehensive approach was the use of on site observations of the schools in the quantitative and quantitative samples. The observations followed all of the requirements of a developed script that was tested and reformulated by the researchers that were coordinating the survey. The Observation Scripts were applied in two or three visits in all of the selected schools. This task was performed by field

researchers that received specific training in how to apply this technique.

This instrument dealt with most of the physical aspects of the school environment. These aspects included the neighborhood, the street, traffic and the surroundings that make up the school environment, including the presence of walls and security gates at the school entrance. These aspects also included the condition of the classrooms, laboratories, gymnasiums, libraries and reading rooms, the grounds, the hallways, the bathrooms and dressing rooms, the snack bars and the lunchrooms, the teachers' rooms, principals' offices and other administrative areas. In addition to all this, the Observation Script also allowed information to be included about student and teacher behavior as well as that of the other employees in the school environment, both inside and outside the classroom.

The qualitative study that sustained this project encompasses individual interviews with principals and teaching coordinators (185); individual interviews with police officers/security agents/guards (116); discipline inspectors or coordinators (124); teachers that participated in the focus groups (370); students that participated in the focus groups (1070) and parents that participated in the focus groups (290). Considering that each focus group had an average of ten participants, the comprehensive part of the study itself gathered information from 2,155 people.

The survey process

The capitals that were part of the research were selected based on discussions among the researchers in charge, institutional partners and specialists in education. This was done in consultation with UNESCO. For the selection of capitals to be studied the importance of the capital in the context of the region was considered in conjunction with the contingency of violence among youths in the area. The sampling was part of specialized

statistics in education and was widely discussed with all of the research partners.

The questions that make up the data collection were developed and discussed with a wide variety of specialists. The questions were then submitted to testing situations, both with individuals and in pilot surveys that took place in schools in the Federal District. After the results of the pilot survey were processed, the questionnaires and scripts were modified according to the necessities that had shown up. One protocol that was included in all of the survey documents and instruments was submitted to the UNESCO Ethics Committee[6] and was approved.

Fourteen institutions were contracted for the development of this survey. These institutions formed local teams that had the responsibility of collecting data in their states. The teams were formed by consultants that came from the universities or from non-governmental organizations based in the states. These consultants had previous survey experience and had already worked in collaboration with UNESCO in previous projects.

Analysis and data presentation

It is worth noting that some information refers to phenomenon in a non-generalized fashion (gun possession, for example). In these cases, the absolute number (N) is quite reduced. This factor justifies recommending caution in making inferences. On the other hand, care should be taken in two additional areas. One is in the interpretation of the answers to the multiple-choice questions. In some cases the absolute number refers not to the total number of respondents, but to the total number of responses. This frequently causes the absolute number (N) to be higher than the total number of respondents. The second area is multiple choice questions that allow for only two possible answers. If they

[6] The Ethics Committee established the ethical principles that guide all UNESCO research.

are marked they mean "yes". If they are not marked they mean "no". In these cases there are no invalid responses and therefore the absolute number (N) will be the same on a number of tables. Finally, in regard to percentages it is important to keep in mind that there are small differences in rounding numbers that allows for variations in totals between 98% and 101%.

The qualitative survey is one of the most important aspects of the project and this is where information analysis takes place. This occurs through systematization of the participants' responses, identifying them and classifying them into the most meaningful categories. This is accomplished through a progressive study of the answers, utilizing data subcategories that are organized by theme.

In reference to the on site observations, results were obtained through scripts that were filled out. Some of the items on these scripts allowed for quantification. The responses were listed and then put into similar categories. This brought about new variables, including some indices. In these cases, although the data received quantitative review, the data were not statistical. This was especially true considering that the observations took place in the schools from the probability sampling as well as in the establishments that were selected using specific intentional criteria. This deals with simple quantification but does not permit statistical inference. Other items of on site observations were dealt with according to the procedures for qualitative analysis. In these cases they are presented as records of the observers' perceptions.

Criteria and limits of generalization

The reports of the coordination/supervision of the field studies did not report objections from the students when responding to the questionnaires. There were practically no numbers for non-respondents.

All of the students from the selected grades/classes received

questionnaires to be filled out by the parents or guardians and the return of the questionnaire was optional. This process applied to the self-application questionnaires that were distributed in all the schools to all members of the technical/pedagogical team[7]. The return of these questionnaires was also optional.

With the element of personal discretion in mind in terms of returning the questionnaires, the samplings that were made up of parents and teachers are not probability samples. It is not possible to calculate the margin of error or the reliability coefficient that does not allow for statistical inferences to be made. However, the data provided by those interviewed are treated as complementary data in regards to the students' responses.

[7] As a rule when the tables cite "members of the technical-pedagogical team", this includes teachers, principals, coordinators and educational supervisors and counselors. On the whole the teachers make up the largest part of this group and the text generally refers to their responses.

I. VIOLENCE IN THE SCHOOLS:
Reviewing the literature

This chapter examines the international and national literature on violence in the schools. This is done taking into consideration the historic development of this field of knowledge, the treatment it receives in some countries, the debate that surrounds the most frequent thematic definitions as well as the most common associations and theoretical-methodological portraits. Finally, this chapter focuses on the national literature from a comparative point of view, pointing out some gaps and omissions.

1.1. THE DEBATE

In a historical analysis of the tradition of studies of violence in schools, Debarbieux points out relevant changes both in terms of what is considered to be violence and how it is seen in terms of approaching the theme. An essential lesson of history is how this variable is treated in terms of violence in education related to representations of childhood and education. (Debarbieux, 1996: 32). The author identifies a phase when analyses referred to violence in the school system particularly on the part of the teachers against the students (punishment and corporal punishment).

In the contemporary literature the opposite is true. Sociologists, anthropologists, psychologists and other specialists favor the analysis of violence among students or of violence to property

(vandalism, for example). There is also a small number of analyses of student against teacher or teacher against student violence[8].

This division transfers the focus to the different forms of violence. It also places focus on the necessity of defining what violence means, particularly violence in the schools. In fact the emphasis of any study on the theme depends very much on how violence is defined. There is a necessity for refining appropriate definitions when dealing with violence in the schools and this is true for research in any area.

In this sense, Chesnais (1981) points out the fact that there are a wide variety of concepts of violence. There are those that should be hierarchically defined according to their social cost. For the author, physical violence is in first place in the referred to empirical order of this concept. This includes sexual violence and refers to violence that may result in irreparable damage in the individuals' lives. This damage may require societal reparations through State intervention.

The second concept includes economic violence. This type of violence refers only to damage caused to goods and property and especially refers to damage that results from delinquent and criminal acts against material goods. This type of violence encompasses vandalism[9]. For the author, this modality escapes

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[8] In fact, children have been "disciplined", including by force, since Antiquity up until the most recent periods. The Hebrew word *mûsar* means to instruct and to correct at the same time. The Greeks defended the idea that childhood and youth were not crazy ages, but ages that were full of excesses and that lacked reason. These concepts justified the applied pedagogy of ancient times when physical and psychological punishment were frequently employed. In the twentieth century, the incidence of punishment decreased considerably, but did not completely disappear. In Europe, teachers could still apply this type of punishment until the 1970's in Europe (Debarbieux, 1996).

[9] According to Chesnais, the French identified so intimately with their heritage and their worldly goods that many times they reacted more intensely when these were violated than when their own person suffered from violence. This tendency to attribute an economic connotation to violence confused it many times with delinquency. The author's words make it clear that understanding economic violence does not refer to inequality in market positions nor does it refer to the deficits in citizenship that result from social asymmetry (Chesnais, 1981: 13).

the traditional definition of violence, as it does not describe violations against a person's integrity.

A third concept focuses on the idea of authority. This idea is highly subjective and according to the author it is very much in fashion to speak of moral or symbolic violence. Chesnais affirms that talking about violence in this meaning is language abuse that comes from certain western intellectuals that are in excessively good positions in life that prevent them from being familiar with the obscure world of extreme poverty and crime (Chesnais, 1981:13).

This author affirms that only the first concept is based on an etymologically correct definition. This concept finds support in penal codes and professional points of view. This includes the points of view of doctors and police officers for example. The phenomenon itself supports this concept. In this way, physical violence is that which effectively means aggression against people that threatens what is most precious to them: life, health and freedom (Chesnais, 1981: 14).

Bernard Charlot refers to the difficulty of defining school violence not only because this refers to heterogeneous phenomenon which are difficult to define and put into order. This difficulty also arises because of the lack of structure among the social images that have a foundation value: infancy (innocence), school (peaceful refuge) and society (Charlot, 1997: 01).

In addition to this, the difficulty in defining boundaries increases owing to the fact that there is not a consensus as to what violence means. What is defined as violence varies depending on the school establishment and the status of the person that is talking (teachers, principals, students...). It also depends on age and probably on gender.

Charlot broadens the concept of school violence and classifies it into three levels:

a) violence: beatings, wounding injuries, sexual violence, robbery, crime, and vandalism;
b) incivility: humiliation, curse words, lack of respect;
c) symbolic or institutional violence: includes a lack of significance for staying in school for so many years; learning as something to be despised, something that obligates the youths to learn subjects and content that are alien to their interests; the impositions that come from a society that doesn't know how to include the youths in the job market; and violence in power relationships among teachers and students. There is also an understanding of a denial of identity and professional satisfaction on the part of the teachers as they are obligated to put up with a high rate of absenteeism and student indifference.

For Charlot (1997), even if physical aggression or psychological pressure appear more, it is the "incivilities" that represent the main threat to the school system.

Debarbieux (1998) criticizes this attitude as "obsolete", not only because of the recognition of various rights, but also because of the significance of the "minor delinquent acts" and the incivilities that break the social pact in human relationships as well as the rules for getting along together well (Debarbieux, 1998). It is common to focus on violence as a fact in acts that are recognized as criminal by the penal code and other codes like the moral code of the time and the place. According to Debarbieux:

It can finally be concluded that a study on violence and lack of security in the schools should take into consideration: i) crimes and misdemeanors such as stealing, robbery, assault, extortion, drug dealing and consumption, etc. according to the qualifications of the penal code; ii) incivilities, above all those that are in line with those defined by the social participants; and iii) a feeling of insecurity, primarily that which is denominated "the

feeling of violence" that results from the first two components but that originates from a more general feeling in the various social reference methods (Debarbieux, 1996: 42).

Dupâquier (1999), also justifies the preoccupation with various types of violence in school in light of the principle of human rights and the victim's side of the story. Demonstrations of violence are considered as well as the increased rate of these demonstrations. There must be a sense of indignation on a social level for the meaning of violence in terms of the victims and the institutions that suffer as well as democracy itself. It is essential that the lack of safety[10] in schools be reduced. The risk of victimization on the part of the youths in this environment must also be reduced, particularly in relationship to their peers.

In that this author considers school violence to be a transgression of order and the rules for life in society, it must be pointed out that this violence should not be confused with aggression. The author recognizes the difficulty in establishing the limits between violence in school and transgressions of the rules of civility[11]. He includes other demonstrations of violence in school: violence related to individual material (robbery and extortion); violence against collective property (vandalism); verbal and moral violence against students, staff and teachers; and physical violence. The author affirms that violence in school should only be considered phenomena in the sense of a brutal transgression in school order and the rules of society (Dupâquier, 1999: 08). In fact as Hanke (1996) also warns in an analysis of schools in the U.S., it is not enough to focus on acts that are considered criminal or extreme. This does not serve to improve

[10] The literature about violence in the schools includes a special preoccupation with youths, reflecting on concepts not only about violence, but about school and youth in addition to other issues.
[11] This is another common preoccupation of various Brazilian authors about the issue. One example is Fukui (1992).

the understanding of the nature, the reach or the associations among violence and victimization.

Based on studies in Spain, Ortega (2001) observes that violence is an issue that awakens a certain moral ambivalence. This occurs mainly in reference to children and youths and the expression violence in the schools provokes a reaction of rejection. This negative reaction was even stronger in Europe in the nineties. However, at least this issue has been undergoing ongoing studies[12].

Similarly Hayden and Blaya (2001) indicate that studies in England include an additional complicating factor. This factor is that in the dictionary the word violence is only defined as physical violence. This means that the term is not used in academic discussion to qualify the behavior of adults and children in the school environment that involve emotional connotations. In England, studies on violence in the schools are commonly filled with other terms including aggression or aggressive behavior on the part of the students[13]. A number of studies focus on conflicts among students that are called bullying[14]. Other references are made to disruptions in the educational system or in the classes that are caused by undesirable attitudes. There is also reference made to tuning out or disinterest in school and learning. Other

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[12] Towards the end of the nineties the Spanish government – in collaboration with UNICEF – developed a broad study on violence in the schools and designed an intervention program: the Sevilha Project.

[13] For example, in research on school bullying, the modality on aggressive behavior is focused on. The term has no exact translation in Portuguese. The closest meaning under the best of circumstances is physical intimidation. This does not mean that it does not exist in Brazil.

[14] Bullying is defined by Nancy Day (1996: 44-45) as physical or psychological abuse against someone who is not capable of defending him/herself. She states that there are four factors that contribute to bullying: 1) a negative attitude for the parents or the person who takes care of the child or adolescent; 2) a tolerant or permissive attitude in relation to the child or adolescent's aggressive behavior; 3) a paternalistic style that uses power and violence to control the child or adolescent; and 4) a natural tendency on the part of the child or adolescent to be arrogant. She says that the majority of the bullies are boys, but that girls can be bullies as well. The girls that are bullies sometimes use indirect methods like gossip, manipulation of friendships, lies and excluding others from the group.

things that are mentioned are anti-social behaviors or acts that imply a lack of respect for the law and actions that are not necessarily illegal and that do not provide room for legal recourse. (Rutter et al., 1998, apud Hayden and Blaya, 2001).

Brazilian authors seek to refine the concept of violence taking the target public into consideration. This includes the youths and the social institution, the school as an object. National literature includes not only physical violence, but includes an emphasis on ethics and politics and a concern for making symbolic violence part of the discussion. For example, Sposito (1998) like Arendt (1961) discovers a connection between violence and a break in dialogue and the ability to negotiate. These elements represent the raw material of knowledge and education. For the author, this signifies that violence is every act that implies a rupture in the social nexus through the use of force. This denies the possibility of social relations that occur through communication, the use of words, dialogue and conflict (Sposito, 1998: 60)[15].

The terms used to indicate violence vary according to country. For example, in a wide variety of research in the United States on violence in school the term juvenile delinquency[16] is often used. This is not true for studies in England. For some authors in Anglo-Saxon literature the term violence in school should only be used to describe conflicts between students and teachers (Curcio & First, 1993; Steinberg, 1991, apud Flannery, 1997) or should be used in relation to activities that cause suspension, disciplinary acts or prison.

In addition to the concept of juvenile delinquency, studies

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[15] Sposito (1998) calls attention to the fact that racism and intolerance are also included in discussions of school violence.

[16] Juvenile delinquency corresponds to acts that go against the law or that are potentially subject to legal measures. It is commonly associated with physical aggression, vandalism and rape (Hayden and Blaya, 2001).

on violence in school in the U.S. are frequently filled with the terms aggression, conflict, disorderly conduct, criminal behavior and anti-social behavior. In light of this, Flannery (1997) emphasizes the importance of being careful with terminology and with differentiating types of violence. This is true particularly when it comes to distinguishing what is understood as violence and anti-social behavior.

Flannery (1997) warns that a change has been observed in regard to the prevalence of certain types of school violence. Progressively, acts of vandalism or property damage are being substituted by violence against people. The same tendency has been observed in Brazil (Codo and Vasques-Menezes, 2001). The first have also gone from being battles using words to battles using fists to battles using weapons, especially guns. This has caused an increase in cases with lethal outcomes.

Another phenomenon associated with situations of violence is the availability of guns and the changes that this imposes on conflict communication. This factor contributes to the increase in the moral character of the conflicts in the schools. Different research based on surveys in the U.S. suggest that youths that carry guns to school have the intention of defending themselves more than committing a crime (Flannery, 1997). Other studies, Breines et al. (2000) for example, point out the association between guns and masculinity as well as the need to demonstrate symbols of power. These studies also discuss the effect of this demonstration or of any dissuasion.

Research about violence in the schools in the U.S. has been influenced by media focus on particular groups like gangs or groups of youths with ritualistic practices. This includes groups with their own languages that are associated with violence, especially xenophobia. This is criticized by Hagedorn (1998), who defends the position that this association does not necessarily take place in all situations. In fact, over the last 15

years there has been an increase of violence practiced by isolated individuals or pairs in U.S. schools.

There is controversy surrounding a broader concept when dealing with violence in the schools. Care must be taken in regard to the moralist value judgements that surround the terms used to describe related behavior. According to Hayden and Blaya (2001: 44):

> *(....) There is room for discussion concerning all of the concepts about behavior. This is particularly true for those concepts concerning what is considered to be anti-social, delinquent or disturbed behavior. It is important to keep in mind who is defining these concepts and who is qualified to define what an act is and what disturbed is.* (Hayden and Blaya, 2001: 44)

On the other hand, there is consensus in regard to the fact that not only physical violence deserves attention. There are other types of violence that can be traumatic and serious. There is recommendation for listening to the victims and the academic community in order to construct ideas about violence that are more in line with realities that have been experienced as well as the feelings of the involved individuals (Budd, 1999, apud Hayden and Blaya, 2001).

1.1.1. Types of violence in the schools

It must be mentioned again that there are many types of violence that were more common, especially in North American literature. These include gangs, xenophobia and bullying. These themes have also been concentrated on in studies in Europe, especially in France, and have included incivilities in the school environment. This last element is another ambiguous term and it is not considered by some authors (Dupâquier, 1999) to be

violence. This is referred to more as aggression towards educational standards that are contrary to the rules of living together and respecting the other person.

However, particularly in France, there is consensus on the fact that incivility is expressed in aggression or insensitivity to the rights of others. There is also consensus that violence requires attention in order for the social relationships in the school environment to be less hostile.

Considering research that developed in France, Peralva (1997) treats violence as an urban phenomenon that is internal to the school and that is sustained in incivility, in contrast to the term civility, adopted by Norbert Elias[17]. According to the author, in the 1990's school violence in France began to belong to purely behavioral transgressions more than to actual crimes.

The concept of incivility becomes more palpable through the way it operates, which also identifies its ambiguity. Considering studies on schools in France, Dupâquier (1999) refers to incivilities in an empirical fashion: crimes against objects and property such as damage to mailboxes, broken doors and windows, damage to electrical installations, elevators, furniture and equipment, buildings and vehicles. A commonly found item is purposeful damage to phone booths that includes even fires and graffiti. Incivilities against other people may take on different forms of physical intimidation (pushing around, spitting) and verbal intimidation (put downs, cursing and threats).

Another form of incivility includes lack of care for collective areas like bathrooms. Other forms include ostentatious symbols of violence and attitudes that are used to cause fear like carrying guns and threatening and sexist attitudes. The public

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[17] This focus that allows delinquency as a reference is the Civilizing Process - in conjunction with the work of Norbert Elias and a special issue of Cahiers Internationaux de Sociologie: Norbert Elias: Une lecture plurielle. vol. 99, 1995. The civilizing process is the codification and ruling of behavior. It is sharing common rules in regard to how to behave in society.

practice of acts that are considered as illicit like drug use or infringement of habits also fall into the incivility category, above all in France.

According to Debarbieux (1998), incivilities are anti-social behavior and anti-social violences. The more traumatic they are the more they are treated as banal or things that should not be discussed in order to protect the school. Many times these elements take the form of symbolic violence. According to Bourdieu (2001), they are permitted because of a nameless power that is conniving and authoritarian. Because of this, teachers do not come forward or complain and the victims are not identified as such. In terms of racism and xenophobic actions there is also a common element of complicity that is not admitted to by the youths, adults, students or teachers.

The need to establish conceptual limits between violence and aggression is also emphasized by Brazilian authors. These authors are all concerned with a non-violent culture that respects human rights. In an analysis of schools in São Paulo, Fukui (1992), suggests that to distinguish between violence and aggression the words of Jurandir Freire (1984, apud Fukui, 1992: 103) must be cited. For Freire violence is the desired use of aggression for destructive means. This means physical aggression, fights and conflicts that can be expressions of human aggression but that are not necessarily demonstrations of violence. In violence, the action is violent for the victim, the agent or the observer. Violence takes place when there is the desire for destruction. Fukui also identifies the following as forms of violence stealing and robbery that reach the school's patrimony, as well as aggression that reaches the person directly (Fukui, 1992: 106).

1.1.2. Endogenous and Exogenous Variables

If possible, it is important to understand and explain the phenomena of both violence that is called violence and what are

called aggressive acts. As much in Brazilian literature as in literature from abroad the work on violence in the schools commonly includes multiple associations of occurrences with characteristics and attributes that include victims and aggressors. They also include descriptions of distinct institutions and environments where the youths circulate as well as the youths' particular socio-political-cultural dynamics such as:

i) Gender, masculinity and sexism, including a wide variety of situations (Artz, 1998, for the U.S.; Peignard et al., 1998, on schools in England). These elements include sexual harassment and sexual and psychological abuse where the teachers become the aggressors (Payet, 1997; Debarbieux, 1996; Breines et al., 2000, among others);
ii) Racial relations, racism and xenophobia, themes that are well studied in the U.S. and in Europe (Debarbieux, 1998; Moreno, 1998; Kramer, 1998; Payet, 1997); and
iii) Ethnic/racial and national composition. This dimension is especially emphasized in European and North American literature that takes into consideration the importance of migration and the racial situation in relation to regional conflicts.

Other exogenous variables present in the literature are:

iv) The family as a conditioning factor or antecedent to violent personalities, with emphasis on some elements that are called social characteristics of violent families (Zinnecker, 1998)[18];
v) Media influence – the way violence is linked to social

[18] This hypothesis is the object of enormous controversy. It is rejected by many authors that call attention to the multiplicity of the institutions that currently interfere in a decisive fashion in the training and mis-training of the youths' behavior;

banality – this is another external phenomenon that is focused on in debates about violence in the schools[19], and
vi) Characteristics of the environment the school is part of. In some cases this is the neighborhood, in others the society.

In some studies in Brazil the school is seen as a victim of violence that originates outside and comes in to reach the school. In this sense it is common to refer to poverty and violence in poor communities that the students belong to as well as to the drug dealers and gangs that enter the schools (Guimarães, 1998). These elements make up part of a social ecology that drowns them, but that is not necessarily caused by them.

One of the more extensive studies made in France demystifies the idea of fatality in violence in schools that are situated in areas that are considered as high criminal areas. The conclusion is that internal policies can be effective in terms of preserving the school community (Debarbieux, 1996). Debarbieux (1996: 75) warns that violence in the school structure is linked to social factors of the served public. A sociology of violence in the schools is primarily a sociology of exclusion.

Ambiguity is found both outside the school and inside it in terms of the poor state of the school in relation to social management institutions and political policies. In this situation the schools would merely be the place where interaction between biased and unsatisfied groups occurs. Along the same line, surveys stress the conventional forms of political representation that are also an object of criticism and rejection on the part of the youths. Many of them project their frustration with the social system. They are not satisfied with the political process or the leaders and they think that no one in the system understands them. (Feldman, 1998: 22).

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[18] Many are critical as well of the sensationalist and simplistic fashion that the media uses to present this type of occurrence.

From another angle the endogenous variables that are within the school include:

i) Age (Flannery, 1997, on bullying in the U.S.) and the student's grade or education level (Döptner et al., 1996; Fuch et al., 1996, apud Funk, 2001);

ii) The rules and discipline in the pedagogical projects of the schools, such as the impact of the punishment system (Carvel, 2000, in: Hayden; Blaya, 2001; Ramognino et al., 1997);

iii) The teachers contribute to disrespect for the students' right to protection. They do this by making violence banal and by not giving special attention to incivilities and discrimination. They do not take the opportunity to educate students against violent cultures (Sposito, 1998; Feldman, 1998). Some studies also point to low quality teaching, a lack of human resources and authoritarian treatment given to the students as stimulators of violence on the part of the teachers (Blaya, 2001).

The debate on the factors outside and inside the school – exogenous or endogenous variables – becomes more complex and delicate when violence versus the autonomy of the school is focused on in the context of other institutions and social processes.

There is consensus in recognition of the negative vulnerability (risks and obstacles)[20] of the school in regard to distinct contemporary processes. These processes include social exclusion, the stance of political power towards education, the loss of prestige and purchasing power of the teachers. In Brazil, various authors stress the degradation of the public schools, their lack of

[20] Negative vulnerability is important in terms of the recent literature on the concept that also emphasizes the positive part. This means the available resources of knowledge as a symbolic, social and cultural wealth that is particular in terms of the schools. In this context this perspective has not been sufficiently explored owing to the limitation and scope of literature about violence in the schools

supplies and didactic resources and the low learning levels in relation to the demands of the job market and the youths' expectations (Sposito, 1998; Zaluar, 1992; Rodrigues, 1994 et al.).

The vulnerability of the school to a wide variety of macro-social violences has been increasing along with its loss of legitimacy as a productive place for the passing on of knowledge. This is clear in contrast to social reach, broadening points of view and access to other forms of training. This is the reality that guides authors like Payet (1997):

> *As a social object, violence in the schools is part of many locations. The school establishments certainly have the status of being the original place, but the social problem is constructed in other areas. Among these are the media and political scenes that are determining factors as they give the acts and the incidents a position and a general value to the occurrences, giving meaning to what happens in the establishments (....)*
> *This habit of thinking in one way about violence in the schools can be summed up with some evidence. Violence that is demonstrated in school comes from outside. For violence to cease the school must be closed for its own protection and isolation.*

The externalization of the causes of violence in the schools is extremely convenient from an institutional and political point of view. This type of logic allows the responsibility to be taken away from the system and obfuscates its function in the production of violence. Two phenomena are constantly increasing and they perform a fundamental role. These are school segregation among the establishments and in the heart of the establishments as well as the social and cultural distance between the teachers and the students in the low-income areas.

Debarbieux puts a name on vulnerability in school in

relation to the increase in delinquent behavior and incivilities vis-à-vis the increase in unemployment and the precarious quality of the life of the families in the poor neighborhoods. Debarbieux also mentions the effect of school massification when schools receive youths that have two roles: crisis victims and violence participants. This means youths that are negatively affected by experiences of exclusion and that also belong to gangs. This has consequences for the entire school community: students, parents and teachers (Debarbieux, 1998: 39).

Prevention against an indefinite definition in terms of territories is essential. An effort must also be made to fight against a lack of knowledge about the situations that might occur in dealing with violence that occur in the school or because of the school. An effort must also be made to construct alternative cultures for peace through strategies and resources of the schools themselves.

In order to identify the variables or factors that are found woven into violence in the schools a wide variety of other relationships and social processes must be examined. The tendency is not to isolate a single factor as the possible cause or antecedent that causes this kind of violence to take place. It is preferable to identify sets of pro-violence circumstances or environments. This is true as much for empirical analysis as for theoretical reflections. For this to happen, many authors defend the importance of a cross-disciplinary approach in addition to multi-dimensional focus. This is especially true in terms of what stems from sociology, political science, psychology, education and criminal justice (Watts, 1998)[21]. Funk (2001), for example, in an outline on studies in Germany, identifies an illustrious group of factors. These are also found in studies developed in other countries strongly associated with violence in the schools such as:

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[21] The theses and work published on the theme in Brazil simultaneously come from areas of education, anthropology, sociology and social psychology.

1) Among the students: low self-esteem, lack of perspective in relation to future and how school is seen in terms of their professional life; some personality traits; family context that is marked by lack of dialogue; domestic violence; lack of parental interest in the youths' school progress; desire to be accepted by the reference group; and ways of expressing and living with masculinity;
2) In terms of the schools: atmosphere of school work or mediocre teaching quality; problems in relationships among teachers and students; lack of emphasis on values in education that takes place; bad school results – larger drop out rate among the students that are involved in violent acts;
3) Media exposure, violent programs, and
4) Type of community and neighborhood and degree of violence found there.

The Broken Windows theory was developed from the perspective of social processes that affect violence, including violence in the schools. The authors James Q. Wilson and George Kelling popularized the idea that neighborhoods that demonstrate small signs of abandonment or degradation are more apt to experience more serious crimes.

According to the authors a broken window is a sign that nobody cares (...) So, breaking more windows doesn't mean anything. (Wilson and Kelling, 1982:03).

The Broken Windows theory essentially maintains that physical disorder in the neighborhood (graffiti, garbage, and degradation) and in small delinquencies (drinking and hanging out) – are signs that nobody's watching. Skykes (1995) proposes the application of the Broken Windows theory on schools, pointing out problems that affect the school community and making an analogy with the broken windows in the original theory.

1.1.3. Levels of analysis and corresponding hypotheses

The levels of analysis vary widely about violence in the schools. The European and British literature frequently call attention to macro-social points of view on youth and violence. Micro-situated studies are also common and are commonly found in North American literature.

In the majority of the studies a unit is selected that is in synch with the students and their points of view. This unit identifies the students as victims or aggressors. Zinnecker (1998) works against this sort of position, indicating that the same student can play both roles, depending on the situation. However, it must be noted that the majority of victims in the schools are the students, followed at a large distance by the adults and the establishments (Debarbieux, 1996: 57).

In regard to the theme or focus, emphasis falls on aggression among partners. Partners in this sense mean students. There is little debate about the relationship between students and teachers or the relationships between teachers and teachers. There is also little discussion about the relationship between principals, teachers and school staff.

However, returning to the youths' perceptions, studies tend to focus on the students' behavior, the culture of the school establishment and the invasion and influence of strangers in the school environment. The studies that have been developed normally begin with the closer and more common themes. For example, in England they leave the schools to discuss citizenship, taking into consideration violence in the community or delinquency and safety in the blocks that surround the school establishment as well as the role the school plays in the community (Marlow and Pitts 1998, Hayden and Blaya, 2001).

The frame of reference for the theoretical debate also varies in the literature on violence in the schools. This occurs mainly among European authors in a tendency to favor institutional

analyses (or variants like the system level approach as Zinnecker calls it). These can take on a wide variety of forms, like analyses of intra-group relationships. Along this line, there are studies that investigate the status and popularity of the youths that demonstrate aggressive behavior among pairs (Crains et al., 1988; Asher and Coie, 1990; Coie et al., 1991, apud Zinnecker, 1998). These studies also include group rules. This line of study is not restricted to the individual characteristics of the students but focuses more on legitimate aggressive behavior, like bullying, or group actions against isolated individuals (Olweus, 1993; Schuster, 1996 apud Zinnecker, 1998).

Debate surrounding personality theories is also usual. For some authors in this area authoritarianism and a tendency towards violence are relatively stable personality traits. For other authors authoritarianism is a reaction to anxiety (Watts, 1998). For example, for Bergman (1998) in Germany, violence among youths is related to anxiety and insecurity that are provoked by the process of the country's unification. According to the author, some of these youth groups are more affected than others by social tension. This causes them to be the carriers of xenophobic and authoritarian expressions. When the focus is centered on individuals (aggressors) it is common to emphasize the lack of competence of these youths as well as problems in communication and the way they interpret messages by responding in an aggressive fashion.

Another line of thinking that is of equal importance concerning the individual is the association of aggressive behavior with socialization in childhood, in the family and in inter-generation relationships. This approach is found most in work concerning bullying. This is when age gains importance, but not only in terms of a specific type of aggressive behavior. In fact, there is a tendency to associate this kind of behavior as part of a cycle that has to do with age. This treats this kind of behav-

ior as aggression that occurs according to a cycle that in some ways is similar to the debate on rites of passage and socialization rituals (Flannery, 1997).

Flannery's (1997) research on students in North American schools is designed in a similar fashion. The author concludes that a large portion of the aggressors in cases of homicide and other serious crimes had already had some kind of criminal record involving guns. This author makes an appeal to call this a developmental theory (of the individual) or a continual analysis of their life story for students in order to define the risk factors or situations that they consider to be violent. This works in conjunction with the warning about the importance of adopting protection factors in the schools. These protection factors need to be guided towards the students beginning in childhood.

In these developmental perspective (of the individual) studies, examining the effects of violence on children and youths in terms of mental health is a common element, especially in cases of bullying. On the other hand, the school is incorporated into the analysis as an institutional space that can promote aggressive and violent behavior and as a place that should take more care with student diversity and with safety in order to prevent violence or the presence of gangs and gang members.

In the analyses that use the school and other institutions like the family and society in general as references, the theoretical-methodological focus is institutional practice and the interaction between violence and authority.

In Brazil, Aquino (1999: 11) advocates using these analyses of relationships between teachers and students as a way of researching the place authority occupies in relationship to how it is constructed institutionally:

> *(....) the subject can only be considered in terms of being situated in a complex of locations and current relationships – that are always institutionalized. (...) The subject is a student in a particular school, a student of a certain teacher or teachers, a child in a specific family, part of a social class, citizen of a country and so on* (Aquino, 1999: 11).

With this focus the intention is to examine the interaction of violence and authority, as a vector of institutional practices that is recognized in the context of the school and that necessarily contains a quantum of 'productive' violence embedded in the teacher-student relationship, a sine qua non condition for the operation and effectiveness of the school institution (Aquino, 1999: 15). What is tolerable in terms of violence comes from institutional pacts according to Belitane (1998). This is also based on studies in schools in Brazil with varying degrees of violence.

The limits of these pacts depend on the relationships established to the school and a feeling of belonging to the school. This does not depend on control but on other subtleties like the awakening of a desire for a certain redemption of social dignity of individuals that play the educational game with the school itself that is connected to the pact (Belitane, 1998: 32).

In the institutional focus there is a notable element of implicit defense of the centrality of the teacher figure for negotiation and adjustment of levels of violence in the schools. When analyses with macro-social perspectives are suggested, the debate on what goes on in the schools is defended placing them in the social contexts and socio-political and cultural dynamics of a time and a society. References are made to macro-referential associations or themes that are connected to violence. These themes include individualism, consumerism, the culture of violence (stressed, for example, in a study on violence and youth in Brazil by Oliveira, 1995) and authoritarianism. More than

other groups or generations, youth is affected by modernization, changes in values, violent cultures and the existence of gangs, drugs and guns (Watts, 1998: 7).

In a similar fashion in research on schools in Japan, Feldman (1998) stresses the association between violence and individualism, materialism, communication problems and negative attitudes in relation to school and studying. This author suggests that it is not enough to give names to socio-cultural dynamics that characterize contemporary life. This is true because these dynamics are intertwined with the economic-political and cultural profile of each specific country. They are also intertwined with the place of education and school in each society.

The author affirms that violence in school is related to its place in Japanese society and that it is not very different in a social sense from other types of violence that occur in other environments. Violence in school is shaped by the particularities of school in Japanese society including the way school and learning are organized and the importance that school has in an individual's life and career.

However, Sposito (1998) warns that in Brazil attention must be paid to historical and social conditions that collaborate in making violent conduct present in the schools. These are molds that should not cause an established linear connection between the social situation that favors the presence of violence and violent practices in the school institution (Sposito, 1998: 61). However, a challenge would be to monitor what goes on in each school in order to evaluate how they strike back and create strategies of resistance in a search to escape any determined resolutions.

1.2. THE NATIONAL LITERATURE: ECHOES, SPECIFICITIES AND SILENCES

This section focuses on projects on violence in the schools that were developed in the 1980's in Brazil. A wide variety of this research was developed by a group composed of public educational institutions, class organizations and to a lesser degree by private research and academic institutions as well as investigation teams that were linked to universities. Curiously, during this time the theme received attention mostly from Social Science professionals rather than specialists in Education. Their interest came later as a consequence of existing lines of research (Sposito, 2001).

Although these studies are still just beginning, the majority of them focus on regional or local situations. The results obtained indicate that the principle modalities of violence are actions against property like degradation or graffiti in the 1980's and forms of interpersonal aggression, mainly among students, in the 1990's.

According to Sposito few studies were carried out in the eighties. This was true because of the inherent difficulties in the research that took into account the resistance of the schools in making data available. Other difficulties included the lack of continuity in the studies. Initially, some disperse initiatives were noticed coming from the public agencies. The purpose of these studies was to provide a picture of violence in the schools.

The first conclusions indicated actions against school property in first place in terms of occurrences in cities like São Paulo, Rio, Salvador and others. Based on these conclusions, the actions were believed to have been the results of a reaction against the authority imposed by the school system.

In contrast, in an investigation on public schools in Campinas/SP, Guimarães (1984) demonstrated innovative results, showing that violence occurred as often in the permissive

schools as it did in the strict schools. On the other hand, the author stated that an increase in guards reduced damage to the schools. However, this increase in guards did not contain the increase in physical aggression among the students.

In the eighties and the beginning of the nineties the adoption of current methods was not sufficient to curb the problem of violence in the schools. The problem persisted in the form of damage to the buildings and constant incursions (Guimarães, 1998; Pinto, 1992). There were also threats to students and teachers (Aquino, 1996 and 1998). Meanwhile, the lack of security in the air was aggravated by the presence of organized crime and drug dealing in some Brazilian cities (Guimarães, 1998). Criminality increased along with the feeling of a lack of security. This occurred principally in the peripheral neighborhoods and school life began to clearly suffer from the effects of this new combination (Barreto, 1992; Guedes, 1999).

In Brazil in the nineties the issue was dealt with in a different way than it had been in the preceding years. There was a preoccupation with no longer defining violence in the schools as something exogenous, although there was still special emphasis given to the drug trafficking problem (Zaluar, 1994; Guimarães, 1998; Candau, 1999; Peralva 2000). There was also emphasis on social exclusion (Araújo, 2001. In: Educação e Pesquisa, vol. 27) as well as gang activities (Abramovay et al., 1999) and other elements. The conclusions of these studies demonstrate the existence of other causes for violence. These causes do not point to authority only, as studies in the eighties did.

> *Intervention of drug trafficking in the schools has an effect (...) in a subtle fashion that is not very visible and that occurs through different mediators, representatives of various positions in relation to the gangs. Their proposal is to broaden the physical area and the social groups that are under their control.*

This operation results in systems of protection/subordination in the institutions according to what is obtained on the part of those that live in the occupied areas. (Candau, 1999: 7)

Most of the studies in Brazil are carried out in the context of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. Priority is given to the environment the schools are located in, affected by drug trafficking or violence and accentuated poverty. These studies take into account that it is not necessarily possible to reduce the phenomenon of violence in the schools as they are so conditioned by outside influences[22].

One interesting fact is that there are almost no references to aggression on the part of teachers against students in the consulted literature. On the contrary, what is perceived is the preoccupation with aggression suffered by the teachers from the students or aggression among the students. There is the example of Batista and El-moor[23](1999: 150):

The episodes of violence in the schools that are most commented on or emphasized by the media are those that are related to aggression against teachers or among the students themselves. These can easily be found in most news stories, newspapers and magazines. However, our research demonstrated that the most frequent occurrences in the Brazilian schools are vandalism, followed by aggression among students and in last place aggression directed at teachers.

In an ethnographic study that was developed in 1991 and

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[22] For example, the work of Guimarães (1995) was developed in drug trafficking regions in Rio de Janeiro. The work highlighted the absence of the State and social policies in the area. Guimarães surveyed groups of youths, the "gangs" in the slums of Rio de Janeiro. He observed the way they acted in schools, including in raids and disputes that were associated with rival gangs. He also observed the negotiations that the principals must make with the drug trafficking bosses in order to guarantee operation of the schools.

[23] Based on research data performed by the National Confederation of Education Workers (CNTE) and the Psychology of Work Laboratory – UnB (LPT) on the mental work and health conditions in Education (a sampling of 52,000 based on 18,000,000 educators in 1,440 schools in various states in Brazil).

1992, Guimarães (1998: 12) examines the different forms of connection the public school (in Rio de Janeiro) has with violence that had intensified in the eighties. The study focused on three distinct movements: drug trafficking, the gangs/crews and the emerging youth movements that affect the day to day life in the schools[24].

Another important contribution of the Guimarães (1998) study on common places for violence would be in the observation that the students that are connected to drug dealing are not necessarily those that stand out for violent behavior in school. On the contrary, although their presence is a possible disturbing element because of the fights between crime factions it can also take place among the gangs.

In terms of what concerns the students the Brazilian literature avoids "demonizing" the youths in the same way the literature from the various authors mentioned previously does (Giroux, 2000). The Brazilian literature takes into consideration the situation of "violence against education". According to Barreto:

> *In the educational system, challenging authority, studied by Hannah Arendt, has brought inefficiency and rejection of reason as a consequence. The student is sacrificed twice - by exclusion and as a result of violence that occurs that occurs against education. This makes it possible to rationally internalize moral, political, social and cultural values (...); and at the same time to be sacrificed because the fact that they have not learned these values make them excluded from free, plural and democratic "human association".* (Barreto, 1992: 63).

