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## STUDENT SAFETY AS AN ELEMENT OF THE HIGH SCHOOL CLIMATE\*

**Introduction:** Safety, as a dimension of school climate, is examined in the context of peer relations, student-teacher relations, school technical facilities, etc. The topic addressed in the research focuses on selected aspects of students' functioning that are related to their sense of safety.

**Research Aim:** The aim of the study is to learn about students' opinions on their subjective sense of safety, considered as an element of school climate and to establish the relationship between experiencing physical and psychological violence and the support they receive, as well as the level of acceptance and mutual respect in student-teacher relationships. The analysis included students' statements regarding the school climate, the level of acceptance, diversity and support between students and between students and teachers, as well as identifying problems related to violence and expressing respect in the school environment.

**Research Method:** Diagnostic survey using an electronic survey questionnaire.

**Results:** Students rated the school atmosphere, aspects related to diversity and acceptance of their person, the possibility of obtaining support, as well as a sense of mutual respect moderately ( $Me = 4$ ). Almost 30% of respondents stated that there are teachers in schools who behave inappropriately towards students. Spearman correlation analysis revealed relationships between school violence, teacher attitudes and peer relationships. Students experiencing psychological violence more often indicated experiencing physical violence ( $r_s = 0.528, p < 0.001$ ). Showing respect for others correlates with acceptance of diversity ( $r_s = 0.465, p < 0.001$ ) and acceptance ( $r_s = 0.455, p < 0.001$ ).

**Conclusion:** Building a safe and supportive school environment is essential for students to thrive. In order for schools to be places where everyone feels at home, it is essential to support students, prevent violence, and promote a culture of respect and acceptance.

**Keywords:** safe school, safety, school, youth, school climate

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## INTRODUCTION

In the psychological and pedagogical literature, the concept of school climate is becoming increasingly popular, as it is seen as an opportunity to improve students' achievements and reduce many unfavourable phenomena occurring in the school environment. School climate encompasses various aspects of the functioning of the school, i.e. social relations, goals, values, organizations that influence the experiences of students and school staff (Cohen et al., 2009), and can be divided into four categories: academic, community, institutional, and safety (Wang & Degol, 2016) – encompassing the scope of physical and emotional safety provided by the school, as well as the existence and functioning of fair, effective, and consistent disciplinary practices. In turn, Cornell et al. (2017) describe school climate through a school community that creates and maintains a safe, cognitively supportive environment, which is also saturated with relationships based on respect, trust, and care, placing a strong emphasis on creating an environment that is conducive to development and ensures physical and mental safety.

School climate is defined in many ways, but in general we can say that it is perceived as providing students with a friendly and supportive school atmosphere, supporting positive social interactions with all school stakeholders in order to promote student success (Bottiani et al., 2020). Aspects of safety are a fundamental element of virtually all school climate models, and research is only beginning to reveal the complex, bidirectional relationship between school climate and the sense of safety of students and staff, indicating that both of these elements interact and are shaped dynamically (Bradshaw et al., 2021). This problem is further complicated by the lack of a uniform, universally accepted indicator of school safety. The literature on the subject is often dominated by an approach in which safety is defined through the prism of negative indicators, such as physical, verbal, or cyberbullying (cf. Wang et al., 2020). This type of approach implies that the absence of acts of violence is equivalent to a sense of safety, while omitting more complex and subjective aspects of this phenomenon, such as the relational, emotional, and psychological components of perceived safety.

School climate is based on correlational research, not causal research, which means that most available analyses are based on statistical co-occurrence relationships, rather than on establishing cause-and-effect relationships. Existing research suggests that school climate is associated with a wide range of outcomes, including student behaviour, academic achievement, and school violence (see: Benbenishty et al., 2016; Berkowitz et al., 2017; Thapa et al., 2013; Wang & Degol, 2016). Teacher mentoring plays a key role in the relationship between school climate and peer victimization (Fernández-Rouco et al., 2022). A positive school climate is essential for a learning environment conducive to learning (Freiberg & Stein, 1999), social and moral development (Weissbourd et al., 2013), as well as a sense of safety in student-teacher relationships (Allen & Bowles, 2012).

