

Reducing Violence Among Disadvantaged Children Through After-School Programs

Prof. Dr. Maria Corina BRONȚ¹, Prof. Dr. Alexandra-Lucia Pop²

¹Faculty of Socio-Human Sciences, University of Oradea, Oradea, Romania

²College of Services in Tourism "Napoca", Cluj-Napoca, Cluj, Romania

ABSTRACT: The purpose of this pedagogical research is to investigate the reduction of violence among disadvantaged children through extracurricular programs.

This research looks at the problem of violence in one of the general schools, on the outskirts of Cluj, in grades 5 and 6. While some consider violence between children an isolated phenomenon, others consider it non-existent, and others consider it a deep problem that can influence students' behavior. The importance of factors include internal causes: lack of culture, family education, vulnerability and external causes: violent games, environment.

Are including descriptive analyses, correlations, Anova tests and T-student tests. The influence of the respondent's gender on the teasing ($p=0.029$), on the irony ($p=0.009$), on the intimidation ($p=0.027$) and on the damage and destruction of objects by colleagues ($p=0.036$). Most students come from dysfunctional families and single-parent families, with a low standard of living and living in the city's waste collection area.

KEYWORDS: school violence, aggressive behavior, after school, child abuse, violence in language.

I. INTRODUCTION

School is an integral part of the wider community, a social space linked to social dynamics, which is affected by the conflicts and difficulties faced by society; consequently, the problems faced by school as an institution and environment for educating young people concern society as a whole. School should be seen as a forum for socialization, a transparent space open to the outside world, whose tensions it assimilates, thus becoming a space for the manifestation of violence. Thus, school violence is a form of everyday violence and a global problem.

Considering the violence that children adopt by imitating various social actors they come into contact with before reaching school age, we must pay special attention to how school can become an environment for reproducing violence, a stage that can transform children's play into a subsequent social reality. The good news is that in a school environment that creates a circle of safety for children, an environment where they feel protected from the violent reality they encounter outside, teachers have the opportunity to detect deviant behavior and take action, through education and counseling, to reintegrate children and promote their harmonious development as individuals in society.

In this regard, in 2011, the Ministry of Education implemented "After School" programs with the aim of providing children with an education system based on individual needs and specialized help with homework. The "After School" concept is a system intended for primary and secondary school students, which will be financed from the budget of local authorities, European or national funds, donations, sponsorships, and parents' own budgets. In order for an educational institution to implement the "After School" system, it must follow a set of procedures designed to create an organized, safe, and personalized educational framework aligned with European standards. To be included in this program, the school must draw up a plan that includes the number of students that can be absorbed into the program, the space required in relation to the number of students, and the material equipment needed for the respective spaces. The program provides that after the compulsory hours required by the school curriculum; children will have lunch and then continue with assisted homework. In this way, students who struggle with their studies will be able to receive additional specialized help.

The activities included in the program are designed specifically to stimulate creativity, skill, responsibility, social and civic spirit, and altruism. The promoters of the "After School" concept argue that parents have limited time available, and that they often lack patience and are tired when their children ask for help with their homework. They also acknowledge that parents are overwhelmed by the complex and concentrated school curriculum. After-school programs primarily help parents and secondarily help shape and mold the adults of tomorrow by creating opportunities for children to socialize and learn nonviolent behavior skills. (1,2)

Reducing Violence Among Disadvantaged Children Through After-School Programs

II. SCHOOL AS AN ENVIRONMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

First of all, based on the definition provided by the Explanatory Dictionary of the Romanian Language, school is a public educational institution where the basic elements of the main subjects are taught or in the perception of specialists, school is a social institution where education is carried out in an organized manner. School is seen as a cornerstone in the formation of the child as an individual and adult prepared to assume responsibilities, to contribute to the development of society and to become independent, prepared for work. (3,4)

Violence in general and school violence in particular has been discussed for a long time, both in the private and family environment and in the public environment: school, social circles, the workplace. Nowadays, school, as an institution, has become more transparent. In the European cultural and political context, the idea is accepted and promoted that school should be a privileged space, of security, free from conflicts and manifestations of social violence. Taking into account its antecedents, violence in schools is an older social phenomenon, but today brought to the public light by the mass media. In old Europe, brutality reigned in schools, tolerated for the purpose of disciplining students. However, with the evolution of human society, in the course of history, a new personality emerged, characterized in particular by increased control of emotions and decreased impulsivity and maintenance of self-control. Today, there is talk about creating a new image of childhood and of course, about the methods of educating children. However, today violence against children is less and less tolerated or even not tolerated at all. From a legislative and practical point of view, the interest of the child must be defended in order to ensure his development in the best conditions, the bad treatment of the child such as threats, indifference, neglect, mockery, humiliation, corporal punishment, being drastically punished. (5)

