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PROBLEM BEHAVIOUR AT EARLY AGE - BASIS FOR PREDICTION OF ASOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Summary: This paper analyzes the results of the study of prevalence of problem behaviour of students in primary and secondary schools. The starting point is that it is methodologically and logically justified to look for early forms of problem behaviour of students, because it is likely that adult convicted offenders at an early school age manifested forms of problem behaviours at school and in the society. Problem behaviours are classified into three categories: inappropriate behaviour at school; manifested anti-social behaviour and acts of violence.

Results of the study showed that the most common forms were:

- Antisocial behaviour: stealing, lying for personal gain, smoking, drinking and gambling;
- Inappropriate behaviour in school: bored during classes; coming to school without adequate accessories and books for classes; not paying attention in classes and disturbing others in doing so; being late for school and coming to classes after the teacher;
- Acts of violence: conflicts with peers; insulting others; cursing and yelling in public areas; being involved in group fights; intentionally physically assaulted others.

Comparison of these results with the results obtained by researchers at the sample of prisoners displays remarkable similarities, as prisoners at the elementary school level exhibiting the same characteristics: they lied to their advantage and to the detriment of someone else; consumed cigarettes; got drunk; gambling; involved in fights; socialized with aggressive people; were involved in group fights; inflict bodily harm to others, etc.

Keywords: antisocial behaviour, inappropriate behaviour in school, acts of violence, problem behaviour of students.

Introductory remarks

Problem behaviours of students in primary and secondary schools increasingly attract the attention of not only of teachers, pedagogues and psychologists in school, but also the general public. At school and other educational and cultural institutions problematic way of

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behaving of students is usually defined as problematic behaviour ("problem children"), or as child neglect and sanctioned according to regulations on disciplinary measures, while in the society severe forms of problematic behaviour are regulated by the criminal law, and milder forms by law of misdemeanours.

For such behaviours different terms are used, that differ in width of various manifestations (antisocial, asocial) and by the type of problem behaviour (criminal, delinquent, violent ...). Their common feature is that they are manifested as behaviours that are contrary to social norms and usually mean milder or more severe conflicts with moral norms and social rules.

Public interest in such phenomena becomes more pronounced after rough, destructive or violent behaviour in school and society, especially those with tragic consequences. Then the public, especially the media, focus on the search for answers about the causes of such unfortunate occurrences. They consult various experts who explain the etiology (causes) and phenomenology (intensity and forms of manifestation) of these phenomena, pointing to the "failures of the family" in early education. What is overlooked is that the emergence of such phenomena is caused by numerous factors that act in the family, school, society, etc. What is often mentioned as the main cause is the overall personality structure, suggesting that the offenders' are psychologically different from non-offenders.

In regards to that there have been various research by many psychologists and criminologists. The results showed that the personality plays an important role in antisocial behaviour. So Momirovic (Momirovic, 1995) states: "It took a stunning number of years before most psychologists, a number of criminologists and even some sociologists, understood a few obvious facts. These facts are a consequence of the fact that every form of human, and therefore criminal behaviour, is essentially a motor act which is preceded by a decision-making process, although the process of decision making, is of course, a cognitive process, the outcome of this processes in humans, as with all other living beings, is affected by conative factors. Therefore, the immediate cause of criminal behaviour, in addition to cognitive, can be just conative characteristics".

However, in the psychological and criminological literature (Rakic, 1981, Vasiljevic In 1995, Vucinic, 1995, Kron, 1995, Momirovic, 1995, Momirovic, Hosek, 1997, Crumb-Petrovic, Nikolic-Ristanovic, Wolf, B., 1995, Obretkovic, Hosek, Momirovic, 1995, Hosek, 1995, Hosek, Momirovic, 1995) it's been said that the causes of unacceptable behaviours are very different, and recent scientific studies have shown that one factor itself can not be the only cause of such phenomena. The general consensus is that problematic behaviour in children and youth is caused by a syndrome of factors that act in society, school, family and personality of the offender, and, of course, there are certain conditions that are more favourable for such behaviour to manifest more easily.