In pedagogy, sociology and psychology, security is considered in relation to needs (cf. Dąbrowski, 2006; Garczyński, 1972; Maslow, 1943). Maslow describes the need for security as an inseparable element of the pyramid of human needs, occupying a superior place in it next to fundamental physiological needs. According to Maslow's theory, satisfying lower-level needs allows for achieving higher needs, i.e. the need for belonging and acceptance, the need for respect and recognition, and self-fulfilment, i.e. cognitive curiosity necessary for learning. An unmet need for security creates anxiety and fear. Security should be built inside a person first, which allows for working on external security later (Maslow, 1943). The sense of internal security shapes the way a person acts, influences building relationships, achieving success or leading a happy life (Korczyński, 2007). Safety needs include: protection from physical and psychological harm, lack of fear for oneself and loved ones, stability and predictability, care, support and assistance, freedom from fear and chaos, the need for order and law, the need for self-confidence, a high sense of self-efficacy, but also avoiding undesirable events, i.e. mental suffering or physical pain (Łoskot, 2022). Due to the subjective dimension of the sense of security, each person perceives the state of threat differently and what for some will be a source of tension and stress for others, quite the opposite.

Research conducted in recent decades on school safety has focused on the issues of problematic interactions between students. The discussion on physical safety focuses on the issues of threat assessment and violence prevention, while psychological safety is considered in relation to forms of peer aggression, including: harassment, intimidation, verbal aggression. Peer aggression includes direct physical and verbal attacks, as well as indirect attempts to undermine social acceptance through gossip, rumours, exclusion, and bullying (see, among others: Card et al., 2008; Cosma et al., 2024; Jakubowicz-Bryx, 2018; Pyżalski, 2015; Sitarczyk & Dudziak, 2024; Tłuściak-Deliowska, 2017, 2021, 2024). According to research, verbal aggression (74%) and physical aggression (58%) directed at peers and teachers are more common problems in schools (NIK, 2014). In the era of new technologies, electronic aggression is increasingly talked about (Pyżalski, 2010, 2011, 2012). Bullying can have negative effects on social and emotional development (McDougall & Vaillancourt, 2015; Schoeler et al., 2018), and as studies show, peer violence increases with the transition from primary to high school and increases the risk of negative effects (Williford et al., 2011).

A safe school is a friendly school, where both students and teachers build relationships based on mutual respect, achieve success, and interpersonal relationships are a source of support. By counteracting threats to physical and psychological safety, they build agreements and create a community (Nerwińska, n.d.).

## RESEARCH AIM AND QUESTION

The aim of the study is to learn about students' opinions on their subjective sense of security, understood as an element of the school climate and to establish the relationship between experiencing physical and psychological violence and the support they receive, as well as the level of acceptance and mutual respect in student-teacher relationships. In order to achieve the aim, students' responses regarding the school climate, the level of acceptance, diversity and support between students and between students and teachers, as well as the identification of problems related to violence and expressing respect in the school environment, were analysed.

Seven research problems were formulated, which defined the research area.

How do students assess the atmosphere at their school?

To what extent do students feel accepted at school regardless of their personal, social and ideological characteristics?

Can students count on support in difficult situations?

To what extent do students experience various forms of physical and psychological violence?

What is the level of mutual respect in relationships between students and teachers?

Is there a relationship between students experiencing various forms of violence and the support they receive from students and teachers?

What is the direction and strength of the relationship between the level of acceptance and the level of mutual respect in student-teacher relationships?

The study was exploratory in nature, so no research hypotheses were formulated.