The World Health Organization defines violence as a continuous process described by a state of violence, poverty and humiliation or violence can also be understood as the threat or use of physical force or power for a specific purpose against another person or an entire group, the consequences of the act of violence leading to trauma, psychological damage, poor development or even death (6,7)

• VIOLENCE AND BEHAVIORAL DEVIANCE

Folksier says that “the frequency of aggression and peer rejection is a signal that a child has embarked on a negative behavior trajectory and that this, without intervention, can lead to school failure, delinquency, drug use and other developmental consequences” (8,9)

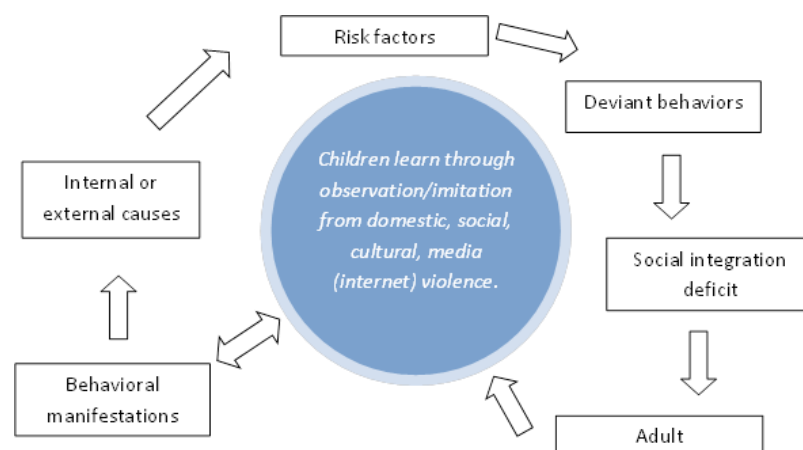
School violence is considered mainly a form of social violence and is related to the behavior of students who have not integrated into the school environment from a normative, emotional, educational and relational point of view. It is present through the manifestation by students of inappropriate and antisocial behaviors that harm other people.

It has been found in numerous studies that, as a rule, risk behavior during adolescence is influenced by the so-called behavioral problems, sometimes specific to the age in continuous transformation and development. In this context, from the category of these behavioral problems frequently encountered among adolescents, we can mention the various types of deviations and delinquencies, consumer behavior, juvenile crime and, more recently, sexuality. (10)

Adolescence is the age of challenges, and young people tend to get involved in various ambiguous, often risky situations. Even if they know what risks they are exposed to, they accept them, considering themselves more resistant than they really are. (11)

(12) also talk about the unhealthy behaviors that are far too common in young people during adolescence, behaviors that are completely harmful not only for the individual themselves, but also for society in general.

• Factors influencing behavior



Source: Adapted from (13), Gender Inequality: Invisible Violence, Eikon, Cluj-Napoca, 2005, p 18.

Reducing Violence Among Disadvantaged Children Through After-School Programs

Behavioral manifestations observed in the figure above, which are present in the present research: physical violence, non-verbal violence, violence in language, psychological violence, violence in clothing and appearance

Internal causes / reasons can be: lack of culture, family education, vulnerability.

External causes: violent games, environment.

- **Children's rights, school violence and combating violence**

As early as 1996, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared that “violence is one of the major public health problems worldwide”. In 2002, the WHO published the first Global Report on Violence and Health. In the “United Nations Study on Violence against Children.

The debates on the relationship between the concept of the “right to safety” (Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989) and the school environment have developed continuously and steadily in Europe, with differences from country to country, and have officially become a political issue following a meeting of experts organised by the European Commission in Utrecht in 1997.

Child abuse is any form of physical or emotional violence to which children are subjected or exposed. In Romania, Law 272/2004 (23) on the protection of children attempts to clarify these aspects and provide legal support to identify cases of abuse. Far from being perfect, it provides a framework that can be used to stop abusive behaviors against children.

