Manifestations of Victimisation Among Lithuanian Teachers and Their Experiences in Educational Institutions

Aistė Diržytė
Institute of Psychology, Faculty of Human and Social Studies
Mykolas Romeris University
Ateities g. 20, LT-08303, Vilnius, Lithuania
E-mail address: aiste.dirzyte@mruni.eu
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2057-3108

Marina Gušauskienė
Institute of Criminal Law and Procedure, Mykolas Romeris University
Ateities g. 20, LT-08303, Vilnius, Lithuania
E-mail address: mgusauskiene@mruni.eu
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0009-0005-9599-0178

Valdonė Indrašienė
Institute of Educational Sciences and Social Work, Faculty of Human and Social Studies
Mykolas Romeris University
Ateities g. 20, LT-08303, Vilnius, Lithuania
E-mail address: v.indrasiene@mruni.eu
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9917-4526

Violeta Jegelevičienė
Institute of Educational Sciences and Social Work, Faculty of Human and Social Studies
Mykolas Romeris University
Ateities g. 20, LT-08303, Vilnius, Lithuania
E-mail address: violeta.suboc@mruni.eu
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6437-8342

Odeta Merfeldaitė
Institute of Educational Sciences and Social Work, Faculty of Human and Social Studies
Mykolas Romeris University
Ateities g. 20, LT-08303, Vilnius, Lithuania
E-mail address: o.merfeldaite@mruni.eu
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8217-7699

Daiva Penkauskienė
Institute of Educational Sciences and Social Work, Faculty of Human and Social Studies
Mykolas Romeris University
Ateities g. 20, LT-08303, Vilnius, Lithuania
E-mail address: daiva.penkauskiene@mruni.eu
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0875-4080

Jolanta Pivorienė
Institute of Educational Sciences and Social Work, Faculty of Human and Social Studies
Mykolas Romeris University
Ateities g. 20, LT-08303, Vilnius, Lithuania
E-mail address: jolantapiv@mruni.eu
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6328-7940

Romas Prakapas
Institute of Educational Sciences and Social Work, Faculty of Human and Social Studies,
Mykolas Romeris University,
Ateities g. 20, LT-08303, Vilnius, Lithuania
E-mail address: prakapas@mruni.eu
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4811-6681

Asta Railienė
Institute of Educational Sciences and Social Work, Faculty of Human and Social Studies
Mykolas Romeris University
Ateities g. 20, LT-08303, Vilnius, Lithuania
E-mail address: asta.railiene@mruni.eu
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8192-6184

Justinas Sadauskas
Institute of Educational Sciences and Social Work, Faculty of Human and Social Studies
Mykolas Romeris University
Ateities g. 20, LT-08303, Vilnius, Lithuania
E-mail address: justas_sad@mruni.eu
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1009-9193

Rugilė Bitinaitė-Motiejūnienė
Institute of Psychology, Faculty of Human and Social Studies
Mykolas Romeris University
Ateities g. 20, LT-08303, Vilnius, Lithuania
E-mail address: rug.bitinaite@gmail.com
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0009-0005-5944-1753

ABSTRACT

Aim. The aim of this study is to reveal the victimisation of Lithuanian teachers in educational institutions. In order to achieve the aim of the study, the following hypotheses were put forward: traumatic experiences as a student are related to experiences of bullying and violence as a teacher; different forms of violence are interrelated; and teachers who have experienced one form of violence are more likely to experience others.

Methods. A quantitative study was conducted, and a questionnaire was developed for data collection using validated scales: Multidimensional Teacher Victimisation Scale (MT-VS-2); Teacher Bullying Experience Scale; Posttraumatic Cognitions Inventory – PTCI-9; Brief COPE. A probabilistic multistage sampling method was used, involving systematic and cluster sampling, with 1,044 teachers participating.

Results. Teachers most often experience psychological and verbal abuse (e.g., the incitement of students to disobey, swearing, gossip, etc.), and less often experience physical abuse, damage to property, sexual harassment, and cyber-attacks. Significant correlations were found between early trauma and current bullying by students, parents, colleagues, and administrative staff. Strong links were also found between physical violence and sexual and cyber harassment, as well as between property damage and psychological violence.

Conclusions. Teacher victimisation is a complex phenomenon determined by traumatic experiences, interpersonal relationships, and the overall school climate. Teachers most often experience psychological and verbal violence. The different forms of violence experienced by teachers are interrelated.

Originality. The study found that trauma experienced by teachers in childhood is positively associated with current experiences of violence and greater visibility of violence.