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[21] Studies in Brazil indicate that even in neighborhoods with violent situations caused by gangs and drug trafficking, for example, the students still value school life as a space for the construction of networks of solidarity with their classmates and teachers (Guimarães, 1992; Cardia, 1997).

Once this has been defined the national literature focuses on macro-referenced processes like poverty, the culture of violence, disenchantment in relation to the role of education, available resources for the school system as well as the quality of the school system as a qualification for a type of democracy. This is called the structural space of violence and its resonance in the interior of the school (Sposito, 1998: 63).

The reference to a crisis in education in Brazil is commonly associated with a crisis in society in terms of being a model of democracy. Barreto (1992) defends the position that the increase in violence in Brazil and the crisis in education are specifically related in a way that causes them to feed off each other. This process makes the necessary solutions more complex. On the other hand, these problems also have global elements that are related to a crisis in civilization that has been forming. According to Barreto:

> *The idea that education presupposes the imposition of the will of one free person on another that exists in many political and social theories of the twentieth century began to be known as "anti-democracy" contrary to the very nature of the educational process. In this way, according to the observations of Hannah Arendt (1961: 191), a loss of authority that began in the political sphere has extended to the private sphere in the way that authority has been challenged in the family and in school* (Barreto, 1992: 57).

Barreto (1992) associated the educational context to the increase of violence in society, stating that:

There is a reciprocal integration between these two areas of human activity that apparently are quite distant from each other. In the Brazilian situation the crisis in education has been

aggravated by the insertion of violence in its diversified forms in the rational world of the school. This has shaken the foundations of education ranging from teachers' authority to abandoning the minimal requirements for approval (Barreto, 1992: 59, 60).

In that Santos (1999) insists on an institutional analysis of school and the type of teaching in addition to the relationships between teachers and students, it must be mentioned that the school must be understood in relationship to sociability This includes a certain "pedagogical authoritarianism". Repressive behavior is noted on the part of teachers in the classroom. This kind of behavior is cited as symbolic violence and includes not giving class or giving class of doubtful quality. This also includes exercising authoritarianism in interpersonal relationships with the students. The distance between the language of the youths and that imposed by a certain type of school is emphasized. The language of the youths is more playful and the language of the school is more of a "barracks" language with an emphasis on discipline and rules:

> *The school and its traditional education impose a learning method on the students that does not correspond to the student's reality or cultural universe. The school is seen as something negative and not stimulating or playful. The exaggerated control of the school stimulates feelings of rebellion or disobedience. Violence that children and adolescents exercise is what is exercised on them in the first place. We know that the "barracks" type of school is experienced as a locked place that puts us in uniforms and that there is no way to escape from it. Rules, control, punishment and domination are the habitual forms of discipline. The school has frequently revealed itself as a place of constraint. It seems that the playful road to learning has been ignored.* (Santos, 1999: 157)

From another perspective both in Brazil and in other countries, a wide variety of authors highlight the importance of differentiating violence that comes from outside and violence that is identified as school violence – that is born within the school or as a modality in direct relationship to the learning establishment (Sposito, 1998: 64). There is an approach that only takes into consideration the structural problems or those outside of the school and Aquino (1999) classifies this as sociologizing. The author criticizes another approach as well and that is an approach found among many North Americans that makes the student the central object. Aquino calls this the clinical-psychologizing approach (Aquino, 1999: 8). Guimarães (1996) advocates that:

> *The school institution cannot be seen as just a reproducer of oppressive experiences or experiences that include violence and conflict following the macro-structural plan. The argument is that despite being mechanisms of social and cultural reproduction, schools also produce their own violence and lack of discipline* (Guimarães, 1996: 7).

Also found in national literature are warnings against deterministic associations between poverty and violence in the neighborhood and in school. These environments include schools with different levels of violence (Sposito, 1998; Batista and Elmoor, 1999; Lucinda, Nascimento and Candau, 1999). According to Sposito (1998: 64): Diversity is also a sign of the fact that violent social environments do not always produce school practices that are characterized by violence.

On the other hand, a variety of authors insist on the role of social inequalities as potentializers of violence. In addition to this, the preoccupation with making violence banal must be mentioned again. The fact is that principals and students sometimes do not consider acts as violent acts even though they

would be considered violent when measured by other parameters (Sposito, 1998). In this sense the silencing that occurs in relation to violences (Rodrigues, 1994) or the way they are defined is one of the areas emphasized by national authors.

For example, in a case study of two Campinas schools, Guimarães (1996), found that:

> *All of the teachers related violence to physical or verbal aggression, but for the majority of them their school was not violent. The fights, robberies and the curses were their thing, normal for the age. The causes of this discipline problem were the family environment and the economic structure. All of the solutions mentioned had the objective of softening the demonstrations of hostility among the students to improve their behavior or adapt it to the school rules* (Guimarães, 1996: 147).

Curiously, in this fashion a school that reports more violent events could be more prepared to admit preventive or control programs as well as self-evaluations on school practices, in contrast with a school that through a lack of recognition denies that there is violent behavior in the school environment.

Candau (1994) reflects on the risks of making school violence banal along with silencing it (Rodrigues, 1994). This is done in a way that illustrates the care the national literature takes in identifying the nexus between violence in society[25] and in school. Care is also

[25] According to Sposito, an incident that occurred in Brasília in 1997 when five middle class youths set fire to a Pataxó Indian while he was sleeping at a bus stop appalled Brazilian society and provided impetus for the production of research on violence and youth. In this context UNESCO carried out a study on the theme with youths in the capital that was titled *Juventude, Violência e Cidadania: os jovens de Brasília* (Youth, Violence and Citizenship: the Youths of Brasília) (1998). This study was the precursor of other UNESCO studies. Each one of these sought to understand the facts related to violence among Brazilian youths. *Gangues, galeras, chegados e rappers* (Gangs, Crews, Buddies and Rappers) (1999); *Ligado na Galera* (In Touch with the Crew) (1999); *Os jovens de Curitiba: esperanças e desencantos* (The Youths of Curitiba: Hopes and Disenchantments) (1999), and others.

taken in ranking types and levels of violence, particularly in school:

In Brazilian society, there has been more and more concern regarding the levels of making violence more complex and more banal. The way that violent behavior has seemingly become more natural in the mass culture is without a doubt another factor that reinforces the process of violence becoming banal. A culture of fear, lack of trust, competitiveness and going up against the enemy, particularly if they belong to a different social and cultural universe, permeates interpersonal and social relationships with more and more force, especially in the large cities.

Demonstrations of a violent society are on the increase. This includes gangs and violence in sports and at dances, especially among the youths. Robberies, insults, fights and exploitation of those who are younger are acts that are so frequent in the day to day life of the school that they end up becoming banal or are treated as "normal" behavior for the age and/or the socio-cultural situation of the youth.

From this perspective, this combination of factors favors a dialectical trauma in terms of violence that links aspects of very different natures. This brings about the idea of establishing distinctions among the different levels and dimensions of violence. This range includes violence that is recognized and effectively punished as a crime as well as violence that is part of the structure of the State that involves broader social and domestic relationships. (Candau, 1994: 31)

An element that Brazilian literature has in common with international literature, especially that of France, is that the professor is seen as a key figure as much in terms of preventive actions as in terms of controlling violent situations in the schools [26].

[26] Some authors are quite emphatic in the sense of stressing the importance of prevention against violence and investment in teacher pay and training. They also stress the importance of conditions that allow teachers to have more symmetrical and friendly relationships with the students, allowing them to gain the students' confidence and to valorize them (Santos, 1999).

Based on a study of safety in three schools in São Paulo in 1990[27], Fukui (1992) emphasizes that:

> *Analysis of the adopted methods and the safety problems that came up indicate that the question of safety in school is transmitted mainly by the teacher figure through the teacher's educating action and through the teacher's action as an opinion maker. This stands in contrast with the action of the public security professionals.* (Fukui, 1992: 114)

Social meanings of school are questioned in the Brazilian literature in order to better understand the causes of violence in schools today. Analyses point to disturbances in education in light of economic globalization, changes in the working world, the place of ethics and widespread consumer and individualistic ideology in today's society. The loss of the importance of education as a tool for social mobility is especially highlighted. Many Brazilian authors also stress the use of specific language by the youths that involves their anxiety for a feeling of belonging and participating. This language contrasts with the traditional language of more formal learning (Guimarães, 1996; Sposito, 1998).

Some studies emphasize special care when dealing with the pedagogical project of the schools and the way that the involved individuals – students, teachers, parents and staff members – position themselves when faced with the phenomenon of violence in the schools (among others, Lucinda, Nascimento and Candau,

[27] In 1990 Fukai was asked by the Foundation for Educational Development (FDE) to carry out a case study on school safety in public state schools in Greater São Paulo. According to Fukui (1992: 108): around 20 to 23% of the schools in the system in all of the regions of Greater São Paulo are affected by safety problems. This shows the general quality of the problem as well as the fact that (...) schools serve as another place for aggressive activity, following the public areas. The author emphasizes some common characteristics of the three schools that were selected for the study. Among these is the precarious condition of the school establishment, overcrowding and an unstable situation for the teachers.

1999). According to Camacho, in a case study carried out in Vitória/ES, Brazilian schools are going through a socialization crisis. This is due to the reevaluation of values and concepts that shape education, primarily in terms of discipline. The author concludes that these actions become much more centralized in the pedagogical process than they do in the educational proposal.

Interest in the pedagogical process should be on par with the relationships that are established among the individuals in the school community. This socialization crisis is one of the main factors responsible for the occurrence of violent behavior in the schools (Camacho, 2001. In *Educação e Pesquisa*, vol. 27).

1.3. VIOLENCE IN THE SCHOOLS: THIS STUDY'S PERSPECTIVES

The following highlights are projects surrounding the current theme that have been developed by a variety of national authors. These studies are a counterpart to the international bibliographic references.

As we have seen, violence in the schools is a theme that involves multiple focuses and research models. In the international literature some gaps can be identified that have been pointed out by authors that have gone back to defining the field such as Debarbieux (2001) and Watts (1998) and others.

The international literature emphasizes a growing number of case studies and local surveys. Watts (1998) observes, however, that there is a lack of transnational comparative analyses as well as a lack of analyses among regions of the same country. Watts also observes a lack of attention in listening to different participants involved with the school.

In the international and national literature the idea that there is a tendency to affirm the perception that the identity of school

is going through changes is found in many countries. This becomes clear with the shifting position of school's place in social representations.

Even when violence in the schools does not occur in large numbers and although the most violent events in society do not occur in the school environment, it is still a phenomenon that causes concern. This is true because of the direct effects on the involved individuals and the testimonies that relate how the violence contributes to a breakdown of the idea that school is a place for knowledge and education and for learning how to be. The idea of school as a place to exercise excellence and learning suffers along with the idea of school as a place to practice ethics and communication working towards dialogue and as an antithesis to violence.

Meanwhile, as Lucinda, Nascimento and Candau (1999) observe, teachers do not necessarily pay attention to their role in the school culture as sources and types of violence. This means symbolic violence, for example. The authors make this inference based on research where the students and teachers in basic education in public schools in Greater Rio de Janeiro were heard from:

> *(....) numerous studies in the educational field have shown that many times there is a huge gap between the school culture and the social culture that is the students' point of reference. This fact then becomes a source of violence as well. There is symbolic violence, for example, or violence that is part of practices that are a specific part of the school. These include the ways that evaluation and discipline are shaped.* (Lucinda, Nascimento and Candau, 1999: 90)

The last few years have brought attention to the increase in, or to the increase in registering of small misdemeanors and large incivilities[28] in the schools. This justifies the feeling of a lack of safety for those that go to the schools. Transgressions and aggressive acts are more apparent as well as the incidents that are less serious. The school and its surroundings become a stage for these acts where all of the involved parties (students, teachers, the technical-pedagogical staff, parents and security agents) feel themselves to be potential victims. This feeling of anxiety and vulnerability, according to Debarbieux (1998:13), demonstrates the existence of social tension. This social tension triggers insecurity in people's daily lives even if they are not direct victims of crimes and misdemeanors. This reflection runs through international literature on the subject.

The school institution has been undergoing profound changes. These changes have caused an increase in daily difficulties that put management to the test and involve problems of internal tension and the effective disorganization of the social order. These elements are expressed through phenomena outside the schools, such as social and institutional exclusion and the crisis and conflict in values as well as unemployment.

The school is no longer seen as a safe place for social integration and socialization. It is no longer a protected place. On the contrary, the school has become the setting for violent incidents.

In addition to confronting internal management problems and the precarious nature of multiple orders that affect the pedagogical project, the school became a place where the ideology that had sustained it for many years was being challenged. Pompous discussion of principles and the value of

[28] Peralva (1997) treats violence as a phenomenon that is sustained by incivility, a counterpoint to the term civility used by Norbert Elias.

education no longer found resonance in society. The school began to be questioned for not preparing students for the job market and for a loss of quality. The school was questioned because of a lack of centrality as a source of knowledge about humanity and as a transmitter of the cultural riches of civilization. School was also criticized for not corresponding to expectations in terms of offering possibilities for a secure future for the youths.

The myths of social progress and individual happiness are phenomena that are experienced by the school community in general, in addition to segregation. (Debarbieux, 1998). Dissatisfaction is felt by the youths and the members of the technical-pedagogical staff as well. There are a lot of criticisms and accusations and school appears to be a consequence of the problems it experiences and a reflection of the problems that many times are impossible to respond to. The solutions for these problems are often out of the school's reach.

This meeting point for socio-political, economic and cultural processes is where the enormous challenge for this theme exists. Dealing with violence in the schools means dealing with the intersection of the elements and their meanings. There is a perspective on a determined order that is not simply a superimposition or a sum of the elements of school and violence. This is a specific equation that involves social practices. If this equation is to be understood, it requires an examination that does not reduce these elements to mere extensions of violent practices or school procedures.

Recently, new concepts have been developed around violence in the schools. These concepts have taken on new meaning and have broadened their definitions in a way that includes events that had been seen previously as customary social practices. In this sense, violence stopped being related to criminality and police action only. Violence began to be the target of preoccupations tied to extreme poverty and political

abandonment. New forms of social organization related to social and institutional exclusion began to occur. There were also new involved individuals and the discovery of a social contract that took place in a way that was not integrated with society (Abramovay et al., 1999: 57) In addition, reflection on the theme began to focus on symbolic violence and its multiple forms of expression as well. This was true especially for those related to society's institutional practices, including various forms of discrimination.

In order to incorporate the wide variety of approaches and theoretical matrixes discussed here, violence is to be understood in this project primarily as physical intervention of an individual or group against the integrity of another person or people or group or groups. It is also considered to be violence against oneself including suicides, beatings, robberies, muggings and homicides and even traffic violence. This type of violence is disguised by the word "accidents". Violence in this study also includes sexual aggression and all forms of verbal, symbolic and institutional violence.

These definitions and other perspectives and hypotheses will be discussed here and will serve as the reference point for the following analysis. The analysis proposes that there are situations that are critical where violence in the schools takes place, rather than just generic "school violence". The violence that results from these critical situations is complex and multi-faceted and understanding this phenomenon implies a challenge as it requires a cross-disciplinary, multi-dimensional and many origin point of view.

2. THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

The previous chapter showed how the debate over the exogenous and endogenous factors associated with violence in the school environment is quite controversial. It is also a sensitive debate as there is a great tendency to emphasize the external factors, those that reduce the responsibility of the school system in terms of the phenomenon and of the fight against it. An effective analysis needs to rely on multi-dimensional focuses that point to probable causes of violence as a set of factors, whether or not they are external or internal to the school.

The analysis developed in this chapter focuses on the school environment. This includes the surrounding areas, the neighborhood the school is located in and even the ways traffic safety is dealt with in the neighborhood. This last element includes whether or not there are crosswalks, the condition of the streets and the existence of traffic guards. In order to understand the variety of ways violence is demonstrated in the schools the physical structure of the school is described and compared to other schools. The analysis includes an examination of how student registration is controlled as well as the state and quality of the physical installations that make the school vulnerable to invasive access.

This possibility of access is linked to two of the main problems of the schools. These are gangs and drug trafficking. These problems represent a huge area of concern, especially among the students and teachers. These elements alter daily

routine and physically threaten those participating in the school environment. In light of these problems the necessity of police presence in the schools has become a rule and this has become quite controversial.

2.1. THE SCHOOL SURROUNDINGS

Each school is part of a social and territorial space and this space affects school routine. It also affects relationships within the school and interaction between members of the school community and the external social environment.

The teachers took on the task of evaluating the neighborhood the school was part of when they answered the questionnaire. Most of them defined the location as good or great. The highest ratings were for Florianópolis and Cuiabá (91%), Rio de Janeiro (89%) and Goiânia and Belém (88%). Salvador (24%), the Federal District and Recife (20%) and Manaus (19%) received higher numbers of teachers that consider their school neighborhood to be regular or bad.

The researchers reported that safety was precarious on the highways and streets that the students and teachers crossed. There were usually no pedestrian facilities like crosswalks, crossing lights, overpasses or underpasses. The chance of getting hit by a car near the schools was at least 10% for the students in the Federal District and Goiânia. It was 8% for the teachers in the Federal District and Cuiabá. In Porto Alegre this rate reached 20% for students and in Fortaleza it was 29% for teachers. Other high percentage rates, although slightly lower, were noted for students in Fortaleza, Maceió, Salvador and São Paulo and for teachers in Florianópolis and Vitória.

The immediate surroundings of the school represent where most violence occurs. This is confirmed by the students (54% in

São Paulo and 53% in the Federal District and Goiânia) and the members of the technical-pedagogical staff (60% in São Paulo and the Federal District). According to the students' statements concerning the location of violent incidents near the schools the maximum rate was 28% in Salvador and the minimum rate was 16% in Fortaleza.

The space outside school walls has a lot more violence, especially when the relative percentages concerning the street directly in front of the school and the surrounding area is totaled. This was the most mentioned category by both students and members of the technical-pedagogical staff. This element included the bus stops and the streets taken to reach school from home. This is a really violent neighborhood. There are a lot of robberies on the bus. There's no specific time for it. They rob the buses anytime.

However, this should not obscure the fact that the street is very different from school. The school is not part of an open space where anyone can walk around where they please without having to cross any barriers. School is not a place without organizational structure, objectives or an explicit hierarchy. The school environment is defined by fences, walls and gates and is replete with attributes, hierarchies and specific powers. The school has objectives to reach and an institutional mission to perform. The school environment is a surprising locus for violent incidents. The rate of this perception among the students varies from a minimum of 16% in Fortaleza to 28% in Salvador. Among the pedagogical staff members this figure varies from 9% in Manaus to 48% in Salvador. Although these figures may seem low it is worth noting that a comparison among capitals demonstrates a predominant number of students (one fifth) and teachers (over one fourth) who describe the school as a safe and protected place.

On the other hand, researchers observed that the space

outside the school is clearly defined as much more threatening. There has already been a murder right at the school door during class time (11:00 to 8:00). It made the students panic. There have already been students who have been involved with murderers. The police found three bodies in the neighborhood. (Observation script, public school. Cuiabá).

The students' statements corroborate this when they make reference to that time when there were a lot, but a whole lot of shootings going on around here, and it's still going on (...) We don't have recess to protect the kids so they won't get shot.

The members of the school community are vulnerable to violence in large part due to the characteristics of the school surroundings. According to students and security agents: It's a heavy neighborhood that has got problems. Our students are constantly held up and robbed, not right in front of the school but around the school, in the neighborhood. This occurs mainly during the evening shift. The school uniform makes it easier for this type of thing to happen because it identifies the school and the school's clientele. When the kids get out of school they leave wearing the school shirt. And it's something that really makes them more visible.

Even if the students get support within the school, they are unprotected when they are traveling to or from the school. Because of where it is the school is considered unsafe. That is, there is safety apparatus within the school but how is the school going to react when something happens when the students are on their way home?

At times the schools are located near commercial establishments that can affect school routine. These include bars and more informal drinking establisments called botequins. According to interviews with principals: Our only weak point is right out in front. Look, it's that bar. It's hard to keep the kid out of there, mainly the kids that are new at the school and haven't yet

assimilated our system. Generally, the bars closest to the schools are visited by the students in groups that drink and become involved in violent practices.

Chart 2.1
Everybody was drunk

Focus group with students, private school, Salvador
Yeah, there are a lot of little bars near here. So the students start drinking at six in the morning. They really drink. Last year they broke all the glass in a classroom. They broke the chairs, they broke the doors, they hit us. They hit the school principal. They really hit because everyone was really drunk. So it's like that. I get out of school, I'm drunk and I've got nothing to lose. They can't do anything to me so I'm going to hit and fight with anybody I don't like.

In some neighborhoods school security is compromised due to precarious lighting. This forces the students that study at night to walk around in groups or to seek better lighted places to avoid being victims of violence: *Safety is really precarious here, mainly for people who study at night. The lighting isn't very good here. Another factor pointed out is lack of police in addition to the lack of safety the police themselves experience in relation to criminals: I think that even the police are afraid when they're working. I'm saying this because I talk to them and that's what they say.*

The fact that there is a police station or quarters in front of the school is not enough to limit violent acts. The police do not intimidate those that commit these acts and they are remiss in confronting the disorder that occurs under their command or in front of their very eyes.

Chart 2.2
The police come around and do nothing

Focus group with students, public school, Fortaleza
There's got to be safety, there's got to be police. In that police station right in front of Sesi right there in the favela, right next to school (...) there's this group that hangs out right in front. But there's a school a little bit farther down (...) and the people from one side hang out with the ones from there. They get into fights with each other and they start hitting each other. The police station is right in front and they just sit and watch and they don't do anything.

In reality, the presence or action of police authority has been questioned lately from another angle. Police efficiency has been extremely restricted in relation to the violence that has been growing because of the presence of specific social participants rather than growing in specific locations. In this case the social participants are the youths. Table 2.1 demonstrates that the members of the technical-pedagogical staff in all capital cities affirm that violence has increased among youths in general. Increases in percentage rates of violence are much lower for the school neighborhoods and internal school environments. This position of attributing blame to the youths is corroborated in the focus group discussions and the interviews. Many of those interviewed maintain that violence is becoming more and more evident among the youths and that the school is unable to stay unaffected by this situation. On the contrary, the school is greatly affected by the situation.

Table 2.1

Proportion of members of the technical-pedagogical staff, by capital of Federal Unit, according to indication of an increase in violence - 2000

Violence Increased	DF	GO	MT	AM	PA	CE	PE	AL	BA	ES	RJ	SP	SC	RS
In the school neighborhood														
Indication	40	28	28	33	20	36	31	20	28	28	35	46	31	41
No indication	60	72	72	67	80	64	69	80	72	72	67	54	69	59
TOTAL	100 (137)	100 (201)	100 (262)	100 (177)	100 (255)	100 (186)	100 (149)	100 (305)	100 (189)	100 (193)	100 (280)	100 (257)	100 (187)	100 (311)
Within the school														
Indication	20	18	15	14	13	13	18	9	34	12	19	32	15	39
No indication	80	82	85	86	87	87	82	91	66	88	81	68	85	61
TOTAL	100 (137)	100 (201)	100 (262)	100 (177)	100 (255)	100 (186)	100 (149)	100 (305)	100 (189)	100 (193)	100 (280)	100 (257)	100 (187)	100 (311)
Among the youths in general														
Indication	65	70	62	61	63	66	64	54	69	64	65	76	63	77
No indication	35	30	38	39	37	34	36	46	31	36	35	24	37	23
TOTAL	100 (137)	100 (201)	100 (262)	100 (177)	100 (255)	100 (186)	100 (149)	100 (305)	100 (189)	100 (193)	100 (280)	100 (257)	100 (187)	100 (311)

Source: National Survey on Violence, Drugs and AIDS in Schools, UNESCO, 2001.
The individuals were asked: "To mark a response only if the answer is yes: Do you think that violence increased in the school neighborhood? Do you think that violence within the school increased? Do you think that violence among youths increased?"

2.1.1. Police in the schools and the school surroundings

School security is not always performed by police officers. Many times private schools hire private security guards. In public schools there are frequently guards that simultaneously serve as gatekeepers and protectors of school property. One of the enormous preoccupations in the schools, particularly in the public system, is the deficiency/lack of personnel to deal with security:

> *We don't have enough staff (...) Public schools are really abandoned on a lot of levels, mainly because they don't send any police over here (...) We've got to have police in the schools as a way of assuring that we develop and perform our function.* (Focus group with teachers, public school, Salvador).

According to some teachers, the violence that circulates in the schools is occurring in greater and greater numbers and lack of police in the schools aggravates the occurrence of crimes in the school environment: *One day they killed a student in back of the school. There was no police interference. We're unprotected. The presence of police serves to inhibit violence among the youths. If there's some kind of structural organization of staff, mainly organized police, in some location and they're watching him [the youth], he's not going to do anything violent there.*

Discipline coordinators and counselors in some private schools stress the need for police in the immediate surroundings of the schools. This only takes place in some learning establishments. The testimonies mention a perceived "differentiation" in some locations in the way public and private schools are treated concerning police and a guarantee of safety: *Our school always gets support from the military police in Amazonas (...) There's this different treatment for public and private schools.*

Many students defend the position that it is the school itself that should solve problems related to violence without telling

the police. However, the need for police interference in school activities is an issue that that is emphasized by parents, teachers and principals from both private and public schools: There was a time that there were police in the school, even in the classroom, just so the teachers would be able to teach class.

Discipline inspectors observed that if there's a fight (...) we call the police. For many inspectors and guards, the police are still synonymous with safety and order. The police are the solution for inhibiting the criminality that occurs around the school. The most critical periods are considered to be recess and the times for entering and leaving class. These periods require police in the school and around it: *Put on more police to watch them right there and during break time.* (Interview with inspector, public school, Maceió) *I think there aren't enough police in the school (...) day and night. They should have at least two police officers working in each school at night.* (Interview with guard, public school, Salvador)

The fact that police have no autonomy for acting within the school is mentioned. They need authorization from the principal to intervene with the minors: *We, the police officers, can't act within the school without the principal giving us [an authorization document] to act within the classroom with the minors.*

The police officers emphasize that at times there is confusion about the function of the police. The school confuses our function. Sometimes there is a strictly educational thing that they call us to resolve. When a crime is committed that is related to robbery, drugs or rape it's taken to the police station. Some police officers say that: *If it's a crime, then that's a police area and you have to act (...) If a student is smoking marijuana or trying to steal something or trying to rape some girl (...) that's what I'm here for, to stop the crime.*

Some students, who all came from public schools, made mention of the help offered by the police when drug problems

occur. Sometimes the police do act within the schools, as the following statement illustrates.

> *In the beginning of the year there was this rumor that they were having meetings with police, teachers and the coordination. There was this rumor that came out of the principal's office that there was this group in the school that was acting (...) bringing in drugs to give to the students. That's why the police were here, trying to find out who it was. But I think that they didn't find anything and they let it go, they just left it at that. (...) At school they take measures. It's like this, if there was a fight today, tomorrow they would send for the police and they'd hang around watching and they have dogs that look for drugs and they watch to see if we're fighting (...) There's a dog in the classroom to see who's got drugs and to take them out.* (Focus group with students, public school, Vitória)

For the schools located in areas that are considered "risk areas" because of drug trafficking, gangs or criminality the students maintain that the police should provide maximum security and should stay in the school full time instead of just appearing during a School Patrol. The focus groups included the following commentaries on the risk areas:

> *[There needs to be] police at the school entrance I think because sometimes there are a lot of people there and it's not just students. (...) If it's not a student let them stay outside. Let people in who need to be inside and stay around to protect us.* (Focus group with students, public school, Cuiabá).

On the other hand, there is no consensus on living with police presence in the school environment. For many students and teachers the presence of police is not only useless, but also

prejudicial in that it does not inspire trust. The youths are critical of the police stating that[29]:

> *It's not just a lack of police. I think that it's just that (...) trusting the police is difficult. I think that we have to be more responsible because when you call the police they show up two or three hours after the crime was committed. Why do you need them anymore if the person that killed already ran away (...) When the police show up people that have nothing to do with it end up getting involved. You can go up to the police and say what's happening because they won't believe you. They really come on to you too. That's why you can't trust them. The police steal and kill people for nothing (...) It's easier to trust a criminal than a police officer.* (Focus group with students, public school, Cuiabá)

In reality, opinions on the subject vary widely according to the predominant image of the public security professionals. This image is the result of their actions or omissions. Police involvement with corruption, drug trafficking, gratuitous aggression against the youths or participation in the murder of innocent people does great damage to how their work is seen: *They go to take the guy's gun but the next day he gets another one. Some other police officer comes along and sells him another one.*

In the opinion of some students, the police lack legitimacy and authority because of various police officers' involvement with drug trafficking.

> *So I think that every one of us here knows about cases of corrupt police officers that get bribes from drug dealers or that*

[29] The UNESCO publications cited on Youth and Violence have shown how critical and incisive the youths are about police action. See Abramovay et al., *Gangues, Galeras, Chegados e Rappers* (Gangs, Crews, Buddies and Rappers) (1999), where the existing latent conflict becomes clear.

take a gun away from some bum over here and sell it to the one on the next corner (Focus group with students, public school, Fortaleza).

One of the students stated that police involvement is on such a grand scale that police give directions to where the drug dealing locations are.

That's really normal for us here. If you see someone smoking pot in front of your house you can smell it and you look (...) What are you going to do, who are you going to talk to? The police aren't around. All the police know where the drug houses are. They know who smokes and who sells. (Focus group with students, public school, Cuiabá).

The relationship between the police and the students is extremely delicate, mainly because many of the students are afraid of the police: *lots of times there are violent acts on the part of the police. Like intimidation or they put you up against the wall and frisk you or hit you, or use their club.* Some students believe that the police aren't going to help anything, they just make it worse. Some police officers say that the students respect them and *that's why I just don't worry about it.*

The discipline coordinators stress another point and that is the lack of preparation the police have, primarily in regard to working with the schools. The police are badly paid and there is a lack of training, qualification and improvement courses. Some police officers are unprepared and suddenly they [add to] an increase in the number of crimes. These are some of the factors that aggravate the deficient conduct of the police even further when faced with the situations that occur with the youths.

What's really needed is police re-education. The first thing is to give them a good salary, and police training and qualification courses to serve people better, mainly teenagers because they are really difficult. (Interview with discipline coordinator, public school, Cuiabá).

2.1.2. Gangs and drug trafficking around the school

Among the various demonstrations of violence the ones that come in from outside and enter the schools are "under siege" (Guimarães, 1998). Special emphasis has been put on gangs and drug trafficking. The feeling of insecurity in the school surroundings of certain schools is aggravated by the forming of gangs. These gangs are formed by groups of friends and neighborhood or block groups and even criminal gangs (drug dealers, robbers and thieves) and in many cases they count on students as members.

In fact, when asked about the biggest problems at the school the percentage of students that indicated gangs and/ or drug trafficking and drug use in the schools or in the surrounding areas varied between 25% and 47%. The highest percentages were found in Cuiabá and Manaus (47%), the Federal District (45%) and São Paulo (41%). The percentage of teachers that indicated this problem was highest in the Federal District and Manaus (54%), followed by 49% in Goiânia and Porto Alegre, and 47% in Cuiabá (table 2.2). The lowest percentage was found in Rio de Janeiro, with 25% of the students and 24% of the teachers (table 2.2A).

Table 2.2

Proportion of students in Elementary (5th to 8th grades) and Secondary School, by capital of Federal Unit, according to indication of the school's biggest problems - 2000*

Source: National Survey on Violence, AIDS and Drugs in Schools, UNESCO, 2001.

The individuals were asked: "To choose what you think are the five biggest problems at school from the list below." The percentage rates refer to affirmative responses only obtained in student samples.

* Enlarged data.

** Lack of material and human resources include: "Not enough teachers. There aren't enough books, videos or computers. There are too many students in a class. Lack of space

*** Gangs and/or drugs in the school or the school surroundings include: "Gangs that act within the school. Dangerous neighborhood. Criminals and drug consumption and trafficking."

Table 2.2A

Proportion of members of the technical-pedagogical staff, by capital of Federal Unit, according to indication of the school's biggest problems - 2000*

[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
TOTAL	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

Source: National Survey on Violence, AIDS and Drugs in Schools, UNESCO, 2001.
The individuals were asked: "To choose what you think are the five biggest problems at school from the list below. " The percentage rates refer to affirmative responses only obtained in student samples.
* Lack of material and human resources include: "Not enough teachers. There aren't enough books, videos or computers. There are too many students in a class. Lack of space
** Gangs and/or drugs in the school or the school surroundings include: "Gangs that act within the school. Dangerous neighborhood. Criminals and drug consumption and trafficking."

The terms gangs/crews[30] are many times used indistinctly. However, many of those interviewed, mainly the members of the technical-pedagogical staff, insisted on making a distinction between the two terms. For them, a crew is only found in school: *I wouldn't say gangs, I would say crews. Crew is considered to be a group of "good" friends. There are those students who do well for themselves who aren't part of the bad side of things, who hang around in groups, in crews. I'm saying that gangs are for trouble.*

The testimonies of students in São Paulo offer a glimpse of how difficult it is to define a gang. The youths seem to recognize gangs in many different forms that include skateboarders, people who dance to pagode (specific Brazilian music) and clubbers. These groups are considered as closed groups because their members don't associate with other groups, nobody from another gang can get in because it would be trouble.

Within the groups the youths identify with each other because they like the same clothes or music and they use the same words and slang. They are groups that wear caps, t-shirts or jackets. The ones who like indoor soccer, who like volleyball, the ones who like funk, or pagode.

In general, in the interviewed parties' opinions, the youths feel a necessity to become part of these groups. Frequently the groups are extremely closed. They have specific rules and most of the time they offer a way for self-affirmation among friends or the class. Being part of a group is a way of not feeling "excluded". In reality, this definition of crews is close to a definition of gangs. There is a certain hierarchical structure and bonds of loyalty and solidarity. In many testimonies the youths link gangs to drugs, to

[30] In Brazil the words gang/crew have been used in a generic fashion to designate a group of youths or a set of friends as well as an organization that is more involved with criminal acts. When youths in the focus groups deal with this theme they end up making the same kind of imprecise use of the words. Gangs for them may be groups that just want to mess around (...), on a group of friends and can also mean a group of friends that get together to have fun and enjoy and they are always ready to protect and defend each other. (Abramovay et al. 1999:100).

the necessity for self-affirmation and to involvement with criminality and death. I don't know if I think it's really a gang but there are groups of friends that get together and enjoy their power a little and use drugs. There are youths that establish a difference between a gang and a group that robs valuable items. This group they call an organized robbery band.

In this context, members of the technical-pedagogical staff avoid using the term gang. I don't know if this is really a gang, but it's kind of a mini-gang: *I don't think gangs really exist. We have groups of students that have things in common. Then they start defending each other. But an armed gang with extreme violence, no.*

However, when members of the technical-pedagogical staff were consulted about this subject they demonstrated great concern over this growing phenomenon. According to them, gangs are formed mainly by students in their schools – there are a lot of crews here inside – but their presence is felt more outside of the school. A large portion of the students mentioned that there were cases where students in the schools participated in the gangs that existed around the schools in the nearby neighborhoods. A large portion of these gangs is made up of people that do not belong to the school. The fact is that the students normally deny the presence of gangs although some youths recognize that their classmates make up the gangs: *In my class there's one who even went to jail!*

Be that as it may, the gangs interfere with school life. In so far as they take a position against a certain student, especially youths that are "marked for death", the school becomes a territory that can be invaded. An increase in violence among peers is linked to territory. The youths claim a space and the group is then considered to be that place's "boss". Overstepping geographical borders signifies danger. The gang actions also demonstrate the atmosphere of revenge and tension among the youths that need

to be in a constant state of alert: *When a student gets hit, someone is going to want revenge. The thing is going to end up outside because all of a sudden someone belongs to a gang and someone else belongs to another gang and they start with the threats: 'Look, I'm going to get my people and come after you.'*

Along the same lines, some people are labeled as enemies and there are places that are designated to be "ours" or "theirs". These places are fought over and become marked as territorial borders. This process is emphasized in the international literature on gangs as a part of the culture of violence. The definition of territorial space brings about rivalry and clashes among the different groups: *We live here (...) and we can't cross over to that side.* There is also the issue of defending a determined territory, where no one from outside can come in. A large portion of the testimonies refers to animosity, fights and defending territory among those that do not belong to a specific neighborhood.

Chart 2.3
It's like a war

Focus group with students, public school, Cuiabá
I think that they really feel like they own that place. It's like a war where there's one country fighting with another country. They don't want people from that country coming over here stepping on their territory but they want to go and step on theirs. You got it? They don't want that. For example, I'm from this neighborhood and there's this rivalry between the (...) and the (...) over there. So the people from (...) don't want anyone from (...). They don't want anyone from over there coming over into our neighborhood. So that's when the conflict starts.

The gangs frequently alter the routine of the schools that fall into their realm, particularly in relation to drug trafficking.

The control that the gangs have causes the need for special precautions, principally on the night shift when there is more of a risk for all types of violence.

Many of the statements emphasize a relationship between the gangs' animosity when faced with someone who doesn't belong to the gang or someone who will not submit to the gang's authority within what the gang considers to be its "borders". This situation seems to provoke certain reluctance on the part of the schools in taking a stand in fighting the gangs and the drug dealers within the school environment. This takes on the form of not punishing the gangs in order to prevent suffering more personal harm or even risking lives. They were already here this afternoon, assaulting the school, they were even going to kill the principal. (...) The security agents highlight the difficulty in working with students that are part of gangs. This reinforces the problem, in that the security guards feel that they are "running a risk".

When the schools confront the gangs, some students point out situations where gang members "retaliate" against the attitudes adopted by the principal in an attempt to repress gang members within the school: *When he was getting ready to leave, his car tire was punctured and the gang had broken the glass and had taken his tape deck. He just got all these threats. There was a time when he had to go home with two police officers in his car.*

This reluctance is also linked to the fact that there is no police support for the security guards in the learning establishments: *If we had coverage, equipment, a radio, anything in the school, it would really help a lot. What happens is that we need to communicate some problem to the police and they don't answer us.*

The gangs end up becoming a type of private power parallel to public power. The gangs impose this power on members of the school community and their power to threaten takes away from the authority of those responsible for the school. This

obligates students, teachers and other members of the technical-pedagogical staff to seek new strategies for living with situations that pass the legal limits of social coexistence.

Sometimes those interviewed began to argue that the gangs did not work like that, saying that they did not negatively affect school life. There is strong gang presence in some locations as well as the presence of youths linked to drug trafficking. Sometimes this presence is part of helping to protect the school: *You've got to swing with it a little to deal with these people. You have to be their friend like it says 'treat them well, with humanity' because if the situation turns around they're the ones that are going to help you watch the school.*

Many parents reveal enormous preoccupation when their children comment that there is a lot of violence for those that participate in the gangs: *Certainly there are a lot of teens that make up these crews that go to school and they don't really show themselves. But they threaten and they hit and they do all sorts of abusive things to the weaker ones.*

One group of parents commented in a rather exaggerated fashion on the existence of 'barbecue stick gangs'. They describe youths that take barbecue skewers and dirty them with feces or garbage and then stick them into people. They said that this type of thing goes on in the schools and that a large portion of the victims becomes extremely sick. Some even die:

> *They [the youths in the cities] end up sticking people with those barbecue sticks that are always around on the street. They take them and put them in poop or in the garbage. I don't know what the hell they do with them, but then they stick people. And the people get sick and they get infections. They have to cut their leg off or sometimes they even die. How can I say this – today they grow up in badness – now they're making a thinner stick and it's going to get at more people. They've got this in*

the schools too. (Focus group with parents, public school, Manaus).

A considerable part of the confrontations that were related in the focus groups involve groups of youths that are included in a certain category in opposition with another one. This includes different neighborhoods that the youths identify with because they live there or because the school is there. The surrounding areas, however, affect school life in a lot of ways[31], especially in terms of walking around in the neighborhood where the school is located. The students are stopped or they feel unsafe as they come and go to school.

In on site observations of the school there was only one time when a researcher clearly saw drug dealing centers near the school: There are a lot of drug houses and places you can get drugs. (Direct Observation, public school, Cuiabá).