## RESEARCH METHOD AND SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

The presented, selected results, related to the safety of students, are part of a larger scientific and implementation project concerning the climate of Warsaw high schools and come from the second stage of conducted among students of high schools that signed up for the pilot project. In the first stage of the research, an invitation to participate in the project was sent to all high schools in the capital city of Warsaw. Fifty schools applied. Analysis of the obtained data allowed for the development of a research tool, a survey questionnaire, which was used in the second stage of the research.

The project entitled Climate Map of Schools was carried out by employees of the Maria Grzegorzewska University (APS) in cooperation with the Education Office of the Capital City of Warsaw and the Warsaw Education Council. (The final implementation effect of the project was a tool created and made available by the



Education Office of the Capital City of Warsaw, called the Climate Map of Schools, available at [https://mapa.um.warszawa.pl/klimatyczna-mapa-szkol/.](https://mapa.um.warszawa.pl/klimatyczna-mapa-szkol/))

The study was conducted using a diagnostic survey method. The survey technique and an original questionnaire consisting of a questionnaire and 58 questions (50 closed and 8 open) were used. The closed questions were grouped into 7 categories, i.e.: perception of the school, relations between students, relations between students and teachers, teaching, checking and assessment, self-government and non-teaching activities of the school, school infrastructure. A total of 16 statements were selected for analyses on the safety of students at school.

The research was conducted online in June 2023 among students of Warsaw high schools that signed up for the Climate Map of Schools project. All participants gave their informed consent to participate in the study. In the case of minors, consent was obtained from their parents or legal guardians. The project received a positive assessment from the APS Ethics Committee.

The survey involved 629 students from 30 Warsaw high schools. Women constituted 60.9% ( $n = 383$ ) of the respondents, and men 31.5% ( $n = 198$ ). 7.6% (48) of the respondents did not want to answer the question about gender. The average age was 16.23 years ( $SD = 1.342$ ,  $Me = 16$ ). The oldest person was 26 years old, and the youngest 13. The largest number of respondents studied in a general high school ( $n = 500$ , 79.5%), 19.2% ( $n = 121$ ) in a technical school, and 1.3% ( $n = 8$ ) in a first-degree vocational school. The most numerous groups were those studying in the following grades: first (46.3%,  $n = 291$ ), second (28.8%,  $n = 181$ ) and third (19.1%,  $n = 120$ ). The least represented groups were fourth-grade students (5.4%,  $n = 34$ ) and fifth-grade students (0.5%,  $n = 3$ ).

## STATISTICAL DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURE

The data were analysed using IBM SPSS Statistics. Descriptive statistics ( $Me$  – median,  $Mo$  – mode) were determined for the variables studied. In order to determine correlations, the categories of variables were assigned ranks according to the rule: *I strongly agree* – 5, *I rather agree* – 4, *I have a neutral opinion* – 3, *I rather disagree* – 2, *I strongly disagree* – 1. The nonparametric Spearman rank correlation test was used, for which a 5% inference error was assumed (significance level  $p < 0.05$ ).

The selection of variables was made based on content analysis, assigning thematic categories to each statement corresponding to key components of school climate (physical and emotional safety; social relations; belonging and identification with the school; equality and inclusiveness; trust and the possibility of obtaining support) and social relations. In this way, the following variables were selected: school atmosphere expressed through a sense of belonging, acceptance, social support, violent behaviours, respect in mutual relations.

## RESULTS

**Atmosphere at school**

Students generally rate the school atmosphere moderately high. The median ( $Me = 4$ ) suggests that the answers are more in the “rather yes” range when it comes to aspects related to friendly atmosphere (41.3%,  $n = 260$ ) and the subjective experience of the student perceiving the school environment as their oasis (29.1%,  $n = 183$ ). However, when it comes to aspects related to anxiety at the thought of school and the possibility of raising controversial topics, students are more likely to choose the answer “I have no opinion” ( $Me = 3$ ) (24.6%,  $n = 155$  and 33.4%,  $n = 210$ , respectively).