Keywords: teacher victimisation, violence, traumatic experiences, bullying, Lithuania

Introduction

In modern society, much attention is paid to student safety and the prevention of violence in schools. In Lithuania, the problem of aggression and victimisation experienced by teachers is receiving an increasing amount of attention from researchers (Budriūnienė & Viliūnienė, 2017; Dirzyte et al., 2023; Dirzyte et al., 2024; Pruskus & Balevičiūtė, 2011). Aggression and victimisation experienced by teachers is also considered a relevant issue by foreign researchers (Espelage et al., 2013; O & Wilcox, 2017; Stilwell et al., 2025). Many studies have revealed that teachers encounter various forms of violence and harassment – including verbal, physical, and indirect aggression – originating not only from students, but also from parents, colleagues, or administrators

(Dirzyte et al., 2024; Espelage et al., 2013; McMahon et al., 2014; Moon et al., 2021). Studies conducted in Lithuania show similar trends: Aiste Dirzyte et al. (2023) found that 36.8 % of teachers had experienced bullying by students, while an even larger proportion had experienced harassment from colleagues or the administration. Such experiences are associated with increased feelings of insecurity, emotional problems, and reduced professional motivation and job satisfaction (Budriūnienė & Viliūnienė, 2017; Choi et al., 2024; McMahon et al., 2014; Moon et al., 2021; Žydžiūnaitė & Rutkienė, 2024). Although most studies focus on the problem of student bullying (Chung, 2023), violence, harassment, and the lack of support experienced by teachers remain relatively under-researched (Dirzyte et al., 2024; Espelage et al., 2013; Stilwell et al., 2025). Studies show that experiencing violence is associated with poorer psycho-emotional well-being and increased psychological distress among teachers (Budriūnienė & Viliūnienė, 2017), and that various forms of teacher victimisation are significantly and negatively associated with life satisfaction (Dirzyte et al., 2024). This indicates the need for a systematic analysis of the forms, causes, and consequences of teacher victimisation and the identification of coping strategies.

The aim of the quantitative study presented in this article is to reveal manifestations of the victimisation of teachers in Lithuanian educational institutions.

The study was conducted as part of a research group project entitled "The relationship between teachers' critical thinking and their experience of victimisation in educational institutions and their psychological well-being" (LMTLT, S-MIP-24-480).

Teacher Victimisation in Educational Institutions: Theoretical Aspects

Violence against teachers is a common and recurring phenomenon associated with behaviour that aims to physically or emotionally harm them (Espelage et al., 2013). Violence against teachers is sometimes defined as a set of actions and situations that students deliberately or repeatedly cause in the workplace and/or digital space, which is determined by the perception of violence, the teacher's response mechanisms, and the organisational management of violence (Alves et al., 2022). Byongook Moon et al. (2021) note that although there is no single definition of teacher victimisation, violence against teachers can be defined as various forms of aggression and violence in schools, including both severe and mild forms of aggression.

Violence against teachers can manifest itself in verbal abuse, physical contact, gestures, social pressure, damage to property, sexual harassment, cyber-attacks, etc. (Alves et al., 2022; McMahon et al., 2020b). Studies on teacher victimisation show that teachers most often face harassment, threats, and verbal abuse (McMahon et al., 2014), rather than more severe forms of physical violence (Kapa & Gimbert, 2017). Claudio Longobardi et al. (2019) identified that teachers are most often subjected to obscene

gestures, offensive and obscene language, damage to personal property, intimidation, etc. A significant proportion of teachers in Lithuania also experience various forms of victimisation. The results of one study (Dirzyte et al., 2024) showed that more than a third of teachers had experienced bullying by other teachers or the school administration, while slightly fewer had encountered verbal victimisation by the parents of pupils. The most common forms of victimisation were verbal and social, experienced by two thirds of teachers. Colleagues and parents of students most often intimidate and threaten teachers (McMahon et al., 2014). In recent years, there have been more frequent instances of cyberbullying, where direct or indirect rumours about a teacher are systematically published online in order to humiliate and/or harm them (Pereira Hernández, 2023).

Research (Berkowitz et al., 2022) reveals that the process of teacher victimisation is related to both internal (teachers' experiences, emotional resilience, conflict resolution skills, relationships with students, rules of conduct, administrative support, microclimate, etc.) and external factors (the microclimate of the student's family, the socio-economic conditions, and the cultural attitudes of the community) in the school context. It has been noted (Kong et al. 2024; Ports et al., 2016; Wilkins et al., 2014) that individuals who have experienced violence in their childhood and youth are more likely to experience repeated victimisation throughout their lives, and the strongest link to repeated victimisation has been found among those who experienced multiple types of violence in childhood (Aakvaag et al., 2016).