Domestic violence is defined by Law no. 217/2003 (24), as updated, and refers to violence directed against any member of the family.

In the specialized literature, violence is defined from four perspectives (13):

- Children exposed to physical violence, which includes those who have been intentionally injured, as well as those injured by insufficient supervision. Clansen and Crittenden consider that emotional violence/abuse is present in almost all cases of physical violence and that emotional abuse is the one that has caused the greatest damage to the child's development.
- Children exposed to emotional violence - it is very difficult to define and can occur in very different forms of life, emotional violence is like a chronic attitude or action of parents or other caregivers, which damages or prevents the development of a positive self-image of the child.
- Child neglect represents "a silent and relentless killing of the human spirit" (14)
- Children are dependent on those who care for them, for the satisfaction of physical and emotional needs, for this reason violence / sexual abuse can be committed by parents, grandparents, other close relatives as well as other "trusted" adults, the teacher, the neighbor or the person who takes care of the child.

The stress-frustration-violence relationship also plays an essential role in understanding the phenomenon of school violence, especially in the context of puberty. Puberty is a difficult and delicate age, full of emotional and social instability for those who go through it. And all the changes have the effect of establishing a perpetual state of stress, as well as the birth of frustrations for those who perceive themselves to be different from other children their age (due to development spurts, body disproportion, acne, etc.). Most of the time, violence against children remains hidden even by the children themselves, as they are afraid or ashamed to talk about incidents involving acts of violence against them. In cases where violence occurs within the family, the act of violence was committed by the spouse or another family member, by a more powerful member of society, such as an employer, teacher, police officer or by a leader of the respective community, fear, lack of experience and most often the precarious age of the children are what stop the victim from addressing the competent and competent bodies in such situations. (15)

As a rule, students open up to a teacher they feel close to, but they also become inhibited when the teacher shows authoritarianism towards those with poor academic results, repress their anger when they are treated unfairly or are labeled as problem students, thus creating a rift between the members of the class. In this context, repeated psychological violence directed against students can lead to the emergence of a feeling of frustration, which can become generalized, thus determining a change in attitude towards the teacher and towards the entire school activity in general. There are also students who suffer as a result of negative judgments by some teachers, judgments that come to reinforce their own feelings of doubt, discouragement, lack of confidence in their own strengths. This contempt, once internalized, can lead to a set of behavioral reactions: lack of communication, passivity in the lesson, indifference or disruption of the lesson, the emergence of violent attitudes.

- **Theories of aggressive behavior**

There are numerous theories in the specialized literature on multiple divisions of violence to better describe the phenomenon.

According to Moser (1987), there are four major conceptions regarding aggressive behaviors:

- o Instinctive theories consider that aggression is a manifestation of an innate drive or instinct.
- o Reactive theories investigate aggressive behavior as a reaction to frustrating, unpleasant situations.
- o Learning theories, according to which aggressive behavior is a behavior taken over through various mechanisms, such as, for example: learning through imitation and observation.
- o The cognitive approach emphasizes the central internal cognitive processes inserted between the stimuli and the behavioral response of the individual.

Reducing Violence Among Disadvantaged Children Through After-School Programs

According to Freud's theses on frustration, it was found that violence is always the result of frustration and that frustration always leads to violent behavior.

The social learning theory of Albert Bandura and W. Mischel, is differentiated from other personality theories by two distinct processes: observational learning and self-regulation. This theory emphasizes the development of cognitive skills, expectations, goals, standards, a sense of self-efficacy and self-regulatory functions, through observational learning and direct experience.

The General Model of Aggression - the Bushman and Anderson model

Regarding the effects of the media on aggression, it is known the impact that models and imitative learning have on individuals, especially on children and adolescents whose personality is in the process of development.

TV programs, games and the internet present acts of violence that can have negative effects, both in the short term, increasing aggression as a result of watching the programs, and in the long term, preserving the level of violence in children during their transition to adulthood. In the first year of practice as a master's student, I applied 12 questionnaires to adolescents, coming from disadvantaged backgrounds, aged between 11 and 13, Roma ethnicity, in order to identify where the phenomenon of aggression in this class was taken from.

The sources of acquiring/learning or imitating violence in school, result, most of the time, from the family environment (home), but also from school, television, internet.