Table 1.  
*Atmosphere at school*

Categories	<i>Me</i>	<i>Mo</i>	Definitely no		Rather no		I have no opinion		Rather yes		Definitely yes	
			<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
			I feel like at home in my school	4	4	84	13.4	93	14.8	171	27.2	183
There is a friendly atmosphere in my school	4	4	39	6.2	70	11.1	132	21.0	260	41.3	128	20.3
When I think about my school, I feel stressed	3	2	90	14.3	168	26.7	155	24.6	115	18.3	101	16.1
In my school, people talk about difficult, controversial topics	3	3	84	13.4	155	24.6	210	33.4	135	21.5	45	7.2

Source: Author's own study.

**Acceptance and diversity**

Students rated the aspects related to their acceptance by others moderately high. The median of 4 suggests that most students indicated the answer “rather yes” (acceptance of diversity 28.3%,  $n = 178$ , acceptance by peers 36.7%,  $n = 231$ , acceptance by teachers 33.7%,  $n = 212$ ). However, it should be noted that the mode is at the level of 5, and the median is 4. This indicates the existence of a certain group of students who do not feel accepted in their school and chose answers from the range of “rather no”, “definitely no”.

Table 2.  
*Acceptance and diversity*

Categories	<i>Me</i>	<i>Mo</i>	Definitely no		Rather no		I have no opinion		Rather yes		Definitely yes	
			<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
At my school, people are accepted regardless of their origin, religion, gender identity, health condition, disability, financial situation, political beliefs, appearance, etc.	4	5	34	5.4	44	7.0	83	13.2	178	28.3	290	46.1
My peers at school accept me as I am	4	5	21	3.3	20	3.2	107	17.0	231	36.7	250	39.7
Teachers accept me as I am	4	5	23	3.7	27	4.3	130	20.7	212	33.7	237	37.7

Source: Author's own study.

### Support and relationships

Students generally rate the possibility of getting help from other people at school moderately high (*Me* = 4). The answers are concentrated around the answers “rather yes” and “definitely yes”. However, there is a certain group of students who do not think that their peers do not react to the harm of others (16.4%, *n* = 103) and do not receive the support they need from their peers (13.5%, *n* = 85), as well as from teachers (22.5%, *n* = 141).

Table 3.  
*Support and relationships*

Categories	<i>Me</i>	<i>Mo</i>	Definitely no		Rather no		I have no opinion		Rather yes		Definitely yes	
			<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
At my school, there is a peer to whom I can turn for support in difficult situations and discuss various problems	4	5	43	6.8	42	6.7	69	11.0	162	25.8	313	49.8
My peers respond when someone is harmed or treated unfairly	4	4	42	6.7	61	9.7	207	32.9	222	35.3	97	15.4
There is a teacher at my school to whom I can turn for help in difficult situations and talk about various problems	4	5	79	12.6	62	9.9	102	16.2	182	28.9	204	32.4

Source: Author's own study.

### Violence and inappropriate behaviour

The sense of safety at school is evidenced by the fact that most students had not experienced peer violence in the year preceding the study ( $Me = 1$ ). Almost 90% ( $n = 565$ ) of the respondents stated that they had not experienced physical violence from peers, and almost 75% ( $n = 468$ ) had not experienced psychological violence. However, the fact that there are teachers in their schools who behave inappropriately towards students is worrying (28.7%,  $n = 180$ ).

Table 4.  
*Violence and inappropriate behaviour*

Categories	Me	Mo	Definitely no		Rather no		I have no opinion		Rather yes		Definitely yes	
			n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
In the past school year, I experienced psychological violence from my peers at school	1	1	346	55.0	122	19.4	64	10.2	46	7.3	51	8.1
In the past school year, I experienced physical violence from my peers at school	1	1	499	79.3	66	10.5	29	4.6	17	2.7	18	2.9
At my school, there are teachers who ridicule, harass, insult, and humiliate student	2	1	176	28.0	157	25.0	116	18.4	101	16.1	79	12.6

Source: Author's own study.