The process of victimisation has a negative impact on teachers: it causes stress, anxiety, and depression (Sigad, 2023), and has other psychological, emotional, professional, and social consequences (Alves et al., 2022). Teachers who experience constant victimisation are more vulnerable, prone to social exclusion and job dissatisfaction, and at greater risk of emotional stress (Moon et al., 2021). As a result, this often leads to professional alienation. Physical and verbal violence and aggression against teachers contribute not only to high levels of stress at work, but also to staff turnover within the organisation (McMahon et al., 2023a, 2023b). It has been found (Curran et al., 2017) that there is a link between threats and attacks experienced by teachers and changing schools or leaving teaching. Teacher victimisation also has a negative impact on job satisfaction (Kapa & Gimbert, 2017), and there is a significant link between teacher victimisation and teacher burnout (Yang et al., 2022).

Teachers' ability to cope with violent experiences is significantly influenced by their perception of support in the professional environment (Sigad, 2023). Researchers (Berkowitz et al., 2022; Curran et al., 2017) note that the attitude of the school administration in providing assistance to teachers who encounter violent behaviour plays an important role in helping teachers to overcome its traumatic consequences. The school administration's response to cases of teacher victimisation, ensuring fairness and impartiality, has a direct impact on teachers' perceptions of how effectively the school addresses teacher victimisation issues (McCluskey et al., 2024). According

to Moon and John McCluskey (2022), the level of procedural justice demonstrated by schools in dealing with cases of teacher victimisation is associated with a positive effect in reducing physical and emotional harm to affected teachers. An unsupportive head of the school or a head who has decided to support parents and students rather than teachers leads to teachers feeling devalued, frustrated, and alienated at school (Berkowitz et al., 2022; Curran et al., 2017). Meanwhile, the consistent enforcement of school rules and good relationships among school staff leads to lower levels of physical violence (Martinez et al., 2025), can reduce cases of inappropriate behaviour by students and the victimisation of teachers, helps reduce the levels of stress and anxiety experienced by teachers, and increases job satisfaction (Kapa & Gimbert, 2017). These findings underscore the notion that institutional support mechanisms and procedural justice play a critical role in fostering teachers' emotional resilience, safeguarding their professional identity, sustaining a positive school climate, and actively reducing teacher victimisation.

Research Methodology

Research Instrument

This study was conducted in accordance with the methodological provisions of quantitative research. The study raised the following hypotheses:

- Traumatic experiences as a student are related to experiences of bullying and violence as a teacher.
- Teachers are more likely to experience bullying from students in secondary schools than in primary schools, and the overall frequency of bullying and violence depends on the type of school and location (e.g. large cities, middle schools).
- Different forms of violence (physical, psychological, sexual, cyber) are interrelated, and teachers who experience one form of violence are more likely to experience other forms of violence.

An anonymous questionnaire was created for data collection. The questionnaire was compiled using validated scales (see Table 1).

Table 1
Measurement Scales Used in the Study

Scale	Purpose	Source
Multidimensional Teacher Victimisation Scale (MTVS-2)	To assess various forms of violence experienced by teachers and their intensity.	Yang et al., 2019

Scale	Purpose	Source
Teacher Bullying Experience Scale	To assess teachers' experiences of bullying at school.	Dirzyte et al., 2024
Posttraumatic Cognitions Inventory – PTCI-9	To assess posttraumatic stress cognitions after violence or bullying.	Wells et al., 2019
Brief COPE	To assessing teachers' coping strategies after bullying or violence.	Huda et al., 2022

Source. Own research.

The reliability of the validated scales used in this study was additionally assessed using Cronbach's alpha (α) coefficient as an internal consistency indicator (Rupšienė & Rutkienė, 2016; Taber, 2018; Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). The analysis showed high internal consistency for all scales: Scale 1 (18 statements) – $\alpha = 0.905$; Scale 2 (28 statements) – $\alpha = 0.946$; Scale 3 (9 statements) – $\alpha = 0.848$; Scale 4 (41 statements) – $\alpha = 0.921$. Thus, all coefficient values exceeded 0.7. This indicates that the selected scales are reliable and suitable for statistical processing.

Research Ethics

The study was conducted in accordance with the basic principles of quantitative research. The basic principles of research ethics were discussed and the research instrument was approved by the Ethics Committee for Educational Research of the Institute of Education and Social Work of the Faculty of Human and Social Studies of Mykolas Romeris University on 20 February 2025 (Protocol No. 10-79 (2.25 E-403)). Participation in the study was voluntary and anonymous, and all participants were free to withdraw from the study at any time. The principles of fairness and absence of bias were observed during the conduct of the study and the processing of data (British Educational Research Association, 2024). In addition, the ethical principles of the study were based on the provisions of the European Code of Conduct for Researchers, which emphasises responsibility for research quality and ethical behaviour (ALLEA, 2023).