In other words, empirical research on etiology of different forms of problem behaviour in children and youth contributed so that in the explanation of the origin of crime the prevalent knowledge is that such behaviour is caused by the syndrome of factors, but also that, in addition to the factors that influence directly, specific factors and mediating factors are also addressed. So in that way, already complex issue is getting even more complex. In addition, the importance of a favourable social environment is also emphasized, when it comes to the emergence and spread of forms of antisocial behaviour. In this context, the importance of wider socio-political and economic conditions is pointed out, as well as narrow characteristics

of the social environment (e.g., tolerance of different forms of criminal behaviour, ineffective system of prevention and sanctioning...), which to a greater or lesser extent benefit not only the appearance, but also the spreading of antisocial behaviour. It is thus evident that inefficient social action and slow system of detection and sanctioning of individuals who manifest different forms of anti-social behaviour greatly contribute to the spread of such behaviours.

In this context there are various questions can the observed problematic behaviour in children and adolescents be considered as early signs of antisocial or criminal behaviour? In other words, the important question is whether it is possible to (at early school age) identify different forms of problem behaviour, seen them as signs and interpret them as predictors of later antisocial behaviour?

In this paper, two concepts are frequently used: problem behaviour - for students in school and anti-social behaviour as a general term for all other forms of inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour in school and society.

Baselines

Besides the interest of professionals and the public in the etiology and phenomenology of anti-social behaviour, prevention is not present enough - not only in public but also in the institutions that should be working and addressing such behaviour. In the literature one can find papers that show that educators, psychologists, sociologists, criminologists and other experts have been trying to construct various instruments for early identification of antisocial tendencies in the behaviour of children and young people. In this context Rakic (Rakic, 1981: 254) notes that in the United States and England (in the sixties) there were predictive tables constructed "according to which it was possible to predict delinquency based on some form of early delinquent behaviour."

In the former Yugoslavia there were also attempts to predict antisocial behaviour on the basis of identification of the type and intensity of early problem behaviours of students. Skaberne (Skaberne, 1965), in Slovenia attempted to answer the question - whether it is and in what way possible to note "socially problematic nature " at the elementary school level. Using the technique of "who's who" on 2,615 students, 945 of the students were considered problematic. After a few years, 137 of those 945 students did punishable offenses, and were registered in the local police station. Although it was established that there was a difference in the type of committed criminal acts, it showed that "the most symptomatic for later delinquent behaviour is lying, and that the aggression failure at school are equally important."

Based on these methodological concepts Kalajdzic (Kalajdzic, 2012) did a survey to explore the 'Early forms of problem behaviour of criminal offenders as a predictor of antisocial behaviour in students' on a sample of 207 male prisoners, in the correctional facility in Foca, Bosnia and Herzegovina which were serving a sentence of imprisonment for criminal offenses punishable by the Criminal Law of the Republic of Srpska and B&H (murder in the first degree, murder, grievous bodily harm, rape, sexual intercourse with a helpless persons, crimes against humanity, robbery, illegal sale and trafficking of drugs, larceny, theft, etc.). The results found that the most frequent forms were:

- Antisocial behaviour: lying to your advantage and another's detriment; consumed cigarettes; getting drunk alone or in the company; playing games of chance and gambling;

- Inappropriate behaviour in school: bored during class; involved in fights; not wearing the required accessories and books to class; being late to class and came in after the teacher; absent from classes without a valid reason.
- Acts of violence: conflicts with peers; hanging out with aggressive people; was involved in group fights; inflicting bodily harm to others; cursing and yelling in public places; destroying other people's property.

Comparison of these results with the results obtained by Skaberne undoubtedly indicates remarkable similarities. It is evident that the prisoners at school age, manifested the same or similar characters as subjects in research Skaberne, such as aggression (in various forms), lying and poor school discipline.

The concept of research

Based on the results of such research it is methodologically justified to work on identification of students who manifest problematic behaviour and to look for indicators that can be treated as predictors of later antisocial behaviour. To be able to work with students, it is first necessary to determine in which category the child should be classified, and then find possible causes of problem behaviour and accordingly adjust the procedures of educational activities.