Although there is a reduced percentage of recognized drug dealing locations it must be remembered that drug dealing may be diluted and may take place in a wide variety of establishments. When it is disperse in the urban environment it becomes more worrisome when it comes to dealing with violence in proximity to the schools.

However, it is important to mention that activity in the streets makes it difficult to identify places where drugs are sold or the drug dealers that are looking for customers. This is especially true on streets where there are a number of commercial establishments. There are also students from the schools that participate in the drug trafficking network. They expose the school to violence in terms of rival groups. They also expose the school that comes from their own group if they disobey orders of the drug bosses.

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[30] See Cardia's (1997), study on the different ways these forms of violence in the surrounding areas affect school life.

We're really exposed here on this street where all kinds of people walk around all over the place. You can see it when there's any kind of problem with a student of ours involved with drug dealing who happens to do something that makes the drug dealers unhappy out there on the street. Well, they come and get that student right in here with no trouble at all. The only thing separating us from the street is that little fence, when a high wall would be a lot better. (Interview with inspector, public school, Rio de Janeiro)

In general the students speak about the constant presence of the drug dealers in the areas around the schools. At times they mention their presence within the school. They speak about how the drug dealers' approach enables the youths' access to drugs. Consequently, the probability that they will use drugs increases. The gravity of the situation stems from the fact that their presence is well disguised. The drug dealers and the minors that make drug deliveries pass themselves off as students and this makes identifying them difficult.

One student told about a boy that was studying in school and began to stand out for having been held back a grade so many times. Some time later it was confirmed that the boy was a drug dealer. Based on the testimony it's hard to be sure whether the boy failed purposely in order to deal drugs in the school, but the relationship between drug dealing and failing begins to seem suspicious. There is a strong indication that the drug dealer infiltrates the school and gets extremely close to the youths. Then, after a few years the dealer can deal drugs within the school without being noticed. There is also difficulty in being able to identify drug dealing activity among the youths.

There was this guy here in this school a long time ago. He studied here for five years and every year he failed. He only

passed two years, the first to the second, then he failed, then he went on to third year because it was getting kind of obvious. This guy sold drugs right here in the school until he got caught. (Student focus group, public school, Vitória)

One principal confirmed this testimony as well saying that there are people who register at school in order to deal drugs. This fact demonstrates how drug dealing is spread among the youths and that the tendency is for drug use to increase[32].

Some teachers and coordinators also confirmed drug dealing in the schools. In some cases it is the students themselves who are responsible for distributing the drugs.

The drugs here are distributed by the students themselves. I know a first year group here that studies in the morning. There are people in the group that bring in drugs and distribute them. (Teacher focus group, public school, Maceió).

One police officer affirmed that in one school teachers had been found distributing drugs: In some rare cases the teacher was bringing drugs to the school.

Some principals approached the questions of supply within the schools, stating that there had been a time when drugs were passed through the wall – *so they would stick stuff in the wall. Then they would make a hole in the wall. We would close the hole and they would open it again. Close the hole, open the hole. Then later it got better.*

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[32] In the schools where the students are older, they maintain a closer relationship with drug trafficking. This occurred with some students who are married to drug dealers, enabling collaboration with them. According to discipline coordinators, there are also a lot of drug dealers' children at the schools and this becomes a huge problem: *There are drug dealers here and there are drug dealers' children who study here.*

Principals and students say that it is extremely easy to contact drug dealers or distributors:

> *Yeah, the other day I went over there to (...) and this person asked me: you want 5 or you want 10? And this other one said ' She's the school principal you know.' They offer you drugs really easily. It's very easy to have access to drugs.* (Interview with principal, public school, Rio de Janeiro).

Chart 2.4
The kids who deliver drugs come down from the *favelas*

Interview with coordinator, private school, Florianópolis
Look, where we are it's really easy [to get drugs]. There's that nice little square at the end of the street in front of the high school and this place is a drug dealing place where the dealers and the distributors from the favela come down and supply the drugs to our students, but we've also got students who go up to the favela to get drugs.

The drug dealers' approach is ostentatious and the first offer made to the students is generally free of charge. One student mentioned that some drug dealers give the drugs for free not only the first time but until they notice that the user is dependent:

> *There's this interesting thing and it's that when you don't do drugs, you don't use and you don't like them, then all these people come around and offer you drugs for free. There's marijuana, cocaine, cigarettes, alcohol. It's all there for free. Then when you're hooked, when you're dependent, there's no one offering you drugs for free anymore. Man, you have to buy your own then. And that's how it goes.* (Focus group with students, public school, Salvador).

Many principals say they are alert to the presence of drug trafficking in the areas that surround the schools. They pay attention to the owners of bars as well as the people who work in them and the customers. They also pay attention to the people who sell candy in front of the schools. The principals feel that all of these individuals deserve attention merely because of the proximity they have to the students. These principals are conscious of the possibility that the candy seller may be a drug dealer.

The teaching coordinators and the teachers also refer to their lack of trust for the people who sell candy at the doors of the schools as well as for the owners of the bars in the areas around the schools. There is strong suspicion that these individuals act in drug trafficking.

> *I believe it, that they buy from these drug dealers. I don't know if this is true, but I've heard that these guys who sell stuff in front of the schools are really these smart drug dealers because they do the business and they even have the bait.* (Interview with principals, public school, São Paulo).

At times the presence of street vendors is prohibited by the schools owing to difficulty in controlling the drug dealers' activities.

> *We've forbidden snack carts and hot dog stands in front of the school. There's even a municipal law that forbids them. There was this attempt to deal drugs and we just forbid this to avoid this connection. These people are disguised as vendors and they're dealing drugs out there. It just got out of control.* (Interview with coordinator, public school, Cuiabá).

In addition to the free and constant offer of drugs, some principals notice other resources that are used by the drug dealers in order to attract the youths to drugs. There are cases of drug

dealers using a wide variety of techniques, including putting pretty girls at the doors of the school to deal drugs.

> *It's like this. In front of the school there's this crew. Some guys with that bad guy kit. The cap, those baggy pants, I don't know. So they get these hot chicks to pass things between people. The girls are the connection. That's how they get into the school.* (Interview with principal, public school, Federal District).

One of the following testimonies emphasizes gang participation in the commercialization of drugs and guns in the neighborhood. The same statement gives the impression that the school is impotent in relation to solving the problem when gangs organize: *Right around the school there aren't any dealers, but the whole neighborhood has these drug locations. There are four organized gangs. Usually, it's one gang for one neighborhood, but here we've got four. These four gangs have got their drug locations, with guns and drugs. The school is powerless to solve this problem.*

In the following testimony the security agent states that there are drug locations in the area that surrounds the school. The agent states that there are constant fights between the drug dealers and at times they include shooting. This is how members of the school are frequently exposed to extreme violence: *Inside the school we don't really have confrontations among the groups, but around the school there are shootings every once in a while. There are a lot of drug locations here.*

Teachers, coordinators and security agents in some schools say that disputes or revenge among the drug dealers have resulted in deaths. This even involved students.

There's already been a death. A drug dealer killed a student inside here, inside the doors of the school. It happened last year. (Interview with discipline coordinators, public school, Porto Alegre)

Look, I'm going to tell you the truth. This guy I knew, he was a dealer. He never left the school. He wasn't a student but he hung around here. They killed him. They shot him in the belly. (Interview with security guards, public school, São Paulo).

One thing that stops any kind of assault against the drug dealers is the generalized fear of denouncing them. Threats that often include death to potential whistle blowers are certainly an obstacle when it comes to denouncing drug dealing in the schools.

Yes, [there are drug dealers walking around inside the school]. I'll say it again, the feeling is that it's gotten a little better, but we've already seen something that happened right there at the door. This teacher that already said they saw things, when it came time to really see they were afraid to look. There was a person who was coming through the door that wasn't from inside the school, ok? It was someone from outside the school but the teacher didn't want to see who got the drugs. (Interview with principal, public school, Rio de Janeiro)

2.2. THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

The implications of violence and the different demonstrations of violence within the school space have caused special preoccupation throughout society. It is essential to understand the school environment in order to understand the phenomenon of violence. This includes understanding that the physical structure of the school is essential[33].

In general, the schools are physically separated from their surroundings by walls, gates, and fences: 99% have a gate at the entrance and the majority of the schools are surrounded by brick and cement walls (80%) that are between 2 and 3 meters high (66%). There are also fences and bars that have been evaluated to be in perfect condition (96%). In addition to these figures, there is some kind of gate that works to control entrance and that serves as protection between the entrance gate and the other school areas (classrooms and administrative areas). Although these percentages seem high, it should be kept in mind that 35% of the schools are vulnerable from the point of view of access.

Students' entrances and exits are often controlled in order to guarantee that they remain in school. This is also done to avoid a strange person's having access to the school's interior and breaking up school routine. According to the observations of the researchers, 17% of the establishments have controlled access. In these establishments access is controlled with ID cards. In 66% of the schools wearing the required uniform is sufficient to gain access. There are different reasons for these different policies that range from lack of personnel to the safety in the area that

[33] This is one of the most discussed hypotheses in literature on violence, especially literature on public installations known as the Broken Windows theory. The theory is well known in the United States and proposes that when populations live in precarious conditions and coexist with degraded social equipment the tendency is to deny ownership to that environment. The tendency is to express dissatisfaction and revulsion towards the various violent acts, especially those against public property (WILSON, James, KELLING, March/1982).

surrounds the school. In 20% of the schools no identification is required to gain entrance to the school.

In the researchers' observations there was mention of many schools where the community made complaints about violence and the lack of a guard or security equipment or any kind of monitoring. They complained that the school remained open with no type of control. The percentages demonstrate that over half of the school have unsafe environments. There is a significant difference between the public (65%) and the private (53%) schools.

2.2.1. The school's physical equipment

In the opinion of the researchers, 73% of the classrooms are in good condition. This figure takes into account classroom size in relation to number of students, lighting and ventilation, an agreeable and pleasant atmosphere, working quality of electrical system, the state of repair of desks and other furniture and cleanliness of the floor and walls46.

The data shows that the environment varies from school to school. Some researchers noticed that certain schools were badly conserved. There was the need for rotating classes and different grades do not have daily classes, but study on an every other day basis. In addition, the quality of classroom installations varies according to administrative dependency: in the public schools the installations that were classified as good represented a little over two-thirds. In the private schools this figure was nine-tenths.

The fact is that the majority of the students state that they like the school where they study but that some of the physical spaces like the classroom, external area or the building and hallways do not please them.

Researchers noted that staff members inspected the hallways in only 62% of the schools: *There is no staff member here that controls the students. There are no guards. There isn't enough staff*

in the canteen and in the administrative offices. (Local direct observation, public school, Goiânia)

In almost half of the schools students were seen walking aimlessly through the hallways (46%). There were also students hanging around the schoolyard during class time with no defined activity (44%). These youths were normally accompanied by their friends (94%), talking (86%), playing ball or playing (35%) or hanging out with their boyfriend or girlfriend (27%). There were also students fighting (3%), drinking, smoking or using drugs (8%).

Many times there were no staff members supervising the students: The students are really left to themselves. There's no one controlling them or watching the hallways or schoolyard. It's really disorganized. (Local direct observation, public school, Vitória)

In the opinion of 58% of the researchers, the school's main building was generally in a good state of conservation. In 27% of the schools the state of the main building was classified as great. However, the local direct observations of the researchers frequently demonstrated that the general physical conditions of the school were unsatisfactory: *The school leaves a lot to be desired in terms of cleanliness, organization and access from strangers.* (Local direct observation, private school, Goiânia)

Even when some buildings were badly conserved in terms of cleanliness, lighting, air and ventilation, conservation of furniture and equipment, as well as architectural characteristics and other elements, they were classified by the set of researchers as school installations in good condition (84%).

Although this percentage seems very high, it is worth reflecting on the reverse case: in 16% of the observations the location where the students and teachers carry out the majority of their daily activities was considered to be in bad condition. On the other hand, the asymmetrical quality of installations in public and private schools causes the physical conditions in a large part of the public schools to be highly problematic.

Above all, it was observed in 95% of the schools that the bathrooms and/or locker rooms were integrated as the main part of the installations, with 56% of the bathrooms in good condition, independent of size. In a little over one-third of the schools there is a person responsible for monitoring these environments. This does not prevent phrases, words or signs written in the bathrooms and/or locker rooms in 47% of the schools. Two-fifths of these phrases include pornographic and/or offensive references. A little over half include poetic or romantic references (53%). There are also references to gang symbols, musical groups, soccer teams, graffiti and personal nicknames.

Researchers stated that 85% of the schools have libraries. Of these, 61% were evaluated as small. The majority were considered well-ventilated (75%), well-lighted (90%), silent (83%) and as having available chairs and tables (93%). However, it is important to keep in mind that frequently the minimum operating conditions are not fulfilled by limited physical space that is noisy and many times is a shared space with the teachers' room. Many times there is no computer access. Sometimes the library's activities are carried out by some of the teaching staff and this takes away from their primary function:

> *There's a lady who works in the library and she is really too much, you know. Everybody tells me: 'Boy, she's rude.' So later, they could prove that she really didn't know what she was doing because you want to know about a book or a specific subject (...) you want to do a project, something like that, and it's that old 'find it yourself' thing, you got it? She'd say, yeah, sure, sure.* (Focus group with students, public school, Rio de Janeiro).

The computer centers are not very valued by the students. However, there were only 44% of the schools where this type of space was made available. The majority of public schools do not

have computer rooms and many times when computers are available the principal's and administrative offices use them. The lack of this type of environment is felt by the teachers and affects their working conditions.

The researchers registered that there are sports gymnasiums in only 45% of the schools. There were laboratories in 31% of the schools and 23% had an art center. There was a room where art activities were developed in 67% of the schools and one for science in 50% of the schools. There was a music room in 48% of the schools. These locations were generally well conserved and clean.

The teachers have problems that are similar to those of the students. This includes physical conditions and supplies. There are teachers' rooms with chairs and tables in 95% of the schools. There are closets, files or cubbies in 82% of them and 78% of them are clean and organized. Only 65% of these teachers' rooms are large enough to accommodate all of the teachers during the break. One teacher mentioned that: *Violence is also a teacher not being able to talk to other teachers or not being heard in an interview because there is no place for it and there's too much noise.*

Issues like lack of supplies and human resources can also be seen. These issues originate within the school and end up causing violent behavior and dissatisfaction. This includes conflicts among students, as described in the previous chapter.

DATA SUMMARY

The area that surrounds the school is where most violence occurs. The existence of bars and botequins where the students consume alcohol is frequently verified.

The lack of safety equipment on the streets that lead to the school explains the significant number of members of the school community's being hit by cars. Many times the streets where the school is located do not have traffic lights, overpasses, crosswalks or a guard to control traffic. In addition, safety is compromised during the night shifts in some of the neighborhoods owing to deficient public lighting.

According to the technical-pedagogical staff, the school environment is no longer a safe and protected place.

According to students and the technical-pedagogical staff, one of the major problems in many schools is gangs and/or drug trafficking. This occurs in the school space or in the surrounding areas and causes an extreme atmosphere of lack of safety. One of the consequences of this is the weakening of authority on the part of those responsible for school order. This is demonstrated in "reluctance" on the part of the administration in taking a stand to combat gangs and drug dealers in the school environment. This lack of punishment occurs in order to avoid greater damage. Many of the statements stress the presence of drug trafficking. In many cases street vendors with candy or other types of stands are used for the sale and distribution of drugs.

Many of those interviewed affirm that they would like to be able to count on police presence to inhibit the criminality in the school surroundings. In contradiction, however, they point out the lack of preparation the police have in dealing with youths in addition to their low pay and lack of qualification and specialized training. These factors are cited as elements that contribute to the predominant negative view of the police.

The physical structure of the schools affects the school environment as well. In general, the schools are separated from the surrounding areas by walls, fences, and barred gates. A significant portion of the students is critical of the physical quality of the schools. This is true mainly in relation to unsatisfactory classrooms, hallways and schoolyards. The preferred locations of the students are the snack bars or canteens, the libraries, the computer centers, sports gymnasiums, laboratories, and art centers. The last four locations were the most frequently attended locations in the observed schools.

3. THE SCHOOL: OPERATIONS AND SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

Education is a social and universal phenomenon in that it is a human activity that is necessary for the existence and operation of all societies. Each society needs to take care training its members in order to assist in the development of their physical and spiritual abilities and prepare them for active and transforming participation in the different circumstances of social life. Social methods influence individuals through educational action. Individuals assimilate and recreate these influences and this makes them able to establish an active and transforming relationship in regard to this process (Enguita, 1989). These influences are demonstrated through knowledge, experiences, values, beliefs, ways of acting, techniques and habits that are accumulated over generations of individuals and groups. These things are then passed on, assimilated and recreated by new generations.

School and the professionals that act within the school make up a universe that is capable of allowing for student development. This includes creating conditions where significant learning and interactions occur. Each individual comes with his/her own universe and this makes the establishment of interactive spaces essential in the educational context. This is guided towards promoting exchange relationships with a shared effort in the construction of common solutions in order to reach collective goals.

These individuals' ways of life interact within the school

atmosphere and provide concrete and symbolic exchanges. This allows for the necessary conditions for social processes to find expression. The atmosphere that is provided by the school favors not only information processes, but communication processes as well. This results in a wide ranging symbolic universe and stimulates sets of feelings and meanings that allow for the identification of subjectivity and the construction of identities.

In this atmosphere of diversity, the schools deal with fights, aggression and violence. This occurs in conjunction with a number of formal and informal procedures that are differently modeled according to the different ways of being that each administrative office or pedagogical project has. Rules are followed to deal with violence or to repress violence. The procedures that are used are mostly warnings, suspensions, transfers and expulsions. These take place according to the gravity of the case as analyzed by the school.

The rules reflect the values that are common and recognized by everyone involved in the interaction process. The absence of these rules in society would be chaos and would also reflect total disintegration of the collective conscience among individuals (Durkheim apud Rodrigues, 2000). The rules of conduct make individuals act according to expectations regarding the social role that they are performing every minute.

Taking these issues into consideration, this chapter initially approaches rules and punishments, as these are the elements that regulate school coexistence. This is followed by an exploration of the perceptions and motivations of the wide variety of participants, principally the students, regarding teaching and the school that they attend. Finally, the focus turns towards interactions in school. These interactions are measured in friendships, conflicts and a wide variety of agreements. This is done in a way that identifies how a school context can influence relationships among the different participants in a negative or positive way.

3.1. SCHOOL OPERATIONS

There are rules that are applied to the daily life of the schools. These rules apply mainly to the students and they are frequently questioned by the students. This is true because they often apply standards not only to behavior, but to appearance as well.

Those interviewed agreed that rules are indispensable for maintaining school order, but they also point out a type of pressure that they are submitted to in order to reach this goal. According to Debarbieux (1998), the problems that occur between the teaching staff and the student body generally emerge from criticism of the school order. This is demonstrated through incivilities or more obvious violence or rejecting behavior.

Some interviewed parents affirm that one contribution schools make is that they apply rules to the students. This points to an environment that is seen from a good point of view in terms of being an environment for discipline[34]: *Getting there on time, getting in different lines for boys and girls.*

Among the internal rules of the schools, those that sustain the most varied reactions are those related to respect for class times, uniforms, identification and things that are allowed or prohibited in the school.

Punctuality is one of the rules that is most questioned by the students. At times, it is even questioned by the parents who talk about students that cannot enter the classroom if they are late and then have to bring in a written signed excuse from their parents: *If you're late, the office sends a note to the parents. It's for control. This is why the students receive so many warnings.* However, in the face of so much violence and the wide variety of contact that the students are exposed to, some of the schools have been more flexible in terms of lateness. This is principally true in the

[34] This mainly comes from parents in reference to military schools.

private schools, letting latecomers enter the school, and even in some cases the classroom: *You can't let them stay out in the street. Get them inside the school so they're not out on the street and they can avoid certain friendships. [Because] today it's just too violent.*

One other rule that is questioned is in reference to the uniform. The uniform is used as a way of identifying the students and is used as a way of controlling entrance and also as a way of preventing the use of inadequate clothing like short or slitted skirts. The uniform is also a way of avoiding obvious social inequalities. The obligatory use of a uniform[35] was also pointed out as good for the students' safety because, if by accident the student gets run over in the crosswalk, they're going to know it was a student because he's got the uniform.

In spite of resistance from a few students, others see wearing a uniform in a positive fashion. These students consider it as something that requires respect: *[The school principals] were stricter last year. This year they aren't really strict, but they really shouldn't let it go, you know? It makes people behave (...) If you go to the school you've got to wear the uniform and act right.*

There are students that say they have no objection to wearing the uniform. However, they are critical about the lack of enforcement for everyone to wear it. They say that some staff members make exceptions for some students. Inversely, other students react to the inflexibility of the internal rules that cause them to receive warnings if they don't wear the uniform. One clear complaint was in reference to the staff members that watch the entrance to the school where there is different treatment that is based on friendship. This treatment allows certain students to enter without the required identification[36]: *Here's the difference:*

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[35] The use of a uniform is not legally required by the Ministry of Education.

[36] In general, according to researchers' observations, entrance control is only for students. Teachers can come and go as they please in 86% of the schools. According to the observations, teachers do not wear identification.

You get there and that one is their friend, so they let them in. Then another one comes in wearing shorts and they don't let him in. That's when you get mad.

Resistance to wearing the uniform is sometimes for aesthetic reasons. The uniform is cited as being inadequate to some students' physiques or for being an unsuitable color or cut or for being out of fashion.

Each school has its own method for student identification and this can include no identification at all. Methods include required uniforms, badges, passes, cards or magnetic cards.

Identifying people that have access to the school has become a security procedure as much for the individuals as for their material property. This includes cars, bicycles and school supplies. It was also stressed that when there is control at the entrance gate those inside the school are less exposed to violence. However, when control is based on uniforms only, many consider this to be an ineffective control method as there are ways of getting past security: *You know how? Well, since there's no card or ID you go up to someone that's got two shirts and you get a shirt for any school on the street and you just go in.*

There are some students on the night shift that consider control at the entrance and exit of the school meaningless. In general, the students at night are adults and are many times parents: *Look, this is closed up here, it's like a prison here inside. We have to ask: 'Can I leave early today?' Nobody wants to know about your problems in here. They don't allow it. They tell you to your face: 'No, you're lying.'*

One other controversial item in terms of internal school rules is the selection of prohibited or allowed practices. In some schools there are prohibitions that are considered to be unnecessary by the students. Chewing gum is one example: *Nobody here ever chewed gum? You can get a warning just for chewing gum!*

As a general rule smoking is prohibited in the school. This

is true principally on the day shifts. However, the principal, teacher and other staff members are not subject to this restriction. The students complain that they're breaking the rules: *'It's because I'm the principal. I can smoke.' Then she lights her cigarette but I can't.* According to the observations, the field researchers stated that there were students smoking in the schoolyards or hallways in 18% of the schools and there were teachers smoking along with the students in 10% of the schools. The application of this rule varies from school to school. Some principals are more flexible while others are stricter: *He [the principal] goes over to whoever's smoking and says: 'Come on, don't smoke.' Now, the old principal would have given that person suspension. The old principal was really crabby.*

The rules discussed here apply to most of the schools. These rules can be considered as institutional violence[37] along with other situations that include not letting students' leave during class or break time: *I don't think it's fair that we can't go to the bathroom. There are other rules that prohibit kissing or playing cards: it's just a game, it's nothing!*

3.1.1. Infractions/transgressions and punishments

There is sanctioned behavior in the schools, as there are in any other institutional space. There are also infractions that carry specific punishments. The following chart outlines the most common punishments found in the public and private schools. They are listed with their causes.

[37] Mota (2001) relates this type of violence with the power people are submitted to. The author refers to the "context of structuring the emerging subjectivity of the low-income child and adolescent that experiences institutional violence through criminalization and practices of suppression and control that are introduced through educational, auxiliary and correctional mechanisms."

Chart 3.1
Causes, types and duration of punishments

	Causes	Types of Punishment	Quantity and Duration
1	Talking and joking in class.	Direct the student to the Disciplinary Office[38]	As many times as necessary
2	Talking and joking in class; attending class without supplies or homework.	Verbal warning	As many times as necessary
3	Incomplete work.	Send the student to the library	Many times
4	Disrupting class, incomplete work, lack of respect for teacher.	No break	Many times
5	Incomplete work, disruption, small misunderstandings with classmates	Keep the student after class	Many times
6	Bad behavior and lack of school work.	Deduct points	Many times
7	Incomplete uniform, lack of ID badge	Send the student back home[39]	Once or twice
8	Disrupting the class because of excessive conversation	Require student to leave the classroom	Many times
9	Excessive conversation or misunderstandings with classmates	Change classes	Limit of two times

[38] *Serviço de Orientação Educacional* (Educational Orientation Service) is the disciplinary office in the schools.
[39] In case of recurrence, the student receives a written warning.

Chart 3.1 (Continuation)

	Causes	Types of Punishment	Quantity and Duration
10	Excessive conversation, fights with classmates, misunderstanding with teacher, frequent tardiness and lack of interest in studies.	Signed agreement[40]	No information
11	Excessive conversation and jokes in classroom, arguing with classmates and teachers, not respecting class times and recurrence of incomplete school work	Written warning	Limit of 3 times per year
12	Students that have demonstrated problems over the years	Non-renewed registration	No information
13	Being sent to the principal's office after three written warnings, serious fights, physical aggression, kissing, smoking cigarettes or using drugs	Suspension	Once or twice, depending on the school. From 1 to 15 days, according to the case
14	When the student has been sent to the principal's office and suspended and the case is considered to be serious. For example, smoking marijuana in school, fights that included bloodshed, threatening teacher or coordinators, or at parents' request	Transfer and/or expulsion	Once

[40] This punishment is more frequently used with the students that study at night, both at private and public schools. According to the principals, this is due to the fact that many of these students are of age and this allows for greater facility in directing the corrections.

In so far as punishments are often assigned in an arbitrary fashion, the school becomes an opportune location for the exercise of symbolic violence.

Symbolic should be understood, according to Pinto (2000), as a knowing activity (meaning), with dynamic representation that is in the subjective domain and that operates through signs in social relationships. Education, principally in school, administrates these symbolic systems and legitimizes the learning institutions as power situations. Violence in this case, would function through agreement and through the use of symbols of power that do not necessarily require physical power or guns or shouts. This type of violence silences protests. In the school environment there is a high probability of this kind of violence being used not only among students, but also among students and teachers.

The various transgressions and their respective punishments were analyzed above all by parents and students that had already experienced their application. It became clear that there were many reasons for getting warnings. For example, not wearing a uniform could bring on a written warning. Some schools gave up on this because the students were being constantly punished. Sometimes these schools distributed uniforms to the youths that were unable to buy uniforms. Sometimes they loaned them to students that happened to come to school without the complete uniform.

> *Official uniform?(...) When someone comes to register they send a paper that says if you can't buy the uniform you should talk to the administrative office, all right? And they always give you a uniform. She [the principal] doesn't send the students back home if you come in wearing the wrong clothes. She gets you a school uniform and lends it to you.* (Focus group with parents, public school, Rio de Janeiro)

In dealing with the wide ranging behavior that disturb the school environment some schools use the Responsibility Agreement as a resource for maintaining order. This is something that the students' parents or guardians sign as a commitment to monitoring the school development and behavior of their children. If the student is responsible for him/herself because of age or legal status, the student signs this agreement.

In transgressions that are considered to be more serious, like graffiti or vandalism, the student can be transferred or expelled from school. The student may also be taken to the police station with their parents. In the inspectors' opinions, these extreme measures should only be taken to maintain order in the school because the guy who did wrong has to pay, because if they aren't punished the first time they will continue to do the same thing.

However, the students do not agree completely with this opinion. At the same time, they make two major critiques of the punishments. The first refers to differentiated treatment given to some because the kid could blow up the school, but if he's the principal's little pet he just gets a talking to. In reality, this is a recurrent problem mentioned by the students in terms of lack of criteria on the part of the school authorities when it comes to applying punishment.

> *(...) This was something I thought was really wrong about the rules here at the school. This guy and this girl were kissing over there. So that should only be a warning. But they got suspended for a week. Then there are some that use drugs, or sniff aerosol or something and they just get punished for two days!* (Focus group with students, public school, Maceió)

This constant lack of criteria triggers a sense of impunity among the students. The punishments seem to be extremely

variable and the student does not get punished according to the infraction. When this occurs they feel proud in front of their classmates: *I made that kid bleed and I didn't get suspended!*

The second critique is in respect to an exaggerated number of threats of punishment. This makes the students disbelieve them: *There's this teacher here at the school and any little thing you do she says: 'You want a warning?'* However, there are some occasions when the threat becomes a more effective result than the punishment: *The best is really the threat of something bad, 'you're going to be suspended.' The guy is going to think about what he did.*

In general, the students that are suspended are those that are caught red-handed or who are involved with drugs, gangs or fights. This involves those that smoke on the school grounds and those who offend the teachers. For cases like these, the parents are notified and called to the school and are informed of the transgressions. Then they discuss ways to direct or solve the problem with the principal's office.

> *The student is sent to the guidance counselor, and they call the family. We explain what happened. The parent signs a document saying that he/she has been informed about what happened, taking responsibility that this will not happen again with the child.* (Interview with inspector, private school, Belém)

Some of those interviewed questioned the effect of suspension. This was because the student almost always went home and sat around doing nothing. They felt that the student was not guided towards reflecting on the attitudes that had brought him/her to that situation.

Another interesting item of data was that suspension is applied mainly when the parents are not involved or when the school implicitly relates the student to the family in a

questionable transposition of responsibilities. There is some kind of transference in terms of responsibility for the youths' behavior when the parents are absent.

> *Generally the parents are called in to recognize the fact and to give advice to their children as well. At times when the parents don't show up, the students are suspended partly because the parents didn't show up to resolve the situation. We take measures against the children because our school's reach is really limited.* (Focus group with teachers, public school, Manaus)

In relation to student transfer/expelling, the data on the questionnaire inferred that 3 to 6% of the students had their school career interrupted in this fashion (table 3.1).

Table 3.1

Proportion of students in Elementary (5th to 8th grades) and Secondary Education,by capital of Federal Unit, according to being expelled from school - 2000*

	DF	GO	MT	AM	PA	CE	PE	AL	BA	ES	RJ	SP	SC	RS
Had been expelled	4	6	4	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	4	3	3	4
Had never been expelled	96	94	96	97	96	96	96	97	97	97	96	97	97	96
TOTAL	**100 (304057)**	**100 (175464)**	**100 (76587)**	**100 (213651)**	**100 (172861)**	**100 (320771)**	**100 (225771)**	**100 (100373)**	**100 (393851)**	**100 (53226)**	**100 (621228)**	**100 (1336201)**	**100 (45948)**	**100 (156987)**

Source: National Survey on Violence, AIDS and Drugs in School, UNESCO, 2001.
The individuals were asked: "Have you ever been expelled from school?"
* Expanded data.

According to students in private schools, these learning establishments seem to be slightly more cautious about using transfer/expelling methods as the parents don't like the student being expelled: *The student doesn't like expelling. They [the school owners] lose money. So, that's why they don't expel students.*

In general, in public schools, the School Boards are called on to analyze the reasons the student was expelled from school as well as to define the type of action that should be taken. Because of the gravity of certain acts practiced by the students, some principals from the public system have sought out the *Conselho Tutelar*[41] in order to take necessary appropriate measures and to avoid future consequences for the actions employed by the school: *Detain, only as a last resort. When the school runs out of possibilities the* Conselho Tutelar *is called.*

In the meantime some schools are reviewing adopting this method of punishment as the *Conselhos Tutelares* and other judicial authorities tend to not grant authorization for expelling students.

> *No, we don't really have that much punishment here and it's partly because of the* Conselho Tutelar. *The students are very well informed about the* Conselho Tutelar. *The child can't be submitted to restraint. So, depending on how you interpret that, anything can be restraint.* (Interview with inspector, public school, Fortaleza)

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[40] The Conselho Tutelar is a Community Council for the Defense of the Rights of Children and Adolescents This is a permanent autonomous agency that has no official jurisdiction. In the absence of this Council, the judge from the Minor's Court has the ability to privately administer protection measures to the adolescents as one of the functions of the courts. Title V of the Statute of the Child and Adolescent defines the Conselho Tutelar as having five members that are chosen by the local community for a three-year term. It should exist in all municipalities. These are the agencies that are responsible for the application of protection measures for the child and adolescent in accordance with Law 8068, July 13, 1990.

Some teachers indicate that they are against transferring or expelling students. They feel that the school is only transferring the problem to another establishment: *The same way that the school transfers, we also get students that are real problems.*

Occasionally transfer and expulsion methods are applied in a somewhat arbitrary fashion. However, as a rule the transfers and expulsions are considered fitting only for situations considered extremely serious by the school principal's office. This would include threats to the teaching staff: *We've already gotten threats from two students and they were immediately transferred from the school. The principal's office directed the problem to the superintendent's office and the superintendent thought it best to transfer the students. This decision was made in the presence of the parents.*

> *A student is transferred from the school only as a last resort, for extremely serious reasons. Last year there were four that I had to transfer. The parents were present and the student threatened me saying that he was going to come back and snuff me. In front of his father, with his father right there! The father put his hand on his shoulder and said 'son, be quiet and let's go.'* (Interview with principal, private school, São Paulo)

At times the principals fluctuate in relation to the type of punishment that should be applied. Even when the available sanctions are prescribed in the school regulations, many principals say that they feel insecure when it comes to making the decision to apply punishment: *I don't know if you can really call it punishment if you don't let the student go on the break or if the student can only enter the school accompanied by a parent or guardian.*

Some schools adopt alternative punishments in the search for new mechanisms for disciplining the students. One private

school applies suspension with a fine as a measure. In this case many times the student has to use resources from his/her allowance or has to listen to his/her parents' complaints. The student ends up avoiding this situation. Another method is registering the punishment on a student file[42].

There are also schools that adopt punishments that can seem too severe or more severe than those normally employed. This type of punishment can cause situations of humiliation and constraint. Sometimes the students negotiate with the principal in order to do some type of task.

> *They were suspended for three days but they had to come back with their parent's signature. So they wouldn't be suspended for the three days they found this way to get the principal to let them sweep the class room, the yard, the bathroom, stuff like that.* (Focus group with students, public school, Fortaleza)

3.2. PERCEPTIONS OF SCHOOL

A wide variety of feelings, attitudes, and perceptions about the school and those involved in the school process develop based on the rules that regulate behavior and relationships among the involved parties. It is important to identify the factors that make students and members of the technical-pedagogical staff appreciate or not the school where they study or work[43].

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[42] This register on file counts on the student's school record. It contains the date and the cause and is signed by the student, the parent/guardian and the principal, according to the description of a public school coordinator.

[43] Comparing frequency distribution, there seemed to be no contradiction among the students' responses to whether they liked school and the indication of the things they did not appreciate about the school. Approximately 15% did not like school. Some crossover seemed to indicate that 59% emphasized one item they did not appreciate at the school and 77% emphasized two items. The percentage of those that did not like the school fell as the number of items that were not appreciated increased.

Over four-fifths of the students responded that they liked their schools (table 3.2) when they were asked how they felt in relation to the school where they studied. However, it is worth noting two things in relation to table 3.2: first, the percentage of students that say they don't like the school may seem low but cannot be underestimated as they vary in the public schools between a maximum of 23% (São Paulo) and a minimum of 9% and 10% (Maceió and Cuiabá, respectively). In the private schools they vary between a maximum of 31% (Federal District) and a minimum of 5% (Manaus). This means that the majority of students that said they did not like their school were not affected by the administrative dependency of the establishment where they studied.

Table 3.2

Number of students in Elementary (5th to 8th grades) and Secondary School, by capital of Federal Unit, according to administrative dependency of the establishment and appreciation for their school - 2000*

	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]														
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
TOTAL	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]														
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
TOTAL	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

Source: National Survey on Violence, AIDS and Drugs in School, UNESCO, 2001.
The individuals were asked: "Do you like your school?"
*Expanded data

However, as seen in the previous chapter, around 84% of the schools had good installations[44] and what the students like the least in their schools is the physical space – classrooms, external space, and hallways. This rate varied from a maximum of 50% in Belém to a minimum of 38% in Maceió. Some testimonies from the researchers said that the school is kind of ugly, no trees, and the hallways are long and old. Many testimonies mention cleanliness problems, especially in the bathrooms: *The school leaves a lot to be desired when it comes to cleanliness, organization and access to strangers. The bathrooms are completely dirty and there's a lot of water on the floor.* In addition to this, the classrooms and hallways are frequently disorganized.

The students' answers demonstrated that the second largest frequency in the indicators of what they didn't like indicated the Administration and Principal's Offices. This reached a minimum of 27% in Goiânia and a maximum of 40% in Recife (table 3.3).

[44] Although each of the capitals makes up an independent sampling, an average for the capitals where the survey was carried out was used. This occurred when the results found in each capital in each category were sufficiently homogenous below the standard curve.

Table 3.3

Proportion of students in Elementary Basic (5th to 8th grades) and Secondary Education, by capital of Federal Unit, according to what they don't like at school - 2000*

Source: National Survey on Violence, AIDS and Drugs in School, UNESCO, 2001.

The individuals were asked: "Mark what you don't like at your school." The percentages refer only to affirmative responses obtained in the student samples. *Expanded data

This is explained by the lack of personnel for the development of certain tasks like supervision of recess and monitoring. It also explains the lack of politeness in dealing with the students and the lack of preparation and interest on the part of the staff members: *After a few minutes in the administration office and the teachers' room, it's just total disregard (...) a total lack of interest. There are just a few that want something better and who are involved in that.* The researchers also say that there are deficiencies in the organization as well as in serving the external public: *The principal was totally indifferent towards us.* Many schools were observed to experience not just indifference from the principals, but the complete absence of the principals. The principal is hardly ever around. At school, at night, there's very little attention from the administrative offices. The principal is someone who's really hard to run into.

The students themselves are the third most frequently cited objects of dissatisfaction. The students were mentioned from a minimum of 24% in Belém, to a maximum of 39% in Salvador (table 3.3). This result really stood out in that it put into question the supposed perception of school as a place for pleasant social contact among the students. In reality, this datum has been observed in other UNESCO research[45] and has caused for monitoring apparently contradictory issues. Sometimes the students demonstrate a certain isolation and lack of connection in relation to their classmates that at times even becomes disturbing. At the same time, though, these classmates form alternative groups both in the school and outside[46]. This includes crews, rapper groups,

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[45] According to Abramovay (Coord.) (2001) the students recognize their lack of interest and themselves as causes of discipline problems. When they are asked what the main problems of their schools are, 77% indicate uninterested students.

[46] See Abramovay et al. *Gangues, Galeras, Chegados e Rappers* (Gangs, Crews, Buddies and Rappers), op. cit.; Castro et al. *Cultivando Vida Desarmando Violências* (Cultivating Life, Disarming Violence), op. cit.

graffiti artists and pagode or theatre groups. These groups do not have membership criteria and are not institutional class organizations or official student groups.

This fact seems to signify the absence among the students of a feeling of belonging and involvement with the school as a space for building communal relationships. On the other hand it suggests the fragility of the students' self-esteem and the consequent loss of a positive image they might have of themselves or their classmates. This picture harkens back to the "bowling alone" hypothesis that was recently developed and presented by Putnam (2000). Putnam observes that in the recent past the Americans demonstrated accentuated social and political involvement with a high level of participation on the part of agencies that are associations from a wide variety of areas – social, economic, industrial, religious, etc. This "bowling league" has now become "bowling alone" with the growing individualism of today. Consequently, there has been a distancing effect in terms of public life in a wide variety of areas.

The students establish boundary lines that separate them from their peers when they indicate their own classmates as objects of dislike or as a problem in the schools. This represents a cleavage among students. It shows them to be individualistic in that they do not recognize that they are part of the community that is responsible for not only intellectual, but also social growth. Instead of this type of posture, the students describe themselves as different, strange, even threatening. They cite feelings of disgust in relation to the school and the other students.

Some of the relationships among students in the same classroom are fragile. These relationships go beyond association with a small group due to the lack of solidarity and union[47]. The fact

[47] A feeling of belonging to the class, according to the testimonies, is linked to concepts like friendship, complicity, politeness and feelings of solidarity as well as class identity.

that they do not like their classmates causes a general lack of comfort and trust. This causes the affective connections between the class members to weaken. There's no identification with others, no union: *[If you] don't come one day and the next day you ask, [your classmate] says 'I don't know.' The teachers give out the work and nobody says anything to anybody else*. This lack of empathy and solidarity among classmates ends up extending to other relationships. For example, one of the parents stated that one of the consequences of the students not treating each other well, with no respect, is that the teachers start doing the same thing.