Analysis of Research Data

When performing quantitative data analysis, particular attention was paid to the assumption of data normality, which is necessary for many parametric statistical methods (Field, 2018; Rupšienė & Rutkienė, 2016). Normality was tested using the (K-S) and (S-W) tests, which are widely recognised and frequently used to assess the compatibility of data with a normal distribution (Razali & Wah, 2011). The chosen statistical significance level was $\alpha = 0.05$. When the p value was less

than 0.05, a significant deviation from the normality assumption was noted. In view of this, further analysis was performed using non-parametric methods, which are suitable for ordinal variables and data that do not meet the assumptions of normality. The Kruskal–Wallis H test was used to assess differences between three or more independent groups, and the Mann–Whitney U test was used to assess differences between two groups (Field, 2018; Nachar, 2008). Correlations between ordinal variables were analysed using Spearman's correlation coefficient (r_s) (Field, 2018).

Participants in the Research

In order to ensure the reliability and representativeness of the sample, a probabilistic multistage sampling method was used, including systematic and cluster sampling. The sample was selected based on the size of the population, aiming for 95% reliability and a 5% margin of error. To ensure the proportional representation of teachers by educational level – primary (grades 1–4), middle school (grades 5–10), and upper secondary (grades 11–12) – the number of teachers in the selected municipalities was taken into account to represent the real situation in the areas under study. The number of teachers in each municipality in the sample was determined according to its percentage of the total number of teachers in Lithuania. This ensures an objective and proportional sample, allowing the multifaceted opinions of Lithuanian teachers to be obtained.

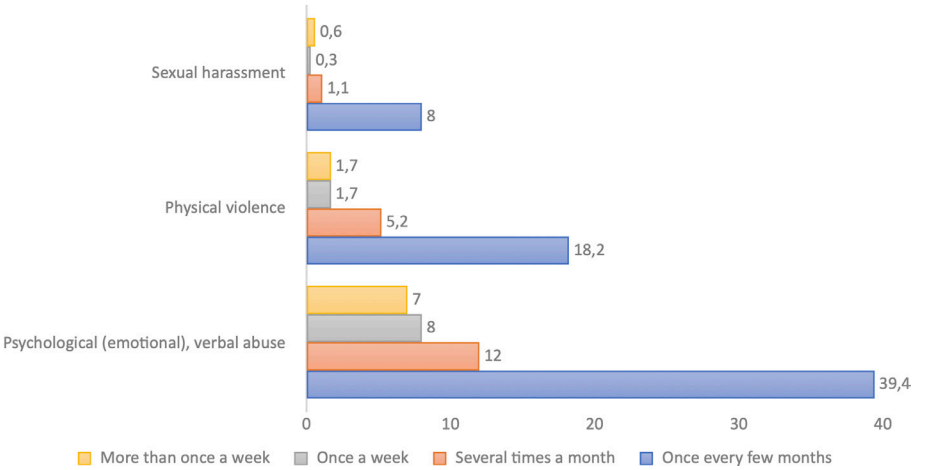
A total of 1044 teachers participated in the study. Most of the respondents were from Vilnius City Municipality (n = 111), Kaunas District Municipality (n = 102), Klaipėda District Municipality (n = 72), Šalčininkai District Municipality (n = 53), Marijampolė Municipality (n = 54) and Anykščiai District Municipality (n = 49). The number of participants from the remaining municipalities ranged from 1 to 47, and 12 respondents did not indicate the municipality in which they work.

Teachers' Experiences of Bullying and Violence

The process of victimisation is complex and often has its roots in the childhood experiences of both the perpetrator and the victim (Felix et al., 2019; Masuya et al., 2022; Scrafford et al., 2018). This study aimed to assess the extent to which today's teachers have themselves experienced bullying or violence from their teachers and peers as students (see Figure 1).

Figure 1

Participants' Experiences of Bullying and Violence in Childhood (at School) (Percent)



Source. Own research.