In searching for an answer to whether it is possible to identify the intensity and forms of early problem behaviours in elementary and secondary school students nomothetic approach was applied, that is, statistically – psychometric and psychodiagnostical approach, in the context of empirical non-experimental research. The starting point was the fact that, in the process of diagnosing the problem behaviours of students, it is reasonable and desirable to look for those types of problem behaviours that are common to more students, which enables the understanding and explanation of behaviour of a number of individuals, and not just the individual. The supporters of psychometric or nomothetic approach represent the view that personality can be looked at and predicted solely on the basis of general laws, because the individual is not isolated from society.

In this sense, it can be assumed that for the design of reliable prevention programs it is more important what is true for most students, and not what applies only to the isolated individual. In the research the applied approach is merely a "snapshot" of the state of things in a period of time. In other words, the basic starting point of this research has been done in the way of explaining the phenomenology of problem behaviours of students, expecting that it is possible to discover common characteristics or similarities of early problem behaviours of students and behaviours of criminal offenders at school age.

Moreover, we note that at this age one cannot expect all forms of anti-social, especially criminogenic behaviour as in adults, but only milder forms such as lying, alcohol abuse, drugs, gambling, smoking tobacco products, bullying and so on. Therefore, the research problem is defined as determining the extent (in forms and intensity) of manifested forms of problem behaviour of students in elementary and secondary schools. Problem behaviours are classified into three categories: a) - anti-social behaviour; b) - inappropriate behaviour at school and v) acts of violence.

According to the available methods and their potential application - for this research survey method is applied, as the most appropriate and relevant empirical and non-experimental

approach. This method is very suitable for empirical research, because it can very quickly and in many different conditions collect data from respondents who are otherwise hard to get for a research. In addition, this method allows the application of different measurement instruments and computer processing of the data, which is very important for every research, as well as this one.

This paper started out from a general hypothesis that the problem behaviour of students are very different in nature, but that it is possible to identify the most frequent forms in the field of anti-social behaviour, inappropriate behaviour at school and acts of violence.

Forms of antisocial behaviour were identified using the scale containing 14 of most common forms of antisocial behaviour; forms of inappropriate behaviour by using the scale containing seven of the most common forms of inappropriate behaviour, and the prevalence of acts of violence by using the scale containing the 10 most common forms of bullying. For all scales preliminary research was done, where students responded to the number of questions about whether and how often did they performed any of the actions from the scale responding with "never", "sometimes" or "often". For the answer "never" students were given 1 point, for the answer "sometimes" 2 points and for the answer "often" 3 points. In this way we established the most common forms of manifested antisocial behaviour, inappropriate behaviour at school and acts of violence. The higher gross score indicates more pronounced degree of problems behaviours of students in school and in the society.

The aim of our research is defined as the analysis of the prevalence of problem behaviours, i.e. intensity of anti-social behaviour, inappropriate behaviour at school and acts of violence in students of elementary and secondary schools.

The sample was comprised of 634 students from primary and secondary schools in the western part of the Republic of Srpska and western part of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, proportionally to their participation in the structure of students in primary and secondary schools. The sample included students from age 13 to 19 years, provided that the average age is 15.35 years (standard mean) and a standard deviation of 2.09 years.

Based on the sample size, method of selection of participants in the sample, and the final structure of selected students according to relevant variables, it can be concluded that this sample represents a fairly good basis for reliable performance of the segmented analysis, as well as the relevant conclusions and generalizations, and that it meets the basic methodological requirements for empirical research of correlation type.