Some difficulties in relationships among the students have already been mentioned here. These include the forming of small closed groups that do not allow others to get near. If these cliques form groups with identity references, they also create a dependent relationship among their members and institute a form of exclusion, once they like to make others feel inferior and themselves superior.

Clearly, relationships among the students influence whether or not they stay in school. This is where they experience social coexistence and form affective connections among themselves. One of the indicators of how students relate to each other is friendship or a feeling of being part of a certain class. This causes connections of belonging and equality with a set of classmates: *you get into class and then you start to make friends with people and it's like you've known them for years, or even: there are always some old friends that worry about you if you're sad [and] you worry about them too.*

Guimarães (1996: 149) referred to the identity established among classmates as a "call for affection" that connects people from one territory – the school – where common interests are shared and where the individual's story ends up making an 'us' where we value what we have in common.

Many students demonstrate an optimistic point of view in

terms of their classmates. Friendly coexistence and mutual support prevail. They compare this situation to family coexistence when they establish affective relationships with their classmates: *When you get into the classroom everyone's family.*

However, the students experience intensely different situations that include strong ties of friendship with some and weaker ones with others. They may experiment with the attitudes of dislike and friendship simultaneously in two different moments with the same classmate or friend.

Returning to table 3.3, the fourth and fifth items demonstrate that the things the students don't like about their schools are respectively the classes and the teachers. In reference to the classes, the percentages vary between a maximum of 34% in Florianópolis to a minimum of 19% in Manaus and Belém.

The teachers were indicated as an object of dislike for a maximum of 29% of students in Florianópolis and a minimum of 20% in Belém and Rio de Janeiro. This situation could be explained by the fact that there are teachers that state that they do not like it when students use discipline, interest or educational foundation as criteria. The values of this item varied between a maximum of 54% in Salvador and 52% in Fortaleza to a minimum of 27% in Vitória (table 3.4).

Table 3.4

Prportion of members of the technical-pedagogical staff, by capital of Federal Unit, according to what they don't like at school - 2000

[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

Source: National Survey on Violence, AIDS and Drugs in School, UNESCO, 2001.
The individuals were asked: "Mark what you don't like at your school." The percentages refer only to affirmative responses obtained in the technical-pedagogical staff member samples.

A crucial question emerges. What kind of schools are these that have significant portions of students that do not like their classmates or the members of the technical-pedagogical staff and that state that the things they dislike the most are the classes and most of the students? Some very useful guidelines for responding to this can be found in the data obtained with the involved participants about the school's main problems.

As shown in table 3.5, the main problems confronted by the students are lack of interest and lack of discipline. This varies between 92% in Recife and 87% in Florianópolis, Porto Alegre, Belém and Goiânia. The magnitude of these percentages deserves attention as they approach unanimity. It can also be seen that other sources of information, such as direct local observation in the schools, corroborates the quantitative data: *It's like there's this atmosphere on the students' part of messing around and on the teachers' part it's yelling. When the teacher is in the classroom the students are always coming and going. There's really no control over them.*

Table 3.5

Number of students in Elementary (5th to 8th grade) and Secondary Education, by capital of Federal Unit, according to indication of the three biggest problems at school - 2000*

Source: National Survey on Violence, AIDS and Drugs in School, UNESCO, 2001.

The individuals were asked: "Choose the five biggest problems at your school from the list below." The percentages refer only to affirmative responses obtained in the technical-pedagogical staff member samples.

*Expanded data

**Lack of material and human resources refers to: "Lack of space, not enough teachers, and lack of books, videos, computers."

One possible explication for this lack of interest on the part of the students comes through when they discuss the content of the classes. At various times this is the target of criticism in so far as some subjects or themes are considered to be unnecessary. The youths reveal that they often feel overwhelmed by so many subjects and that many times subjects or classes that they are interested in are not offered by the school. The students demonstrate their lack of knowledge about the usefulness of different parts of class content and they make evaluations according to their projected usefulness for the future.

> *Geography is dead, (...) it doesn't do anything. For me, there are people who want to learn geography in school and they're going to be a teacher and nothing else. My dad says that you're going to use Math and some things, but nothing else. So, square roots and I don't know, other stuff, only if you're going to be a math teacher (...) Depending on the profession, you're not going to use Math for anything.* (Focus group with students, private school, Rio de Janeiro)

The students refer to other reasons they don't like classes, like when they find them monotonous or tiring: *A lot of people stop studying because of it! You're in the classroom for five hours writing and looking at the board. The teacher has this droning voice (...) you sit there and that voice just goes on 'blah, blah, blah' in your ear.*

The students seem to feel the need for more dynamic classes and didactic approaches that get their attention. This necessity, however, certainly faces a wide variety of obstacles. As shown in the data presented in the previous table, the second most mentioned problem in school (76% in Belém, and 54% in Vitória) is the lack of human resources and supplies. Without a doubt, this makes it difficult to offer more pleasant classes.

On the other hand, some youths demonstrate a certain passivity in waiting for the stimulation to study to come from their teachers. Other students equate interest for their studies with the interest the teacher has in what they are studying. They see their behavior as a type of reciprocal element in relation to the teacher.

There is also an expectation that will probably continue to remain in some part frustrating. This is the teachers' lack of dedication and competence and this is the third problem that the students point out as a problem in their schools. This is one of the largest problems in the school in the opinion of 49% of the students in Florianópolis, reaching a minimum of 32% in Goiânia and Cuiabá.

In fact, local observation in the schools where the research took place showed that it's not unusual for a number of teachers to arrive late for class. Researchers observed students with no classes hanging around in the schoolyard in many of the schools due to teacher absenteeism: *In all the visits we made to the schools we could see a large number of teacher absences.* This problem is seen as normal by both the students and the Principal's Office.

It must be emphasized that the data indicated by the students brings on a discussion of attributing blame and responsibility to the educational process. The fact that the students recognize their own lack of interest or themselves as the causes of disciplinary problems is important in contrast to the teachers that do not consider themselves to be responsible for school failure. The teachers attribute the blame to the students and their families as well as to their precarious working conditions.

Some members of the technical-pedagogical staff state that the school's biggest problem is *lack of discipline, lack of respect, lack of responsibility, lack of good manners, [because] the students leave their homes completely untrained.* Some teachers don't point to anyone in particular as responsible for the situation, but say that *this lack of discipline is caused by the fact that there aren't any limits today!*

These individuals emphasize the importance of parental participation in the students' learning process and in their disciplinary maturing process as well.

According to the technological-pedagogical staff, a lack of parental interest is one of the main problems of the school, with percentage rates varying between 79% in the Federal District, Belém, Fortaleza and Salvador and 56% in Rio de Janeiro.

On the other hand, some of the parents that were interviewed judged the lack of discipline to be the result of the fact that the school is a bore: *The teachers don't prepare, they're not interested in giving class [they] just want to get rid of the classes and the programs are all really old fashioned.*

The blame game between parents and teachers has already been noted in other research (Waiselfsz, 1998a). The discussion in this research involves the "cultural deprivation" of the students and cites the family as responsible for the youths' lack of attention. The research cites the family as responsible for not spending enough time with the youths stating that this affects the school-family dialogue in a negative way. The students' difficulties are generally located in an environment outside the school by the members of the technical-pedagogical staff. The family and cultural environment are commonly cited: *Look, I think that the whole thing is based on family, you know (...) It's the family that guides their children (...) here at school it's really difficult to find a family where the kid has limits.*

3.2.1. Relationships among students and teachers

Given the descriptions of the attitudes and perceptions the students and teachers have about each other and about the school, how they relate to each other in the school environment must be noted. The teacher is many times the main spokesperson for saying whether the students and classmates are polite with each other or not. Many students say that they have friendly

satisfactory relationships with their teachers[48]. This is because if they have problems with one teacher there is always another one that may appreciate them for different reasons.

As seen in the chart below, the students value the teachers that encourage them to continue their studies, that show interest in them, that worry about their performance, give advice, talk to them and are their friends.

Chart 3.2

Reasons the students study in certain schools

Reasons to study in School	Statement	Administrative Dependency
The teacher respects social differences	The teachers (....) don't like to make anyone feel inferior.	**Public**
The teacher stimulates student interest in the class	The teachers, like in Sociology, Philosophy, History, they stimulate you, they encourage you to write about a certain subject.	**Public**
The teacher encourages the student to continue studying	The Portuguese teacher told us his life story, he started where we're starting. He was a student like us, today his brothers have all graduated, this is an (....) incentive for us; they talk a lot, they encourage you to keep studying.	**Public**
The teacher worries about the student's performance	All you have to do is get to know the Portuguese teacher because when someone gets a bad grade she comes up to the student and asks 'are you the one that got this grade?' She really helps you get the best grade you can.	**Public**

[48] In Minayo et al. (1999: 112) the relationship to the teachers was seen positively by youths from different sections of the domestic survey. Around 74% of the youths qualified the relationship as good, 24% as regular and only 2% as bad. In the focus groups the youths spoke of their experience with educators from a variety of points of view. There were compliments for those that taught well and were dedicated and interested in the personal and social life of the students. (...) they were extremely critical of those that displayed a lack of interest, lack of professionalism and disrespect for the students.

Reasons to study in School	Statement	Administrative Dependency
The teacher encourages the student to produce knowledge	It's like he makes us go further (....) he makes us do (....) some little exercise and each question is ten lines or more. It's got to be ten lines because five for him is just a disaster. He says that we don't have to cheat on the material, we have to read it and understand it.	**Public**
The teacher is interested in the student's future	There are teachers that are interested in explaining things, like this Geography teacher that came in, she gets interested in what you're going to be, you know?	**Public**
The teacher gives good advice	The good teachers are the ones that know how to give good examples, good advice really. I don't have any problems with any of the teachers because they're really good.	**Public**
The teacher knows how to balance moments of playfulness and seriousness	They're all pretty cool with you, they play, they talk, sometimes they want (....) they're all like (....) then sometimes they're really strict, ok (....) They treat the students really well and they explain the subject really well. If you have a question they explain it again.	**Public**
The teacher creates opportunities to have conversations with the students	It's not that fake thing, that fake treatment, you can see that it's real because if someone's having a problem in the class or if someone doesn't come to class it means something to them, they always talk to you and they try to discuss the problem.	**Private**

Reasons to study in School	Statement	Administrative Dependency
The teacher shares the students' interests	Sometimes the air-conditioner breaks and the Portuguese teacher has to deal with our complaints and helps us get what we want.	**Private**
The teacher knows how to deal with teenagers	It's like they're really prepared to deal with teenagers, with adolescents.	**Private**
The teacher allows the students freedom of expression	It's this completely cool conversation, you can say what you think.	**Private**
The teacher doesn't talk only about the didactic content	The Math teacher is really like our friend, he gives Math class and then afterwards he starts talking to us, we talk about sex, drugs, religion.	**Private**
The teachers are friends	The teachers are really your friends.	**Private**

Of course it isn't possible to establish preferential models for the teacher/student relationship[49], but many students stress that the treatment they receive beginning with the first class is extremely important in terms of creating a positive atmosphere for the whole school year[50]. In many discussions it can be seen that the teacher/student relationship is linked to the availability for dialogue: *What I think is interesting is that every first day of class the teachers introduce themselves to the students and say: 'Anything you want to talk to me about, do.'*

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[49] In research developed in Rio de Janeiro, Minayo et al. (1999: 112) indicated that relationships with teachers were seen in a positive way by students from different segments in domestic surveys (...) In the focus groups the youths made it clear that they viewed their relationships with teachers from different angles (...) There was praise for teachers that teach well and are dedicated and interested in the personal and social lives of the students.

[50] The results of this research coincide with the Minayo et al. (1999: 113) research when they indicate that the youths consider the good teaching professional to be a teacher, coordinator, principal or inspector who they can talk with and that respect includes interaction and reciprocity.

Harmony in relationship between student and teacher was described and praised by the inspectors.

> *They are really attached to the teachers, they're really needy and the teachers get a lot of affection from them. They're always giving parties for the teachers. They don't let a birthday go by (....) It's really lovely on their part, there's always some kind of compliment, some little word to please the teacher with a note. In the love mailbox, I noticed a lot of little notes for their teachers, you understand?* (Interview with inspector, public school, Rio de Janeiro)

The students state that sometimes the relationship between the students and teachers is like a mother and child relationship. In this agreeable atmosphere, there are times when the teacher has a hard time with dialogue, because of the subject, but the relationship is permeated with a certain politeness. Along with dialogue, the students state that the ability the teacher has to create amusing moments while explaining the subject makes it easier to get closer to them and that this doesn't take away from their authority with the class: *After the subject [math] the teacher starts to talk with us, about sex, drugs and religion.* This dialogue is valued in both the private and the public schools. Dialogue means talking about different subjects that wake up the students' interest. It also means talking and sharing opinions on big decisions to be made at the school.

Other youths point out that when there is adversity, there are teachers that quickly overcome the problem. This was true in the case of one teacher that at times *went through this huge challenge in class [but] then the next day she'd get there all happy, helping everyone, fighting for us.*

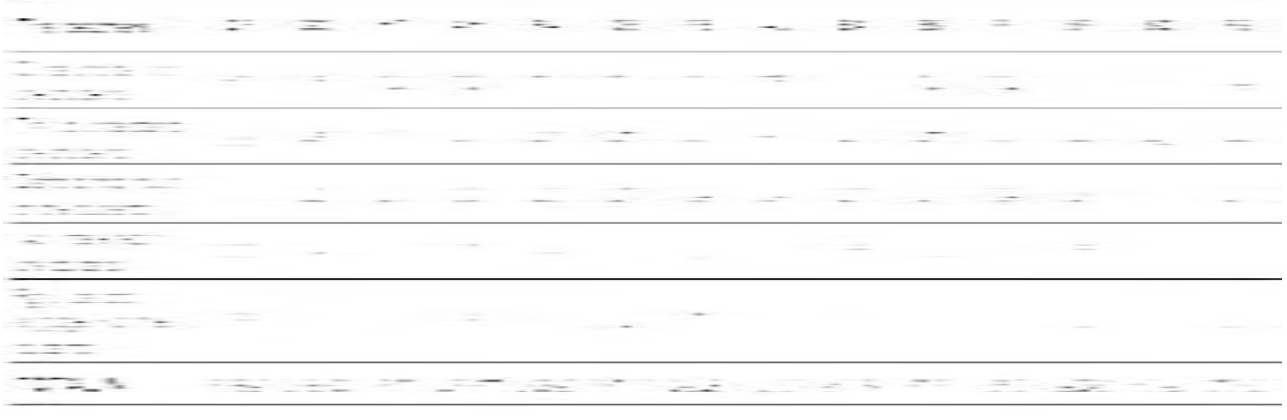
In corroboration with information obtained in the focus groups, table 3.6 shows that 75% of the students in Maceió and

57% in the Federal District emphasized that the teachers guided them and talked to them. In the same way, 51% in Maceió and 38% in the Federal District stated that the professors sought ways to understand them.

However, a maximum of 22% of students in the Federal District and a minimum of 9% of students in Maceió state that the teachers are not interested in the students. In addition, there are percentages that are significant although they are not so high, indicating that teachers fight and use bad language with the students. These values fluctuate between a maximum of 13% in Manaus and the Federal District and a minimum of 7% in Recife.

Table 3.6

Number of students in Elementary Basic (5th to 8th grades) and Secondary School, by capital of Federal Unit, according to the way they are treated by the teachers – 2000*



Source: National Survey on Violence, AIDS and Drugs in School, UNESCO, 2001.

The individuals were asked: "How do most of the teachers at your school treat the students?" The percentages refer only to affirmative responses obtained in student samples.

*Expanded data

Students' lack of communication with teachers or other members of the technical-pedagogical staff triggers a huge sense of revolt among the students. This is true independent of age or grade. This attitude probably affects student self-esteem when they do not accept being ignored. In this sense there is strong criticism of the teachers who just restrict their activities to the subject without taking an interest in or interacting with the class: *He gives class (...) there's never any conversation. He doesn't stop the class to ask you anything, or to ask if anyone has a question.*

The data also show that there are difficult relationships where teachers and students don't understand each other and where the teachers bring their personal problems into the classroom. This has a negative affect on their relationship with the students and also generates more serious consequences for the youths as they go through school: *If he comes in and he's all stressed out, had a fight at home with his kid or his wife, sometimes he runs into the student that he doesn't like and he starts to yell (...), starts a fight with the student. The student gets expelled and the teacher stays!*

The students criticize and bring up cases of teacher student relationships that fit into the violence category, particularly the symbolic form where the abuse of power signifies using authority symbols (Bourdieu, 2001).

What is clear in this research is that the students are evaluating their teachers, mainly in respect to the exercise of power. Excessive use of this power creates a disturbing situation for the involved participants. The students are often afraid to complain or denounce a teacher because the teacher is the one that gives them their grades. This is an important power tool: *Remember that day that we started disagreeing with that Math teacher? Everybody got a bad grade on the test.*

There are teachers that have difficulty talking with the students. These teachers humiliate the student and ignore the

students' problems: *They don't want to listen, because what the teacher talks about has nothing to do with it.* Others treat the students badly – *smartass, big guy.* They resort to verbal aggression and make the students look ridiculous when they don't understand something or when they are unable to answer a question.

> *[They give you a] nickname, trying to be funny (...) they see the person's name and they give them a nickname. There's this kid in class that the teacher calls "Little Saint" to bug him. In our room this one guy is called 'Lard Ass'. The teacher calls the kid LA.* (Focus group with students, public school, Goiânia)

> *I think it's the wrong way to do it, you know? It really makes the kids feel humiliated too. She [the principal] puts the kids down a lot. A lot of times it even causes violence in the school.* (Focus group with students, public school, Federal District)

The students talk about their indignation and consider the way they are treated to be unfair when the principal uses their authority to accuse them of something without proof:

> *Without being sure, he [the principal] comes up and accuses me of spraying graffiti on the walls. He said I had done the damage but he didn't have any proof. He never proved it and he just kept making these threats. He took me up to a teacher to talk and he pulled out my student file that showed that I was repeating a grade and then it all came down on me...* (Focus group with students, public school, Federal District)

> *It's really a military regime, that's their system, ok? It doesn't matter if you stand there and yell 'you're wrong!' If you don't agree with something you have to shut up.* (Focus group with students, public school, Goiânia)

The teacher's situation in the classroom is not a comfortable one. As one student describes, there are kids that challenge the teacher, threaten to scratch their car. There are teachers and staff members at the private schools that feel discrimination and lack of respect more on the part of the students. According to one inspector's description: *They don't respect anyone here. The students do what they want, what they like, and even the teachers are afraid to do anything about it.*

One coordinator that works in a private school as well as a public establishment said that there is differentiation in the way students from private schools treat school staff. Because they pay for their studies they think they have the right to confront the teachers and to treat the other staff with a lack of respect. There are complaints that the students go beyond their right to question things and disrespect the staff with lower qualified positions:

> *First it's the students' manners, the discrimination that has always been here in the school against the type of work you do, because when you're a guard people already put you way down there. So there are always those people who aren't going to respect a guard. They think you've got a low job and sometimes they walk past you and turn their face away.* (Interview with security agent, private school, Cuiabá)

The private school student sometimes seems to behave in an authoritative way, humiliating and/or insulting the teacher. In extreme cases these students even use their parents' power or prestige to force the firing of someone they don't like[51]:

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[51] There are management strategies for handling conflicts in relationships between students and teachers. The conflicts take on three forms: use of the informal pronoun for you, rather than the formal respectful term; yelling and insults; threats against the adults, and physical aggression (Peralva, 1997: 17). The author refers to the French context and in Brazil the pronoun use form does not apply. Due to regional diversity it is possible to use either the formal or formal term to address a teacher.

> *They even put financial pressure into their relationship with the teachers. Sometimes they treat the teachers like they are their employees. A teacher that doesn't have a good relationship (...) and a good relationship is almost this huge friendship, you got it? So they pressure this person so much they can hardly give class. We've had cases where the teachers simply couldn't give class.* (Focus group with teachers, private school, Fortaleza)

This information is corroborated by the data obtained with the members of the technical-pedagogical staff. Table 3.7 shows that these participants were treated with a lack of respect as professionals and people. In the first instance, the percentage rates vary between 51% in São Paulo and Porto Alegre, and 19% in Maceió. In the second instance the maximum is 39% in São Paulo, and 12% in Maceió. In addition, the student-teacher relationships are marked by caution on the part of the teachers so as to avoid being unjustly accused by the students. This situation describes an atmosphere where there is a lack of trust in human relationships. The teachers were also threatened and humiliated. The highest percentage rates of this were seen in Goiânia, São Paulo and Porto Alegre. In reality, Goiânia and Porto Alegre are the two capitals where the highest registers of almost all types of symbolic violence occur against the teachers.

Table 3.7

Number of members of the technical-pedagogical staff, by capital of Federal Unit, according to forms of symbolic violence they have experienced in school - 2000

Source: National Survey on Violence, AIDS and Drugs in School, UNESCO, 2001.

The individuals were asked: "In regards to your students, how do you feel as a teacher at your school?" The percentages refer only to affirmative responses obtained in technical-pedagogical staff member samples.

3.2.2. Relationships between students, principals and other school participants

Some principals are praised in that they take advantage of the opportunity to talk to the students, give them advice and get involved with them for a variety of reasons: *He's a really communicative person, he likes to get involved with the students.* The principal gives advice. The fact that the principal takes a stand in helping the students with their demands is recognized by the students:

> *When we're going after something we get in this special group and go to the principal, and if we're right something gets done about it. Flexibility in dealing with situations is recognized because of a really calm style, he gives the students a chance. He takes the student over and talks and gives advice. But if the student gets rebellious or does it again, then it's suspension.*

There are cases of students who need the principal to resolve conflicts with teachers: *You talk to the principal and the principal goes and calms the teacher down.* One private school principal corroborated this opinion when stating that a good school environment involved the pedagogical and administrative staff's agility in solving the students' problems: *The student talks to the teacher, the principal, the coordinator, about something and something is done about it right away.*

Some of the parents have the opinion that the principals should be recognized for their attitudes. They stress the preoccupation one principal has with their children, saying that the principal goes from house to house to get the students that aren't coming to class. One of the students also praised an attitude that showed the social concern of the principal with the students: *there's even a student that studied here last year that went to prison and she would go visit him everyday in the penitentiary. I couldn't believe it when I found out!*

The principal's intellectual abilities and talents were emphasized as well: *He really knows a lot about a lot of things. He's a 'poly', I think he's a polyglot, he speaks French, Spanish* (...) The principal's ability to manage to impose rules both inside and outside of the school is also recognized:

> *When there are fights, or trouble between the neighborhoods, our principal knows how to act alone (...) He is the voice of authority around here (...) He lives here, and people really respect him a lot. He did a lot with our neighborhood around here and people respect him a lot.* (Focus group with students, public school, Cuiabá)

Independent of the particular situation, the fact that the principal respects and maintains open dialogue with the students was emphasized. When the principal doesn't just go after students to punish them he/she ends up with better results and credibility.

There are also difficulties in the relationships between students and principals that occur because of lack of time and the distance the administrative staff maintains with the students, even with representatives that were elected directly by the school body: *She should come by the classroom to talk to the students, to get to know them. But she stays away. You can't even say if she's good or not, you?*

This distance between the administrative staff and the school body causes many students to just know the principal by sight. Frequently, many principals are absent from school routine and let the vice-principal or the coordinator assume their responsibilities: *He's never here.*

In addition, many times the Administrative Office has no direct contact with the class representatives. The office does not hold meetings to discuss problems and does not try to find out if there are any demands, dissatisfaction or suggestions for the administrative or teaching staff:

Chart 3.3
They never have a meeting

Focus group with students, public school, Fortaleza
I'm the class president and they've never had a meeting to know what's going on with the students. It's not that I've got to know what everyone wants, but to know what's going on in the classroom, with the teachers, if they're giving good classes, everything.

Another problem is the Principal Office's attitude when they ignore student opinion. The students see this as a lack of trust in their ability to make decisions: *We got all these signatures to re-examine this schedule thing and it didn't mean anything. They told everyone to come on Saturdays.* The youths said that it's like this hierarchy thing with no fair contact with the students.

The principals play important roles in the schools and the area that received the most attention was in relation to rules of coexistence. The students allege that the principals are not always able to maintain these rules and they act in an authoritarian fashion to compensate: *The principal rules like a dictator. He thinks it's that way and that's it!*

The relationships between principals and students can be even more problematic when they are hierarchical and there is closer contact with those that are closer in terms of social status. This differentiated treatment is confirmed in the statement of a vice-principal. This vice-principal made it understood that there was even a difference in the treatment that the parents received, depending on their profession or their position in the power structure: *We've got lawyers and judges here sometimes (...) So you have to treat them right, you know?*

In addition, the students complain about differentiated treatment from the Principal's Office when the students are with their parents. They feel that this is the only instance when

conversation is encouraged: *With us it's one thing, then when our parents are with us it's a whole different thing.*

Student opinions are widely varied when it comes to relationships with the other school participants. Some say that a good relationship largely depends on the way they treat these people, *if you know how to treat the people who work at the school, they're all really great people...The ladies that work in the kitchen...man, they're really cool!* For others, it's up to the staff to treat the students well, mainly by recognizing everyone's rights and responsibilities: *At times, if the guard doesn't like your face, you don't get past the door.*

A large portion of the coordinators, inspectors and security agents maintain good relationships with the students that are based on respect. In a general manner, this standard is based on recognizing the other as part of the school structure and on courteous treatment: *I do my job with respect and the students respect me too. The relationship is friendly, but there's respect. My relationship with them is pretty good, ok?*

Respect seems to be fundamental, especially for the inspectors. They recognize that respect is valuable as the main tool in guaranteeing a good school environment. However, this does not come naturally within their limited area of action in the school because their activities are monitoring students. The authority relationship that must be established in order for them to do their jobs depends significantly on this respect especially since procedures like punishment and warnings can only be applied by a member of the principal's office or the pedagogical administration.

Despite the fact that most students, teachers and principals classify the school environment as good, some interviews reveal that the presence of a hostile social circle, particularly among the discipline coordinators, inspectors, educational counselors and the security agents. According to those interviewed this happens

because there is competition, rivalry, contempt, separation, a corporate mentality, lack of cooperation, falseness, impatience, selfishness and discrimination: *Students, it's like snakes swallowing snakes, each one has no respect for the rights of the others, you got it?*

One student points out difficulty in relating to the school coordinator, commenting that *she has really bad manners. You start talking to that woman and she just turns her back and walks away and you're just talking to yourself.* Another one adds a generalization: *It's like some kind of coordinator thing they've all got.*

In spite of difficulties in some of the relationships that are established among the involved social parties, the school emerges as a place for socialization for the youths. It is the place where meaningful learning goes on and where the way the participants interact in the school environment encourages material and symbolic exchange. The information and communication processes mobilize a large symbolic universe and stimulate different configurations of feelings and meanings. This process then contributes to the building of subjectivity and the construction of identities.

From this point of view it can be said that the schools that get organized based on democratic principals and that define rules in conjunction with the students fulfill a larger commitment within their area. In this case the student doesn't feel the need to test what an adult has defined as limits of acceptable behavior as much because the student helped define the rules as well and knows the consequences. Many times the students are found to be much more severe than the Principal's Office in terms of establishing the rules. However, they hope that their participation guarantees not only that the rules are followed, but that there will not be extreme or unnecessary rules.

DATA SUMMARY

• Like the other participants approached in this research, the students agreed that internal school rules are essential for school order. However, they question the type of suppression they have to undergo in order to reach this goal. The rules that get the most varied reactions are those that have to do with class hours, uniforms, identification cards and practices that are forbidden or allowed in the school space.

• The students emphasize that when there is more control at the school entrance they are less exposed to violence. However, they insist that this cannot be controlled only through wearing a uniform because guards can be fooled that way.

• The students allege that not smoking in school applies only to students. This rule is broken at times because those directly responsible for monitoring the situation often smoke and even smoke in front of the students.

• The students state that the application of punishment is sometimes arbitrary and includes a lack of criteria and an abuse of power.

• The students cite their own classmates most often as what they like the least at school. This result stood out significantly in that it put into question the idea of school as a place for pleasant social coexistence among the youths. At the same time the students demonstrate a certain isolation and lack of connection in relation to their classmates that at times even becomes disturbing. They form alternative groups both in the school and outside it. This includes crews, rapper groups, graffiti artists and pagode or theatre groups. These groups do not have membership criteria and are not institutional class organizations or official student groups.

4. SCHOOL, SOCIAL EXCLUSION AND RACISM

This chapter concentrates on aspects of the concepts and ideas that emerge in the imagination about the meaning of school in the students' lives. This encompasses the strategic importance of school for the youths' future as well as evaluations from the various participants concerning educational quality and school performance. From the point of view of exclusion and social discrimination – with special emphasis on racism – perceptions and attitudes of members of the school community are approached and included in the discussion of symbolic and institutional violence.

The findings demonstrate that although there is a concept of school as a key to opportunities for a better life, school is also seen as a place for social exclusion. School contains cultural and institutional elements. School is also a place with discrimination and stigma that go beyond economic boundaries, including beliefs, values and meanings. These elements include specific attitudes about cultural diversity. In order to contribute to the construction of a culture against violence, it makes sense to deal with discrimination, intolerance and exclusion in the school space. This is especially true in light of the fact that these elements often end up resulting in threats and fights, threats and deaths and physical violence.

In the conceptual construction of the projects developed by

UNESCO, there is a certain insistence on the understanding of social exclusion as a lack or insufficiency of incorporation of a part of the population in the political and social community (Abramovay et al., 1999). This means that placing individuals at the margins of the social contract denies them their rights of citizenship. This occurs in a formal or informal fashion in equal measures in terms of laws and public institutions. It also occurs in terms of State protection and access to various opportunities such as studying, professional training, work, culture and leisure, in addition to other goods and services that are part of a civilization.

It is important to remember that the concept of social exclusion is controversial. One critic, Castel (1999: 26) was attacked for suggesting a perspective of stagnation: designates a ... state of deprivation, omitting processes that cause these situations. From the point of view adopted here, however, social exclusion is understood more as economic inequality that includes cultural and institutional processes and dimensions through which numerous portions of society become strangers to the social contract. They become deprived of the exercise of citizenship and unaided by public institutions abandoned by the State.

One of the socio-cultural aspects of exclusion is the racial issue[52]. This aspect is dealt with here in terms of perceptions and examples of discrimination. In fact, racism is a form of social exclusion that is embedded in Brazilian society in general and in the educational system in particular. Racism at times appears in an explicit form. At other times it appears through attitudes of pseudo-politeness, as is shown in this study[53].

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[52] Race here corresponds to the meaning inherent in social thinking and not to an official category. Along these lines race can be seen as a class of understanding in the social world. It is important to note that in a biological sense the only race that is proved to exist is the human race (Oliveira et al., 1998; Guimarães et al., 2000).

[53] It has been widely proved by scientists in the biological and social areas that the concept of race lacks scientific foundation. However, from a socio-political point of view it becomes impossible not

4.1. THE MEANINGS OF SCHOOL

School can be an effective way to access the exercise of citizenship for the students. In contrast it can also be a mechanism for social exclusion. In the first concept school, education and the learning process work as a kind of moral pass, a passport for entrance to society.

In addition to this, studying is increasingly becoming a requisite for job opportunities in modern society. This is without a doubt an essential condition for human survival. However, this intersection between studying and work is where one of the most serious problems of social exclusion is found. This is where quality education opens doors to opportunities and where poor education accentuates exclusion.

The striking fact is that most students indicate that they have a positive view of school, studying and teaching. Half or more believe that school really teaches them something. Percentage rates vary between a minimum of 50% in Salvador, and a maximum of 68% in Cuiabá. However, the flip side of this data cannot be ignored. There are a high percentage of students that say that school teaches little or nothing. This figure is 50% in Salvador, 49% in the Federal District and 47% in São Paulo. The percentage of those with a negative view of school in terms of the adequacy of the teaching is also high (around 40%) in other capitals.

Members of the technical-pedagogical staff that most frequently sustain that school teaches a lot/enough can be found in Vitória (75%), followed by Manaus (70%) (table 4.1). On the

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to talk about race. This is because all research shows that it is a fact that a large portion of those excluded are excluded for reasons of race phenotypes. As Seyferth insists: *Even though there are no well defined lines or racial barriers, Brazilians give a lot of emphasis to physical appearance and they develop numerous categories to designate skin tones, facial features and other characteristics of the black race* (Seyferth, 1989: 28).

Table 4.1

Prportion of students in Elementary Basic (5th to 8th grades) and Secondary School, by capital of Federal Unit, according to evaluation of how much school teaches – 2000*

Students	DF	GO	MT	AM	PA	CE	PE	AL	BA	ES	RJ	SP	SC	RS
School teaches a lot/enough	51	60	68	56	57	64	56	67	50	66	65	53	56	57
School teaches little/nothing	49	40	32	44	43	36	44	33	50	34	35	47	44	43
TOTAL	**100 (307976)**	**100 (175945)**	**100 (76720)**	**100 (218495)**	**100 (174895)**	**100 (327938)**	**100 (228764)**	**100 (102759)**	**100 (404094)**	**100 (52972)**	**100 (624553)**	**100 (1353235)**	**100 (46853)**	**100 (160571)**

Source: National Survey on Violence, AIDS and Drugs in School, UNESCO, 2001.
The individuals were asked: "Do you think school really teaches you anything?" The categories of responses correspond to the alternatives in the table.
* Expanded data.

other hand, the largest percentage rates for those that consider the school to teach little or nothing are found in Recife (48%), Florianópolis (47%) and Salvador (43%). The rates for those with a negative view of school in terms of the adequacy of the teaching is also high (around 40%) in other capitals.

School performance evaluated through information on repeating grades is another way to measure the way school is seen in terms of learning by the students. Survey data reveal that the capitals with the largest percentage rates for repeating grades are 55% in Salvador (55%) and Belém (58%). The smallest percentage rates occur in São Paulo (29%) and Vitória (30%). There are also high percentages of students that were held back more than once in Belém and Goiânia (28% and 27%). It must be mentioned here that in seven of the fourteen capitals where the study was carried out, almost half or more than half of the students had had one experience with repeating a grade.

Although there is a significant perception of school as a place for learning, it is also appreciated for other attributes in the minds of the students. In fact, in the students and other involved participants' opinions, school appears to be a place that encourages socialization, attitude and opinion forming and personal development. The statements emphasize the school's capacity to teach the youths how to relate to people, to develop detailed or more focused discussion and to form an opinion about a particular subject:

> *Studying makes you know how to have a conversation too (...) you can talk about a lot of different subjects. You know how to talk. That's something you can really use for a lot of things.* (Focus group with students, public school, Fortaleza)

Another vision of the objective of school and the learning process emerges among the students as well. This is a vision that

emphasizes the development of citizenship and critical thinking: *The same way it [studying] can alienate you it can make you think too. It trains you because it gives you a head start on your life in society. It gives you more value, the citizen.*

In a similar fashion, the members of the technical-pedagogical staff affirm that teaching has a very real obligation to train and stimulate the true aptitudes of the students, rather than to simply inform or train the students to take the college entrance exam or to train them for a profession. They also point to the school as a permanent space for social coexistence.

The predominant perception among the teachers is that the main function of school is to prepare the youths for the job market: *It's not enough to use critical thinking and to pass the subject on to the students if they're going to leave here and they're not going to be able to get a job. What I mean to say is that the subject is important but without a job, a profession, it doesn't matter.*

The students also frequently emphasize how useful school is in terms of joining the work force in the future. This point of view highlights the importance of studying because a diploma and formal qualification are required by the job market: *You have to have gone to school for most jobs (...) These days, the minimum is a high school diploma. There is no choice, you have to study to work, because schooling allows you to get a decent job, one that is directly related to a good salary.* As a rule, the youths show that they are conscious of the fact that the job market is becoming increasingly more selective and demanding.

When asked about their outlook for the future, both public and private school students stated that they wanted to complete their basic studies (secondary school) and get a job. They indicated school as the only possible channel for making these aspirations a reality:

Chart 4.1
Better future

Focus group with students, public school, Recife; private school, Salvador
I want to study so I can work, get a decent job so I can help my family, mainly my mom, to give a better future to my children. In the future I want to be a (...) I want to get a job, do something to help out at home, to help my parents, my grandparents, make things better for my family. It's not just so I can buy things for myself.

The proposition of a better life[54] for themselves or their families was cited by the students that believe that studying develops intelligence and provides opportunities for personal "security"[55] in the future: *To grow more in life and get things because you deserve it, more things, a better way of life for your family and your children.*

Some principals, teachers and parents also indicate this expectation of a "better life" for the youths. This is true in both school systems and points to access to socially valued functions above all. The vision of these individuals includes concern for the adolescents regarding their future in that:

> *Many of them have plans and expectations for the future, they want to be someone in life. Being someone for them is having power and money, being successful (....)* (Interview with principal, public school, Manaus)

[54] From the perspective of financial independence and social ascension, according to Barreira (1999: 97), school appears as a positive element independent of social class: The youths value this school and they tend to give it a similar or even higher position than the one they give to their family when they are thinking about strategies for social ascension.

[55] A significant gender distinction in terms of the perception of the value and purpose of education is included in the testimonies of some of the female students in the longing for independence in relation to family, and mainly men: To have a good future you can't depend on anyone. To be someone in life means not depending on a husband when you get married so your husband doesn't humiliate you at home.

> *They have dreams like everyone, to graduate, to have a profession. Usually they want to have a better life than the one they've got, ok? This is just a place to work!* (Interview with principal, public school, Recife)

These references could bring about better understanding of why the learning process is critical both in terms of adequacy and quality. Other data show that over four-fifths of the students believe that school teaches them something useful for their lives and futures. The largest rates for those expressing this position are found in Maceió (91%) and to a lesser extent in Porto Alegre (78%) (table 4.2). In general this perspective is more frequently found in Northeast capitals (Fortaleza, Maceió, Recife) than in the Southeast and South (São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Porto Alegre and Florianópolis). This suggests speculation surrounding the critical perception of students in the capitals of the more economically dynamic states, where it might be supposed that the inconsistency between what school offers and the abilities and capacities demanded by the work market become clearer.

Surprisingly, the number of students that consider the

Table 4.2

Prportion of students in Elementary School (5th to 8th grades) and Secondary Education, by capital of Federal Unit, according to opinion of the usefulness of what school teaches – 2000*

[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Useful for life, for the future	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Useless, but you need it to have a better chance to work	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Useless, and it doesn't affect your chances for working	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
You don't learn anything	[illegible]	[illegible]	–	–	–	[illegible]	–	–	[illegible]	[illegible]	–	[illegible]	–	[illegible]
TOTAL	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

Source: National Survey on Violence, AIDS and Drugs in School, UNESCO, 2001.
The individuals were asked: "When you think about the things that you learn in school, you think that:" The categories of responses correspond to the alternatives in the table.
* Expanded data.

things taught in school to be useless are quite low. This opinion relates to the substance of the things taught, even those that are important to maximize chances for jobs. The values vary between 7% in Fortaleza and 20% in Porto Alegre. These numbers stand out mainly in comparison to the number of students that consider these subjects useful and necessary for the future. The percentages of students that think the things taught in school are completely useless or that say they don't learn anything in school are even lower.

Among the members of the technical-pedagogical staff, those that believe most in the usefulness of school learning for the future are found in Manaus (95%) and São Paulo (91%). The larger percentages were registered in Recife (78%) and Rio de Janeiro and Salvador (81%) (table 4.3). However, some teachers and principals questioned the usefulness of the content of certain subjects considered to be "behind" in relation to the information and knowledge demands required by the job market. They are also considered to be "behind" in relation to the youths' personal and professional development.

Table 4.3

Prportion of members of the technical-pedagogical staff, by capital of Federal Unit, according to opinion of the usefulness of what school teaches - 2000

Technical-pedagogical staff	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Useful for life, for the student's future	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Useless, but the students need it for better chance for work	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Useless and doesn't affect the students' chance for work	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
They don't learn anything in school	[illegible]	—	—	—	[illegible]	—	—	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	—	[illegible]	—
TOTAL	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

Source: National Survey on Violence, AIDS and Drugs in School, UNESCO, 2001.
The individuals were asked: "When you think about the things that are taught, as a base for school curricula, you think that:" The categories of responses correspond to the alternatives in the table.