The questionnaire shows that the sources where most violence phenomena were seen are at school with 32%, followed by television with 24% and at home with 20%, and with 12% each, on the street and the internet. (16)

Next, we will focus on Ellis's cognitive-behavioral ABC therapeutic model (emotional-rational model), in which violence is seen as a consequence of dysfunctional beliefs, the case study from the practical side applying perfectly to this model. The cognitive model was initiated in 1962 by Albert Ellis and developed by Aaron Beck in 1976. The cognitive ABC as the model is also called refers to 3 states that define the theory:

A- The activating element refers to those situations, thoughts, emotions, feelings, behaviors related to certain events, thoughts, memories and experiences from the past, which are reflected in the current situation.

B- The person's beliefs which are often formulated as certain rules, generalities, philosophies of life, principles and values, preconceived and ingrained ideas.

C- The consequences often presented as behavioral, emotional, physiological, cognitive responses to certain events or situations. (17, 18).

In the specialized literature, the model presents two types of beliefs: rational and irrational, which will be taken into account regarding oneself, the world and others. In other words, when we talk about rational beliefs, we remember those ideas that stimulate and help the person to achieve their goals, but if the goals are not anchored in reality, they can give rise to the greatest disappointments, negative emotions, sadness, depression and worry. On the other hand, irrational beliefs refer to the individual's difficulty in adapting to certain requirements, demands, rules that ultimately create dysfunctional emotions. (19,20, 21)

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The role of the "After School" program in school

The "After School" program is funded by the "Peoples Development Foundation" in this case, at the general school on the outskirts of Cluj-Napoca and aims to reduce the risk of early dropout for those children who present a high risk, by offering educational services within a program complementary to the compulsory school program. The foundation intervenes integrally at the community level with three main objectives:

1. Preventing school dropout
2. Promoting sustainable employment
3. Developing social economy initiatives

"Main activities:

Recovering and developing students' knowledge and skills to meet school requirements through specialized support

- Preparing students for life by carrying out non-formal and recreational educational activities
- Involving parents in their children's educational journey
- The "After School" services we offer take into account the particularities of each child, their learning style and pace. At the same time, we have an integrated approach that takes into account other important factors in the child's life: the family and the school teachers whom we try to involve directly in the child's educational journey." (22)

In the "After School" programs, programs related to the promotion of children's rights should be implemented, as well as programs with the role of preventing and combating school violence.

In this study, we applied an evaluation through qualitative research, through a group interview and through quantitative research, in which children were involved in evaluating the behavior of their peers. Intervention activities for reducing violence among children, based on the cognitive behavioral concept and evaluation through quantitative and qualitative research.

Reducing Violence Among Disadvantaged Children Through After-School Programs

Research Purpose

The main purpose of the research is to identify the set of causes of impulsive behavior of students in two classes, in order to propose intervention methods that would reduce existing aggressive behaviors. In order to measure the evolution of the effectiveness of these intervention methods, I will apply a questionnaire regarding the students' perception of violence in school on 01.04.2024, during the school day, in grades 5 and 6, totaling a total of 32 students. Subsequently, the proposed activities will be carried out only with the 17 children who participate in the "After School" program, for two calendar months, and at the end, I will apply the same questionnaire to all 32 students with reference to their perception of school violence in the last two months.

Thus, in the present research, I want to find out whether the hypothesis "Reducing school violence is possible by educating students towards assertive communication and engagement activities" is confirmed or refuted.

Research methods

Several research methods were used in this work, through which I tried to present the current situation and the changes that will occur as a result of the activities. Qualitative methods were used - observation, quantitative - questionnaire and case study.

Regardless of the method I used, some principles related primarily to the legislative level and the security of the children's identity were respected: obtaining consent from the parents of minor students, applying the questionnaire and carrying out activities, obtaining consent from the foundation, from the school principal, maximum confidentiality.

Quantitative method

The research conducted is quantitative, using a questionnaire method, and qualitative, using a series of activities and exercises, which highlight how violence is perceived by students in grades 5 and 6.

The research group consists of 32 students aged between 11 and 14, of which 16 students will represent the group on which the intervention will be carried out, and the other 16 students, on whom no intervention will be carried out, represent the control group used to measure the efficiency of the intervention plan. The 16 students on whom the intervention will be applied are structured as follows:

- 8 female
- 8 male
- all coming from disadvantaged backgrounds
- the majority of Roma ethnicity (80%).

The research design was an intervention type, in which an intervention program was applied to a class of 5th and 6th grade students, without a control group. A pre- and post-intervention evaluation was applied using the student behavior evaluation form.