Analysis of the results of prevalence of forms of problem behaviour in students

As it was outlined in the theoretical part of the paper, forms of antisocial behaviour were identified by students' self-report on the scale for examining the extent of the manifested forms of antisocial behaviour, the scale of inappropriate behaviour in school and scale reporting acts of violence.

a) manifested anti-social behaviour

In the scale for examining the extent of manifested forms of antisocial behaviour amongst

students, individual results were classified into categories of intensity of manifested anti-social behaviour by "never", "occasionally" and "often", which are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Categories of intensity of manifested anti-social behaviour in students

Categories of intensity	Nr	%
- never	531	83.75
- occasionally	98	15.45
- often	5	.79

Insight into presented results shows that the forms of anti-social behaviour manifested by students are distributed so that there is a prevalence of students who did not exhibit anti-social behaviour, i.e. those who were classified into category of "never", of which there are 83.75%, followed by students who occasionally exhibited some of the various forms of anti-social behaviour, i.e. 15.45%, and that only 5 students or 0.79% of the students were classified in the category of "often". In other words, distributed responses indicate that a small percentage of students -0.79% often manifest anti-social behaviour, while a much larger percentage manifest various forms of anti-social behaviour occasionally.

It can be said that different forms of manifestation of anti-social behaviour are present among the students, although in majority there is evident prosocial behaviour or absence of anti-social behaviour.

Students' assessment of the prevalence of specific forms of antisocial behaviour show that there are differences in the incidence of certain forms of anti-social behaviour. By calculating scale values or the arithmetic mean (\bar{X}) the average value or average prevalence for each listed form of anti-social behaviour is determined. Based on these indicators, we can conclude that the surveyed students expressed a different intensity level of manifested antisocial behaviour, as can be seen from the results presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Prevalence of specific forms of anti-social behaviour in students

Forms of anti-social behaviour	\bar{X}	never	occasionally	often	without reply
		1	2	3	0
- Stealing	1.87	268 42.27	178 28.07	188 29.65	0 0.00
- Lying for own benefit	1.83	279 44.01	178 28.07	177 27.91	0 0.00
- Smoking tobacco	1.55	404 63.72	104 16.40	125 19.71	1 .15
- Alcohol abuse	1.41	465 73.34	70 11.04	98 15.45	1 .15
- Gambling	1.19	550 86.75	41 6.46	41 6.46	2 .31
- Smoking marijuana	1.17	552 87.06	54 8.51	28 4.41	0 0.00
- Was rude or was causing disturbance in a public space	1.15	555 87.53	49 7.72	26 4.10	4 .63
- Ran away from home	1.12	568 89.58	50 7.88	16 2.52	0 0.00
- Skipping school	1.08	593	28	13	0

		93.53	4.41	2.05	0.00
- Drug abuse	1.07	592 93.37	21 3.31	16 2.52	5 .78
- Dealing and smuggling	1.06	591 93.21	24 3.78	13 2.05	6 .94
- Prescription pill abuse	1.05	606 95.58	18 2.83	9 1.41	1 .15
- Prostitution	1.05	612 96.52	8 1.26	14 2.210	0 0.00
- Begging on the streets	1.04	611 96.37	12 1.89	8 1.26	3 .47

Thus, for the most common form of anti-social behaviour - robbery - only 42.27% of students said that they did it "never", while as much as 29.65% of the students stated that they did it "often" and 28.07% "occasionally", thus making the robbery's scale value of 1.87 first on the list. Similar distribution have the results of estimated prevalence of lying for own benefit, whose scale value is 1.83. In fact, only 44.00% of students said that they lied for own benefit "never, while 28.07% said that they lied "occasionally", and as much as 27.92% that they lied "often".

Among the most widespread forms of anti-social behaviour is smoking (= 1.55.), Because 19.72% of the surveyed students said they did it "often" and alcohol abuse (=1.41.), as stated by 15.45% of the students .

Among the top five of the most widespread forms of anti-social behaviour is also gambling (=1.19), as 6.46% of the students stated that they did it "often", and 6.46% that they did it "occasionally".

Among the forms of anti-social behaviour the least widespread is vagrancy and begging (=1.04.) because 1.89% of the students stated that it did "occasionally" and 1.26% "often." Then follow are "prostitution" and "prescription pills abuse" (= 1.05), „smuggling" (= 1.06) and "drug abuse" (= 1.07).