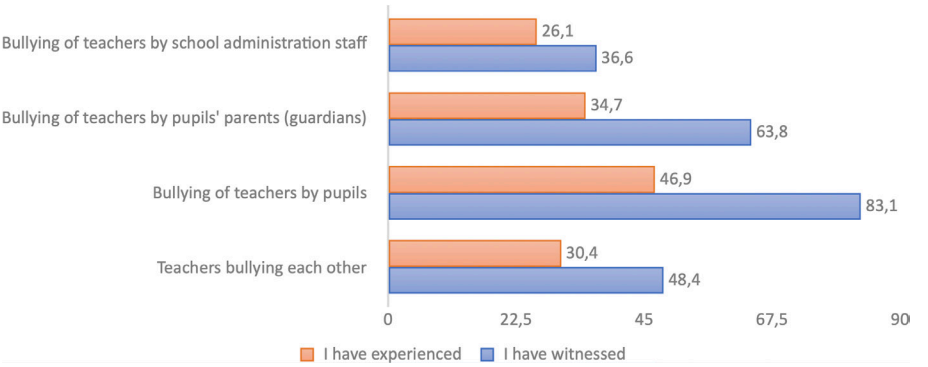
In total, 49.7% of the study participants experienced bullying from a teacher during their school years, while 71.6% experienced bullying from their peers. The most common form of violence experienced during their school years was emotional and verbal (66.4%). Physical violence was reported by 26.8% of the study participants, and sexual violence by 10%. One in three research participants (35.9%) indicated that they consider their school experience to have been traumatic, and that it has had and continues to have an impact on their adult life.

Correlation analysis revealed a significant link between the intensity of traumatic experiences and the perception of the prevalence of bullying at school. Participants who reported having had more frequent shocking, traumatic experiences during their school years were significantly more likely to notice teachers bullying each other ($r_s = 0.244$; $p < 0.01$) or perceive how the administration bullies teachers ($r_s = 0.239$; $p < 0.01$). The obtained results show that study participants who experienced more intense traumatic experiences during their school years not only encountered direct forms of bullying more often, but also noticed bullying and psychological violence in the school environment more sensitively and actively, both among teachers and in relation to the administration. In addition, participants in the study who had had traumatic experiences are statistically significantly more likely than those who had not had them to now experience bullying from teachers ($r_s = 0.310$; $p < 0.01$), students ($r_s = 0.215$; $p < 0.01$), the parents of students ($r_s = 0.220$; $p < 0.01$), and administrative staff in particular ($r_{s=}0.282$; $p < 0.01$).

The participants in the study often witness other people bullying teachers, and they themselves are often bullied by other members of the community (see Figure 2).

Figure 2

Current Bullying Experiences of Study Participants (Percent)



Source. Own research.

Teachers most often encounter bullying by students: 83.1% of all survey participants indicated that they had seen students bully other teachers, and 45.3% indicated that students bullied them. It was found that other members of the community also actively participate in bullying – more than a third of the teachers who participated in the study have experienced bullying from students' parents or guardians (34.7%), and the extent of bullying among teachers is similar (30.4%). More than a quarter (26.1%) have experienced bullying from school administrators, with 1.2% of study participants experiencing bullying particularly frequently (more than once a week).

The research data shows that secondary school teachers experience bullying from students ($U = 541.11$; $p < 0.001$) statistically significantly more often than primary school teachers. When analysing the bullying of secondary or primary school teachers by parents or guardians, fellow teachers, and administrative staff, no statistically significant differences were observed. When analysing the research data by school type, statistically significant differences emerged in middleschools. It is in these schools that teachers experience statistically significantly more bullying from pupils ($H = 562.51$; $df = 3$; $p < 0.001$) and their parents or guardians ($H = 563.00$; $df = 3$; $p < 0.001$).

Another factor that showed statistically significant differences in the field of bullying experienced by teachers was the location of the school. In schools in large cities, teachers experience bullying from students ($H = 591.86$; $df = 3$; $p < 0.02$) and their parents or guardians ($H = 597.89$; $df = 3$; $p < 0.001$) statistically significantly more often. The bullying of teachers by fellow teachers and administrative staff does not show statistically significant differences in schools located in different areas and of different types.

No statistically significant differences were found between teachers in terms of their age, length of service, qualification category, or highest level of education.

Forms of Bullying and Violence Experienced by Teachers

The survey data show a particularly high level of psychological (emotional) and verbal violence against teachers (see Table 2).

Table 2
Forms of Bullying and Violence Experienced by Teachers

Forms of bullying and violence	M	SD
Physical violence	1.09	0
Damage to property	1.10	0.3
Psychological (emotional) and verbal abuse	1.32	0
Electronic (cyber) bullying	1.06	0
Sexual harassment	1.15	0
Harassment and violence by parents or guardians	1.14	0.3

Source. Own research.