### Respect in student-teacher relationships

The results show that students feel respected by each other and teachers. The most common response was "rather yes". The median of 4 suggests that at least half of students chose the response "rather yes" or "definitely yes". However, it should be noted that not all students are satisfied with the respect they receive from both peers (17.5%,  $n = 110$ ) and teachers (11.8%,  $n = 74$ ).

Table 5.  
*Respect in student-teacher relationships*

Categories	Me	Mo	Definitely no		Rather no		I have no opinion		Rather yes		Definitely yes	
			n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
My colleagues treat others at school with respect	4	4	42	6.7	68	10.8	165	26.2	241	38.3	113	18.0
Teachers at my school treat me with respect	4	4	34	5.4	40	6.4	147	23.4	249	39.6	159	25.3

Source: Author's own study.

*The relationship between students' experiences of various forms of violence and the support they receive from teachers and peers*

Spearman's rank correlation analysis showed relationships between violence at school, teachers' attitudes and peer relationships. The strongest relationship was found between physical and psychological violence experienced by students. Students who experienced psychological violence more often also experienced physical violence ( $r_s = 0.528$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Students who experienced psychological violence ( $r_s = 0.358$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) or physical violence ( $r_s = 0.221$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) at school more often indicated verbal violence used by teachers. Students who experienced psychological violence ( $r_s = -0.121$ ,  $p = 0.002$ ) and physical violence ( $r_s = -0.158$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) were also less likely to count on support from peers and teachers ( $r_s = -0.092$ ,  $p = 0.022$ ;  $r_s = -0.132$ ,  $p < 0.001$ , respectively).

Table 6.

*Spearman's rank correlations between students' experiences of various forms of violence and the support they receive from teachers and peers*

Spearman's rho		In the past school year, I experienced psychological violence from my peers at school	In the past school year, I experienced physical violence from my peers at school	At my school, there are teachers who ridicule, harass, insult, and humiliate student	At my school, there is a peer to whom I can turn for support in difficult situations and discuss various problems	My peers respond when someone is harmed or treated unfairly	There is a teacher at my school to whom I can turn for help in difficult situations and talk about various problems
In the past school year, I experienced psychological violence from my peers at school	Correlation coefficient two-tailed significance		.528** <.001	.358** <.001	-.121** .002	-.279** <.001	-.092* .022
In the past school year, I experienced physical violence from my peers at school	Correlation coefficient two-tailed significance	.528** <.001		.221** <.001	-.158** <.001	-.168** <.001	-.132** <.001
At my school, there are teachers who ridicule, harass, insult, and humiliate student	Correlation coefficient two-tailed significance	.358** <.001	.221** <.001		-.005 .909	-.180** <.001	-.194** <.001

At my school, there is a peer to whom I can turn for support in difficult situations and discuss various problems	Correlation coefficient	-.121**	-.158**	-.005	.267**	.210**
	two-tailed significance	.002	<.001	.909	<.001	<.001
My peers respond when someone is harmed or treated unfairly	Correlation coefficient	-.279**	-.168**	-.180**	.267**	.312**
	two-tailed significance	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001
There is a teacher at my school to whom I can turn for help in difficult situations and talk about various problems	Correlation coefficient	-.092*	-.132**	-.194**	.210**	.312**
	two-tailed significance	.022	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001

$N = 629$

\*\* correlation significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed)

\* correlation significant at the 0.05 level (two-tailed)

Source: Author's own study.

In summary, physical and psychological violence are strongly linked and correlated with the perceived verbal abuse from teachers. Students who experience violence are less likely to receive support from their peers and teachers. Schools where students perceive teachers as supportive tend to have a stronger culture of responding to violence.