Based on the distribution of results it can be concluded that in the surveyed sample of students there are all forms of anti-social behaviour, with more or less intensity of prevalence, but that the stealing and lying are the most widespread forms.

b) Inappropriate behaviour at school

In the scale for measuring the prevalence of inappropriate behaviour of students in the school there were seven different forms of inappropriate behaviour at school presented (the most common ones), which relate to different types of behaviour in the classroom and outside. Students assessed and gave answers on whether and how often they engaged in some of these behaviours with "never," "occasionally" or "often". Individual results that were obtained were classified into categories of intensity of manifested anti-social behaviour - "never", "occasionally" and "often", which are presented in Table 3.

Insight into presented results shows that the forms of inappropriate behaviour of students in school is distributed in a way so that prevalent are the students who did not exhibit any inappropriate behaviour contrary to the school rules. Those students are

classified in the category of "never" which is 60.25%. This is followed by students who have manifested inappropriate behaviour to a lesser or greater extent, i.e. those students who occasionally exhibited some of the various forms of misconduct - 38.33%. The least number of students - only 9 or 1.41% "often" exhibit forms of inappropriate behaviour. In other words, distributed results show that a small percentage of students - 1.41% often manifests inappropriate behaviour, while a much larger percentage of students manifests various forms of anti-social behaviour "occasionally" - 38.33%.

Table 3: Categories of intensity of the inappropriate behaviour in school

Categories of intensity	Nr	%
- never	382	60.25
- occasionally	243	38.33
- often	9	1.41

In the surveyed students there are different forms of inappropriate behaviour at school present, but with the most of them, there is an obvious absence of anti-social behaviour and presence of behaviour that is in accordance with school rules and social situations.

Students' assessments of the prevalence of specific forms of inappropriate behaviour at school indicate that there are differences in the incidence of certain forms of inappropriate behaviour, as can be seen from the results presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Prevalence of inappropriate behaviour of students in school

Forms of inappropriate behaviour of students in school	\bar{X}	often	occasionally	never	Without reply
		3	2	1	0
- was bored on class	1.92	172 17.35	352 55.52	110 27.13	0 0.00
- leaving the class with false pretences	1.51	39 6.15	245 38.64	349 55.04	1 .15
- not bringing obligatory accessories and books to school	1.47	38 5.99	226 35.64	370 58.35	0 0.00
- didn't follow in class and obstructing others in doing so	1.39	20 3.15	212 33.43	402 63.40	0 0.00
- being late for class or coming in after the teacher	1.38	20 3.15	210 33.12	402 63.40	2 .31
- missing class without good reason	1.36	10 1.57	212 33.43	408 64.35	4 .63
- verbal confrontation with teachers	1.19	9 1.41	108 17.03	515 81.23	2 .31

Insight into distributed results shows that, with more or less intensity, we recorded all forms of bad behaviour at school in the surveyed students. Identified scale values ranged from 1.92 for the most common form, i.e. for the presence of boredom while being on the class, to 1.19 for the least common form, i.e. for a verbal confrontation with teachers. It is thus evident that the established scale values or arithmetic means - are in the range of 1.92 for most common form (being bored in class) to 1.14 for the verbal confrontation with teachers. In other words, distributed results indicate that inappropriate behaviour of students is widespread, as can be seen from the results presented in Table 4.

Besides being bored in class, which occurs in two-thirds of the students, the most common form of inappropriate behaviour is leaving classes, under the pretext that he/she must go to the bathroom, for which 38.64% of the students said they do "occasionally" and 6.15% of students "often". Somewhat less frequent, but still noted is the following: "coming into the class after the teacher" which is "often" done by 3.15% of students and "occasionally" by 33.12% of the surveyed students. Then follow the "absences from classes without a valid reason," which is "often" done by 1.58% of the students and "occasionally" by 33.44% of students. Rarest forms of inappropriate behaviour is "verbal confrontations with teachers," which is done "often" by 1.41%, and "occasionally" by 17.03% of the surveyed students.