Teachers most often claim that pupils encourage others not to listen to the teacher (40.1%) or swear at them (37.6%). More than a fifth of cases involve various forms of gossip, name-calling, and rumour-mongering. Sexual harassment related to verbal abuse includes deliberately saying obscene words to the teacher, making obscene gestures (24.2%), and telling obscene jokes in front of the teacher (14.8%). There are slightly fewer experiences related to physical violence, when the teacher is deliberately provoked by bumping into or pushing them (14.1%). One in ten study participants indicated that their personal belongings had been deliberately damaged or simply stolen. Attention should be paid to the violence demonstrated by parents or guardians. This is always related to psychological violence, where parents or guardians directly threaten (14.9%) or swear at the teacher (15.7%). The least common form of violence is in the electronic space: sending offensive messages about the teacher to other people (7.5%) or directly to the teacher (6.1%).

The results of non-parametric tests (Mann–Whitney, Kruskal–Wallis) show that when assessing the frequency of forms of bullying and violence experienced by teachers in separate aspects, all forms of bullying are statistically significantly more common among primary than among secondary school teachers; teachers working in schools in large cities; and teachers working in progymnasiums and middle schools. The only notable difference is that in upper secondary schools, statistically significantly more often than in other types of schools, students damaged the reputation of teachers by spreading rumours about them ($H = 531.95$; $df = 3$; $p < 0.03$).

Correlational analysis revealed that teachers' experiences of dangerous objects being used against them were closely correlated with various other forms of violence

in the school environment. Teachers who had experienced physical injury through the use of dangerous objects also encountered other forms of physical violence particularly often. The strongest correlation was found between experiences of pupils hitting or beating a teacher ($r_s = 0.761$; $p < 0.01$) and situations where students incited others to physically injure a teacher ($r_s = 0.691$; $p < 0.01$). These data reveal that physical violence against teachers often manifests itself not in isolated acts, but in a variety of aggressive behaviour.

In addition, strong links were observed between experiences of physical violence and sexual and cyber harassment. Teachers who reported experiencing physical violence with dangerous objects were more likely to have also experienced sexual harassment ($r_s = 0.627$; $p < 0.01$) and receiving messages of a sexual nature ($r_s = 0.614$; $p < 0.01$). A significant correlation was also found between physical violence and cyberbullying, such as pretending to be a teacher online and spreading humiliating information ($r_s = 0.635$; $p < 0.01$), sending insults and falsifying information ($r_s = 0.630$; $p < 0.01$), or sending offensive messages and visual material ($r_s = 0.526$; $p < 0.01$).

Moderate correlations were observed between physical violence and property damage (*students deliberately dirtied my belongings*; $r_s = 0.589$; $p < 0.01$), as well as psychological violence (name-calling; $r_s = 0.193$; $p < 0.05$), mocking the teacher's appearance ($r_s = 0.315$; $p < 0.01$), issuing threats ($r_s = 0.382$; $p < 0.01$), or hiding belongings ($r_s = 0.339$; $p < 0.01$). Weaker but significant correlations were found with indirect forms of bullying, such as gossiping or reputation-damaging ($r_s = 0.177–0.200$; $p < 0.05$).

In summary, teachers' experiences reveal the complex phenomenon of violence, with physical violence occurring alongside psychological and sexual violence and cyberbullying. This suggests that teachers are confronted with a complex range of violence.

Coping With Bullying and Violence Experienced by Teachers

When teachers experience bullying and violence at school from students, students' parents or guardians, their fellow teachers, or school administration staff, they reflect on these painful and, as research shows, traumatic experiences (Dirzyte et al., 2024) and look for solutions (see Table 3).

Table 3

Teachers' Initial Assessments of Painful Experiences

Painful experiences	M	SD
People are not what they seem.	3.48	1.839
People cannot be trusted.	3.2	1.906

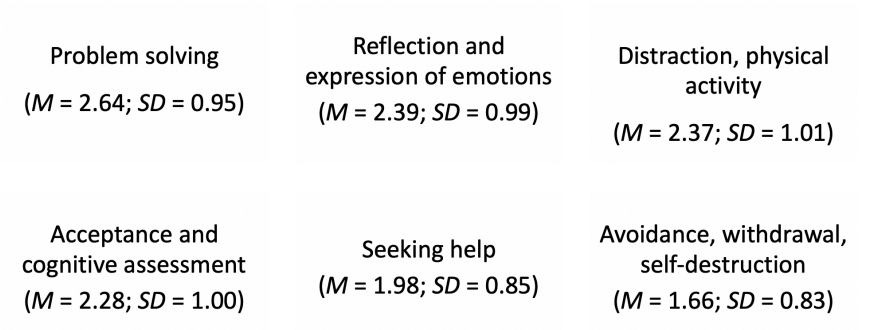
Painful experiences	M	SD
I cannot rely on other people.	2.98	1.834
Someone else would not have ended up in this situation.	2.45	1.635
Something inside me caused the incident to happen.	2	1.554
It happened because of my behaviour.	1.87	1.457
I feel like I don't know myself any more.	1.7	1.336
Nothing good can happen to me any more.	1.66	1.387
I have no future.	1.5	1.221

Source. Own research.