4.2. SCHOOL AS A PLACE FOR SOCIAL EXCLUSION

Exclusion is generated in the twists and turns of the political and economic scenario. This includes the social scenario in its many dimensions that include specific efforts that do not always coincide in the areas of culture, education, work, social policies, ethnicity and societal identity. Stemming from the many-faceted and complex quality of exclusion, any discussion of school clearly reveals profound ambiguity and contradictions. In this sense, Sposito (1998) sustains that the ambiguity of the relationships between students and the school is characterized by processes of exclusion, intermittent attendance, successive registration, drop outs and interruptions that make it difficult for the youths to recognize the importance schooling has in their lives. They do not see it as a way to gain social mobility.

In Brazil, the increase in school attendance[56] is accompanied by another type of phenomenon: as a rule, lower-income youths tend to view studying as a way to gain better job opportunities and access to school is often seen as the only channel for social mobility. This reveals the source of their frustration in that studying does not always assure the desired future. This contradiction is felt by the youths, mainly those from the less privileged economic classes that experience exclusion as a cultural, social and institutional phenomenon that deprives them of their basic rights of citizenship.

Even so, social ascension is seen as something that is made possible through school training. Jobs without requirements or that require only a low level of instruction are found in lower positions on the pay scale as well as lower values of power and

[56] In Brazil, beginning with the Law of National Education Guideline and Bases (Law no 9394/96) secondary school became part of basic education. The Federal Government confirmed the universalization of basic education as a priority, encouraging a larger demand for secondary school. At the same time, this broadened the possibility of access to this level of higher schooling.

social prestige. However, inversely, the most desired positions are not only tied to studying, but to a higher level diploma. This diploma requires crossing the barrier that the college entrance exam represents.

Many students state that they have had to look at the college entrance exam as their main target. However, others argue that not all of the subjects that are required for this goal are taught in the schools and that this has a negative affect on their being selected: *I don't think it's really necessary for the future. Some things are [but] Biology and Chemistry...that stuff, no way! It's because of the college entrance exam. The things that are on the exam are really different. It's Literature and something else, ok? You get that on the test and you don't get it.*

Many students emphasize the difference between the opportunities that the public and private schools offered. In reality, this is a crucial socio-economic gap in the Brazilian education system. There are hollow school systems that segregate youths according to social class. This establishes bases for discrimination and causes the opportunities of a system to be unequal. Inequality is treated as a value, nourishing the processes of exclusion and symbolic violence.

One of the most prominent facets of this phenomena regards the quality of teaching and its relationship to expectations for the future: *[If] you're going to make it in college, it's already a little harder because you went to a public school. The public schools are really way behind in teaching, it's much slower*. The parents emphasize that the youths that study in public schools make a comparison between the schools more easily. They compare their schools and the quality of teaching there with what they would have access to in a private school: *For example, the private schools are always going on these trips to visit places like museums, other schools, things you don't get. In public school you don't get that kind of thing.*

The teachers also observe that the future is different for

private school students. The future is more promising than the future is for public school students. Purchasing power, available time and the chance to study at good private schools favors many students' future success.

Chart 4.2
College entrance exam

Focus group with teachers, private school, Federal District
I look at it like this, that our students here at (....), with a little more effort, if they don't pass the first college entrance exam, they're going to pass the second time for sure. There's purchasing power when a parent can pay for university. So, in general, these are the students that I believe will have a good future. It's different from a low-income student who has to work all day to pay for university at night.

In addition, opportunities may be even more restricted for the youths that must work because of lack of time to study. These students consider their chances for passing the college entrance exam to be slim: *There are those [students] that have a better chance of passing [the college entrance exam] because they have time to study, they have the [financial] means. They can even study at night their last year. The [other student] can take the second year and if he doesn't pass it's because he didn't have time to study. He had to work.*

4.2.1. Standards of exclusion and social discrimination

Discrimination and social discrimination occur in many ways. They occur in inequalities in terms of learning quality and the possibilities for studying in good schools as well as in the availability of appropriate supplies. Beyond this, discrimination and social discrimination also occur in attitudes about school and

in the relationships among the students. Along these lines it is possible to identify three patterns of exclusion/social discrimination in school.

The first pattern concerns how public school and public school students are seen. According to some teachers' statements the more privileged economic population sees both the schools and the students as extremely poor in quality. This includes the physical structure of the schools and the teaching that goes on there. Many public school students are seen as criminal, unprepared, bad mannered and harmful to society:

> *They feel rejected by this society when they study in a public school like ours: it's the worst! So, from the point of view of prejudice in relation to school, I think some of them are prejudiced. Not so much in terms of the structure, but of the teaching, from the first grade through high school. I think there is a certain prejudice in relation to public school.* (Focus group with teachers, public school, Goiânia)

The second pattern refers to the relationships among students from the same school system – either public or private – whose economic levels are unequal.

According to the statements of some public school principals, there is obvious exclusion in the school environment on the part of the students. The youths with greater purchasing power avoid getting close or having contact with the poor students: Some of the poorest students in the public schools aren't respected in the school because they go to school without having taken a bath, or wearing old or dirty clothes, or because they didn't bring a snack and they can't afford to buy one. Some school inspectors also notice discrimination among the students:

The teachers feel the difference in the group. There are some children that are better dressed, there are others that are really poor, abandoned by their families. So they come to school in wrinkled dirty clothes. Even among the students there's this separation, you know. Why are they so neat and clean and they smell good and then the others smell bad and don't wear good clothes? There's a conflict you know: 'Oh, no, I'm not going to sit there, teacher, I'm not going to do my work over there because that kid stinks.' (Interview with inspector, public school, Fortaleza)

In the testimonies, there are indications that those suffering from discrimination react aggressively to the group's backing off. Added to this differentiation are the students that exclude themselves. This attitude is found when students prefer to isolate themselves rather than to relate to people who are better off than they are economically:

Chart 4.3
Bumming off of other people

Focus group with students, public school, Vitória
You can see that the ones with more money are the ones who discriminate more. And the ones who don't have money stay to themselves so they won't be discriminated against. Some of them stay in the classroom, they don't go out. They don't get close to anyone who's eating something, so they don't feel bad, you know. They don't want people to say they're bumming off people. These are the ones that feel excluded: during the break they don't get near anybody that has money to go to the snack bar.

One motive for this type of isolation is school supplies. The students who are economically well off have notebooks and good pens and the others don't even have the basic necessities for studying.

Some students act in solidarity with their classmates and contribute in some way so that they will be able to do the schoolwork or participate in extra-curricular activities even though they don't have the means. School staff members help in the same way with clothes or necessary school supplies:

> *We deal with all types of adolescents, not just those from a high middle-class or middle-class background. We help six students from the school, from the favela here (...) these needy kids from these projects they've got around here. They study with us and they always integrate into the school with no trouble. This is really satisfying for me to see [the fight against] inequality within the school. There's no difference, [because] we always try to pass on this idea, this consciousness.* (Interview with coordinator, private school, Rio de Janeiro)

However, the third pattern occurs in the private schools and affects the students with lesser purchasing power. It affects the poorest ones, those that receive scholarships, or that are teachers' or other staff members' children. Statements from some teachers show that even with this "incentive" on the part of some schools of offering places to students who cannot pay the fees, those who are not on scholarship insist on emphasizing the inequality of their social situation in the form of humiliation.

One inspector observed that many staff members do not register their children in the school where they work because they will be subject to discrimination from those who pay the fees. The inspector then goes on to point out the distinction between children of staff members and teachers' children registered in the school.

It's tough to see a staff member's kid in here. You can do it, it's just that no one puts their kid in here because of discrimination. There was an inspector who put her son in school here. And I think that the Guidance Counselor came up to her and said: 'Look, I don't think it's a good idea to put your son in school here.' The Guidance Counselor told her it would be better to put him in another school. Could it be that the Guidance Counselor didn't want that kid in school because he was a staff member's kid or was it the students? He was leaving and they said that the student was really discriminated against. The students said that his mom was the maid of the school, you know, stuff like that. It's different with a teacher's kid. All of the teachers that have kids, their kids study here. (Interview with inspector, private school, São Paulo)

Especially in today's Brazil – one of the countries with the largest socio-economic inequality in the world – social exclusion imposes a basic chasm between rich and poor[57]. This dichotomy establishes differentiated standards for these groups. The groups construct stereotyped images of the other groups and this adds to the distance between them. Each group seeks to defend itself against the threat represented by those that are not like they are.

[57] Brazil is the leader in world ranking of social inequality. Data from the Institute of Applied Economic Research, based on UN and World Bank data, showing that the richest 10% of the population retain an income that is 28 times higher than the poorest 40%. (In: *Jornal do Brasil* newspaper, March 15, 2001).

4.3. STRATIFICATION, SOCIAL INTERACTION AND PERCEPTIONS OF CHANGEABILITY

It was possible to construct an index of student social stratification based on information on the availability of lasting goods and services. The sample of students that is called class A or high class corresponds to a maximum of 1%. The sample for class B or middle-class is also small. When combined with class A this group varies between a maximum of 21% in Recife and a minimum of 5% in Manaus (table 4.4). The most numerous social strata is the group that corresponds to class C or middle middle-class. This group varies from between 49% in Manaus, Cuiabá and Maceió, and 79% in Florianópolis. The students from class D or low middle-class are numerous in Manaus (46%) and vary from around 1/3 in Belém, Salvador and Cuiabá. These students represent around one-fourth in Fortaleza, Recife and the Federal District and demonstrate small percentages in Rio de Janeiro (14%) and Florianópolis (12%).

Table 4.4

Prportion of students in Elementary Basic (5th to 8th grades) and Secondary School, by capital of Federal Unit, according to social segment - 2000*

Social Segment*	DF	GO	MT	AM	PA	CE	PE	AL	BA	ES	RJ	SP	SC	RS
A-B	7	6	13	5	7	6	21	9	9	18	13	11	9	12
C	71	53	49	49	56	69	51	49	56	61	73	72	79	71
D	22	41	38	46	37	25	28	42	35	21	14	17	12	17
TOTAL	**100 (329879)**	**100 (193676)**	**100 (82989)**	**100 (235150)**	**100 (189513)**	**100 (354106)**	**100 (244175)**	**100 (111638)**	**100 (442900)**	**100 (56390)**	**100 (659337)**	**100 (1443698)**	**100 (49666)**	**100 (168733)**

Source: National Survey on Violence, AIDS and Drugs in School, UNESCO, 2001.

* Expanded data.

** The social segment was obtained through the average considered in the variables that indicate access to consumer and service goods: radio, color television, refrigerator, sound system, and CD player, videocassette, microwave oven, bathroom, domestic help, leisure car, cellular telephone. The values obtained were divided into four "classes". A, B, C and D.

The data in this table about social stratification allow for a variety of significant observations. First, the Brazilian pyramid of social inequality is reproduced among students as well in that class A is quite small in comparison to other social strata. Second, classes B and C represent most students, and the most reduced percentages are found for class D. This could mean that a larger portion of school-age youths from class D find themselves outside of school.

Self-identification of socio-economic situation shows the generalized predominance of students that consider themselves as "living well". This was observed found most frequently in Florianópolis (81%), Vitória and Recife (77% and 76%) and least frequently in Belém (57%), São Paulo (66%) and Manaus (64%). The cities that contain the largest percentages of students that identify themselves as poor or extremely poor are Manaus (36%) and Belém (43%).

"Living well" or choosing an intermediate category when the students classify themselves on the social scale could be a way of refusing to take on the situations that are considered as extreme and are viewed negatively from a social point of view. It may also be a way of avoiding stereotypes. In some fashion this indication contains implicit references to one category or another that an individual does not want to be identified with or that doesn't serve as a parameter for comparison[58].

On the whole, this data also suggests the search to be the same or close to a group. This suggests a certain homogeneity or social leveling through school. In fact, perhaps because they want

[58] Discrimination standards were analyzed in a survey carried out in the Federal District about gangs. This research recorded the tendency to seek differentiation because of differences in lifestyles. In this case, those living in the periphery saw themselves as different in relation to 'the ones who live in the main part of the city.' The research highlighted the occurrence among the youths of a 'compensatory discussion that was inverted in reference to values and moral criteria.' (Abramovay et al., 1999: 45). Caldeira (1984) emphasizes the compensatory mechanism that occurs in the self-classifications that operate on codes about rich and poor and through compensations and distancing.

to avoid discriminatory attitudes among themselves and society, the students take on an attitude of social leveling when they indicate that they are "living well". This homogenous effect occurs in the average samplings and guarantees the non-existence of prejudice among the classmates. This means that in a setting where most of the people have similar socio-economic conditions, there would naturally be no discrimination of this type.

4.4. SELF-IDENTIFICATION OF RACE AND IDEAS ABOUT RACISM

Distribution according to race in terms of student self-identification faithfully follows regional Brazilian definitions for the population as a whole. In Porto Alegre and Florianópolis there are larger percentages of students that define themselves as white (75% and 83%). This is followed by São Paulo (61%) and Rio de Janeiro (56%). The largest percentage of students that define themselves as black occurs in Salvador (23%) and those that define themselves as indigenous occurs in Manaus (5%) and both represent minority groups. In Belém and Maceió, there are larger numbers of those that identify themselves as mixed race (54% and 51%, respectively). This group is quite large in other capitals, however, where the recorded percentages are close to the percentages for those that define themselves as white.

Although the violence related to discriminatory practices that result from preconceptions about race has been institutionally silenced, it is still evident in the school community. In the following statement from a parent focus group the theme of intolerance is revealed:

My daughter suffers from prejudice at school, but that's the way the world is. Most public schools have more black kids and my daughter is white. So, because she's white, she's completely discriminated against in the school. They've even threatened to cut her hair because she has this long, straight, blond hair. They say 'what's this dirty blond doing here?' The principal said it like this 'It's because your daughter is in a public school and she doesn't have the public school profile.' I said 'This is really crazy, this is nuts, to say they're going to get her out in the street.' (...) The teachers really try to help. They call the group together and tell them 'For God's sake don't go out and get this girl on the street.' (Focus group with parents, public school, Salvador)

In the meantime, principals and teachers from private establishments tend to maintain that there is no racial prejudice in the schools where they work because there is a very small number of black people in the school environment:

Racial prejudice (....) it's complicated to even say racial because at a school like ours I think if there are 10 black kids here, that's a lot. (Focus group with teachers, private school, Florianópolis)

Prejudice here is minimal, there's almost none. You've only got a few black kids here. (Focus group with teachers, private school, Fortaleza)

The data indicate discrimination and reveal that the non-white students are much more numerous in public schools than white students are. This fact could be an expression of racial structuring. This means that there is the existence of barriers for black and mixed-race students having access to private schools. Private schools were considered by many survey participants to be better quality schools. However, it must be noted that the

quantitative data do not demonstrate that non-white students are totally absent from private schools. The data merely indicate that the percentage rates for those with access to private schools are much higher among white students.

In addition to differentiated access according to administrative dependency whites and non-whites are differentiated as well by study shift. Larger percentages of non-whites study at night. This is found at a minimum of 23% in Florianópolis and a maximum of 82% in Salvador. The data has shown that studying at night imposes a lot of obstacles for the students. Intellectual activity is more difficult at night and violent incidents tend to occur more frequently at night than they do during the day.

The data indicate another dimension of racial discrimination in the schools where the non-white students are more subject than white students are to verbal violence, especially violence expressed through threats (table 4.5).

Table 4.5

Prportion of students in Elementary Basic (5th to 8th grades) and Secondary School, by report of occurrences of verbal violence in the school environment and by capital of Federal Unit, according to self-identification of color/race - 2000 *

	MT		AM		PE		BA		ES		RJ	
Verbal Violence	White	Non-White	White	Non-White	White	Non-White	White	Non-White	White	Non-White	White	Non-White
Reported	36	40	30	36	23	30	30	39	26	32	20	27
Did not report	64	60	70	64	77	70	70	61	74	68	80	73
Total	**100 (36973)**	**100 (43502)**	**100 (87396)**	**100 (120231)**	**100 (117950)**	**100 (119833)**	**100 (116521)**	**100 (322009)**	**100 (28154)**	**100 (26787)**	**100 (362956)**	**100 (290109)**

Source: National Survey on Violence, AIDS and Drugs in School, UNESCO, 2001.
The individuals were asked: "What is your color or race?" The "non-white" category includes mixed race, blacks, Asians and indigenous Indians. The states that exhibited significant statistical associations were the only ones considered.
* Expanded data.

There are barriers that result in a process of exclusion that affects the non-white students and ends up creating an image of privileged and non-privileged in the educational system.

Chart 4.4
Prejudice when and if you're black

Focus group with parents, private school, Goiânia
I had already chosen another school before we got here to Goiânia. But at this other school I suspected that there was a certain prejudice, I don't know if it was because of color, but there was something there. I had left the papers so the principal or coordinator could process the registration and they had those papers for a week. They called me and told me that it was much more difficult than it had been to get an opening. Before, they had said they had an opening and then they told me I had to go to another school. Because we were black, it was a problem.
They told me about this other school (...) the principal was very nice to me and he's Asian. He told me what to do. He was very helpful. So, appearances count a lot and there's a lot of prejudice when you're black. My son suffered prejudice from not being accepted at the first school.

There is recognition on the part of a number of students and members of the technical-pedagogical staff of the fact that racial prejudice does exist in school. This is underlined mainly by those who have been victimized, by those that have heard expressions like nigger, blacky, stinky and brillo head.

> *The girls there call me blacky, a lot of stuff. That really makes me mad and I fight back. At home I say: 'Mom, I don't want to go to school because I don't want to fight. They call me*

names, they call me a lot of things. You think I like that?' So then I go to the break and I hear them yelling: 'Look at that stinky one over there.' (Focus group with students, public school, Porto Alegre).

It's my daughter who's going through this [discrimination]. She's got kinky hair and the students there don't, so they call her brillo head. (Focus group with parents, public school, Florianópolis).

There are many testimonies that indicate that black students are excluded from the most valued positions with the most status or from prestigious jobs. This occurs in a subliminal or non-subliminal fashion. There is no doubt that day to day racial hostility also has the power to cause prejudice in school by stigmatizing and marginalizing the victim: *I notice [that] the black students (....) tend to pull away because we've got this prejudice, because society as a whole puts this on you beginning when you're little.*

In the literature about the theme in Brazil, the fact that racism takes place in complex ways is commonly emphasized. This does not mean, though, that racism is admitted to by the majority of the population. It is that attitudes like having friends from another ethnic or racial group do not necessarily exclude practices related to or reproducing racism (Guimarães et al., 2000). At first it is not easy to detect practices or behavior that are described by racist patterns in the schools. On the contrary, denying any type of discrimination is common. This difficulty in being able to notice racial prejudice is due to the ideology that is deeply rooted in Brazilian social thinking. This ideology describes the country as racially idyllic, a place where discrimination by race does not happen because Brazil is a racially homogeneous country, a "brown nation". Even today the fallacy of this "brown

nation" Brazil is embedded in discussion of the school community and Brazilian society as a whole. There is no reason for prejudice (...) Brazil is very mixed. On the other hand, there is a social process that is taking place in Brazil that is starting to demystify the perception of the country as racially democratic. This has been reflected in the schools: *Trying to hide this doesn't work (...) There is prejudice. It's hypocritical to say there isn't.*

The students say that there is racial prejudice in the school environment. They tell of cases when this included the Principal's Office against students and teachers and also when it came out among the classmates:

> *I think there's racial prejudice from the principal towards one of our teachers. He's black, he's one of the best teachers here at the school. He's understanding and he treats the students really well. But there's this prejudice the principal has with this teacher.* (Focus group with students, public school, Vitória)

> *I think that there's not this explicit, declared prejudice. Sometimes it's not even prejudice. The person doesn't think it's prejudice, it's this thing you see that they have, though. The other day we were putting on this presentation (...) and there was this teacher that was walking by. There are a lot of black kids in our class. So, the teacher walked by and said: 'Look at this! The highest concentration of blacks is in this classroom!'* (Focus group with students, private school, Salvador)

A number of those interviewed recognized that racism exists in their schools. They made reference to prejudice in a general way and to racism that involves other people or groups. There are rarely statements where people admit to being racist themselves. Blacks blame whites, blondes accuse brunettes, teachers point to students, students talk about the principal and

children accuse parents. The conclusion: prejudice always involves "the other one."

The statement of a black student reveals declared explicit prejudice and illustrates a situation at the limits of racism that is assumed and "rationalized" by the cultural setting concerning what is beauty and normal is. This excludes blacks:

Chart 4.5
If she's a little whiter you can walk around holding hands

Focus group with students, public school, São Paulo
I don't really like blacks, you know. No, seriously now, I don't really like the color of my race. I don't like to go after or go out with black girls. I just can't face that little black face looking at me. If she's a little whiter you can walk around holding hands, you can go to the mall. Now, I'd like to see you have the nerve to take some black girl to the mall. Because at the mall you can just go around with the trendy girls. Because they [the friends] think that I'm going to the mall to show off my girlfriend. You have to walk around with that girl presence, you know. I'm not going to say it's not like that because it is. The mall is like any other place in your circle of friends. I mean, I think they get together and say 'oh, man, my girlfriend is really hot, she's white, she's got blue eyes.' So, now I'm going to go around and show off this brown or black girl with bad hair in front of my friends?

In Brazilian literature about racism it is common to talk about how racism becomes banal because of "polite racism". This is when racist positions are disguised by false politeness, hiding prejudicial references behind supposed affectionate treatment (Guimarães and Huntley, 2000; Guimarães, 1999; Hasenbalg, 1992; Moura, 1988, among others). The fruit of this denial of direct racist practices is that racial prejudice is expressed through

playful games and jokes. Nicknames are recognized to be the main source of spreading anti-black stereotypes in the school community. These nicknames are considered to be innocent or playful yet they perpetuate segregation barriers and discriminatory concepts: *There's this guy, he's like my main man. I play with him: 'Shut up blacky.' But it's a joke. I know it and so does he.*

Perhaps this is why some students demonstrate ambiguity when they are asked to state whether prejudice exists in their schools or not when they are discussing the theme racial prejudice. At first the students comment that there is no prejudice in their schools and that what goes on is just fooling around. However, nicknames like "asphalt popsicle", "tar face", "chocolate quik", "chocolate" and "little skin" are found to be on the thin line that defines the extremely diffuse line between playfulness and aggression:

> *There are those little games that are sometimes in bad taste. They call some people asphalt popsicle, stuff like that.* (Focus group with students, public school, Fortaleza)

> *But I've already gotten a few of these jokes because I was the one with the brownest skin in my class. Last year, I don't know, this year they call me black, Michael Jackson, those kind of comments.* (Focus group with students, private school, Cuiabá)

Parents in focus groups also emphasize the use of adjectives that are disguised as "little games" to express and legitimize racial prejudice:

My daughter is in eighth grade. They [the students] call her chocolate quik or chocolate. She's really dark, too. She says that the white students always give nicknames to anyone who's brown or black. They say it's only a joke. (Focus group with parents, private school, Cuiabá)

The other day my daughter was watching a video in the class and the teacher said: 'I hate blacks and I hate poor people.' And they got her. 'You're not part of this.' I went there and really made a ruckus. You know what the Principal's Office asked me? If I knew the teacher. And I said: 'No, and I don't want to.' 'She's black.' And I said 'But that doesn't mean she can discriminate against my daughter because she's white.' And the Principal's Office said that she was only kidding. How are you supposed to know what's a joke in a situation like this.' (Focus group with parents, public school, Salvador)

Based on the perception of racial prejudice, the students said that there was discrimination against blacks by whites but that the reverse situation happened often as well. They also emphasized that prejudice and discrimination exist between blacks that demonstrates a certain difficulty in assuming their status as blacks:

There's something I wanted to say about racial prejudice. Lots of people say that the whites discriminate against the blacks and all. But it's not just the whites that discriminate against the blacks, nope. It's the blacks that discriminate against the whites too – that little yellow thing, that little pale thing, stuff like that. (Focus group with students, public school, Salvador)

The prejudice that blacks have in relation to whites was also mentioned in some statements: *Most of the administrative office is*

black. I'm not black, but everyone in the office is. I was almost suspended because of this prejudice from the administration because I'm not black...that happens too.

On the other hand, there are those that feel that the young black students put themselves on guard against situations that they interpret as racist. This may be due to a socially critical consciousness of a culture that tends to reproduce racism or it may be a form of self-defense: *You see this prejudice that the black kid has in relation to being black. He thinks that we're giving him a talking to just because he's black.*

In some way the progressive social consciousness raising about racist attitudes against blacks has also alerted other ethnic groups to the use of negative expressions and pejorative forms of treatment that can affect them in the same way. This has caused warnings against intolerance in a variety of forms:

> *They [the students] have racial prejudice, sure. There's even one who has some Indian features and the students go around giving him nicknames like a tribe name, they make fun of him, they sing some Indian song and go on from there.* (Focus group with teachers, public school, Porto Alegre)

The connection between the feeling of social exclusion and racism is clear in many of the discussions. Some public school students comment that racial prejudice is the product of society. Society is what causes the differentiation, relating demonstrations of discrimination to the class system and to particular cases of racism but not necessarily to the school. They also relate cases when they think racism has its own operational basis, one that crosses the differentiation in social classes, as suggested in the following testimony:

> *Like Rappa [musical group] says, every paddy wagon has a little black sheep. I think it's like this, the fact that a guy is black, he's going to face a lot of discrimination from society, that's for sure. Society is the first one to tell you that. I'm not someone who can say that I've suffered [from prejudice]. Maybe it's already happened and I just didn't notice. But I know what's going on. Sometimes the fact that a guy is black, he can be wearing a suit and tie, but the guy is more suspicious than the white guy who's dressed up or not. Society does that.* (Focus group with students, public school, Rio de Janeiro)

However, in some statements there are notable numbers of teachers that think it's possible to deconstruct prejudice, as suggested by the following:

> *Even children have prejudice. I've tried, I've explained, it's always the same thing, even in the classroom, here comes some little girl [black], and it's like this, they [the white students] play with her and then they don't want her anymore and they kick her out of the group. I've been working on this with her [the black student].* (Focus group with teachers, public school, Cuiabá)

The school community demonstrates a variety of opinions about the presence of racism. These range from denying demonstrations of discrimination in their school to denouncing them. Whatever the social position of the involved party, the ways that these perceptions were stated revealed elements that affirmed racism or affirmed the naturalization of racism in the school environment.

Meanwhile, the victims of racism have faces. The great majority of those that say they have been the victims of racial prejudice are people with non-white characteristics, although

they do not always identify themselves as blacks. This data revealed another facet of the naturalization of racism and that is the "whitening" of self-identification.

DATA SUMMARY

According to the different participants in the school community about interactions and social positions, it can be concluded that the school is seen as both an effective way to access the exercise of citizenship and as a mechanism of social exclusion. The school community sees school as a place that favors socialization, forming attitudes and opinions and personal development. The school is seen as a place with the goal of promoting citizenship and the capacity for critical thinking as well as a place that has a direct affect in preparing youths for the job market, although it does not always manage to fulfill this potential.

The students demonstrate contradictory and distinct meanings about the role of the school. School is seen as a place to learn and as a road towards positive inclusion in the job market and in society. On the other hand, many students consider school to be a place for social exclusion where violence and discrimination (physical, moral and symbolic) are reproduced. In spite of this, many youths demonstrated a positive view of school, studying, and the teaching.

• The data showed perceived differences between the opportunities offered by public schools and those offered by private schools. The data reveals that the youths are segregated according to social class and this establishes bases for social discrimination, causing unequal opportunities. This nourishes the social processes of exclusion and symbolic violence. The low quality of public schools takes place right from the beginning.

The private schools are in a better situation to prepare the adolescent for high school and university. The data stress that the future of the private school student is more promising than the future of those from public schools. This fact is revealed in purchasing power, availability of time and the chance to study in better high schools.

• It must be noted that half the students had been held back a grade at least once in nine out of the fourteen surveyed capitals.

• In terms of social stratification of the students, the data indicates that a maximum of 1% belongs to class A or the high class. Students in class B or high middle-class are also not very numerous. This distribution directly reflects the higher layers of the Brazilian social pyramid. The most numerous social strata correspond to class C or the middle-class. The students in class D or the lower-middle class are underrepresented in relation to the size of these social strata in the population. This suggests the operation of social exclusion mechanisms that obstruct the opportunities for registration of the poorest part of the population in the schools.

• The students suggest a certain homogeneity or social leveling in the school setting, with the goal of avoiding discriminatory attitudes when they identify themselves as "living well". This homogenizing effect occurs in the average samplings and guarantees the non-existence of prejudice among the classmates. This social homogeneity in the schools is a construction of the students. Even so, the numbers of students that notice differences in social levels in their schools are quite low.

• One of the most outstanding forms of social exclusion is expressed through racism. This appears to be part of the educational system and Brazilian society. Sometimes racism takes on the form of "games and jokes" where racist positions are disguised by pseudo-politeness. Racism is demonstrated in the form of nicknames that are considered to be innocent or playful

and that perpetuate barriers of segregation and discriminatory concepts. Nicknames like "asphalt popsicle", "tar face", "chocolate quik", "chocolate" and "little skin" are found to be on the thin line that defines the extremely diffuse line between playfulness and aggression.

• The research data demonstrates that the non-white students are much more numerous in the public schools than the white students. In the same way the non-white students are much more numerous on the night shift. These data suggest the presence of informal barriers to access to teaching that is considered to be better quality by non-whites. This is one of the most worrisome aspects of structural racism.

• A denial of racial discrimination could be confirmed in the testimonies from the schools community. However, the absence of accounts of racism results more from the absence of interaction between races than the absence of racial democracy. The statements of denial stem from the data that show that non-white students suffer more from verbal violence and threats than the whites do.

5. VIOLENCE IN THE SCHOOLS: INCIDENTS, PERPETRATORS AND VICTIMS

Violence in the schools is associated with three distinct socio-organizational dimensions according to Debarbieux (1999). Degradation of the school environment is in first place. This is an enormous problem for school management, resulting in deficient structures. In second place is the violence that originates outside of the schools and becomes part of the school setting (Guimarães, 1998). This type of violence includes the presence of gangs, drug trafficking and the growing visibility of social exclusion within the school community. The third position is related to an internal element in the schools that is specific to each and every establishment. There are schools that have histories of violence and others that have experienced violent situations. The presence of safe schools can be seen in neighborhoods or areas that are recognized as violent. The reverse situation is also true, suggesting that there are no determining factors or fates that guarantee local actions or reactions. This is true even for certain periods or for areas that are characterized by exclusions.

This chapter intends to describe the various types of violence that occur in the school environment. This description is based on the point of view of those that live with violence in the most immediate way. These are students and members of the technical-pedagogical staff as well as police officers, discipline inspectors and school security agents. From this perspective

violence is seen, understood and represented mainly by individuals in the schools who have been victims, witnesses, observers and even perpetrators. This overall analysis takes into account violence in a broad ranging manner. This analysis does not seek a universal meaning for this violence. However, it does seek to understand the meaning this violence has for the different individuals and groups that make up the set of schools in this group of Brazilian capitals.

The different dimensions of violence have been discussed in previous chapters and include institutional and symbolic violence. Within these dimensions, this chapter focuses on physical violence. As discussed in the literature on the theme, this form of violence is the most visible part of the phenomenon in the schools and was a considerable part of the discussions the interviewed individuals had concerning the theme and appeared as a reference for them.

According to Debarbieux and Blaya (2001) and Bonafé-Schmitt (1997), it is impossible to analyze violence in the schools without reflecting on physical aggression. This includes petty thefts, vandalism and what French researchers consider "incivilities". This means verbal offenses, a variety of vulgar behavior, pushing and shoving, interfering in other people's business and humiliation. In fact, it becomes clear in the discussions of the students and technical-pedagogical staff members that these forms of violence are numerous and that their goals, targets, instruments, victims and perpetrators are widely varied.

This large and complex spectrum of demonstrations causes the need for categorization in order to better understand the phenomenon in the school environment. In order to accomplish this, a variety of situations that those interviewed are exposed to were identified in this survey: (1) violence against a person, verbal or physical: threats, fights, sexual violence and coercion through the use of guns; (2) violence against property: stealing,

robbery and mugging; (3) violence against property, specifically vandalism and damage to school installations. Each of these categories involves practices that are described in detail by the perpetrators and the victims, as shown in the following.

5.1. TYPES OF VIOLENCE: VIOLENCE AGAINST A PERSON

5.1.1. Threats

The first modality of violence against a person consists of threats. This means explicit promises to cause damage or violate the physical or moral integrity or liberty and/or property of another person. The quantitative data show that threats occur in the school environment among students and members of the technical-pedagogical staff but also occur with other school employees as well as with the parents. Threats are most frequently mentioned by students in São Paulo and the Federal District (40%) and least by students in Belém (21%). There are also many declarations of threats among the members of the technical-pedagogical staff, fluctuating between a maximum of 58% in Goiânia to a minimum of 30% in Fortaleza.

When looking at tables 5.1 and 5.1A there is something quite startling and this is the fact that in all of the capitals except the Federal District the percentage rates of members of the technical-pedagogical staff that report threats are significantly higher than the percentage rates for students that report threats. This does not necessarily mean that the threats are directed towards the staff members although this does occur often as can be seen in the following.

Table 5.1

Proportion of students in Elementary Basic (5th to 8th grades) and Secondary School, by capital of Federal Unit, according to reports of threats to students, parents,
teachers and/or staff members in the school environment - 2000 *

Interviewed Individuals	DF	GO	MT	AM	PA	CE	PE	AL	BA	ES	RJ	SP	SC	RS
Students	40	33	38	32	21	28	27	23	35	29	23	40	36	35
TOTAL (N)	(335850)	(198831)	(83871)	(239377)	(192841)	(357003)	(246280)	(113608)	(459169)	(57630)	(665906)	(1462381)	(50046)	(170511)

Source National Survey on Violence, AIDS and Drugs in School, UNESCO, 2001.
The individuals were asked: "Mark with an X if you know about this happening in this school: Students, parents, teachers or staff members have been threatened." The percentages refer only to affirmative responses obtained in the student and technical-pedagogical staff member statements.
* Expanded data.

Table 5.1A

Prportion of members of the technical-pedagogical staff, by capital of Federal Unit, according to reports of threats to students, parents, teachers and/or staff members in the school environment - 2000

Interviewed Individuals	DF	GO	MT	AM	PA	CE	PE	AL	BA	ES	RJ	SP	SC	RS
Students	22	16	19	16	14	13	16	12	19	16	11	21	25	23
TOTAL (N)	(335850)	(198832)	(83870)	(239377)	(192840)	(357003)	(246280)	(113607)	(459169)	(57630)	(665907)	(1462381)	(50046)	(170512)

Fonte: Pesquisa Nacional Violência, Aids e Drogas nas Escolas, UNESCO, 2001.
Solicitou-se aos informantes: "Marque com um X se você sabe que já aconteceu nesta escola: Alunos, pais, professores ou funcionários já foram ameaçados". Os percentuais referem-se apenas às respostas afirmativas obtidas na amostra de alunos e na amostra de membros do corpo técnico-pedagógico.

In the focus groups, students and members of the technical-pedagogical staff indicate that one of the principal motives for threats from the youths to the teachers is disagreement about grades or about the level of requirements as well as disciplinary infractions in the classroom: *The teacher, if he's not a little bit nice (...) ends up getting hurt. If the teacher is really strict about everything he ends up getting hurt.*

Physical retaliation after class time and away from the school establishment is the most common form of threats: Look, if the teacher turns me in to the principal and I end up getting in trouble, or if the principal gives me suspension, the teacher is going to see what's going to happen out there outside of school. One of the researchers that was carrying out an on site observation reported that the threats extend to the members of the technical-pedagogical staff. This was exemplified when one of the third year coordinators complained that they had received threats from one of the students and that they were afraid to confront the student. (Observation report, public school, Florianópolis)

Threats to the principals generally occurred when they applied more severe punishments such as suspensions and expulsions. The following testimony illustrates an extreme case where the aggressors were from outside the school and acted in the defense of a student considered to have received unfair treatment:

> *I took on the administration of this school substituting a principal that was on leave after having received threats here in the school. One of the students was put in prison for homicide and his group came around to get a statement saying that he had been in school when it happened, an alibi. Then he [the former principal] refused to say that the guy had been in school because he had already dropped out a long time before. This gang invaded the school and made the principal write the statement. They said they were going to kill his whole family.*

(...) He asked for early retirement and it's been a while since he left. This was the situation when I got here and I've received threats here. (Interview with principal, public school, Rio de Janeiro)

In general, the students usually react in an aggressive manner when they consider the school routine to be violent. The students identify a violent school routine as the imposition of the institutional power of the school when it comes to discipline, requirements and the rules that measure their knowledge. However, the students do not externalize the reasons or parameters that they use to define the rituals of the school as violations that will be answered with threats.

The threats can become concrete realities in physical violence. They also may remain just threats. Either way, this creates an atmosphere of daily tension. Reports indicate that some threats become physical aggression on the part of the students when they are put out of the classroom or are suspended and/or forbidden to enter the school when they come late. Security agents and discipline inspectors are also threatened when the give warnings or demerits for disciplinary problems or lateness. Many of these parties report daily problems like these and this makes their relationships with the students very problematic. The police officers with school duty also experience this situation. They point out that they receive constant threats: *They say they're going to get me, they're going to shoot me, but you feel they're just trying to scare you.*

Teachers and principals and other members of the pedagogical staff say that they feel unsafe due to the atmosphere of intimidation in the school. The researchers also reported that in the on site observations: *The students are extremely aggressive. They walk around armed and they threaten the teachers. Three years ago the school had problems with students and the principal. The principal left the school because of threats and never came back.*

5.1.2. Fights

Fights are one of the most common modalities of violence in the schools in a wide variety of ways. This ranges from forms of juvenile sociability to brutal conduct. This type of aggression among students is manifested in verbal attacks that come from the students. This is when it becomes difficult to establish clear lines among these types of violence, such as fights and threats. The most common form of this type of violence in the schools seems to take place in situations on the borderlines between discussions and arguments.

At first these less severe incidents like put downs, challenges and verbal aggression in general are thought of more as precursors of more serious incidents than as violent practices in and of themselves. When they are limited to verbal confrontation they can be resolved through dialogue and negotiation. In other cases, even those that begin by exchanging threats, challenges or offending or provoking often escalate into physical aggression that often requires police involvement.

The fights are considered to be commonplace. This suggests that violence has become banal and legitimate as a mechanism for conflict resolution. The researchers observed during visits to public schools in Florianópolis and Brasília that students fight a lot in the classroom and don't respect each other at all: *There was a fight a day when we were there.* Some students reported that fights were frequent.

Many times fights occur as a continuance of the students' playing around and this can have more serious consequences. There are also games where violence is part of the game where it starts in fooling around and ends up with hitting.

Fights and games - silly stuff – get mixed up in the same kind of language and are caused by a variety of situations. The students fight about playing soccer or eating a snack or because of grades. They also fight because someone called someone ugly

or fat. They fight because someone took someone's things or because of girlfriends or boyfriends: *You were really looking at my girlfriend.*

Among the triggering factors like threats and fights, there is one that is highlighted and that is "the look". This concerns a way of looking that can mean breaking a basic rule in the youths' non-verbal communication rituals. The look is direct and insistent and assumes a disrespecting challenging aspect that brings on conflict: *What are you looking at me for? You trying to mess with me?* When a student bumps into another student, even by accident, this can be interpreted as a careless and provocative attitude and this can trigger violent fights:

Chart 5.1
You can bet on it, you're already dead

Focus group with students, public school, São Paulo
If the guy you bumped into is the man, you can bet you're already dead. Look, I mean really dead! There was this big mess here where they got the guy and rubbed his face against the wall, on those stones, you know? So they rubbed his face against the wall and practically scraped his face off, then they threw him in the bushes.

An average of almost one fifth of the students and members of the technical-pedagogical staff stated that physical aggression or beatings had occurred in their schools. This included physical aggression or beatings of students, parents, teachers or other staff members. The percentage rates for students who knew about this kind of incident in their schools varied from a minimum of 11% and 13% respectively in Rio de Janeiro, Maceió and Fortaleza, and a maximum of 23% and 25% respectively in Porto Alegre and Florianópolis. (Table 5.2).