The general objective of the research

Is to demonstrate the visibility of the effect of reducing violence in children in the 5th and 6th grades, participants in the "After School" program. To demonstrate this effect, the research will compare the level of violence in children in the 5th and 6th grades who participated in "After School" with those who did not take part.

Operational objectives

Analysis of aggressive behavior in the educational unit where the research was conducted;

Identification of causes of acts of violence;

Identification of methods that lead to the reduction of violence.

Research questions

- To what extent can "After School" programs influence the reduction of violence?
- What are the manifestations of acts of violence in school?

Limitations: The statistical analysis has limited value due to the small number of questionnaires completed by children, namely 32, of which 16 are participants in the "After School" program

Quantitative research method and instrument

The questionnaire consists of three parts, each part being based on a requirement. It was taken from "Intervention Procedures and Management of Violence Cases in School" and adapted according to the present research. We reduced the items in order to match the level of the students. Items that covered the area of teachers were excluded.

Analysis and interpretation of collected data

The data analysis was carried out using the statistical program SPSS version 20.0, and in order to capture the phenomenon in as much detail as possible, we started from simple frequency and average analyses to more complex analyses such as the T-Test and Chi-square. The lower mean limit will be 1, and the upper mean limit will be 5.

Of the 16 students who are of interest for our research and who of course participated in the After School program, 50% are boys and 50% are girls. Under these conditions, an attempt was made to maintain a balance between the number of female and male students, without discussing the issue of discrimination or favoring a category of students.

Reducing Violence Among Disadvantaged Children Through After-School Programs

As I mentioned later, 5th and 6th grade students were the subject of this quantitative research, hence the age differences between the students. Thus, 40.63% of the 16 students are 13 years old, 28.13% are 12 years old and 15.63% are 11 years old and 14 years old respectively.

Next, we will analyze the aspects pursued in the quantitative research provided in the questionnaire applied to the students.

Analysis of the aspects evaluated by the students

Statistics									
	Average before schedule			Average by schedule			Evolution		
	Observe d	Agains t you	The girl of colleagues	Observe d	Agains t you	The girl of colleagues	Observe d	Agains t you	The girl of colleagues
High pitch	4.5	3.38	3.81	3.38	3.38	2.81	1.12	0	1
Teasing	4.31	3	3.06	2.88	2.5	1.75	1.43	0.5	1.31
Irony	4	3.31	3.31	2.69	2.31	1.94	1.31	1	1.37
Nicknames/ labels	3.88	4.19	3.56	2.94	3.31	2.44	0.94	0.88	1.12
Insults	4.25	4.13	3.5	3	2.75	2.25	1.25	1.38	1.25
Swearing/ obscene words	4.5	3.94	3.31	3.06	3	2.69	1.44	0.94	0.62
Intimidation/ threats	4	3.75	2.81	3.13	2.38	1.81	0.87	1.37	1
Spit	3.81	3.38	2.5	2.88	2.5	1.5	0.93	0.88	1
Unwanted	3.81	3.19	2.81	2.88	2.25	1.44	0.93	0.94	1.37
Spanking	3.81	3.13	2.5	2.63	2.5	1.81	1.18	0.63	0.69
Shoving	4.31	3.38	2.88	3	2.31	1.5	1.31	1.07	1.38
Drone	3.88	3.19	2.81	2.5	2.19	1.56	1.38	1	1.25
Throwing objects	4.25	3.31	2.94	2.38	2.56	2.06	1.87	0.75	0.88
Dispossession of personal belongings	3.56	2.63	2.31	2.38	2.19	1.25	1.18	0.44	1.06
Hitting/pulling hair	4.19	2.94	2.94	2.44	2.56	1.5	1.75	0.38	1.44
Damage/ destruction of things	4.13	2.31	2.25	2	1.94	1.06	2.13	0.37	1.19

(1-Never, 2- 1.2 times, 3-Sometimes, 4- Often, 5-Very often)

Source: Own processing

The overall picture of the results obtained for the two points in time: before the application of the program and after the application of the program, for the three categories of behaviors: observed, against oneself and against colleagues, shows a decrease or, better said, an improvement or an improvement in the behavior of the students who took part in the activities proposed in the "After School" program.

We will focus especially on those aspects that deserve our attention, namely on the biggest and most important developments but also on the aspects that have not undergone changes or have undergone very small changes.