The research data show that teachers who have experienced bullying and violence choose specific coping strategies (see Figure 3). Analysing the research data, six strategies used by teachers to cope with bullying and violence can be identified: problem solving (M = 2.64; SD = 0.95), reflection and expression of emotions (M = 2.39; SD = 0.99), distraction, physical activity (M = 2.37; SD = 1.01), acceptance and cognitive assessment (M = 2.28; SD = 1.00), seeking help (M = 1.98; SD = 0.85), and avoidance, withdrawal, and self-destruction (M = 1.66; SD = 0.83).

Figure 3

Teachers' Strategies for Coping with Bullying or Violence



Source. Own research.

The study participants most often (M = 2.64; SD = 0.95) emphasised trying to solve problems objectively by focusing their efforts, trying to do something to change the situation, thinking about problem-solving strategies, etc. Less frequently (M = 2.28; SD = 1.00), the participants tried to accept what had happened, learned to live with it, and tried to find something positive in the whole painful experience. Some (M = 2.39; SD = 0.99) of the study participants tried to focus their attention on work or other activities so that they would not have to think about their problems; they watched TV, went to the cinema or shopping centre, immersed themselves in work, started exercising, spent time in nature, etc. An even smaller proportion (M = 2.37; SD = 1.01)

tried to turn everything into a joke or express their emotions in some other way. Some ($M = 1.98$; $SD = 0.85$) sought sympathy, support, advice, and help from other people, while some applied for help from school administrators and specialists. The smallest proportion of the respondents ($M = 1.66$; $SD = 0.83$) ignored their problems, avoided talking about them, limited their social contacts, started drinking alcohol, smoked more, and sometimes started taking medication.

Correlational data analysis showed that the coping strategies used by teachers are closely inter-related. Concentrated efforts to change the situation correlated with active action ($r_s = 0.574$; $p < 0.001$), strategy development ($r_s = 0.591$; $p < 0.001$), and intense thinking about possible actions ($r_s = 0.507$; $p < 0.001$). Similarly, focusing attention on work or other activities was associated with efforts to resolve the situation ($r_s = 0.517$; $p < 0.001$). The use of alcohol or other substances to reduce tension was closely related to their similar use for coping purposes ($r_s = 0.761$; $p < 0.001$). Self-criticism correlated with blaming oneself for events ($r_s = 0.619$; $p < 0.001$), while distancing oneself from people was strongly associated with seeking solitude ($r_s = 0.686$; $p < 0.001$). Talking to avoid unpleasant feelings correlated with receiving help and advice from others ($r_s = 0.689$; $p < 0.001$), seeking comfort and understanding ($r_s = 0.602$; $p < 0.001$), and receiving emotional support ($r_s = 0.573$; $p < 0.001$). The forms of support themselves correlated very closely with each other – for example, seeking help and seeking comfort ($r_s = 0.701$; $p < 0.001$), or asking for help and receiving advice from others ($r_s = 0.728$; $p < 0.001$). Seeking help or advice also correlated with intense thinking about actions ($r_s = 0.504$; $p < 0.001$).

When analysing the survey data in terms of individual demographic aspects, differences were only observed in terms of the pedagogical experience of the survey participants. Those with less teaching experience (up to 3 years) were statistically significantly more likely to seek external help (emotional support, advice, etc.) ($H = 620.41$; $df = 5$; $p < 0.003$), while teachers with 4–5 years of teaching experience were statistically significantly more likely than others to try to ignore problems or come to terms with the situation ($H = 619.47$; $df = 3$; $p < 0.002$). These are particularly worrying signs pointing to a certain tendency towards learned helplessness.

Discussion and Conclusion

This study has highlighted the role not only of students, but also of their parents, colleagues, and school administrators in the victimisation of teachers. Almost a third of teachers experienced bullying from students' parents or colleagues, and a quarter from administrators. These results show that violence against teachers should not be seen solely as a consequence of inappropriate behaviour by students. On the contrary, it is a multifaceted, systemic phenomenon determined by the school microclimate, the cultural attitudes of the community, and power relations within the institu-

tion (Berkowitz et al., 2022; Budriūnienė & Viliūnienė, 2017; Dirzyte et al., 2023; Dirzyte et al., 2024; Pruskus & Balevičiūtė, 2011). This insight is particularly important because, in practice, violence in schools is most often associated only with student behaviour, while the role of other community members is often ignored.