Table 5.2

Proportion of students in Elementary (5th to 8th grades) and Secondary School, by capital of Federal Unit, according to reports of aggressions or beatings of students, parents or teachers in the school - 2000 *

Interviewed Individuals	DF	GO	MT	AM	PA	CE	PE	AL	BA	ES	RJ	SP	SC	RS
Students	22	16	19	16	14	13	16	12	19	16	11	21	25	23
TOTAL (N)	(335850)	(198832)	(83870)	(239377)	(192840)	(357003)	(246280)	(113607)	(459169)	(57630)	(665907)	(1462381)	(50046)	(170512)

Source National Survey on Violence, AIDS and Drugs in School, UNESCO, 2001.
The individuals were asked: "Mark with an X if you know about this happening in this school: Students, parents, teachers or staff members have been attacked or beaten." The percentages refer only to affirmative responses obtained in the student and technical-pedagogical staff member statements.
* Expanded data.

Comparing this data with the percentage rates concerning threats (tables 5.1 and 5.1A), the information on physical aggression and beatings is on a much lower level. This suggests that a significant part of the threats do not become reality. On the other hand, although these percentage rates do not even remotely approach a majority, they make up a significant number when it is kept in mind that physical confrontation between individuals should be an exceptional event in the worst of hypotheses, especially in the school environment. The data alerts us to the way violence has become natural and banal in that almost one-fifth of all interviewed individuals mentioned incidents that included physical aggression or beatings. Based on these observations, a hypothesis can be developed where fights got support from attitudes of excusing the aggressive behavior. This elevated the acts to something that should be applauded and encouraged. This represents one of the features of a culture of violence.

However, it is worth mentioning that the quantitative and qualitative data suggest a prevailing standard of behavior among the students that does not include police authority or family help as a resource. This standard opts for the private exercise of violence practiced in a group that can stimulate the spreading of attitudes that favor new confrontations. This standard of reacting to aggression and/or violent confrontations among third parties seems to be an important component of a culture that incorporates violence into the students' world. This causes the students to be in a state of readiness or alert for violent events and also includes effective involvement in these events.

Generally, students say that they have participated indirectly in fights within the school or outside it. When they make these statements they put themselves in the position of victim and/or "cheerleader": *The whole school knew about it. And so everyone was out there by the front gate, waiting!* The students don't usually compute this attitude as participating in confrontations.

Without excluding the possibilities of comradery, involvement in fights can turn into "settling accounts" in public, in confrontations that many times mobilize a large number of youths.

Among the situations that generate fights that never end, there are rivalries among groups that are made up of different forms of school inclusion. This includes groups that belong to different grades or classes: *I think it's because they're third year, so they run the school... [In] the second and first years, there are these groups where one can't even look at another one or they fight. Man! It's terrible. It even happens in the same class.*

Another important modality of rivalry among the youths occurs in violent confrontations that involve students from different schools and neighborhoods. These confrontations are frequently stimulated by sports disputes and are also caused by competition between the neighborhoods.

Some events, like soccer, are driving forces for violence. This suggests reflection about the change of meaning that occurs when a game, something playful, loses its quality of healthy competition, solidarity and comradery. There is acceptance of the game as an activity that is inherently full of conflict where resolution through violent means becomes part of daily life:

> *Last year there were a lot of fights. It was really bad. The ones over here were fighting (...) They didn't accept anyone winning in soccer. It was like if we beat them they didn't accept and they went around saying our neighborhood was going to lose. No, they didn't accept it. They just stared and said like: We'll settle this outside.' Then when you leave there are all these people around, this huge crowd. So this happened at our school and it still happens.* (Focus group with students, public school, Cuiabá)

A person can be labeled as an enemy and places can be divided into "ours" and "theirs" and can be fought over. This

situation includes the demarcation of territorial boundaries and this is a process that the international literature on gangs emphasizes as part of the culture of violence. Territorial delineation brings about rivalry and clashes among the various groups as they defend a certain territory: *If you live here (....) you can't go over to that side (...) the ones over there won't let you in.*

Violence has its own nature and redefines social places. Territories are defined and there are those that are from "inside" the school and from "outside". Those from outside are considered as enemies and the location of the violence extends out to reach them. Most of the time the fights go beyond the physical space of the school. Sometimes they involve classmates that had a disagreement at school during class time. The fights "out there" – that's where the problems are more serious – after class, consist of ostentatious demonstrations of willingness to fight. These fights are normally between boys: *I'm going to get you when it's time to leave. I'll be waiting.*

These confrontations may even include non-students that invade the school space or practice violent acts against students in the areas that surround the school. Reports of violent practices that involve individuals from outside the school reinforce the idea of the dichotomy between the student inside versus the outsiders. This reinforces ties of solidarity that impel students from the same school to fight in defense of their threatened classmates. The idealization of the school environment appears in the testimonies as concern for preserving the school's limits. These limits are understood to be a circumscribed space and are thought of as a more secure area when compared to the outside world.

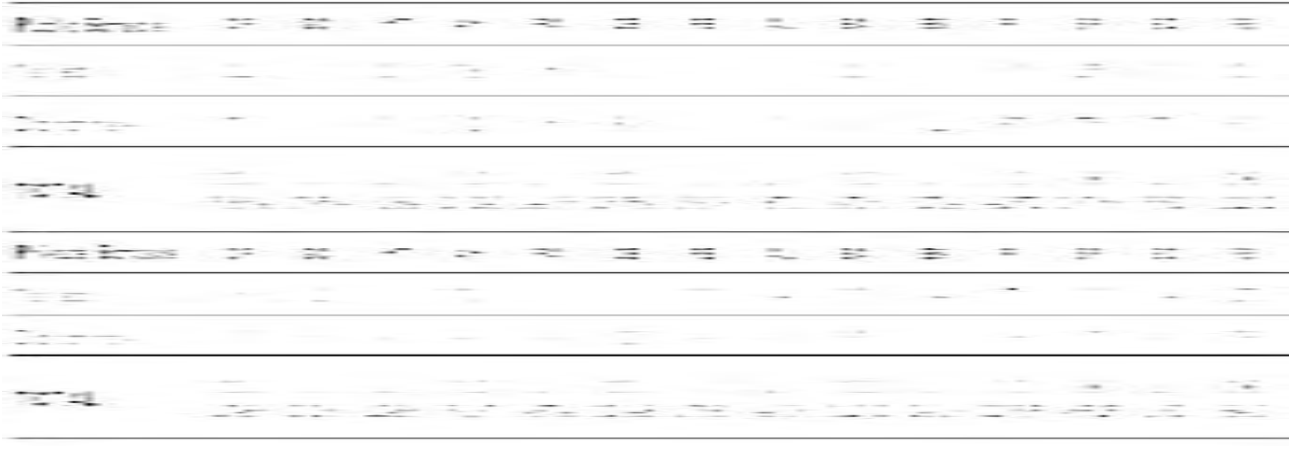
However, physical aggression is seen as a problem in the school even when it occurs outside of the school. The testimonies of both private and public establishments include concern for direct intervention on the part of the Principal's Office as they see themselves as responsible: *We go over there and get our students and*

bring them back inside so there won't be any kind of accident (...) with our student.

The public schools are particularly vulnerable and exposed to violence in terms of physical aggression and beatings as indicated in the data in table 5.3. Considering the public school's greater vulnerability to situations of this type it is to be expected that more fights and physical aggression would occur most in these establishments, even if just because of less availability of resources and personnel responsible for prevention as well as the higher number of students per teacher or staff member. The social distance between the two types of schools is noticeable. As a rule there are more incidents of physical aggression and beatings in the public schools than there are in the private schools. In Florianópolis, for example, this difference reaches 50%, with almost 30% of students in public school report physical aggression and beatings, while this number is 14% for students in private schools in the same city (table 5.3).

Table 5.3

Prportion of students in Elementary Basic (5th to 8th grades) and Secondary School, by capital of Federal Unit, according to administrative dependence and indication or aggressions or beatings of students, parents or teachers in the school - 2000 *



Source National Survey on Violence, AIDS and Drugs in School, UNESCO, 2001.

The individuals were asked: "Mark with an X if you know about this happening in this school: Students, parents, teachers or staff members have been attacked or beaten."

* Expanded data.

However, the numbers of accounts of physical aggression and beatings vary according to capital and administrative dependency. This observation makes it possible to sustain that there is no inherent determining factor and that being a public or private school is not enough to define a fixed and inflexible description of violence in the schools across the country.

5.1.3. Sexual violence

Although sexual harassment has not been studied very much as a manifestation of violence and has even been ignored, it can have serious consequences for the youths. This situation creates a permissive culture where acts of this type are not seen as serious or subject to punishment.

The strictly legal concept refers to the induction of sexual favors through pressure that occurs based on asymmetrical positions of power. This study understands sexual harassment in a broader sense, one that includes various forms of sexual intimidation. This includes looks, gestures, jokes, obscene comments, exhibition and abuse. It also includes proposals, insinuations and physical contact that is not apparently intentional as well as gossip, phrases and bathroom drawings. It must be mentioned that sexual harassment is seen as one of the most common forms of violence from teachers against students, mainly female students, according to the youths' discussions. However, it can also take place between students or other individuals in the schools.

There are testimonies that indicate a variety of forms and ambiguity in classifying an action as sexual violence. This type of violence ranges from "fooling around" to rape. Many times the students refer to verbal approaches that include "fooling around" that may cause those on the receiving end to feel ill at ease: *They're not just innocent little games. They're vulgar and there's really no place for that kind of thing.* Many times the person keeps quiet and pretends not to hear, *pretend you don't even know*

they exist. At other times, these approaches can be seen as normal: It's completely normal. Everyone goes around like that here. They say all sorts of stuff!

The "games" and playful comments may be directed at the students by the teachers or vice-versa and include observations and comments on physical features that are made during class. Some students reported that there were male teachers who said that certain female students were making it hard for them to work: If you're sitting there with your leg up on the chair or something he comes over and says: *'I'm not going to be able to pay attention, to teach class right if you keep on sitting like that.'*

For some students, the distinction between attempted seduction and sexual harassment is very fuzzy. Even without the explicit promise of favors that could result from a sexual proposal from a teacher, the resulting effects of the game between the two parties indicate how much power the teacher is working with in these cases: *The teacher gives you that look. Depending on the teacher and the student he's going to give you a better grade.* This unequal relationship is revealed in a seduction attempt from the male or female teachers to the male or female students: *If you ask him [the teacher] if you can go to the bathroom or something he says like: 'only if you give me a kiss.'*

There was a statement that related one teacher's proposal for sexual "programs" that involved going to a motel and payment for "provided services": *Let's go, you name it [the price]!* This encourages involvement with prostitution.

> *It happened in my school too and that's really harassment. I was talking to this (...) teacher at school. I didn't have a job. I was looking for a job and I was dying to earn some money. So he says to me: I know an easy way for you to make some money.' I just left that alone, I thought he was joking. So later I said: 'Teacher, what kind of work are you talking about?' 'Oh, I've*

got some friends and it works like this: It's easy money.' So I said: 'So explain this to me, teacher, because I really need to work.' So he told me that it was this homosexual program thing, you know? (...) Everything stopped right there. I didn't say anything to anyone but I told him that if it happened again I was going to get him into trouble. I was going to talk to the principal. (Focus group with students, public school, Vitória)

There are significant numbers of accounts where the youths state that sexual violence in the widest variety of forms affects both sexes. However, it can be seen that the more frequent references refer to situations where males are harassing females. In addition to this it is worth noting that many of the comments blame the girls for the violence because they provoke the boys by wearing "different" or provocative clothes – *Like those little shorts or skirts. The girls hardly even wear shirts. A shirt is just this little thing to cover their breasts. Their stomach is showing and they're always showing a little bit of their panties so they can be all sensual.* This attitude reinforces the prejudice that says that sexual harassment is caused by feminine provocation.

When dealing with rape specifically, the students considered it to be one of the five most violent acts. There were significant variations, but the most numerous indications were made by females and varied between 88% in Recife and 78% in Manaus. In comparison, the indications made by males varied between 76% in Recife and 63% in Salvador.

In the inspectors' discussions, the fact that the students are discovering their sexuality[59] can cause problems in the operation

[59] Many female students complain that the boys force them to have physical contact. This fact was confirmed by a principal who made it a point to make a comment that was incompatible with his position: *This goes on all the time {cases of sexual harassment}. I don't know if you can let yourself. Let's say the girl comes up and says 'Principal, he grabbed my ass! He grabbed my boobs!' A lot of the time I kid them and say: 'Oh, if I were them I would grab them too.' (Interview with principal, public school, Fortaleza)*

of school activities. The bathroom turns into a place for sexual abuse. This environment is clearly used to force girls to have sex, rub up against them: *The boys want to get the girls and force them to kiss them on the mouth. This going to the bathroom thing, they go into the girls' bathroom.*

Table 5.4 illustrates the relative extent of the responses to the question of the incidence of rape or sexual violence in the school environment. Students and members of the technical-pedagogical staff indicate percentages that are extremely close to those for brutal incidents like sexual violence and/or rape (8%). These percentages were mostly reported respectively in the Federal District (9% and 20%), São Paulo (11% and 18%), Manaus (11% and 10%) and Cuiabá (12% and 6%).

Table 5.4

Proportion of students in Elementary Basic (5th to 8th grades) and Secondary School, by capital of Federal Unit, according to reports of sexual violence and/or rape in the school environment - 2000 *

Interviewed Individual	DF	GO	MT	AM	PA	CE	PE	AL	BA	ES	RJ	SP	SC	RS
Students	9	7	12	11	5	5	6	7	9	5	6	11	6	9
TOTAL (N)	(335849)	(198832)	(83869)	(239376)	(192840)	(357002)	(246281)	(113607)	(459168)	(57630)	(665907)	(1462381)	(50046)	(170512)

Source: National Survey on Violence, AIDS and Drugs in School, UNESCO, 2001.

The individuals were asked: "Mark with an X if you know that this has happened at this school: There was rape or sexual violence in or near this school. "The percentages refer only to affirmative responses obtained in the student and technical-pedagogical staff member statements.

* Expanded data.

In many of the accounts, mainly those from female students, harassment from teachers is associated with stricter measures, like the presence of the parents or taking legal action. Other statements indicate that many female students react directly to the harassment by threatening to turn the person in to the police:

> *I had a teacher that was principal too, and a lot of times he tried to harass my best friend. She came and talked to me and said 'Let's turn him in because he can't do this. How many times has he tried to do this to the other girls? You could be the tenth. If no one does anything, he's going to keep on doing it.' We had hardly finished talking and the next day at school I saw him grabbing some girl behind the water tower. Last year, he really bugged me, thinking I was going to do the same thing. He would get right next to me and I said if he did that to me he was really going to get in trouble because he was going to have to get involved with the police and the juvenile court because the juvenile court is my guardian.* (Focus group with students, public school, Federal District)

There are also rapes and other forms of sexual violence that happen in the areas that surround the school, precisely where the students travel to and from school to their homes: Last year a girl was raped on the street where the school is. She was a second-year student. According to the discipline inspectors, one of the consequences of this type of violence is that it causes the girls to be afraid to go to school and many times they quit studying at that school or stop studying altogether: *I've had to attend to girls that were raped. There are girls who have to leave school early because of this, because of the fear of violence.*

Dealing with sexual violence in schools involves many types of interwoven violence. This includes physical violence and

verbal violence as well as violence of a symbolic nature. A wide variety of power symbols come into play including gender roles like stereotypes for masculinity and the expected division of sexes. The girls are expected to be reserved and are not supposed to provoke by wearing clothing considered to be inappropriate. The boys are expected to be aggressive. It is also noted that there are a significant number of cases where the teachers participate as aggressors. Many times this type of incident goes unpunished based on symbolic violence or abuse of authority in a culture that discriminates against women. It must also be noted that while female students are the most frequent victims of this kind of violence, there are also accounts of sexual violence against male students.

5.1.4. The use of guns/weapons

The use of guns/weapons as a resource for fights and conflicts in this era of increased violence in society reaches the schools in large measure. According to some North American research (Cox, 1997; Flannery, 1997; Day, 1996), taking a weapon/gun to this environment is done less with the intention of committing some type of crime and is used more as a way of commanding respect or for self-protection and self-defense.

Both national and international literature on violence in the schools stress that the availability of a weapon increases the possibility of confrontations where those involved will lose control and the situation will become extreme violence, homicide. It is also commonly mentioned in the literature that the use of weapons has taken on meaning as a gender power symbol or an expression of masculinity. Mainly, the use of guns/weapons in the schools is reported as being for physical intimidation and according to some students for "defense".

This research data in Brazil suggest that guns represent a small portion of the weapons found in the schools. In opening up discussion about weapons, the students showed that they were

conscious of the power of aggression not only from guns, but also mainly from so called white weapons[60]. Other weapons included chains, bats or clubs: Sometimes people think that a weapon is only a gun, [but] there are lots of types of weapons. A knife or scissors can be a weapon too. They even mention knives, switchblades, stilettos, and (....) sharpened pieces of metal. *There are a lot of students that go to school with knives, stilettos, switchblades. There's always that kind of thing. There was a kid in our class who brought his little knife with him everyday.*

The teachers and the principals reported that it was common to find students carrying fishing knives, knives, switchblades: *They [the students] like to walk around with these things. You find a lot of those big pointed scissors too.*

Some parents see it as normal for the students to walk around with so called white weapons. This reinforces the hypothesis of a culture of violence that makes violence banal: *Here (....) it's really common for a student to be armed. It happens all the time, it's not so surprising. They [the students] use white weapons, all types, like knives, switchblades and other things.* In addition to this, there are parents that reinforce this kind of behavior in their children. They criticize the Principal's Office when measures are taken in this respect. They do this without taking the existing danger into consideration:

> *I know of a case where this boy brought a switchblade to school. The school suspended him or expelled him, I'm not really sure how it went. I met the mother and she thought it was nuts [saying] 'just because he took a switchblade to school?' Like it was the most normal thing for a kid to go to school with a stiletto, knife or gun.* (Focus group with parents, private school, Rio de Janeiro)

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[60] The survey asked about the use of the following weapons: guns, knives, bats, clubs, stilettos and chains. White weapons include cutting objects.

Consulting with the students and members of the technical-pedagogical staff (tables 5.5 and 5.5A) show that the majority of violent situations in the school environment include guns. The percentage rates of those that point out the use of guns are high, reaching almost half, especially in São Paulo and the Federal District. These cities also showed an accentuated consistency among percentages recorded for both students and members of the technical-pedagogical staff. The smallest rates for the use of guns were found in Florianópolis (24% of students and 18% of members of the technical-pedagogical staff).

Table 5.5

Proportion of students in Elementary Basic (5th to 8th grades) and Secondary School, by capital of Federal Unit, according to indication of types of weapons used in violent incidents at school - 2000 *

Students	DF	GO	MT	AM	PA	CE	PE	AL	BA	ES	RJ	SP	SC	RS
Guns	49	32	41	33	32	34	40	33	34	36	43	50	24	37
Other weapons**	51	68	59	67	68	66	60	67	66	64	57	50	76	63
TOTAL	**100 (315993)**	**100 (170437)**	**100 (82552)**	**100 (232962)**	**100 (153484)**	**100 (297064)**	**100 (197555)**	**100 (95841)**	**100 (384155)**	**100 (45290)**	**100 (419790)**	**100 (1128867)**	**100 (38593)**	**100 (156966)**

Source: National Survey on Violence, AIDS and Drugs in School, UNESCO, 2001.

The students and members of the technical-pedagogical staff were asked: "Which weapons were most used? (Mark all that you know about.)

* Expanded data.

** The other weapons category includes knives, stilettos, chains, sticks and clubs.

Table 5.5A

Proportion of members of the technical-pedagogical staff, by capital of Federal Unit, according to indication of types of weapons used in violent incidents at school - 2000 *

Technical-pedagogical Staff	DF	GO	MT	AM	PA	CE	PE	AL	BA	ES	RJ	SP	SC	RS
Guns	49	25	34	33	27	31	37	29	20	41	49	48	18	27
Other weapons*	51	75	66	67	73	69	63	71	80	59	51	52	82	73
TOTAL	**100 (127)**	**100 (181)**	**100 (207)**	**100 (149)**	**100 (214)**	**100 (150)**	**100 (125)**	**100 (201)**	**100 (115)**	**100 (143)**	**100 (141)**	**100 (195)**	**100 (103)**	**100 (218)**

Source: National Survey on Violence, AIDS and Drugs in School, UNESCO, 2001.

The students and members of the technical-pedagogical staff were asked: "Which weapons were most used? (Mark all that you know about.)

* The other weapons category includes knives, stilettos, chains, sticks and clubs.

The fact that weapons – guns or not – are generally associated with violent incidents in the schools contributes to spreading a feeling of insecurity. It also creates a natural element to carrying weapons and justifies adopting them as instruments of defense. In other words, even if guns do not assume complete prevalence their presence in the school is alarming as are relatively more elevated percentage rates.

In detailed observation of the use of guns in violent incidents in the schools according to administrative dependency, the high percentage rates for public schools is shocking (table 5.6). In fact, the use of guns in violent incidents is much more frequently registered by public students than by private students. However, in Rio de Janeiro, the Federal District, São Paulo and Cuiabá, the percentages of students in private schools that indicated the use of guns in this type of incident were higher than in other capitals.

Table 5.6

Proportion of students in Elementary (5th to 8th grades) and Secondary School, by capital of Federal Unit, according to indication of use of guns in violent incidents in school - 2000

[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]														
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]														
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

Source: National Survey on Violence, AIDS and Drugs in School, UNESCO, 2001.

The students and members of the technical-pedagogical staff were asked: "Which weapons were most used? (Mark all that you know about.)" The answers shown in this table are restricted only to those that marked "guns".

percentages refer only to affirmative responses obtained in the student and technical-pedagogical staff member statements.

* Expanded data.

In addition to the already mentioned weapons, toy weapons[61] were used for intimidation. This can create a situation of chaos in the schools. Many principals' statements from both education systems were not able to keep up with the growing number of students that go to school with toy weapons. According to those interviewed, the "toys" are real replicas that confuse anyone, principally the layperson: *If you don't know about guns, you think they're real. Do you want to bet on that kind of thing? Of course you don't. I've already had a few surprises when I saw armed children at school, but then it was really a toy.*

Using toys indicates the importance of weapons in the students' concept of the situation. The toys serve as a stimulus for increasing the desire to acquire the true item (....) *It's a sign that the kid is going to admire a real gun pretty soon and is going to want to have a real gun.* The security agents share this observation. They express their apprehensions about the real intention youths have when they carry this kind of "toy": *you don't really know what the kid is after (....).*

The presence of any type of weapon is a sign of not only effective and explicit violence. It is also an indication of settings that make violence banal. Guns, even when they are not used, become part of the school setting. There is evidence that carrying guns and other weapons comes to represent part of a field that could turn into a battlefield at any time. This is shown in the following table.

A portion of students that had seen students, parents or teachers carrying a gun in the school environment varied between 9% and 18%. The highest percentages were registered in the Federal District, Cuiabá, Porto Alegre and São Paulo. The

[61] Art. 10 of Law no 9437, 02/20/1997, describes as a crime the use of toy weapons, guns that are capable of simulating a weapon that can kill another in order to commit crimes.

numbers varied between 2% and 8% for members of the technical-pedagogical staff. This suggests that many times the gun is not seen and that the staff is not informed.

In regard to other weapons the percentages from students and those from members of the technical-pedagogical staff are quite close to each other. The students' rates vary between 9% in Rio de Janeiro and 20% in Florianópolis. Among the members of the technical-pedagogical staff the rates vary between 6% in Rio de Janeiro to 19% in Porto Alegre and 18% in Goiânia and Florianópolis.

Depending on the type of weapon, these discrepancies between the students and the technical-pedagogical staff knowing or being informed about students' carrying arms may be understood from the following points of view: 1) widely legitimate and almost banal use of other weapons that are not guns in a way that is known to all; 2) knowledge of guns that may be more restricted to the students and hidden from the authorities. If these hypotheses receive support, they do so in light of a false hierarchy of weapons type and of the seriousness of their use in the school environment.

Many students reported that they had already heard about armed individuals but they deny that there are weapons at their schools. They say that they have never seen weapons or seen them used in fights: *Nobody's ever seen one, you just find out who has them because you hear stuff.*

It was clear in many of the statements that there is personal direct student involvement in confrontations that included the use of weapons in the school environment. This involvement includes relationships with people from outside of the school or with classmates, in addition to describing a certain accident type of logic in terms of how confrontations erupt:

Chart 5.2
So then he took out a gun

Focus group with students, public school, Rio de Janeiro and Goiânia
I was always play fighting with this guy here at school. Then one day we were playing around and I hit him really hard. So then he says: 'I'm going to bring my uncle and he's going to get you.' So the next day (...) hey kid, you hit my nephew, now you're going to suffer the consequences.' So then he took out a gun. So I said: 'I always play with your nephew and this time I hit him pretty hard, but when he hits me pretty hard I take it. He can't say I hit him hard this time and he's not going to accept it and then this happens.' So he called his nephew and asked him 'was that how it happened?' 'Yeah.' 'This time you get away with it, but next time you won't.'

I didn't think he'd get me at school [because] he said he had gone somewhere else, but when I got here he pushed me up against the classroom wall and pulled out a stiletto (...) I told him to cut me, 'Go ahead, cut me. You'll get yours.' He left me alone after that. He was all up in my face and they went and told the secretary (...) He's always doing that, like he's playing around, but he could really cut someone.

The use of weapons in the schools apparently reflects the fact that weapons have become part of the domestic setting. Between one-third and one-fifth of the students have contact with guns in their family environment. This situation varies between 32% in Porto Alegre and 18% in Belém, considering students that said their parents or relatives have guns in the home. Among the students, 14% in Porto Alegre and Cuiabá and 13% in the Federal District and 5% in Recife said they know where to get guns and who sells them.

In the focus groups a number of youths said they have access to guns in their homes. The guns belong to their parents or other family members and they are frequently hidden or stored away. The principals corroborate these statements: *This year I caught a student with eight bullets from a 38 and he had the gun. His father is police and he had left the gun where the student could get it. So he took it to trade it for stickers. That's what he said.*

According to table 5.7 the percentage of students that said they had or had had guns varied between 7% in the Federal District and 2% in Recife. In describing this group and going back to other information, the incidence of carrying weapons is the same in the elementary and secondary levels, but it occurs more at night, in public schools and among male students.

The same table illustrates that 19% of students in São Paulo and 21% in the Federal District state that is easy to get guns at the school or near the school. On the other extreme, 8% of students in Rio de Janeiro state the same. Going back to the associations, the same occurrence of information of this type is found for the two educational levels. However, it is growing among those that study at night in public school and among male students. This means that some youths with specific characteristics will know more about where to get guns in the school or near the school.

Table 5.7

Number of students in Elementary (5th to 8th grades) and Secondary School, by capital of Federal Unit, according to type of contact with guns -– 2000*

	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

Source: National Survey on Violence, AIDS and Drugs in School, UNESCO, 2001.

The individuals were asked: "Mark with an X if this is true: ..."The percentages refer to those that marked true for the alternatives for the table.

only to affirmative responses obtained in the student and technical-pedagogical staff member statements.

* Expanded data.

The students point to mechanisms that facilitate the presence of guns among school community members. This spreads the carrying of guns and their eventual use. It is said that *buying these things [guns] is like buying candy, lollipops*. The guns are acquired easily, mainly through friends or acquaintances. In a number of capitals, in both the public and the private schools, the students show that they are familiar with how to buy guns: *(....) you pay for it after. You pay for it little by little with that payment plan.*

Many locations do not require authorization for buying a gun. This indicates the lack of control for this type of commercial activity. The police appear as suppliers, indicating how easy it is to acquire a gun, not only for the youths but for any interested party: *maybe they [the police] even give them to the bums around here because the police around here are worse than the bums.*

Chart 5.3
Firearms

- *A little over half of those that know where to purchase weapons, 55% also know where weapons can obtained near their school.*
- *Over half of those that have or have had a gun, 51% also say that their parents or relatives own guns.*
- *Two-thirds of those that know where/who sells guns, 67% say that these weapons are used in violent incidents at school.*
- *Of those that say it is easy to obtain guns in school or in the surrounding areas, 69% state that these weapons are used in violent incidents at school.*
- *Of those that have or have had a gun, 70% say that these weapons are used in violent incidents at school.*
- *The group that states having seen students, parents, teachers or staff members carrying guns and/or other weapons represents the largest number of accounts of violent incidents when compared to the group that did not report the carrying of weapons.*

The qualitative data indicates the presence of students that receive stolen guns. The data stresses that weapon sales apparently do not take place within the establishment and do not negatively affect the youths' school performance. These students live a sort of double life as the following statement suggests:

> *We've got a student that sells guns, but not at school. Here inside the school, certainly not. He is a huge dealer, not a drug dealer, but an arms dealer. He receives stolen guns. He's a student here and he was one of the two leaders last year in that whole mess. Here at school he's a great student, but I know what he does outside school. He holds up buses, he receives stolen weapons and he sells guns. He's got a 32, he's got a 38, a 22 and a 765.* (Interview with inspector, public school, Fortaleza)

The active or passive pressure and complicity from many parties sustain the culture of violence that we have been discussing. There are reports of students knowing who sells weapons, who comes to school armed and how to get into school with a weapon. The reports indicate that students help to hide these situations. This is how the "law of silence" goes into effect, because the youths fear retaliation. They also do not want to be marked as informants. When someone does decide to talk or give information it occurs in a coded manner. This involves so many restrictions that it ends up interfering with the school's monitoring duties:

> *I've never seen anything, but I've got information that sometimes an armed student gets into the school. How they do it, I don't know. I only know that the other students stay quiet about it, so nobody will find out. So, ok, it's just that the people who decide to give information or to say something do it in such a "secret", coded way that it ends up all confused. And then it's*

really hard to do anything about it. (Interview with inspector, public school, Salvador)

The parents' discussions reveal that there is also a certain amount of ambiguity concerning carrying weapons or student access to weapons. Some parents say that there are students that manage to enter the school with weapons without any problem, in the public and private schools alike. At the same time, they say that they have never seen anyone armed at the school and that their children haven't either: *My son's classmate was armed today. He had a 38. 'Did you see it?' I asked. He said no, but that everyone said it was this student.*

Even so, information from students and members of the technical-pedagogical staff are full of shooting episodes in the school environment or in the school neighborhood. The rates for this kind of report are high, with a total of 21% of the students and 17% of the members of the technical-pedagogical staff in the 14 capitals. The highest numbers are for the Federal District (36% and 31% respectively), São Paulo (29%), Cuiabá (23%) and Recife (19% and 32%).

The following table allows for a comparison of information about shootings in or near the schools, according to administrative dependency. Once again, there is a high index of reports about situations of this type in the public schools. The examples in the testimonies about carrying guns in school reveal that the private school students seem to know more or to talk more than the teachers do about shootings in or near their schools, with the exception of Vitória.

Table 5.8

Proportion of students in Elementary Basic (5th to 8th grades) and Secondary School, by capital of Federal Unit, according to administrative dependence and indication of shootings in or near school - 2000*

[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]														
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]														
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

Source: National Survey on Violence, AIDS and Drugs in School, UNESCO, 2001.
The individuals were asked: "Mark with an X if you know this has happened in this school: There have been shootings in or near the school." The answers in this table are restricted to those that indicated the occurrence of shootings in or near the school. percentages refer to those that marked true for the alternatives for the table.
* Expanded data.

In light of these numbers, the students' testimonies become even more significant. Students from both the public and the private systems see the use of weapons as necessary and legitimate for self-protection. They see guns as something that fights violence, because of fear or to feel more protected: *There are people who are afraid or who think they're courageous because they're armed, but most of the time it's because they're afraid, and they feel better if they're armed.*

For the students, protection is a justifiable or opportune cause for the acquisition and carrying of weapons, mainly guns. Other reasons are to show off in an attempt to assert themselves in front of others, *to say that he's this great guy, to make people afraid.* The gun demands respect and is an instrument of power. In addition to this, the acquisition of weapons can be the expression of an idea that will discourage their classmates who might be against them.

The flip side of the coin also appears in the students' accounts. They point their fingers at the ones that use guns: *With a gun, they're big shots. I want to see them without their guns, to see if they're big shots!*

Many of the youths state that disarmament should be general, the police shouldn't use them, and neither should the criminals. Some students believe that the fact that the youths walk around armed ends up causing more violence – *this really causes a lot more problems. I think you should carry a gun when it's really necessary.* In some cases, the weapon makes people lose control:

> *I think it's always like that with a gun. It's dangerous to come across a person with a gun. Everyone has something that you could call an 'all of a sudden' inside them. I'm going to use these words. Nobody knows anybody all the way through. I don't know myself, for example. I don't know how I would react to*

> *something, a problem, a hold up. Everyone reacts a certain way at a time like this, with a gun. Instead of being something that can get you out of the situation, save you, it's going to make it worse. You can turn into a criminal.* (Interview with educational counselor, public school, Belém)

In the belly of a culture of violence that becomes more wide-ranging through the use of weapons, gender separations are broken in regard to violence. Members of the school community that were interviewed consider the number of girls found with white weapons to be increasing, especially when fights are involved:

> *Switchblades, knives. You catch them in the bathroom even when you don't want to because the girls put them in their pants. One time I caught this girl and I said 'Who are you going to get with that knife?' And she said '(...) I'm going to cut her belly open.' So I said 'Girl, why do you have to be so violent?' And she said: 'Play with me and I cut you.'* (Focus group with students, public school, Cuiabá)

There are complaints among the students that there are no effective measures to prevent weapons from entering the schools. In some public and private schools a certain preoccupation can be observed on the part of the students for there to be effective control against armed people getting into the school. Previously there were searches at the school entrances where students were caught with weapons. These measures no longer occur: *There was a time when the principal was taking away weapons when people were coming into the school There were two police officers at the entrance looking for weapons for the girls and the boys. They found a pistol, a 38 and a few stilettos.*

Some public school teachers feel limited in trying to restrict the entrance of armed students. They comment that the *Conselho*

Tutelar prohibits schools from taking any kind of action when they find an armed student. The most they can do is direct the problem to the *Conselho Tutelar* for evaluation and due measures:

> *So we always run into this barrier from the Conselho Tutelar. You can't frisk a student and you have to be sure that you saw the kid with the gun. I think that I had a kid in class, one class, that had a gun. I didn't see any type of weapon but he walked by me with something and he was challenging me. I think it was a gun. I didn't know what kind of stand I should take and I had to leave the classroom and leave the students there.* (Focus group with teachers, public school, Porto Alegre)

5.1.5. Other forms of violence against a person

As shown in the following tables 5.9 and 5.9A, students and members of the technical-pedagogical reported non-specific types of incidents in the school environment. The distinctive features of these incidents were grave injuries and/or deaths of students, teachers or parents. Although these percentage rates seem low, they are alarming because of their seriousness.

Table 5.9

Proportion of students in Elementary Basic (5th to 8th grades) and Secondary School, by capital of Federal Unit, according to reports of serious injury or death of students, parents or teachers in the school environment - 2000*

Interviewed Individuals	DF	GO	MT	AM	PA	CE	PE	AL	BA	ES	RJ	SP	SC	RS
Students	11	6	9	12	5	8	8	6	11	7	6	10	8	9
TOTAL (N)	(335849)	(198832)	(83869)	(239377)	(192841)	(357001)	(246280)	(113608)	(459168)	(57630)	(665907)	(1462380)	(50047)	(170511)

Source: National Survey on Violence, AIDS and Drugs in School, UNESCO, 2001.
The individuals were asked: "Mark with an X if you know this has happened at this school: There have been incidents of serious injury or death of students, parents, teachers or staff members." The percentages refer only to affirmative responses obtained in the student and technical-pedagogical staff member statements.
* Expanded data.

It must be mentioned again that the importance of these events is not simply their magnitude, but what they mean and reveal about violence in the schools. With this in mind, average variables of 8% for students and 6% for teachers taken on enormous significance beyond what they represent in total numbers.

The capitals with the highest percentage rates for accounts of grave injuries or death for students, parents or teachers in the school environment occurred in Salvador (11% for student reports and 16% for technical-pedagogical staff reports, Manaus (12% and 5%, respectively), São Paulo (10% and 7%) and the Federal District (11% and 5%).

Table 5.9A

Proportion of members of the technical-pedagogical staff, by capital of Federal Unit, according to reports of serious injury or death of students, parents or teachers in the school environment - 2000

Interviewed Individuals	DF	GO	MT	AM	PA	CE	PE	AL	BA	ES	RJ	SP	SC	RS
Technical-pedagogical Staff	5	7	8	5	2	3	7	3	16	3	6	7	7	6
TOTAL (N)	(137)	(201)	(262)	(177)	(255)	(186)	(149)	(315)	(189)	(193)	(280)	(257)	(187)	(311)

Source: National Survey on Violence, AIDS and Drugs in School, UNESCO, 2001.
The individuals were asked: "Mark with an X if you Know that this happened in this school: Armed assault od teachers, parents or students."
The percentage refer only to affirmative responses obtained in the student and technical-pedagogical staff member statements.

In spite of reluctance to relate incidents of a serious nature, the rates of those who gave statements registered in the previous table are corroborated by statements obtained in the interviews and focus groups: *Just this year, there have been two homicides and one of those was when the husband came into school and murdered a student, his wife.*

One school principal related a murder that involved students and that reinforced the permanent atmosphere of insecurity:

Chart 5.4
Student kills other student

Interview with principal, public school, Salvador
(....) after the boy died we asked for security, something to be done, and it's still the same as it always was. It was in that bathroom over there. A 14 year-old killed a 12 year-old and nobody saw it.

5.2. VIOLENCE AGAINST PROPERTY

5.2.1. Stealing and robbery

There are numerous accounts of stealing and robbery occur in the testimonies and they are presented from the point of view that these kind of things are normal. Both stealing and robbery consist of taking property although stealing occurs without the victim's noticing: In this case, stealing is taking something without anybody seeing. Robbery means aggression. In robbery there would be a certain amount of violence when taking something. However, the majority of the accounts state that the term robbery is used in both situations, with no clear difference between stealing and robbery.

According to tables 5.10 and 5.10A, the students state that car theft is common as is stealing students or teachers' personal

objects, and percentages vary from 38% in Porto Alegre, and 36% in the Federal District to 20% in Belém. The percentages among the teachers are higher, with the highest numbers again in Porto Alegre (62%) and the Federal District (58%) and the lowest numbers in Maceió (30%), followed by Rio de Janeiro and Cuiabá, both with 32%. This is in contrast with the information on violence against people, where the students reported more of this type of incident.

Table 5.10

Proportion of students in Elementary (5th to 8th grades) and Secondary School, by capital of Federal Unit, according to reports of car theft or theft of personal objects in the school environment -– 2000*

Interviewed Individuals	DF	GO	MT	AM	PA	CE	PE	AL	BA	ES	RJ	SP	SC	RS
Students	36	27	30	29	20	27	29	26	26	29	24	26	38	38
TOTAL (N)	(335850)	(198832)	(83870)	(239378)	(192839)	(357002)	(246281)	(113608)	(459168)	(57631)	(665907)	(1462381)	(50046)	(170511)

Source: National Survey on Violence, AIDS and Drugs in School, UNESCO, 2001.

The individuals were asked: "Mark with an X if you know this has happened at this school: Thefts or robbery of cars, tape decks, tennis shoes, books, etc?" The percentages refer only to affirmative responses obtained in the student and technical-pedagogical staff member statements.

* Expanded data.

Table 5.10A

Proportion of members of the technical-pedagogical staff, by capital of Federal Unit, according to reports of car theft or theft of personal objects in the school environment - 2000

Interviewed Individuals	DF	GO	MT	AM	PA	CE	PE	AL	BA	ES	RJ	SP	SC	RS
Technical-pedagogical Staff	58	46	32	42	41	33	39	30	43	41	32	46	42	62
TOTAL (N)	(137)	(201)	(262)	(177)	(255)	(186)	(149)	(315)	(189)	(193)	(280)	(257)	(187)	(311)

Source: National Survey on Violence, AIDS and Drugs in School, UNESCO, 2001.

The individuals were asked: "Mark with an X if you know this has happened at this school: Thefts or robbery of cars, tape decks, tennis shoes, books, etc?" The percentages refer only to affirmative responses obtained in the student and technical-pedagogical staff member statements.

The information seems to give the idea that most of the petty theft that goes on is done by people from within the school and this seems to indicate acceptance on the part of the youths. They see these incidents as something natural and this causes students, coordinators and principals to play down their seriousness. In some cases, they even forget the nature of the act: *There's this stealing that goes on in class, nothing really valuable gets taken. There are those stupid little thefts, like taking stuff from the classroom, even stuff for studying. Sometimes it isn't worth much at all, like one buck*. This omits the meaning of incivility and disrespect for the other. This also omits the idea of violence as stealing or robbery because of the victims or because of the violation of ethical principals.