For the observed behaviors, those that suffered the most significant changes were damage/destruction of objects with a decrease of 2.13, throwing objects with 1.87, hitting/pulling hair with 1.75 and swearing/obscene words with 1.44. In other words, after the end of the "After School" program, students were able to observe these behaviors less manifested at the group or class level. Through the activities proposed within the program, but with less success, the intensity of intimidation/threats was reduced by 0.87, spitting by 0.93 and unwanted touching by 0.93.

From a personal point of view or with regard to behaviors that turn against the person, major changes occurred in the case of insults that decreased by 1.38, intimidation/threats by 1.37 and pushing by 1.07. The same frequency of behaviors or an almost imperceptible change occurred in the case of aspects such as high tone stagnation 0, damage/destruction of objects decrease by 0.37 and hitting/pulling hair a decrease of 0.38.

The third category of behaviors is directed at those around or at colleagues, the attitudes that have shown a major improvement and are very rarely manifested towards colleagues are hitting / pulling hair with a decrease of 1.44, pushing with 1.38, unwanted touching and irony with 1.37. However, we still have attitudes with minor improvements such as swearing or obscene words addressed to colleagues with a decrease of only 0.62, slapping with a decrease of 0.69 or throwing objects with a decrease of 0.88.

Reducing Violence Among Disadvantaged Children Through After-School Programs

It is worth appreciating and noting the fact that each manifestation, attitude or behavior in particular has registered positive changes from one moment to another, so that the activities proposed within the “After School” program have achieved to a certain extent the purpose for which they were created and applied.

The Anova analyses applied in the following lines have as main purpose to signal a connection between the socio-demographic data of the students and their attitudes before and after the program. The test was applied to all reported behaviors: observed, against oneself and against colleagues, but we kept only the significant ones.

Anova analysis

Before the program		Sum of squares	Differences	Mean Square	Test F	Sig.
Teasing	Between groups	6.337	1	6.337	5.87	.029
	Within groups	15.100	14	1.079	6	
Irony	Between groups	9.600	1	9.600	9.33	.009
	Within groups	14.400	14	1.029	3	
Bullying	Between groups	6.667	1	6.667	6.08	.027
	Within groups	15.333	14	1.095	7	
Deterioration	Between groups	8.067	1	8.067	5.39	.036
	Within groups	20.933	14	1.495	5	

Source: Own processing

Thus, we identify multiple links between the socio-demographic variable (gender) and the observed behaviors and those towards peers before the program was implemented. For a more in-depth study, we will create graphs that support and show the influence of one variable on the other.

The links identified and presented in the previous table refer to:

- The influence of the respondent's gender on the teasing observed before the program (since $\text{Sig.} = 0.029 < 0.05$).
- The influence of the respondent's gender on the irony observed before the program (since $\text{Sig.} = 0.009 < 0.05$).
- The influence of the respondent's gender on the intimidation observed before the program (since $\text{Sig.} = 0.027 < 0.05$).
- The influence of the respondent's gender on the damage and destruction of objects by colleagues before the program (since $\text{Sig.} = 0.036 < 0.05$).

Also to see the connections before the program and after the application of the program, we will apply the T-test, which does nothing more than have the same variable in the two moments of time and track the impact of the activities on the students.

Correlations for behaviors observed before and after the program

Observed before and after the program implementation	Correlations	Sig
High tone	.557	.025*
Teasing	.330	.212
Irony	.038	.89
Nicknames/labels	.129	.634
Insults	.213	.428
Swearing/obscene words	.338	.201
Intimidation/threats	.042	.877
Spitting	.374	.154
Unwanted touching	.488	.055
Slapping	.382	.144
Pushing	.278	.298
Slamming	-.138	.611
Throwing objects	.300	.259
Taking personal items	-.094	.729
Hitting/ hair pulling	.267	.317
Damaging/ destroying objects	.117	.665

Source: Own processing

According to the table above presenting the results of the correlations, we can see that there is only one correlation that stands out, namely the one relating to the tone observed before the program and the tone observed after the inclusion of the students in the program ($\text{Sig.} = 0.025 < 0.05$). The correlation coefficient being equal to 0.557, shows us that there is a direct link between the two variables included in the analysis. All other pairs of variables that presented the object of the study did not show satisfactory results from a significant point of view.