The study data revealed that the victimisation of teachers is closely related to their previous childhood experiences. Almost half of the study participants have experienced bullying from teachers, and even more from their peers. The link between traumatic experiences during school age and current sensitivity to bullying and violence shows that victimisation is a continuous phenomenon with long-term effects. These findings confirm the insights of other researchers (Felix et al., 2019; Masuya et al., 2022) that violence experienced in childhood increases the likelihood of becoming a victim of or witness to aggression later in life. Studies on the victimisation of Lithuanian teachers show that a significant proportion of them have experienced violence from parents, teachers, or peers in childhood (Dirzyte et al., 2024). This suggests a mechanism of violence reproduction, whereby early trauma leads to greater vulnerability and lower stress resistance in the long term.

The study revealed that subject teachers, especially those working in progymnasiums and middle schools and in large cities, are most often bullied by students. These results can be explained by the fact that progymnasiums and middle schools are attended by adolescents who are more prone to risky behaviour and uneven social and emotional maturity, which increases the risk of conflict. According to Ryan Kapa and Belinda Gimbert (2017) and Susan D. McMahon et al. (2020a), the age of adolescents and the urban context increase the likelihood of violence against teachers.

Physical violence is closely correlated with psychological, sexual, and cyberbullying. In other words, violence against teachers is not an isolated phenomenon – it usually manifests itself as a combination of various forms of aggression. This coincides with the insights of Angela Gilda Alves et al. (2022) and Moon and McCluskey (2022) that victimisation should be understood as a violation of relationships, encompassing various components of emotional, physical, and social stress. This interpretation is important because it allows us to understand that the protection of teachers cannot be focused on just one form of violence – it is necessary to develop complex interventions.

The study also revealed the coping strategies used by teachers. Most often, teachers choose situation analysis and problem solving as their coping strategy, seeking external help or involving the administration less frequently. Some teachers resort to strategies of ignoring and isolation, and in isolated cases, they resort to self-destructive behaviour (alcohol consumption, self-criticism, social isolation). It can be assumed that teachers are often left alone with their problems, and the effectiveness of official support channels is limited. The research performed by McCluskey et al. (2024) confirms that the administration's response to cases of violence determines whether teachers feel safe and supported. If management ignores or underestimates teachers' experiences, educators choose more passive, less effective forms of coping, which in the long run can lead to professional burnout and resignation (Curran et al., 2017; Yang et al., 2022).

The study data revealed a lack of support for teachers. Only a very small proportion of teachers sought help from a psychologist, doctor, or state institutions. This can be explained by both the availability of support and the problem of stigmatisation, where teachers may fear being perceived as incompetent or unable to cope with their students. Such fears reflect the more widespread societal view that teachers must be able to cope with any situation on their own. This aspect indicates the need to change institutional practices, ensure safe and anonymous channels of support, and strengthen the availability of psychological assistance for teachers.

Studies (Curran et al., 2017; McMahon et al., 2023b; Sigad, 2023) show that the victimisation of teachers contributes to staff turnover, professional disillusionment, and a decline in prestige. This phenomenon can be considered alarming in countries where the problem of teacher shortages is becoming increasingly acute. As educators experience constant insecurity and a lack of support, the number of those intending to leave the profession is growing, while the attractiveness of the education system to young professionals is declining (Organization For Economic Co-Operation and Development, 2025).

Research data suggests that the victimisation of teachers is structural in nature; it reveals not only the behaviour of individuals, but also a system of institutional and cultural attitudes. If the school administration does not intervene or even supports aggressive parents, the teacher becomes doubly vulnerable – not only to direct bullying, but also to a lack of support. This is in line with the insights of Ruth Berkowitz et al. (2022) and McCluskey et al. (2024) that the organisational culture of a school is a decisive factor in shaping teachers' sense of security.

Finally, teacher victimisation is a complex phenomenon determined by traumatic experiences, interpersonal relationships, and the overall school climate. Different forms of violence are interrelated, and childhood trauma is linked to current experiences and the greater visibility of violence. All of this increases psychological stress in teachers' lives, reduces job satisfaction, and increases the risk of burnout and withdrawal from work.

Hypotheses about the links between traumatic experiences in school life and current bullying/violence, as well as the links between different forms of violence, have been confirmed. Significant links were found between early trauma and current bullying by students, parents, colleagues, and the administration, as well as the greater visibility of bullying. Strong links were also found between physical violence and sexual and cyber harassment, as well as between property damage and psychological violence. The hypothesis regarding the links between the frequency of student bullying and the types of schools and locations was only partially confirmed. The research data show that subject teachers, especially those working in progymnasiums and large cities, are those most frequently bullied by students. Future research could focus on analysing the links between teacher victimisation and the school microclimate, cultural factors, and the socio-economic conditions of the community.

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