These petty thefts were presented as behavior characteristic of youths. This seemed to justify the thefts somehow as something normal for the age. Many statements reflected this point of view: It's a teenage thing. *Sometimes the teens like to show off and they have to be different. It happens in adolescence. It's a block that the kid has, it's stupid stuff for the kid who doesn't have anything better to do*. There are also accounts of stolen items that are returned to their original owners. These occurrences are categorized correctly as "playing games" by the youths – *sometimes it's funny*. It must be mentioned, however, that the statements infrequently include any kind of preoccupation with the ethical training of the students that commit these petty thefts: *It's nothing really serious. It's just little stuff. But someone who steals this little stuff today could steal bigger stuff tomorrow.*

There are differences of opinion on the degree and frequency of robbery and stealing in the schools among those interviewed. However, the majority agrees that the more serious acts are committed by people outside of the school community that enter the school at night or during the weekends or holidays. This represents a dichotomy between the truly violent street space

and the relatively more secure school space. This dichotomy also encompasses the school community that sees its members as less violent: *They already robbed the school, but it wasn't anyone from here at the school. They took a television, a video (...) they stole a teacher's wallet but it wasn't a student who did it.*

The "ex-students" and "new students" appear as criminals in the testimonies. The new students are suspect of robberies owing to the fact that they are not yet considered as belonging to the school space. Some security guards allege that some ex-students enter the schools disguised with the school uniform in order to steal student and school property.

On the other hand, some accounts from teachers, principals, coordinators and inspectors affirm that stealing of school and personal property is performed mainly by students. This includes stealing money, bus tickets and food. These statements refer to the fact that *you've got a clientele that if you let your guard down for a minute, they take stuff. Den of thieves!*

When students are seen as participants in robbery and stealing, the youths say that they feel nervous about leaving their belongings out in the open: *they have to go on the break with their backpacks because there are students in Phys Ed who come in and just clean out the classroom. They take the things their classmates bring to school. Supplies, money and belongings.*

The insinuations that demonstrate collusion and intellectual participation on the part of the students must be mentioned again. This includes supplying information or uniforms and student ID cards as facilitating methods for people from outside: *You see someone who has two shirts and you ask for a shirt from any school on the street and you walk right in.*

One principal stated that school property had been stolen, mainly electronic equipment, by people who knew the school. At times this principal's statements became dubious, maintaining that we get this kind of problem a lot. However, this report

exposes a tendency to minimize the seriousness of the supposed participation of the people in the school:

> *We've already had robberies here at the school where they took all the computers. They took the whole video setup, televisions, videos, they got a lot of stuff, ok? The police officers made us aware of this: 'Is it possible that information came from a student?' So we didn't know what to say, because we don't really have that kind of thing here, stealing, robbery. No one said anything. You know that the thief that came in knew everything. They knew there was an alarm and where all the classrooms were and the supplies. We know it and all the students and the employees know it too.* (Interview with principal, private school, Cuiabá)

The petty thefts have already been stressed. These include stealing school supplies like pens, erasers and pencil cases as well as small amounts of money, cellular phones and purses. Many students and principals interpret this type of stealing as a result of jealousy or resentment because there's that person that doesn't like you and knows that you've got a certain thing and then they go and take it. They also mention that social differences stimulate the poorer youths to steal in order to balance the difference in social status.

> *It's also when someone stands out. We had this student in here twice because her supplies were stolen. All of her pens were taken. I had already talked to her about not bringing such nice pens to school, such a nice pencil case. Their standards don't allow for that kind of difference in supplies.* (Interview with principal, public school, Rio de Janeiro)

According to table 5.11 the students that display expensive items are described by the students as a group that is quite vulnerable to violent acts. The highest rates are found in Porto Alegre (29%) and Florianópolis (32%). The members of the technical-pedagogical staff pointed out this type of victim to a lesser extent. In all 14 capitals 8% cited this group of students as targets for violence. It must be mentioned, however, that the highest rates for this group were found in Manaus (18%) and Florianópolis (12%).

Table 5.11

Proportion of students in Elementary Basic (5ª a 8ª) and Secondary School, by capital of Federal Unit, according to indication of students that display expensive items as victims of violence in school, 2000*

Interviewed Individuals	DF	GO	MT	AM	PA	CE	PE	AL	BA	ES	RJ	SP	SC	RS
Students	28	22	26	23	21	21	19	19	25	21	21	24	32	29
TOTAL (N)	(263722)	(142534)	(65997)	(177526)	(135194)	(263661)	(166924)	(71306)	(323868)	(40437)	(416444)	(1098250)	(35865)	(135608)

Source: National Survey on Violence, AIDS and Drugs in School, UNESCO, 2001.
The individuals were asked: "Mark with an X if you know that these were victims: Students that display expensive items." The percentages refer only to affirmative responses obtained in the student and technical-pedagogical staff member statements.
* Expanded data.

Once again, the inconsistency between student responses and responses from members of the technical-pedagogical staff must be mentioned. Each group seems to have a distinct and separate universe. There is a larger tendency among the youths to associate victimization to the victim's socio-economic characteristics and behavior such as showing off expensive things. The youths feel that this creates a social clash and attracts violence. A certain intolerance and fragility in the students' ethical references must be mentioned in addition to the fact that the exhibitionist behavior can be questionable.

An idea that goes against common sense is revealed in a large portion of the testimonies. This is that robbery and stealing by students may have other motives that are not necessarily linked to financial need or lack of things: *I say: 'Really, you don't need this. If you pay eight hundred to go to this school, you don't need to steal from anybody.'*

Teachers and parents were indignant with the reasons for robbery and stealing in the school environment, especially those that included students as perpetrators. Teachers and parents agreed that stealing to buy drugs was the largest cause of this type of incident: *Some of them steal to get money to buy drugs. First they use everything they can from their families. They usually don't work. Some steal inside the school.*

The majority of serious robberies and stealing is not attributed to the students. However, the blame almost always falls on the students. Teachers and principals are practically unanimous in stating that robberies and stealing occur because of student negligence, saying that they allow this type of violence to happen: *Here in Rio de Janeiro, everyone wants to be smarter than the next guy. You're going to be careless with your money?*

5.2.2. Assaults

Assault corresponds to taking personal property through armed coercion. As shown in table 5.12, according to students, these occurrences in the schools are more frequent in Cuiabá and Belém (20%), and the Federal District and Porto Alegre (16%). The teachers indicate (table 5.12A) that the rates of armed assault of students, parents and teachers are more frequent in São Paulo (24%), the Federal District (23%), Fortaleza (22%), Manaus (20%) and Belém and Vitória (19%).

Table 5.12

Proportion of students in Elementary Basic (5th to 8th grades) and Secondary School, by capital of Federal Unit, according to reports of armed assault of students, parents or teachers in the school environment or surrounding areas, 2000

Interviewed Individuals	DF	GO	MT	AM	PA	CE	PE	AL	BA	ES	RJ	SP	SC	RS
Students	16	9	20	16	14	14	13	11	12	9	9	13	10	16
TOTAL (N)	(335850)	(198830)	(83869)	(239376)	(192841)	(357001)	(246281)	(113608)	(459167)	(57632)	(665907)	(1462380)	(50046)	(170511)

Source: National Survey on Violence, AIDS and Drugs in School, UNESCO, 2001.

The individuals were asked: "Mark with an X if you know that this has happened in this school: Armed assault of teachers, parents or students." The percentages refer only to affirmative responses obtained in the student and technical-pedagogical staff member statements.

* Expanded data.

Table 5.12A

Proportion of members of the technical-pedagogical staff, by capital of Federal Unit, according to reports of armed assault of students, parents or teachers in the school or surrounding areas - 2000

Interviewed Individuals	DF	GO	MT	AM	PA	CE	PE	AL	BA	ES	RJ	SP	SC	RS
Technical-pedagogical Staff	23	8	13	20	19	22	13	5	7	19	11	24	3	15
TOTAL (N)	(137)	(201)	(262)	(177)	(255)	(186)	(149)	(315)	(189)	(193)	(280)	(257)	(187)	(311)

Source: National Survey on Violence, AIDS and Drugs in School, UNESCO, 2001.
The individuals were asked: "Mark with an X if you know this has happened at this school: There have been incidents of serious injury or death of students, parents, teachers or staff members."
The percentage refer only to affirmative responses obtained in the student and technical-pedagogical staff member statements.

The fact stands out that certain testimonies suggested that this type of violence has undergone a naturalization process – *I think it's weird that we're already so used to it!* Special emphasis is given to assaults because they are extremely common:

> *Today I can only see it with a certain amount of 'normality', quote unquote, that a student was assaulted. The first question 'Did they hurt you?' 'All right, they didn't hurt you. What did they take?' 'They took the money.' What they wanted was the money. They didn't take any school supplies, or tennis shoes. The assaults here are for money.* (Focus group with teachers, private school, Porto Alegre)

In the public schools the percentage rates vary between a maximum of 17% in Porto Alegre and Manaus. In the private schools they vary between 7% in Florianópolis and 30% in Cuiabá. Similarities can be observed among both types of schools in terms of this modality of violence. However, the public school accounts are more frequent. There is also a high occurrence of this type in the private schools, however. When this occurrence is put in juxtaposition with the feeling of fear and insecurity of the cities' populations, it is clear that this type of violence runs through the schools and the social classes independent of whether the school is public or private.

5.3. VIOLENCE AGAINST PROPERTY

Degradation of the school space and equipment, without robbery, suggests a social reaction against the school. North American studies (Greenberg, 1969) demonstrate that vandalism has been associated with authoritarian school administrations. It has also been associated with indifference and omissions. This means when teachers are not receptive to the students or when

there is a high teacher turnover rate or many punishments. It is important to try to clear up the messages that are hidden in violence against school property. It may have various meanings, including a necessity to get attention and show off in front of classmates or to express rebellion. According to Day (1996), this kind of violence occurs from the desire of those who are doing it to leave their mark on the world: *they're putting out all the rebellion that they have against the government or their parents, society, their school. They scratch something in the walls to display their will, their desire.*

The fact that degradation in diverse forms is frequently reported by students and members of the technical-pedagogical staff can be seen in tables 5.13 and 5.13A. The members of the school community in Porto Alegre reported the most occurrences (26% and 61%, respectively) followed by Recife (17% and 59%), São Paulo (16% and 49%), Goiânia (16% and 48%) and Salvador (11% and 52%).

Table 5.13

Proportin of students in Elementary Basic (5th to 8th) and Secondary School, by capital of Federal Unit, according to reports of degradation of the school, 2000*

Interviewed Individuals:	DF	GO	MT	AM	PA	CE	PE	AL	BA	ES	RJ	SP	SC	RS
Students	19	16	19	13	8	8	17	7	11	17	11	16	18	26
TOTAL (N)	(335850)	(198831)	(83871)	(239376)	(192840)	(357002)	(246279)	(113608)	(459168)	(57630)	(665907)	(1462380)	(50047)	(170511)

Source: National Survey on Violence, AIDS and Drugs in School, UNESCO, 2001.

The individuals were asked: "Mark with an X if you know that this has happened in this school: Degradation of the school." The percentages refer only to affirmative responses obtained in the student and technical-pedagogical staff member statements.

* Expanded data.

Table 5.13A

Proportion of members of the technical-pedagogical staff, by capital of Federal Unit, according to reports of degradation of the school, 2000

Interviewed Individuals:	DF	GO	MT	AM	PA	CE	PE	AL	BA	ES	RJ	SP	SC	RS
Technical-pedagogical Staff	45	48	34	41	31	32	59	32	52	41	34	49	34	61
TOTAL (N)	(137)	(201)	(262)	(177)	(255)	(186)	(149)	(315)	(189)	(193)	(280)	(257)	(187)	(311)

Source: National Survey on Violence, AIDS and Drugs in School, UNESCO, 2001.
The individuals were asked: "Mark with an X if you know that this has happened in this school: Degradation of the school."
The percentages refer only to affirmative responses obtained in the student and technical-pedagogical staff member statements.

The members of the technical-pedagogical staff indicated cases of degradation in the schools more than the students did. This different perception of what degradation is or what it is considered to be suggests that caring for the school is a value that is more widespread among the technical-pedagogical staff than among the students. However, caution is recommended when looking at student values referring to school property, attention to learning establishments and a feeling of belonging to the school community. Acts of spraying graffiti, damage to outdoor walls, windows, or inside walls and the destruction of equipment in addition to robberies appear as the most common forms of vandalism pointed out by the various categories of those interviewed:

> *When I walked in my school for the first time, there was graffiti all over the place, in all the classrooms, everywhere. I was amazed when I saw it...just amazed. I said 'My God! They told me so much about this school, how good it was.' I wanted to get to know the school so much and then when I got here...* (Focus group with students, public school, Rio de Janeiro)

Graffiti occurs in all schools, public and private, mainly in the bathrooms. According to on site observations the writing in the bathrooms include phrases of love, declarations and messages about legalizing marijuana – "Yes, I smoke. Legalize." And "Marijuana High" – and to a lesser degree anti-government protests. There are also names, gang references and mainly dirty words or pornographic phrases addressed to specific people. In the girls' bathrooms there are also these types of phrases and declarations of love.

Disputes between the "scribes" end up causing a lot of problems for the schools as they bring their differences inside the walls as the following testimony shows:

> *Well, there are a lot of problems at this school due to this graffiti thing. Because there was this fight here at the school and they got in. So they jumped over this wall because the other one had security guards. So they started throwing rocks over there. So they put a guard over there, and then they left. So there was a fight on the other side and sometimes it got in here.* (Interview with security, public school, Belém)

However, this is just one form of material degradation that victimizes the school. The testimonies from the public school security agents and inspectors indicate a series of commonplace and particularly violent acts that resulted in destroying school infra-structure: *Day before yesterday they even threw rocks at the school but nobody knows who it was. They put a toothpick in the lock. There's a wall over there where those vandal types hang out. They started over there, wanting to break the windows (...)*

Some researchers observed the following in on site observations in the schools:

> *There was a group of ex-students that tormented the teachers during class time. They set off firecrackers in the school, they turned the fuse box off, they broke glass, and they set off the fire extinguishers in the hallways.* (Observation report, public school, Porto Alegre)

Explosions in the bathrooms are also recorded, demonstrating the complicity of classmates that do not denounce the responsible parties.

Chart 5.5
Who set off the bomb?

Other on site observation reports also included accounts that students threw "a little bomb out in the yard" and that the interviewers were obliged to interrupt their work: This very significant thing happened while I was at the school. As soon as I got there, I got the news that they had set off an explosive in one of the classrooms while one of the staff members was inside.

In addition to episodes that illustrate degradation within the school, teachers and parents point out the degradation of their own personal property. They say that students scratch their cars. Parents reported the following episode. Silence following the episode must be pointed out again in that it is the prevailing attitude to just let these kind of things work out by themselves.

> *A new teacher got there and I don't know what they did wrong. They said that when she got there they were tearing the place up. One day later her car, the front, was all marked up. So think about it, that's vandalism. 'What about it?' I asked 'Nobody saw anything?' Yeah, nobody sees that kind of thing.* (Focus group with parents, public school, Porto Alegre)

Independent of the type or seriousness of the episode, some testimonies suggest that the frequency of violence against property is high. This type of violence occurs in one of the schools, almost every week, daily. There are days when it's calmer, but there's always something. They emphasize the fact that these incidents occur mostly during the night shift: *Man, it happens all the time, but it's more serious at night. There have even been problems with teachers canceling class, the last class, because they were throwing rocks at the roof.*

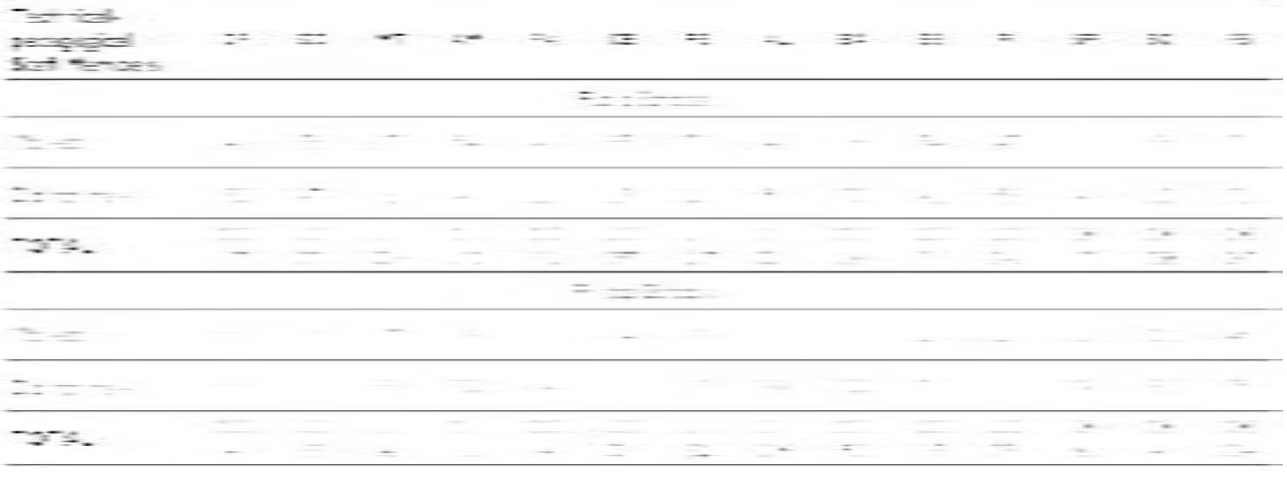
In general, vandalism like break ins are accompanied by stealing and taking food and other types of school supplies: *Last time, about four months ago in February, they took that sound system and an industrial blender that we had that weren't in the closet.*

The perpetrators of vandalism are identified as students or members of the community: *Last year after our party in June, students from the school broke into a classroom and took the soft drinks. They passed them out and everyone knew about it.*

As table 5.14 shows, members of the technical-pedagogical staff report school degradation incidents more frequently in public institutions than in private ones. The results for Porto Alegre, Recife, Salvador and São Paulo are much higher than those for the other capitals.

Table 5.14

Proportion of members of the technical-pedagogical staff, by capital of Federal Unit, according to administrative dependency and indication of occurrence of degradation in the school - 2000



Source: National Survey on Violence, AIDS and Drugs in School, UNESCO, 2001.
The individuals were asked: "Mark with an X if you know that this has happened in this school: Degradation of the school."
The percentages refer only to affirmative responses obtained in the student and technical-pedagogical staff member statements

In some cases, the technical-pedagogical staff tended to see the causes for the violent practices in the schools as typical of adolescence. They excuse the students and soften the image of school violence as a purely behavioral phenomenon: *some are aggressive, others can't stay still for very long, and others hit each other. One youth set off tear gas in the school. It was this huge mess. It was a teenager. The students got nervous and made threats but it never went beyond this.* Other testimonies noted the lack of hope in relation to youths that cause damage, attributing these acts to the destruction instinct of the students, as if this were something deeply rooted within them:

> *(....) The secretary put up a display over there [but] we still haven't inaugurated it because the lighting hasn't arrived yet and we haven't put it up. But their destruction instinct is very strong. I think it's part of them, even the sports court that is meant for them is difficult to preserve because they keep breaking the lock, and ripping the net. (...) Leisure space doesn't exist here. We have a club here, an area with a sports court. So our school has a sports court now. Some weekends we open the school to the community [but] we don't have a guard. So the following Monday the chairs are broken. They pee in the classroom and 'make works of art' in the drawers (...)* (Interview with principal, public school, Maceió)

Other testimonies contribute to corroborating the hypothesis that the degradation is a sign of the lack of a feeling of collective sharing of objects like chairs, doors and classrooms. These things are seen as part of the school and not as tools that can allow for student personal growth. The school is still seen as something far from the student and the community. From this perspective, a teacher mentions the fact that students behave according to the environment that they are confronted with:

When it's pretty, I try to keep it that way. If it's ugly, everybody scratches it a little more. The bus seats are all ripped up. Once they start getting ripped up, everybody takes off another little piece.

This chapter is concerned with supplying a synthesis of the ideas and emphases that accompany accounts of violence experienced and perpetuated by agents and beneficiaries of the Brazilian school system. Through quantitative and qualitative data, it was possible to discern that schools have been undergoing situations where transgressions, acts of aggression and incidents of different levels of gravity have become more apparent.

Independent of the type of violence, examination of the data shows that violence is a social construction, with numerous and varied perceptions. In social relationships, violence involves mutability and meanings that are differentiated for the involved participants and for societies that serve as their points of reference. Complex processes that require a multi-dimensional point of view are alluded to (Watts, 1998; Debarbieux and Blaya, 2001; Flannery 1997). Difficulty in defining what violence in the schools is brought this research to a special point of view on the phenomenon. A choice was made to become familiar with the different schools and the various participants. There was a battery of indicators on violence that were included in the questionnaires and in the interviews and focus groups. This allowed those interviewed to construct meanings about what violence in the schools meant to them. The focus can be defined as being the conception, definition and explanation of violence in the school environment according to those that live with this violence.

It was confirmed that many youths are victims or agents of violence. However, many youths that are not directly involved reported numerous cases where they knew about the presence of violence in the school space. This proximity contributes to the process of making violent behavior banal. This process turns many incidents into trivial incidents. These incidents include

petty theft, robbery, assault, rape, physical aggression, revenge, homicide and degradation. The fact that violence is gratuitous for these youths is a reality. Fear is a common element in their statements.

Physical violence is the most visible feature of the phenomenon in the schools. Physical or armed confrontation was a considerable part of the discussions. This type of violence appears as a reference for those interviewed to discuss the theme and broaden it to include other types of violence. In some situations, physical violence appears to be justifiable as a form of self-defense or as a position taken to protect friends or weaker individuals. It also appears to be justifiable as a revolt against violence from a stronger party. At other times it appears to be an action that was not premeditated in the face of a provocation. Independent of any justification, violence is a form of power negotiation that excludes dialogue. It can be caused by a variety of circumstances and can even be cloaked in moral connotations, like defending friends or people that are excluded.

Dealing with violence in school means dealing with intersecting elements. Violence in the schools is a phenomenon that no longer means the simple sum of the objects "school" and "violence". It is a unique phenomenon that involves a variety of social practices. In order to understand this phenomenon, a point of view that is not limited only to violent practices or schools is required.

DATA SUMMARY

• The students and technical-pedagogical staff members emphasized that one of the principal motives for student threats against teachers is disagreement about grades and the level of requirements as well as disciplinary problems. The consequences of this are generally promises of physical retaliation after school hours and outside of the learning institution.

• The most commonly found situations in the schools seem to be borderline situations between threats and fights and talking and fighting. There are cases that begin with an exchange of threats, challenges, insults or provocations and end up being something that the school cannot control. The fights are considered to be commonplace and this suggests that violence has become banal and legitimate as a mechanism for resolving conflicts.

• The students do not often go to their parents or to police officers to resolve attacks that they might suffer from at school. The majority of the students seek out revenge with the help of their friends. Average accounts of violent incidents in the schools are higher for those that cause the fights or for those who have been attacked and ask their friends to help them get revenge.

• Soccer is cited as having the ability to trigger violent practices. This is true primarily for the boys who refer to settling accounts, generally with teams from other schools or neighborhoods. The entrance of strangers in the school space is perceived as a rupture in the physical boundaries of the school. This fact is pointed out as one of the most common causes of violence.

• Sexual harassment occurs as much on the part of classmates as on the part of teachers. Rape is considered by the students to be one of the five most violent acts. There are significant variations depending on the sex of the interviewed party, with more numerous accounts found among the females.

6. REPERCUSSIONS OF VIOLENCE AND ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS

The first objective of this chapter is to map out and identify the multiple repercussions of violence in the schools. It then seeks to understand the reasons schools become settings for violence and/or cease being settings for violence and the processes that make them so. Finally, it views the school community as a whole – students, their parents, technical-pedagogical staff members, police officers, school security agents, guards and discipline inspectors/coordinators. This is done by considering perspectives and practices that have proven to be successful at UNESCO regarding what to do to combat violence in the schools. It also presents proposals based on the results of this research, specialized literature and the organization's own information stockpile.

6.1. REPERCUSSIONS OF VIOLENCE

Violence situations compromise the identity of school as a space for positive socialization. They also compromise the learning of ethical values and forming of critical minds. This should take place based on dialogue as well as recognition of diversity and of the civilizing heritage that accumulated knowledge represents. These situations have repercussions on learning and on the quality of education for both students and teachers and this is demonstrated below.

A recent study by the National Confederation of Education Workers shows that violence has consequences that negatively affect the quality of teaching and learning. These impacts are similar to those that other factors have. These other factors are already known and include insufficient training for education professionals, lack of infrastructure, parents' low level of education and lack of bibliographic material in students' homes (Codo & Vasques-Menezes, 2001).

Data in this research corroborate these findings. Almost half of the students state that violence in the school setting makes them unable to focus on their studies. This is shown in the table below. Percentages vary from 38% in Florianópolis to 52% in Manaus, the average being 45% (table 6.1).

Table 6.1

Proportion of students in Elementary Basic (5th to 8th) and Secondary Education, by capital of Federal Unit, according to perception of the effect violence in school has on their school performance - 2000*

Source: National Survey on Violence, AIDS and Drugs in School, UNESCO, 2001.

The individuals were asked: "How do you think violence affects your studies. Do you get nervous? Disgusted? Don't feel like going to school? (Mark all true responses)" Only the affirmative responses were considered.

*Expanded data

The second largest group of students is made up of those who state they are nervous and rebellious about the situations of violence they face in their schools. Percentages vary from 28% in Rio de Janeiro to 39% in Cuiabá. Loss of interest in going to school is the third most mentioned consequence of violence in the school environment. This is shown by percentages that vary from a minimum of 27% in Rio de Janeiro and Recife to a maximum of 34% in Goiânia, Cuiabá, Manaus and Fortaleza.

Tables 6.2 and 6.2A show that violence in the schools is one of the causes for absenteeism on the part of both teachers and students. The levels for teachers, however, are much higher than those for students. The highest percentage of teachers who stated they had been absent from work due to violence in the school setting was 7% in Rio de Janeiro, and the lowest was 1% in the Federal District and in Belém (as well as Vitória, where there were no accounts registered). The percentage among students varies from 9% in Cuiabá to 3% in Florianópolis.

Table 6.2

Number of students in Elementary Basic (5th to 8th) and Secondary School, by capital of Federal Unit, according to declaration of not attending classes due to violence in school - 2000*

	DF	GO	MT	AM	PA	CE	PE	AL	BA	ES	RJ	SP	SC	RS
Students	7	7	9	8	6	5	5	4	7	5	7	8	3	5
TOTAL (N)	(287296)	(162343)	(73778)	(200821)	(158889)	(302444)	(214091)	(93328)	(376805)	(50765)	(589619)	(1274440)	(44046)	(155746)

Source: National Survey on Violence, AIDS and Drugs in School, UNESCO, 2001.
The individuals were asked: "In the last 12 months have you missed classes because of problems of violence in school?" Only the affirmative responses were considered in the student and technical-pedagogical staff member samples.
*Expanded data

Table 6.2A

Proportion of members of the technical-pedagogical staff, by capital of Federal Unit, according to declaration of not attending classes due to violence in school - 2000

	DF	GO	MT	AM	PA	CE	PE	AL	BA	ES	RJ	SP	SC	RS
Members of the Technical-pedagogical staff	1	2	4	3	1	4	4	2	2	–	7	3	2	2
TOTAL (N)	(128)	(187)	(218)	(149)	(228)	(167)	(129)	(260)	(165)	(175)	(253)	(237)	(168)	(293)

Source: National Survey on Violence, AIDS and Drugs in School, UNESCO, 2001.
The individuals were asked: "In the last 12 months have you missed classes because of problems of violence in school?" Only the affirmative responses were considered in the student and technical-pedagogical staff member samples.

It is clear that students do not appear only as the most frequent perpetrators and victims of violence. They are also the ones that suffer its consequences the most in terms of attending school, whether they are perpetrators or victims.

At this point it is necessary to refer back to the concept of indirect or secondary victims of violence proposed by Soares and Rua (1996). They state that violence is not limited to the act itself or to the direct consequences it has on its immediate victims. Instead, its repercussions spread to several spheres in the lives of all of those affected by it. Possibly, these individuals make up a huge contingent of secondary or indirect victims, but this has not yet been measured.

Cross analysis of data indicates that the most significant impacts violence has are, by order of importance, the transformation of school into a "heavy" environment, an increase in student absenteeism and lower quality classes. Next is loss of motivation for attending classes, which was statistically associated to violence taking place in the schools (table 6.3).

Table 6.3

Proportion of students in Elementary (5th to 8th grades) and Secondary School, by capital of Federal Unit, according to perception of effect violence has on teaching quality - 2000 (%)*

	DF	GO	MT	AM	PA	CE	PE	AL	BA	ES	RJ	SP	SC	RS
The school environment gets "heavy"	44	38	42	34	33	36	35	33	39	43	37	42	48	44
Class quality gets worse	34	30	30	31	28	30	27	25	31	30	28	35	29	30
TOTAL (N)	(335850)	(198832)	(83871)	(239376)	(192841)	(357002)	(246279)	(113607)	(459168)	(57630)	(665907)	(1462380)	(50046)	(170511)

Source: National Survey on Violence, AIDS and Drugs in School, UNESCO, 2001.
The individuals were asked: "How do you think violence affects your studies: The school environment gets "heavy". You feel that the quality of the classes worsens. (Mark all true answers.) Only the affirmative responses were considered in the student samples.
*Expanded data

Nervousness, rebelliousness and lack of concentration are the least significant impacts when quantitative data are concerned. However, quantitative data were highlighted in the discussion of technical-pedagogical staff: *It comes out in a totally undisciplined way in the classroom and makes the learning experience hell.*

As a result, violence in the school setting brings on serious personal consequences to students, as well as physical damage, trauma and feelings of fear and insecurity. This harms their personal development and happens both in public and private schools.

> *There are kids here that couldn't even go to class because of this robbery [that took place] the other day, [they got] nervous. The teacher has to talk to them and it just doesn't work. So I think it interferes with school, yes it does.* (Interview with principal, private school, Cuiabá)

Specifically in regards to members of the technical-pedagogical staff, the impact on the performance of teachers was described as follows:

> *Violence has repercussions in the quality of teaching. For example, [when] a teacher works at a school in the periphery, he gets to school worried already. The teacher can't teach a good class anymore because he's always worried about when it's time to leave, he is worried because of the students.* (Interview with principal, public school, Belém)

In addition to consequences estimated subjectively, violence has objective impacts on the quality of education as it tends to cause teacher turnover. They try to transfer to places where they can work more safely, and this possibly causes a lack of professionals in the teaching staff at more violent schools.

This data is confirmed in the testimonies of principals like the one that follows: *I think [violence] influences not only the kids, the students, but also us, as educators. The days go by and we get more scared, more uneasy about coming to school.*

This is a very common way for technical-pedagogical staff members to react to threats and/or aggressions, as shown in table 6.4. It was indicated by a minimum of 12% of technical-pedagogical staff members in São Paulo and a maximum of 27% in Salvador.

Table 6.4

Proportion of members of the technical-pedagogical staff, by capital of Federal Unit, according to ways of reacting to threats/violence experienced - 2000

	DF	GO	MT	AM	PA	CE	PE	AL	BA	ES	RJ	SP	SC	RS
Try to transfer to another school	26	13	15	14	16	22	21	26	27	17	21	12	12	15
Maintain the same rigor at work	34	43	29	33	34	29	36	30	30	33	38	34	40	35
TOTAL (N)	(137)	(201)	(262)	(177)	(255)	(186)	(149)	(315)	(189)	(193)	(215)	(257)	(187)	(311)

Source: National Survey on Violence, AIDS and Drugs in School, UNESCO, 2001.
The individuals were asked: "If you felt threatened, disrespected or in danger, what would you do? Try to transfer to another school. Maintain the same rigor at work." (Mark all true answers.) Only the affirmative responses were considered in the technical-pedagogical staff samples.

6.2. MEASURES TAKEN AGAINST VIOLENCE IN THE SCHOOLS: SUGGESTIONS MADE BY PROTAGONISTS

A series of measures to be taken in order to stop violence in the schools was presented to those interviewed so they could select five. These measures are of the following kind:

1. Security or supervision measures at school (installing metal detectors at the entrance of the school, building high walls or security fences, installing video surveillance systems and hiring guards and security agents to supervise the premises of the school);

2. Preventive measures involving increased participation based on individual interaction (the establishment of dialogue among students, parents, teachers and the coordination so as to solve the problem of violence and to create a partnership between school and community);

3. Security measures inside and outside of the school (police surveillance on school premises and surroundings);

4. Disciplinary measures to be taken with students (a more inflexible style of discipline, expelling students who engage in irregular activities);

5. Preventive measures based on self-defense (self-defense classes for students and teachers), and

6. Reactive measures involving violence (having a gun to protect oneself and/or one's children).

The following table presents a summary of the propositions made by students, teachers and parents in thirteen Brazilian capitals and in the Federal District.

Table 6.5
Average percentage of indication of measures to contain violence in school, by students, parents and members of the technical-pedagogical staff, for the set of surveyed capitals - 2000

	STUDENTS*	PARENTS	TEACHERS
Police patrols in the school and surrounding areas	73	82	71
Dialogue with students, teachers, and administration to find a solution for violence	66	74	65
Partnership between school and community to end violence	58	66	77
Internal circuit TV cameras** and metal detectors at school	54	58	29
Hire guards and security agents to monitor the school	47	54	39
Stricter discipline: expel those that take part in irregular incidents	41	44	38
Surround the school with a high wall or fence for protection	37	34	13
Acquiring a gun for self-defense and/or for defending others	9	3	1
Obligate students to do community service		60	

Source: National Survey on Violence, AIDS and Drugs in School, UNESCO, 2001. The individuals were asked to: "Mark the five alternatives that you like most." The percentages refer only to affirmative responses obtained in the student, parent and technical-pedagogical staff samples.
*Expanded data

The proposal to increase police surveillance on school premises and in school surroundings was the one people supported the most. This is common data for all of the participants that took part in the research. Among students, this proposal was supported by 73%. A similar trend was shown among technical-pedagogical staff members and parents (71% and 82%, respectively). The fact that all participants point to police surveillance on school premises and surroundings may indicate that there is consensus regarding violence as a phenomenon that comes from outside. Violence encircles the school and makes its way inside. That is why surrounding areas must be cared for and prevention and security must be increased.

There is an idea that public security institutions are responsible for making sure citizens live together safely and freely and that their civil, political and social rights are respected. This idea has repercussions on the perception of how important police surveillance is. However, it is necessary to bear in mind that the relationship students have with the police is a dubious one. If on the one hand students emphasize that there is a need for security in the school environment, they also vehemently criticize the way the police act.

In fact, in focus groups students demand that security measures be taken. In their testimonies, they emphasize the need for the police to be present in the school and surrounding areas. At the same time, however, they are critical of the kind of police that exists today and the way official security takes place in schools and surrounding areas.

In reference to security problems faced in the school environment, students talked about the presence of police officers and canine units in the school and the practice of frisking students. At times, these are presented as commonplace situations in their daily lives.

Security agents that work at schools also took part in the

interviews. They showed an inclination towards proposing measures based on greater control of gun permits and on the presence of the police:

> *There should be more control over guns and the police should be present in the schools 24 hours a day, or when there are classes. Because the police here at school now (...), they just come in and see how it's going and they leave. They should stay during classes here at school. They only show up here once a week. So, when two police cars with four policemen inside get here, then I open it, take them over to the principal, she talks to them and they leave.* (Interview with security agent, public school, Cuiabá)

The data presented indicate that 66% of students and 65% of technical-pedagogical staff members selected dialogue among students, teachers and the coordination as one of the measures appropriate for fighting violence in the schools. This is mentioned by parents (74%) even more frequently (table 6.5).

Dialogue was rated by students in focus groups as a direct relationship between teachers, the coordination and students: (…) *They are feeling what we're doing here now: talking about it. Because when people talk they stop thinking stupid thoughts. They don't want to take justice into their own hands anymore. It's sharing the problems.*

Activities such as lectures may also make dialogue easier and bring students and teachers closer: *There are schools where there are lectures, they get students from the school to give the lecture, act in a play, you know? There's more awareness (...)* Technical-pedagogical staff members (77%) cited prevention through participation more frequently than students (58%). This especially included the partnership between the school and the community to end violence.

A positive indicator that stands out is the fact that these

participants believe in the effectiveness of shared measures to solve the problem. This is demonstrated in the fact that dialogue between students, parents and the coordination and a partnership between school and community are now seen as important devices to stop violence in the schools.

Students insist that there must be preventive measures involving increased participation. These measures should be based on the interaction between family and school: *To improve education, both at school and in the family (…) I think dialogue is also a way.* School is apparently seen as a mediator between the student and the family. Its responsibility is to work on the meaning of violence within and outside school boundaries in order to fight violence by dealing with important aspects of students' lives that go beyond school walls and the school year.

Students, parents and technical-pedagogical staff members tend to choose other security measures such as video surveillance systems and metal detectors in the school (54%, 58% and 29%, respectively). The percentage among the last group is the lowest. They also mention hiring guards and security agents to supervise school premises (47%, 54% and 39%, respectively).

However, some students reported situations considered to be invasive due to secret observation of their behavior by means of cameras installed on school premises and surroundings:

> *One of the things that gets every teenager mad [is] when they realize somebody is doing something behind their back. They get even more rebellious. And one of the things that made these guys get mad was that they found out there were hidden cameras (…).* (Focus group with students, private school, São Paulo)

It is important to say that 41% of students defend the adoption of punitive measures against themselves, including expelling students who engage in irregular activities (table 6.5). Several of

the students' statements illustrate this perspective: *I think the principal could act more, be stricter with students. There are cases that could be avoided. Just kick them out right away, because there are many students here that have fought lots of times already, then they fight again and get kicked out later anyway.*

In the statements there are proposals that are not shown in the quantitative data. A wide variety of measures to fight against violence is presented. This includes specific descriptions and differences among groups.

The valorization of the support offered by psychologists stands out:

> *The student that was getting mad a lot or fighting, starting to fight, then (...) a psychologist or someone like that (...) would call him (…) right? 'Boy, get over here.' Or they would get this class here for example, like we're talking: 'No, let's talk.' 'Why do you do this, why?'* (Focus group with students, public school, Fortaleza)

> *Violence starts with only one guy. At a time when his head is messed up (…) he just looks for trouble with everyone, encourages you to fight. In my opinion, there should be a psychologist at each school. If they work with this person, he won't be violent or generate violence among his friends.* (Focus group with students, public school, Rio de Janeiro)

Another significant role is that of culture and education. These elements allow for growth, leading to the redemption of self-esteem and to an awareness of problems and inequalities that makes it possible to overcome them. This also creates solidarity. Strengthening students' self esteem is helpful in fighting prejudice and is seen by teachers and principals as an effective means to overcome obstacles:

> *I really like to work on self-esteem. Because when the person knows that they're worthy, that they're important, that they're capable, they have more choices to fight, to overcome barriers.* (Interview with principal, private school, Federal District)

Among the strategies adopted in order to fight violence, two have shown good results. One of them is improving the relationship between school and the community and the other is creating a space for students to express themselves: *They should pay more attention to students because (...) we spend most of our time at school.* School has the responsibility to deal with violence by creating a friendlier environment where there is more cooperation and everybody – students, teachers, parents, etc. – is involved (Avancini, 2001).

The expectation that school should be a privileged agency in the fight against violence and the culture of violence is met through experiences that use professionals that bring together regular teacher functions and those of mediators between school and the family or resort to dialogue in the relationship with students. Students also suggest that it is important to have a more flexible curriculum, one that includes artistic activities and emphasizes life lessons.

It is worth noting that acts of vandalism were reported to have decreased due to physical change in the school environment performed with the involvement and direct participation of students and the community. This makes students value and maintain school patrimony, which starts being seen as common property.

6.3. WHY DOES A SCHOOL BECOME VIOLENT?

Literature demonstrates that some schools are historically violent while others go through a period of violence (Debarbieux, 1999). This excludes determinism even in areas characterized by exclusion and ensures that there will be space for actions to prevent and fight against violence[62]. Some violence may be occasional. Some is more permanent and depends on conditions that are both related and unrelated to school.