Reducing Violence Among Disadvantaged Children Through After-School Programs

T-test analysis of behaviors observed before and after the program

Observed before and after the program implementation	The difference between the pairs					T	Df	Sig.
	Mean	Standard deviation	Deviation from the mean	95% Confidence interval				
				Under	Above			
High tone	1.125	1.025	.256	.579	1.671	4.392	15	.001
Teasing	.938	1.389	.347	.197	1.678	2.700	15	.016
Irony	1.313	1.852	.463	.326	2.299	2.835	15	.013
Nicknames/ labels	.938	1.611	.403	.079	1.796	2.328	15	.034
Insults	1.250	1.528	.382	.436	2.064	3.273	15	.005
Swearing/ obscene words	1.438	1.209	.302	.793	2.082	4.755	15	.000
Intimidation/theats	.875	1.746	.437	-.056	1.806	2.004	15	.063
Spitting	.938	1.340	.335	.223	1.652	2.798	15	.014
Unwanted touching	.938	1.482	.370	.148	1.727	2.531	15	.023
Slapping	1.188	1.424	.356	.428	1.947	3.335	15	.005
Pushing	1.313	1.250	.313	.646	1.979	4.200	15	.001
Slamming	1.375	1.821	.455	.405	2.345	3.020	15	.009
Throwing objects	1.875	1.544	.386	1.052	2.698	4.858	15	.000
Taking personal items	1.1875	2.2867	.5717	-.0310	2.4060	2.077	15	.055
Hitting/hair pulling	1.750	1.483	.371	.960	2.540	4.719	15	.000
Damaging/destroying objects	2.125	1.746	.437	1.194	3.056	4.867	15	.000

Source: Own processing

After applying the T-test through which we wanted to see how significant the differences are between the variables analyzed in the two moments, we observed that only two pairs of variables are not significant, namely the intimidation/threats observed before and after participation in the program ($\text{Sig.}=0.063>0.05$) and the dispossession of personal belongings ($\text{Sig.}=0.055>0.05$). Between all other pairs of variables, significant connections are observed $\text{Sigs} < 0.05$, which show an improvement in the behavior of the students observed before and after the program.

V. CONCLUSIONS

Following the secondary research included in the theoretical part of the dissertation by studying Romanian and foreign books and articles, and the quantitative research by applying the questionnaire, collecting and analyzing the answers provided by the students, we can issue a series of conclusions and directions, mentioned below:

- Violence, especially in the case of children, is a sensitive subject regardless of where in the world it manifests itself, but most of the time due to the fragile age and the lack of support from adults, acts of violence carried out in the family or at school are silenced;
- The increased attention to this subject has led to the creation of institutions and competent bodies that deal with acts of violence against minors, from verbal to physical violence;
- Changing the behavior and language used in the classroom in a positive way compared to the initial situation;
- The state of agitation, violence, refusal to participate in activities, denial of the fact that they are subjected to violent treatment were alleviated at the end of the program after the students were subjected to the activities mentioned;
- Making students responsible through the activities in which they were involved and increasing their level of self-confidence;
- Taking them out of their comfort zone and creating a new perspective on the environment and the educational space, on what collegiality and civic sense mean;
- The personalized attention offered to students led to a feeling of belonging to a group, identification and involvement in social activities;
- In the case of disadvantaged groups, the “After School” program has a significant impact, because within the school, students feel appreciated, are encouraged to discover themselves but also to create relationships and connections with other colleagues, while within the family, most often divided or without solid principles and values, these skills are lost or even become null;
- The diversity of activities and games have the role of stimulating creativity, responsibility, competition, altruism, teamwork, civic sense, socialization, which aim to form and shape an adult with strong principles and values and a beautiful character;
- Although the “After School” program sometimes requires an additional effort for the parents of the students, based on the research conducted, we can say that it is an important and significant step in the development of tomorrow's adult.