Based on the results we can see that in the surveyed students there are all forms of inappropriate behaviour present at school, with more or less intensity, but that "being bored in class" and "leaving the classes under false pretext" are the most common forms.

c) Acts of violence

The scale for measuring the prevalence of violence contains 10 different (most common) forms of bullying, which refer to different manifestations of violence in school and outside of school. The most frequent forms of bullying are also registered. Individual results were classified into categories of intensity of forms of manifested antisocial behaviour by "never", "occasionally" and "often", which are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Categories of intensity of bullying in school

Categories of intensity	Nr	%
often	14	2.21
occasionally	30	4.73
never	590	93.06

Results show that the majority of students never committed any violence - 93.06%. These are students who manifest appropriate behaviour in school and outside of school. They are classified in the category of students who are replied that they "never" manifested violence. Prevalence of violence, to a greater or lesser extent, is evident with 4.73% of students, which occasionally manifest violence and 2.21% who "often" exhibit various forms of violent behaviour.

Students' assessment of the prevalence of certain forms of violence in schools and in society is presented in Table 6.

The most frequent form of bullying is "confrontation with peers due to differences of opinion", because 13.24% of the students stated that this happens "often", while 57.41% stressed that this happens "occasionally". On the other hand, 28.39% of the students declare that it happens "never".

In addition to conflicts with peers, "often" comes up with - "offending people" and "verbal confrontation with teachers' and other forms of verbal violence", also 4% of students participate in fights. It can't be neglected that some students observed that forms of violent behaviour depend on the situation in which it happens, i.e. that their reactions are situation dependent.

Table 6: Prevalence of acts of violence in school

Forms of acts of violence	\bar{X}	often	occasionally	never	Without reply
- Confronted peers because of differences in opinion	1.83	84 13,24	364 57,41	180 28.39	6 .94
- Offending peers by saying they are stupid or similar	1.32	25 3,93	160 25,23	444 70.03	5 .78
- Verbally confronted teachers	1.30	30 4,72	141 22,23	455 71.76	8 1.26
- Swearing and yelling in public areas	1.28	17 2.67	138 20,18	484 76.34	5 .78
- Involved in group fights	1.23	28 4.40	94 14,82	506 79.81	6 .94
- Intentionally attacking peers	1.16	9 1.41	89 14,03	531 83.75	5 .78
- Destroying property on purpose	1.14	6 0,94	80 11,03	551 86.91	7 1.10
- Extortion for money from other people	1.12	13 2.05	56 7,24	560 89.90	5 .78
- Participating in a robbery or theft	1.09	10 1.57	46 12,91	573 90.37	5 .78

Results show that forms of violence such as: participation in robbery/theft, extortion of money from others, intentionally destroying things or intentional physical attacks on others, even though they are recorded in the behaviour of the students, are not prevalent and are statistically represented in the population with a percentage of less than 2.00%. It should be noted that such behaviour, although statistically not highly represented, should be taken seriously in educational work, because according to some estimates, even in the society the percentage of people with violent behaviour is not greater than 2.00%.

Conclusions

In the analysis of the research results of the prevalence of problem behaviours of students in primary and secondary schools the starting point was - that it was methodologically and logically justified to research early forms of problem behaviour of students, because adult convicted offenders manifested different forms of problem behaviour at an early school age at school and in society. The presented results of the study showed that the most common forms are:

- Antisocial behaviour: stealing, lying for personal gain, smoking, drinking and gambling;
- Inappropriate behaviour in school: bored during class; involved in fights; not wearing the required accessories and books to class; being late to class and came in after the teacher; absent from classes without a valid reason.
- Acts of violence: conflicts with peers; hanging out with aggressive people; was involved in group fights; inflicting body harm; cursing and yelling in public places; destroying other people's property.

Comparison of these results with the results of those obtained by other researchers at the sample of prisoners display remarkable similarities, as prisoners at the elementary school level exhibited the same characteristics: they lied for their own advantage and to the detriment of someone else; consumed cigarettes; got drunk; played games of chance and gambled; were

bored in the class; were involved in fights; socialized with aggressive people; were involved in group fights; inflicted bodily injuries to others etc.

On the basis of these results it can be concluded that for the prevention of antisocial behaviour in children and young adults professionals need to look for early indicators of anti-social behaviour, to be able to organize various planned activities to reduce and prevent anti-social behaviour. In these activities, schools can and should play a greater role.

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