The first situation refers to the surroundings of the school, the social-geographical area where it is located. There are safe schools that are located in places considered to be extremely dangerous, where a lot of violent situations take place, and vice versa. An example of this is a public school located in the periphery of Rio de Janeiro which is considered privileged in relation to other schools. Its premises are preserved in new condition and teachers form a united group: together for education.

According to teachers, students have found a friendly and respectful environment and that is why they help with school maintenance: School ends up not being violent. It ends up actually being public. The students themselves take care of it. Students emphasize that the school is very safe although security measures are limited to controlling access to school by means of checking uniforms and student cards. It is a calm, healthy, good environment that fosters learning and the students consider the quality of education great. It stimulates their own research: you don't come here just for chalk and a blackboard.

At this school students have an organized association and in each class there is a class representative and a substitute. There is

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[62] This realization called attention to the need to return to schools characterized by different situations of violence in order to better understand these variations. At the time, the cities of Rio de Janeiro, Cuiabá and São Paulo and the Federal District were selected to be returned to.

also a representative teacher who acts as a mediator with the class and represents the school at parent-teacher conferences. Parents frequently participate in school activities. The coordination highlights the democratic bases of administration and emphasizes dialogue as a way of interacting with students. This develops a sense of belonging. Teachers also express this feeling. This includes enrolling their own children at the school.

Still on the question of the surroundings, another example is found in a neighborhood in the outskirts of Cuiabá. It is considered quite dangerous, yet there is a public school that is relatively safe. Students that attend this school generally live in the neighborhood, as does the coordination.

When they analyze the role school plays, students see it as a space for socialization and getting together. It is a place where affective relationships are constructed and experienced by students among themselves and with teachers, the administration and the coordination. The role played by the administration is to ensure security in the school space by establishing strict control of the access of strangers to the school: *Before they show up here we do something about it.*

The examples analyzed suggest that the most relevant factor in the construction of a Culture of Peace at schools is precisely the construction of a sense of belonging to a democratic educational community by all of those who have some kind of relationship to this space:

> *This school was totally covered with graffiti on the outside. When we came here, we found it like that already. But it was something that didn't get us worried, the graffiti outside. We started this internal maintenance work on the inside. Then the community, the people who use the sports court, volunteered and painted the school. And it didn't get sprayed. You can see that there's no graffiti here at all. If you go around the schools in this*

neighborhood, you'll see that this is one of the few schools where there isn't [graffiti]. Why not? Because they're the ones who painted it and they are the ones who keep it that way. Because there is a relationship of trust between the school and the community. They know that the school won't call the police to solve matters like fighting and drugs. (Interview with principal, public school, São Paulo)

The statement above introduces a new dimension regarding encouragement for having ties with the community.

Because the situations studied are those of schools where violence levels are lower although they are located in violent neighborhoods, several times the creation of links with the community has other implications. They include the need to deal with drug dealers and gangs.

A typical example is found in the periphery of Rio de Janeiro, where the principal of one establishment uses a good neighbor policy. She attempts to have a good relationship with drug dealers, a group that includes several former students. According to her, it is necessary not to go against them in order to try to have a good environment for the students. Students, in fact, state that the principal is successful. Although strictness is demonstrated in relation to disciplinary rules, a factor not normally appreciated, youths refer to the coordination affectionately: *I consider the people in the coordination to be like a family.*

At another school there are shootings and violent police officers as well as the interference of drug dealers. Youths there complain about frisking, which takes place in a public space and is done by both police officers and drug dealers. However, criminals and the police are not on the same level for them. Like most of the population that lives in drug dealing areas, students state that they trust drug dealers more than they trust the police: *If something happens at our house, (...) no one is going to call*

the police. (...) Sometimes it's better to trust the criminals instead of the police.

This context affects students. They say they are afraid and insecure on school premises. Education is also compromised since when there are shootings the school is closed and there is a feeling of fear and uncertainty. However, teachers are considered very good, as is the quality of education, and students are satisfied in relation to the leisure and sports activities offered.

Youths also consider the physical structure of the school and discipline to be below ideal standards. The principal agrees with the reports and states that violence has increased considerably in the past five years. This is true also in relation to drugs. The principal also says that students who attend school at night are more violent and there are more occurrences of degradation and graffiti spraying.

This situation is included in another socio-organizational dimension, that of school environment degradation. This occurs because of great management difficulties and precarious physical structures, among other aspects.

Problems in physical structure are found in another school, which is in a terrible state of conservation and maintenance. Students state this themselves saying that floors and walls are vandalized and sprayed and the entrance gate is totally open. There are no guards or gate keepers and most of the doors, desks and chairs are broken. The sports court is full of holes and the kitchen is in a bad state of conservation and smells bad:

> *It's all falling apart, the bathroom is all filthy, the classrooms are sprayed. We used to study in this room up until last week and because there was no way to study here we moved to that one that's a little better. It's real visual pollution. You get to a place this ugly, you don't even feel like going in. It's like jail!* (Focus group with students, public school, Cuiabá)

Students also complain about the lack of security. Because the gate is constantly open, it is common for gangs from outside of the school to get inside. The lack of adequate conditions for the school to operate causes discouragement and disinterest. At the same time, relationship problems involving the principal's office and the coordination are also cited. Authoritarian and repressive attitudes on their part towards youths are predominant.

Transferring "problematic" students is another situation where schools start being less violent. An example of that is a school in the Federal District that was considered very violent. It ceased being violent because, according to students, gang members got transferred out[63].

This situation is also found in another school located in downtown Cuiabá. Students from several neighborhoods in the outskirts attend this school. The participants that were interviewed were unanimous in saying that the school had been violent once, but because "problematic" students got transferred out, everything was solved, even though the reputation remains!

It is important to mention that when the school has done everything possible to deal with these students, the *Conselho Tutelar* steps in to support it. It acts with families and with the Minors' Court:

> *Now, finally, most of them have already dropped out or been transferred. Maybe because there is pressure, whether you want it or not, that is not exactly to get rid of these students but to work with them. We try all the time. And when we ask the Conselho Tutelar it's because there's no way anymore. There's no way to go on because it's worn out. But we work while we can.* (Interview with principal, public school, Cuiabá)

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[63] Despite this, students described the principal's authoritarian attitude, highlighting her absenteeism: She's never around. When she shows up it's to give orders. Our student association is inactive because she said so. We can't have the cultural activity that used to go on during the break anymore.

This kind of student is a common problem at public schools since there is no way to not accept registrations. This brings the "problematic students" that the school doesn't know about, or sometimes they're taken in through the *Conselhos Tutelares* because these youths cannot attend other schools.

Regarding the way a school changes from more violent to less violent, the administration seeks to value students and stimulate respect, dialogue and the feeling of belonging to school among all participants in the school environment. This happens in a school in São Paulo that is located in a working-class neighborhood.

According to the principal, who was called to work there for only a few months but ended up staying, the school was considered a "circus of horrors". This impression is confirmed by the statement of a student who said that when her mother visited the school for the first time she said it looks like a juvenile detention center. The former principal was responsible for this situation because she didn't stay in the school and therefore didn't supervise the activities developed by students and technical-pedagogical staff. She did not care for the preservation of the physical structure either.

When a student wanted to transfer to another school in the neighborhood or get a job, having gone to that school was an obstacle due of its low credibility: *If you went to look for a job and said you went to (…) you were considered a troublemaker and an addict. However, after they changed principals the school was born again. It's like they tore it down and made the whole thing over.*

The principal says that his main secret was teamwork. Everyone follows the same philosophy and the rules established by the school are respected. Also, students are valued and self-esteem is redeemed through stimulating dialogue. This creates a sense of belonging to the school environment, joining respect and freedom. This includes preservation of the physical structure.

This statement is confirmed by students when they comment on the fact that the school was rebuilt: *The floors were rotten wood and there were mice there. When it rained, they couldn't have classes: the school was a dump, everything was falling apart.*

Currently, the school is one of the most sought-after ones in the neighborhood. It is seen as a model and everybody who is involved with the space shows their appreciation in some way: *I like it so much I come here Sunday through Sunday. What the school offers keeps us here.* The fact that the principal and the vice principal are from the community makes contact with students and their families easier.

A school in the Federal District went in the opposite direction. It was initially indicated as a less violent school and became more violent, according to the opinion of sources. This happened because of the presence of little groups that like to fight at school. A fact that might explain this increase is drug consumption in the surroundings, even if students say this is due to people from outside the school.

Stating that violence in the schools represents a state and not a characteristic of one school or another or of the school system means accepting that this condition changes with the processes each establishment goes through. This is true especially for changes in the administration and in the relationship with teachers and coordination members. Data point towards the fact that stances taken by the administration produced changes in the profile of the school in relation to violence. These include the reduction of tolerance regarding rules (gate always closed, more control of school entrances and exits, demanding that a uniform be worn, transferring students). They also include the democratization of the school environment, bringing students, teachers and administrative staff closer to the community, and the improvement and maintenance of physical structure.

The participants' perceptions concerning violence in the schools derive from their histories and their memories. This includes the social relationships they establish throughout their lives. Violence is perceived as a regular and commonplace phenomenon in the daily lives of those who have experienced situations related to theft, threats, robbery, discrimination, vandalism, authoritarian actions, fights, etc.

Having schools without violence as an objective, it is important to identify measures so they will become safe places for all of their members. There is certainly consensus in society that school security is a value in and of itself because it affects the physical, emotional and psychological integrity and the lives of students, teachers, staff and parents. Furthermore, violence or the threat of violence, in its several forms, has a direct impact on how teachers and students develop their work in the classroom and in the school environment. It also has a direct impact on student performance and on their families' quality of life.

Parents go through loss and damage and live in constant fear that their children will be victims of violence at school or in its surrounding areas. Students are absent because they were threatened with physical or emotional damage. They are also absent due to the fact that their schools are forced to suspend classes because they are unsafe and/or are operating precariously. This happens because of the degradation of school installations, furniture and equipment.

In specific reference to professionals in the area of education, it becomes clear that when they work in unsafe and threatening environments they become less capable of fully developing their potential. Their classes are less creative and they have no motivation to go to work. This includes teachers, guidance counselors, principals, supervisors and others. There are constant requests for transfer and consequently the substitution of these professionals is also constant. Obviously, turnover has an

extremely negative impact on the quality of education. It must be considered that this kind of change, especially teacher turnover, influences the relationship students and community have with the school. It increases frustration and causes dissatisfaction and isolation.

In this context, specific national characteristics must be considered in order to define political policies. It is necessary to emphasize the importance of education and specialized attention services for "living together as citizens". This must include combining participation and social responsibility and redeeming trust in institutions as they are spaces for socialization. Opportunities for working with families and for cultural and community integration activities should also be provided. All of these guidelines indicate that policies must be based on actions for the prevention of violence and not on repressive measures.

In relation to school, pedagogical proposals must be more attractive to youths, with accumulated human knowledge as a basis for these proposals. It is also important to focus on the whole situation. This means dealing with several spheres of life and considering the youths as important protagonists in education policies.

6.4. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICIES, STRATEGIES AND MEASURES AGAINST VIOLENCE IN THE SCHOOLS

Considering the literature on violence in the schools, UNESCO's essays and research and the contents of this research[64], it is possible to systematize a set of recommendations to be put into practice by the government at the federal, state and municipal levels.

The measures against violence in the schools are based on a few general premises:

i) they are based on concrete knowledge about school, especially through diagnostic tests and research;

ii) they are legitimized by the participants/subjects involved. The participation of the educational community, especially principals, teachers, staff and students is necessary, and

iii) supervision through permanent evaluation processes is carried out several times using different kinds of evaluation. This occurs because every measure depends on different situations and staff in terms of resources and the type of violence recorded both in schools and their surroundings.

Another basic principle is the existence of political good will in the form of political policies to support the prevention and

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[64] Among others, WAISELFISZ, Júlio Jacobo *Mapa da Violência: os Jovens do Brasil* (Map of Violence: the Youths of Brazil) - Rio de Janeiro: Garamond, 1998; SALLAS, Ana Luisa et al. *Os Jovens de Curitiba: Esperanças e Desencantos, Juventude, Violência e Cidadania* (The Youths of Curitiba: Hopes and Disillusionment, Youth, Violence and Citizenship) - Brasília: UNESCO, 1999; GOMES, Candido Alberto *Dos Valores Proclamados aos Valores Vividos: traduzindo em atos, princípios das Nações Unidas e da UNESCO para projetos escolares e políticas educacionais,* Brasília: UNESCO and Rio de Janeiro State Secretariat, 2001; WERTHEIN, Jorge, *Juventude, Violência e Cidadania* (Youth, Violence and Citizenship), Brasília, UNESCO, 2000; WERTHEIN, Jorge and CUNHA, Célio, "*Fundamentos da Nova Educação*". Cadernos UNESCO Brasil, volume 5, Brasília, 2000; CUÉLLAR, Javier Pérez (org.) *Nossa Diversidade Criadora: Relatório da Comissão Mundial de Cultura e Desenvolvimento,* Campinas: Papirus, Brasília: UNESCO, 1997.

eradication of violence. Society as a whole is responsible for this rather than just the administration. This is true since many measures require a certain time to mature[65], particularly those that deal with symbolic elements, culture and concepts created by students. Fighting violence in the schools should be part of the public agenda for the consolidation of democracy, and not a problem for youths or schools to solve. This requires continuous significant investment by many agencies.

Another premise is that for the prevention and eradication of violence in the schools it is necessary to combine emotional intelligence and ethical knowledge, the valorization of youths and the creation of a pleasant and participatory environment. This should involve specialized cross-disciplinary knowledge as well as analyses of public and school security.

On the other hand, it must be noted that violence has gained ground in the form of acts that wound and kill both in the school and in other environments. This has occurred not only through isolated actions, as terrifying as these may be. These activities are legitimized and reinforced by a subtle culture of impunity, disrespect for human rights, power abuse, intolerance and many types of prejudice. Prejudice tends to seem like a sign of the times. This leads to making violence and fear banal in society. This weakens self-esteem, especially for the youths. Therefore, the most important principle is the importance of the construction of a Culture of Peace, which is intrinsically related to conflict prevention and non-violent resolution. This is a culture based on tolerance, solidarity and sharing on a day-to-day basis. It is a culture that respects all individual rights and the principle of pluralism, which ensures and supports freedom of opinion. It works on the prevention of conflict by solving it at its

[65] According to Flannery (1997: VII.1) "Aggressive behavior is stable, chronic, hard to change through short-term interventions and limited if based on curricula."

source, which includes new non-military threats to security like exclusion, extreme poverty and environment degradation. The culture of peace attempts to solve problems through dialogue, negotiation and mediation so as to make war and violence impracticable (Werthein in UNESCO, 2001: 6).

The perspective of a Culture of Peace drives away repression and makes special use of prevention. It is based on the fight against inequality and social exclusion and on respect for citizenship rights. It avoids cultural or economic bias in relation to its meanings.

In order to achieve this, it is necessary to have professionals respected for their knowledge and pedagogical skills in and out of the classroom. It is a responsibility of the government to invest in training and recycling for these professionals and to adopt strategies to see that the rights and duties of the teacher are respected. It is necessary to have quality education and pedagogical training curricula that are related to the pillars of knowledge (Delors, 2000). It is also necessary to insist on humanistic education.

School may be a privileged space for fighting violence as it joins a variety of attributes and characteristics that make it a beacon to the community and society. These characteristics and attributes are:

1. it is a place where cultural diversity is brought together, which increases its capability to solve conflict originating outside the school and enables it to come up with creative forms of solidarity;

2. it has strategic potential for creating relationships with the community and especially with the family, since several evaluations of programs for school conflict prevention see parents as important partners;

3. there is the possibility of experimenting with preventive measures and supervising both the target public and public policy experiences that have been implemented, and

4. it is important for students in terms of developing values and passing on knowledge. This has implications on the interaction processes that take place not only between teachers and students but also among the students themselves.

Several projects for fighting violence in the schools have been implemented in several countries. The Sevilha Anti School Violence Project was created in 1995. Its objective is to seek alternatives for the problem of violence in the schools. The development of the project peaked with the establishment of a global model for educational intervention. This happened through a proposal based on the analysis of school as a complex arena where the two axes the organization deals with meet. These axes are interpersonal relations and teaching/learning activities.

This model is based on the psychological-educational point of view with school as a space where youths live together and where all community members must be represented. This includes families, teachers and students. Save sees school as a place where living together must be treated democratically. Teaching must be cooperative and education has to go beyond teaching, permeating the sphere of developing values for an education based on feelings and social emotion (on the Save Project, see Ortega, 2001).

Save is a process of social intervention made up of groups of students that get together in order to discuss existing difficulties and look for solutions. These groups are called "circles of quality".

Blomart (apud Debarbieux and Blaya, 2001) mentions countries of the European Union in his bulletin Initiative,

Violence in the School (1999), published by the European Commission. He talks about policies and projects for the fight against violence that are in progress in member states. Most preventive programs carried out in Europe are related to civic instruction and education for citizenship and health. Ministers from several countries insist that it is necessary to promote social and emotional competence and give meaning to values among children and adolescents. These programs are not always put into practice by the government, with the exception of the Red Cross, medical assistance and associations that work for peace. Some projects are developed by teachers themselves.

The analysis of over 300 prevention programs related to violence in Quebec identifies elements that influence the results obtained in the school environment. This takes place through actions that must reach individuals and the school, family and community. The project must: (1) be based on local resources and on the re-valorization of surrounding areas; (2) have clear and tangible objectives; (3) establish links with the community, making it possible for everybody to participate in decision-making processes; (4) increase spheres of activity and autonomy, and (5) use different strategies for intervention.

In the United States there are several projects dedicated to the fight against violence and alcohol, cigarettes and illegal drug use in schools and their surroundings. Some of them are Working Against Violence Everywhere, School Violence Prevention Program and Schools Teaching Options for Peace. Many of these projects are civil society initiatives, like Students Against Violence Everywhere (SAVE). It was created in 1989 by West Charlotte High School students who were angered by the murder of a colleague at school.

Currently SAVE acts in schools in 28 North American states and Canada promoting discussion groups. In these groups volunteers guide students' discussion and the development of

alternatives to solve conflict. They also help students use what they learn in projects to fight violence in the school environment and in the community.

Federal, state and local governments in the United States have passed laws and funding to support initiatives like SAVE. The Safe and Drug Free Schools program (SDFS) is the main tool of the North American federal government for encouraging, linking and carrying out projects that use federal, state or local resources.

Among the programs developed with the help of SDFS is the After School Program, in which schools remain open after regular school hours. They provide students with a safe place to practice sports activities and develop cultural activities. It also offers after-school tutoring. According to research carried out by the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP)[66], whose results were published in September 2001, 67% of public schools held activities after regular school hours for students.

Generally speaking, the After School Program is made up of three main parts: academic, recreational and cultural. The main objective of the academic aspect is to improve student performance through the creation of tutoring labs involving several subjects like Literature, Math and Computer Science. The recreational aspect is the only option for youths in many areas to engage in this kind of activity due to lack of space, and it is very important for the development of cooperation and problem-solving skills. The cultural aspect, like the recreational aspect, may be the only opportunity many youths have to become familiar with new opportunities.

Also according to research carried out by NAESP, the After School Program has reached two important results. The first is

[66] http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/resources/afterschoolrelease.pdf

improving student academic performance. The second is getting youths off the street in the period ranging from the time school is out to the time their parents get home from work. This is done in order to avoid student involvement with gangs and drug dealers, both of which are important factors of violence in North American schools.

In Brazil, UNESCO created the program Making Room: Education and Culture for Peace. This program is the result of research on violence involving youths in Brazil, both as victims and as direct agents. An increase in aggression levels and criminal activity was found among youths. This was true especially on weekends, when youths say there is a lack of spaces and that it is impossible to participate in social and cultural activities.

The program for opening schools on weekends creates alternative spaces to attract youths. It deals with them on artistic and cultural levels and also in the area of sports, providing other spaces for youth protagonism to take place.

An example of this kind of work is the Schools of Peace project, a joint initiative carried out by UNESCO and the State of Rio de Janeiro. About 250 public schools are open on weekends and make use of the community's own talents and cultural production in areas of greater social vulnerability. The same project is being put into practice in other states in Brazil: in Bahia, it goes by the name of Making Room: Education and Culture for Peace. In Mato Grosso, it is called Making Room, and in Pernambuco, its name is Open School.

Next is a list of recommendations for measures and programs to prevent and stop violence in schools.

6.5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are related to the implementation of public policies concerning violence in the schools. They require support from federal, state and municipal governments and from civil society. In the educational sphere, the participation of all those involved is fundamental. This includes teachers, students, staff, parents, the media, police, etc. The idea is that successful programs may change the situation of schools, create new expectations and make it possible for more productive, positive and pleasant social relationships involving a feeling of belonging to exist.

State and municipal secretariats of education must supervise the implantation of measures against violence in the schools by assisting and facilitating the implementation of policies and training and evaluating the several parts of the programs taking place at schools. They are also responsible for contributing with personnel training and with material for personnel training, as well as for discussing management and security policies with educational authorities and the community.

Caring for school surroundings and neighboring areas

- Having traffic lights, pedestrian overpasses and crosswalks to protect youths, technical-pedagogical staff members and parents.
- Caring for the maintenance of lighting in the areas surrounding schools.
- Creating a service to control the sale of alcoholic beverages to minors at establishments or places close to schools.
- Prohibiting the existence of gambling establishments in surrounding areas.
- Adopting and improving control mechanisms to discourage the distribution of illegal drugs.

Leisure – opening school space

• Putting programs into practice to open schools on weekends with the intention of getting the community, parents and students involved in cultural, artistic, sports and leisure activities, with an emphasis on education for citizenship and on the construction of a Culture of Peace[67].

• Carrying out activities involving students, youths, community and especially the family using the youths' language. This includes arts, culture and sports and deal with themes concerning citizenship.

Interaction between school, family and communities

• Sensitizing families and the community where the school is located in relation to the problem of violence and the need for and possibility of decreasing it.

Activities of a cross-disciplinary nature

• Raising student awareness of the consequences of drug and weapon use, theft and robbery, and of the various kinds of prejudice, discrimination, intolerance, acts that result in humiliation, disrespect, prejudice against homosexuals and discrimination against ethnic differences and gender.

• Launching a campaign to fight violence in schools with the support of mass media, the National Council of State Secretaries of Education (CONSED), the Union of Municipal Directors of Education (UNDIME) and other mobilization institutions.

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[67] This proposal should not be confused with programs that limit themselves to opening schools on the weekend that are common in Brazil (see Gonçalves and Sposito, 2001). It follows UNESCO principles, combining research and continuous evaluation systems. There is care for the ethical content and cultural-artistic quality of the activities and a complex structure for increased democratic management is set up. There is research on community talents and the program is supervised in terms of intervention on forms of social interaction (on this proposal, see also the creation of Schools of Peace in Rio de Janeiro, in Abramovay et al., 2001)

School Environment

• Caring for the physical state and cleanliness of school premises, schoolyards, bathrooms and classrooms. This creates a pleasant environment, well ventilated and well lit, with good furniture and adequate space for holding educational and leisure activities.

• Ensuring the participation of youths, technical-pedagogical staff and parents in different activities, thus developing a feeling of belonging to school.

• Having spaces for chemistry and computer labs and spaces for artistic activities and sports activities.

• Encouraging graffiti art and restoration courses and organizing groups of youths to take care of the schools. This stimulates a sense of belonging to school and indirectly combats vandalism and graffiti spraying involving school property.

Regulations

• Having clear discipline rules and expectations regarding teachers', students' and other school staff's behavior and school performance.

• Resorting to punitive measures like suspending, transferring and expelling students only in extreme cases, and having clear rules regarding these regulations.

• Having punitive rules against moral violence (such as humiliation or discrimination) on the part of teachers and staff against students and having transparent processes for evaluation and decisions regarding students' reports against technical-pedagogical staff members.

• Having rules regarding teachers' and technical pedagogical staff members' obligations to students, like mandatory attendance and the obligation to teach pedagogical classes. This avoids power abuse on the part of teachers and staff

members against students, such as those found in the area of security.

Sensitizing process

• Sensitizing teachers and technical-pedagogical staff members in regards to matters related to violence. These include incivility, bad treatment, sexual harassment and other kinds of violence both among students and between teachers and students.

• Reinforcing programs for teachers and creating specific programs for staff members in the area of school security on current themes related to youth culture, sexuality and drugs, among other subjects.

Security

• Counting on effective police activity to stop violence in school surroundings.

• Making use of programs for weapon collection at school combining preventive and punitive measures.

• Providing security to students and members of the educational community not only at schools but also in school surroundings.

• Working on sensitizing the police in relation to human rights so as to valorize the youths' own nature. This would create a police force sensitive to citizenship and youth issues, with no authoritarian attitudes or power abuse against the poor or blacks.

• Consideration on the part of security agents, guards and community police in relation to the fact that there are critical spots in school life and critical hours in terms of the occurrence of violent acts, including the break, the time when students get to school and the time when they leave school. During these periods there must be more security.

• Having explicit rules, like wearing uniforms, with the objective of identifying students at the entrances of schools.

Media

• Having debates and meetings with journalists and other media professionals and stimulating positive representations of the youths. Spreading the news of successful cases in the construction of a Culture of Peace and discussing problems faced by different groups at school.

Valorization and organization of youths

• Attempting to value youths, respecting their autonomy and discussing the occurrence of conflict and violence directly with those involved.

• Stimulating the creation of students' associations or specific organizations.

• Stimulating youth protagonism through discussions about violence based on youths' experiences and language, that is, protagonism created by youths.

• Stimulating the use of murals organized by students

Alliances

• Linking schools to Secretariats of Education, Conselhos Tutelares and, when these are not available, to the Public Prosecutor Service or the responsible judge. According to the Statute of the Child and Adolescent, measures for protection against and prevention of violence must be developed jointly by these organizations.

Specialized support for the process of implementing measures

• Integrating measures against violence through programs involving parents, youths, technical-pedagogical staff members, the media and the police force, considering that in order for effective intervention to take place it is necessary to discuss different issues with parents and representatives of the community where the school is located. These issues include the result that is expected of the program and measures to be put into practice against violence.

• Carrying out research on violence in the schools throughout the country with the help of different specialists and agencies.

• Becoming familiar with and having deeper experience with projects in schools that carry out work against violence.

• Implementing a permanent and periodic system for the evaluation of the situation of violence in the schools at a national, state and municipal level using quantitative and qualitative techniques and indicators which are flexible enough to adapt to the specific features of each school. This should include the reporting of this phenomenon in addition to successful cases involving preventing and stopping violence. Different evaluation techniques should be used, including personal reports by students, teachers, principals, parents and members of the community where the school is located as well as data gathered in partnership with police institutions.

• Developing written and audiovisual educational material to aid teachers, principals, staff members and students who wish to act within their establishments. Collaborating with arts and culture groups, particularly those involving youths, that have proposals in that area. This should be put into practice by states and municipalities.

CONCLUSIONS

Violence appears in this research as every type of physical or symbolic damage that is imposed on individuals or groups. It is related to tendencies like poverty, social inequality and problems in communication. It also refers to the loss of legitimacy, which is the antithesis of violence and involves the use of reasoning, consent and dialogue (Arendt, 1994). It also refers to ways to relate to power, such as that exerted by weapons, fear, intimidation and lack of respect for others.

When the theme of violence in the schools is brought up, several contradictions must be dealt with. This includes the fact that there has been an increase in violence since the 1980s, during the period of the consolidation of democracy. This was highlighted by Peralva (2001). While school is a space for learning values and exercising ethics and reasoning, it is also a space for incivility, fights, invasion, degradation and even death. Conflicts take place between many agents, between students and students, students and teachers, students and staff. This includes symbolic violence and authoritarian attitudes.

Symbolic violence is more difficult to be perceived than physical violence because it is exerted by society. This takes place when society is unable to place youths in the job market and to provide them with opportunities to develop creativity and leisure activities. It also happens when schools impose uninteresting content that has no meaning in students' lives or when teachers refuse to provide enough explanation, leaving students to fend for themselves and humiliating students with unappreciative words and gestures. Likewise, symbolic violence is related to violence teachers are subject to when their work and professional identity

are attacked by students' lack of interest and indifference. This set of elements form an environment of day-to-day tension that is expressed through hostile acts, including lies, fights and deceit involving members of the school and sometimes students' parents.

There are several hypotheses to explain violence in the schools. They are based both on national and international literature and resort to multiple associations involving characteristics and attributes of victims and perpetrators regarding:

• gender – boys are found to be more involved in situations of violence than girls, both as victims and as perpetrators;

• age – aggressive behavior is related to age;

• race –dominant ethnic stereotypes are reproduced at school, which in practice means that students resist ethnic minorities and there is discrimination on the part of students and teachers;

• family – some authors refer to the family as a conditioning factor and predecessor of violent personalities. Some call attention to what they call "the social characteristics of violent families". This is a highly controversial hypothesis and several authors reject it;

• external environment – communities that show small signs of abandonment or decadence are more vulnerable to violence[68];

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[67] The Broken Windows theory was developed by focusing on the social and environmental processes that affect violence, including those that take place at school. According to this theory, communities that show small signs of abandonment or decadence are more vulnerable to violence. The central idea is that lack of order in the neighborhood indicates to criminals that there is no authority watching and to individuals that others are indifferent to their living conditions. This includes physical aspects, like graffiti, garbage and degradation, and small-scale delinquency, like drinking and bumming around. National literature warns against deterministic associations between poverty and violence in the neighborhood and school since there are different levels of violence in schools in violent neighborhoods (Sposito, 1998; Batista and El-Moor, 1999). According to Sposito, "diversity also demonstrates the fact that violent social environments do not always result in schools characterized by violence" (1998:64).

• dissatisfaction/frustration in relation to institutions and public management. This includes lack of interest in schools on the part of the government, lack of equipment and school materials and low quality education in terms of youths' expectations and job market demands;

• social exclusion – restrictions to the incorporation of a part of the population into the political and social community, and

• exertion of power, lack of motivation, bad quality education, incivility and discrimination contribute to disrespect for students' human rights to protection. They waste the pedagogical chance to form a counterculture to violence, bad quality education and lack of human resources.

In this research, some of these hypotheses were looked into based on the result of the questionnaires and on the testimonies of several participants.

As shown before, the context of the school and its characteristics are elements necessary for understanding this phenomenon. These elements include the neighborhood where the school is located, the ways in which the police patrol the area, the existence of precariously lit areas, unsafe traffic and crossings where there are no traffic lights, overpasses, crosswalks or traffic cops to control pedestrians and vehicles. They are part of a social ecology that affects the school but that do not originate in school.

In general, schools are located on secondary streets where there is not so much activity. Many of them are located in a social and territorial space whose characteristics affect their routine. There is the interference of gangs and drug dealers who change students' and teachers' daily lives and physically threaten individuals who go to school.

The areas surrounding schools are the most critical spots in relation to the occurrence of violence. This is reported by both students and technical-pedagogical staff members. It was

observed that many of the students go to markets, snack bars, bars, gambling establishments and video arcades close to schools. This gets students off track and consequently takes them away from classrooms. Students frequently go to bars with their groups or crews and buy alcoholic drinks even though it is illegal to sell alcohol to minors. Underage youths make up a significant portion of secondary school students.

In the opinion of some sources, lack of police patrols worsens the situation as the police may be a synonym of security and order. Other testimonies, however, indicate that their presence should be seen not only as useless but also as damaging and untrustworthy. Youths are especially critical of the police. This is true not in terms of the institution but in terms of specific professionals, some members being less trustworthy than some criminals. The image of public security professionals is compromised since there are alleged actions or omissions on their part. This includes corruption, involvement in drug dealing, unjustified aggression against youths and participation in the murder of innocent people.

Violence in the schools is manifested in various ways and involve those who are part of the school system both as perpetrators and as victims. Physical violence is the most explicit facet of this phenomenon, with an emphasis on threats. When the teacher is the victim, one of the main reasons found for violence is disagreement with students because of grades in addition to the level of requirements and lack of discipline in the classroom. The most common threats on the part of students involve physical retaliation, especially after school hours.

Fights are considered commonplace occurrences, which suggests that violence has become banal and legitimate as a conflict-solving mechanism. Many times fights happen with the encouragement of colleagues. This has been found to be the most common reaction when there is a fight.

Also in regard to violence against the individual, there is sexual abuse. Both students and technical-pedagogical staff members were reported to have taken part in this form of abuse as aggressors. Violence also becomes concrete through the presence of guns. It is necessary to point out that youths frequently state that there are guns in their homes. They also say that it is easy to get them at school or close to school.

High percentages of other types of weapons also draw attention. It is common to find several members of the educational community carrying knives, stilettos and switchblades.

The fact that guns and other weapons are related to violent acts contributes to spreading a feeling of insecurity. It also makes carrying weapons something natural. It justifies using a gun as a tool for defense, contributing to the increase of violence in the schools. Most students accept the use of weapons as a necessary and legitimate means to protect oneself with the objective of fighting violence through fear.

Theft and robbery in the school environment are mentioned constantly. Students report that it is common for their personal belongings and teachers' cars to be stolen. Sources say that people who are not part of the educational community are responsible for the most serious occurrences. They go into the school at night, on weekends and during vacations. Most petty theft is committed by people who are part of the school environment. In these cases, it is observed that sources underestimate the seriousness of this type of occurrence and sometimes do not consider the nature of the act.

In relation to robbery, there is a great difference between public schools and private establishments in most capitals. There is a higher percentage of reports at public schools, but they are also numerous in private schools.

There are also acts of vandalism in the school environment. This has been related to authoritarian, indifferent or omissive school authorities. Reports on school degradation are much

more common at public institutions than at private ones. This demonstrates the lack of a feeling of belonging and sharing what is public. This also shows the distance school keeps both from students and from the community. Testimonies suggest that acts of violence against school property happen frequently but that they also happen involving teachers' personal belongings.

In general, schools dealt with fights, aggressions and violence through a number of formal and informal procedures. There are different models depending on the characteristics of each administration or pedagogical project.

The procedures followed are mostly written warnings, suspension, and transferring or expelling students, according to how serious the problem is. Discipline is both a responsibility and a commitment and is shown as a necessary condition for maintaining the order necessary for school activities. Each institution establishes its internal rules that are, in some cases, questioned by students, like school hours, wearing a uniform, etc.

When students were asked how they felt about the school they attend, the great majority answered that they like it even though they do not accept some of the rules imposed by the school. When they were asked to indicate the elements they like the least at school, physical space was pointed out first. The administration and the coordination were cited second. The third indication was other students, which once again suggests the frailty of the feeling of belonging and being involved with school as a space for building social relations. This suggests that students have low self-esteem and consequently do not have a positive image of themselves or their schoolmates.

Several teachers stated that they do not like the classes, which are understood as the professional activities they are subject to including activities, content, materials and workload. Also, they do not like most of their students. Their criteria is discipline, interest and educational background. Data indicate

that teachers do not like students because they are not interested in their studies. Another reason is that they do not feel safe in their workplace because they are threatened by students and fear the gangs that act within the school space.

The previous indications are reflected in the answers given by students when they cited the three most serious problems at school. The first was lack of interest and discipline on the part of students themselves. The second was the lack of human and material resources. The third was teacher absenteeism or incompetence. technical-pedagogical staff members cited the lack of human and material resources first, lack of interest and discipline on the part of students second and, third, parents' lack of interest in school and in their children's school life.

Other themes are raised, including power abuse, authoritarian attitudes, arbitrary punishment, low quality education and conflict relationships. It is necessary to consider the dimensions of symbolic violence as well as those of physical violence since they are a set of phenomena not always perceived as violence by victims. This happens even though they are expressed concretely in the victims' actions, possibilities and lives.

School stands out as a place where symbolic violence takes place through the power to exercise rational communication. This follows Bourdieu's line of thought, which refers to the power exerted by dominant groups *"such as those that act through sanctions to the educational institution (…)*"(2001: 101).

Pressure based on the power to give grades, ignore students and their problems, treat them badly, make use of verbal aggression and expose them when they do not understand the subject is a recurring theme in students' testimonies. However, teachers also suffer when they are subject to aggression in their workplace in relation to professional identity. This takes place in the form of lack of interest and indifference on the part of students, which creates an atmosphere of daily tension.

It is not possible to ignore another facet of symbolic violence, expressed by the realization that a considerable number of students believe school teaches little or nothing. They also believe that the nature of what is taught is useless even though it is important as an instrument to increase the chances of getting a job. Their testimonies, however, show that students are not confident that more education and training actually ensure that they will have a job or a better salary. Their empiric perception is that this does not always happen. Still, it is demonstrated that low-income youths generally see school as an opportunity for social mobility.

Most students believe that what school teaches is useful for their lives and futures. It is a privileged space for socializing, promoting citizenship, forming opinions and attitudes and developing oneself. At the same time, school is cited in students' and technical-pedagogical staff members' testimonies as an agent of social exclusion and discrimination. Racial aspects also stand out in this research since the testimonies of several participants demonstrated that there is prejudice within the school environment. However, few people admitted to being prejudiced, attributing this kind of behavior to others. The denial of direct racism changes the focus of racial prejudice to "fooling around". This means racist behavior disguised by pseudo-cordiality.

Some students, however, affirm that racial prejudice is out in the open and state that many times fights are motivated by racism.

The existence of feelings of social exclusion and racism makes students see school as a space for social exclusion and discrimination. On the other hand, the view of school as a whole shows that it is an effective way to access citizenship. This demonstrates that students' perceptions are contradictory.

The findings of this research contain important leads for understanding how youths deal with violence. In the first place, it is demonstrated that there is no unique notion of violence. The

notion of violence appears as a fragment of social life. For some it is common and natural, while others describe various forms of violence, from physical confrontation to racial discrimination and social exclusion.

Secondly, violence does not have a definite connotation as a value. On the contrary, it is seen as instrumental. It may be valid or not depending on why it is committed, what it is committed for and against whom it is committed. It is considered valid as defense, for instance, in the case of aggression, humiliation or injustice and or as a valid reaction to theft and robbery.

Violence also has consequences that negatively affect the quality of education and learning. Violence in the schools directly affects students and makes it hard for them to concentrate on their studies. They are absent from school, lose interest in attending classes and get nervous, rebellious, afraid and insecure. This is harmful to their academic and personal development.

In relation to teachers, absenteeism is a direct consequence of violence and lack of appreciation for their work. Other results are lack of motivation to go to work, a feeling of rebelliousness and difficulty in concentrating in class. There is also high teacher turnover. They try to transfer to places where teaching is safer, which possibly causes a lack of teaching staff at more violent schools.

Therefore, it is necessary to draw attention to the fact that violence in the school is not limited to a series of objective data. It encompasses how facts are experienced in multiple and different ways by those who experience them. "What happens to me and how I perceive it." The effort put into this work in order to provide a comprehensive overview of the several dimensions of this phenomenon made it possible for a number of participants to share their perceptions in relation to it. This proved to be especially effective in order to understand violence in the schools and guide discussion towards the search for strategic paths to overcome it.

MAP OF BRAZIL

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

AL State of Alagoas

AM State of Amazonas

BA State of Bahia

CE State of Ceará

CN-DST/Aids National Coordination of STD/AIDS

CNPq National Counsel for Scientific and Technological Development

DF Federal District

STD Sexually Transmitted Disease

ECA Statute of the Child and Adolescent

ES State of Espírito Santo

FDE Foundation for Educational Development

FUNDEF Maintenance and Development for Basic Education and Teacher Recognition

GO State of Goiás

IBGE Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics

ILANUD Latin American Institute of the United Nations for Crime Prevention and Delinquency Treatment

INEP National Institute for Educational Research

IPEA Institute for Applied Economic Research

ISER Institute for Religious Studies

LDB Law of Guidelines and Bases for National Education

MEC Ministry of Education

MJ Ministry of Justice

MPAS Ministry of Social Assistance

MT State of Mato Grosso

NGO Non-governmental Organization

UN United Nations

PA State of Pará

PE State of Pernambuco

PNAD National Program for Samples of Residence

RJ State of Rio de Janeiro

RS State of Rio Grande do Sul

SAVE Sevilha Anti-Violence in the Schools

SC – State of Santa Catarina

SEE State Secretariat of Education

SEEC State Secretariat of Education and Culture

SOE Educational Counseling Service

SP State of São Paulo

UnB University of Brasília

UNODCCP United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention

UNAIDS United Nations Program for HIV/AIDS

UNDIME Union of Municipal Directors of Education

UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

USAID North American Agency for International Development

UNICEF United Nations Children's Foundation

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