REFERENCES

- 1) <https://www.edu.ro/scoala%20dupa%20scoala>

Reducing Violence Among Disadvantaged Children Through After-School Programs

- 2) Gheorghe, D., (2014) "“After School”" sau colapsul unei idei bune,
<http://www.romanialibera.ro/societate/educatie/%E2%80%9E”After School”%E2%80%9C-sau-colapsul-unei-idei-bune-326438>
- 3) Dex Online, dexonline.ro, accesat la 08.10.2016
- 4) Cristea, S., (1996) Managementul organizației școlare, Editura EDP, București
- 5) Konta, R., (2016) Violenta în școală , Școala Gimnazială Sânpaul ,,
<http://ccdmures.ro/cmsmadesimple/uploads/file/rev6/violenta.pdf> , accesat la data de 15.10.2016
- 6) World Health Organization, October 15, 2016;
- 7) Gogonea, V., (20015) Educația și lecția de de viață. Despre problema violenței în mediul școlar
<http://www.gorjeanul.ro/cultura-2/educatiiasi-lectia-de-viata-despre-problema-violentei-in-mediul-scolar#.V0RNzTXhDIU>
- 8) Gullotta, T.P., Plant, R.W., Evans, M.A., (2005) Handbook of Adolescent Behavioral Problems: Evidence-Based Approaches to Prevention and Treatment, Second Edition, Springer, USA
- 9) Best, A.L., (2007) Representing Youth: Methodological Issues in Critical Youth Studies, New York University Press, New York and London
- 10) Arnett, J., (1992) Reckless behavior in adolescence: A developmental perspective. Dev Rev 12:339–373.
- 11) Tymula, A., Rosenberg Belmaker, L.A., Roy, A.K., Ruderman, L., Manson, K., Glimcher, P.W., Levy, I., (2012) Adolescents' risk-taking behavior is driven by tolerance to ambiguity, USA
- 12) Reyna, V.F., Farley F., (2006) Risk and rationality in adolescent decision making: Implications for theory, practice, and public policy. Psychol Sci Public Interest 7:1–44.
- 13) Veleaovici, A.C., (2015) Tulburări emoționale la copiii aflați în situație de abuz și neglijare, Chișinău
- 14) Carr, A., (1997) Family therapy and Systemic Practice: Reading on child protection, clinical techniques and empirical foundations, University press of America
- 15) ONU, (2004), Raport al expertului independent pentru studiul ONU privind violența asupra copiilor
http://www.salvaticopiii.ro/upload/p000200010000_Studiul_ONU_privind_violenta%5B1%5D.pdf
- 16) Opreșor, A., (2016) Chestionar violența în școală,
http://www.academia.edu/8906663/CHESTIONAR_VIOLENTA_IN_SCOALA
- 17) Pucă, A. N., (2012), Teoria cognitive, Revista de Psihoterapie Integrativă Vol.1. No.1, Decembrie
- 18) David, D., (2006) Tratat de psihoterapie cognitive și comportamentale, Editura Polirom, Iași
- 19) Dryden, W., (2007), Dryden's handbook of individual therapy – fifth edition, Sage Publication, London
- 20) Ellis, A., Harper, R., A., (1997) Ghid pentru o viață rațională, Editura RTS, Cluj-Napoca
- 21) Mirescu, C., (2013) Introducere în psihoterapia cognitiv comportamentală, <http://www.medicalstudent.ro/>
- 22) <http://www.fdpsr.ro/domenii-interventie/socio-educativ/proiecte-actuale>
- 23) Legea 272/2004 privind protecția și promovarea drepturilor copilului, republicată 2014, www.dreptonline.ro
- 24) Legea 217/2003 pentru prevenirea și combaterea violenței în familie, republicată 2014. Lege nr. 217/2003 republicată 2014, www.dreptonline.ro

ANNEXES–Questionnaire applied before and after the intervention

“Recently, especially through the contribution of the media, several acts of violence in the school environment have been discussed and analyzed. We know that there are acts of violence between students, but we do not have sufficient information about the nature and frequency of these acts of violence. Therefore, we ask you to complete this questionnaire.

1. Check in the tables below which of the following forms of behavior you have observed at school in the last month.
2. Check in the tables below which of the following forms of behavior have been directed against you in the last month.
3. Check in the tables below which of the following behaviors you have practiced either in general or towards your classmates in the last month.”

Questionnaire applied to students

Behavior	Frequency with your students/colleagues				
	Never	1-2 times	Sometimes	Often	Many times
High tone					
Teasing					
Irony					
Nicknames/ labels					
Insults					

Reducing Violence Among Disadvantaged Children Through After-School Programs

Swearing/ obscene words					
Intimidation/threats					
Spitting					
Unwanted touching					
Slapping					
Pushing					
Slamming					
Throwing objects					
Taking personal items					
Hitting/hair pulling					
Damaging/ destroying objects					