### **The relationship between the level of acceptance and the level of mutual respect in student–teacher relationships**

The Spearman rank correlation analysis revealed significant, weak to moderate, positive relationships between all aspects of the school environment examined ( $r_s = 0.142$  to  $r_s = 0.465$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). The strongest relationship was found between the perceived acceptance in school, regardless of personal, social, and ideological characteristics, and the respect shown by students ( $r_s = 0.465$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). A strong dependence was also demonstrated between respect among students and acceptance by peers ( $r_s = 0.455$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ).

Table 7.

*Spearman's rank correlations between the level of acceptance and the level of mutual respect in student-teacher relationships*

Spearman's rho		In my school, difficult and controversial topics are discussed	At my school, people are accepted regardless of their origin, religion, gender identity, health condition, disability, financial situation, political beliefs, appearance, etc.	My friends at school accept me as I am	My colleagues treat others at school with respect	Teachers at my school treat me with respect
In my school, difficult and controversial topics are discussed	Correlation coefficient		.318**	.142**	.284**	.285**
	two-tailed significance		<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001
At my school, people are accepted regardless of their origin, religion, gender identity, health condition, disability, financial situation, political beliefs, appearance, etc.	Correlation coefficient	.318**		.381**	.465**	.372**
	two-tailed significance	<.001		<.001	<.001	<.001
My friends at school accept me as I am	Correlation coefficient	.142**	.381**		.455**	.293**
	two-tailed significance	<.001	<.001		<.001	<.001
My colleagues treat others at school with respect	Correlation coefficient	.284**	.465**	.455**		.394**
	two-tailed significance	<.001	<.001	<.001		<.001
Teachers at my school treat me with respect	Correlation coefficient	.285**	.372**	.293**	.394**	
	two-tailed significance	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	

$N = 629$

\*\* correlation significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed)

Source: Author's own study.

In summary, schools where difficult topics are openly discussed are more frequently perceived by students as accepting of diversity. In turn, the acceptance of diversity is strongly linked to the sense of acceptance among students and the respect shown. Students who feel respected by teachers are more likely to perceive an atmosphere of respect among their peers.

## DISCUSSION

The need for safety is the most important, basic need of every person. And as research shows, there is a connection between emotional safety and the ability to learn (Hurt & Hudson, 2006). In the presented studies, students evaluate the atmosphere at school moderately high. For many of them, school is a place where they feel safe and at ease, a place where they meet friendly people and can develop their interests and passions in an atmosphere of respect and support, acceptance of their person regardless of origin, religion, gender identity, health condition, disability, financial situation, political beliefs, appearance, etc. As researchers show, building mutual school bonds and positive perceptions of psychological and physical safety is associated with fewer behavioural disturbances and fewer cases of bullying (see, among others: Espelage et al., 2014; Steffgen et al., 2013; Thapa et al., 2013). Positive relationships between students and teachers are a strong predictor of students' success (Thapa et al., 2013). A friendly atmosphere and a friendly educational environment promotes academic achievements and emotional development of students (Straumann, 2023; Wehrli, 2019). A positive school climate correlates positively with high levels of academic achievement and other desirable behavioural indicators, but negatively with undesirable behaviours (Benbenishty et al., 2016; Berkowitz et al., 2017; Thapa et al., 2013; Wang & Degol, 2016).

Students who feel insecure at school experience negative feelings (Cemalcilar, 2010) and may not be able to learn. The lack of a supportive educational and upbringing environment at school can lead to social exclusion and adaptation problems (Beld et al., 2019). Peer relationships improve students' psychological and emotional well-being as well as problem-solving skills and coping strategies (Uslu & Gizir, 2017).

In the presented research, almost 90% ( $n = 565$ ) of the respondents stated that they had not experienced physical violence from peers, and almost 75% ( $n = 468$ ) had not experienced psychological violence. However, it is disturbing that in the schools studied there are teachers who engage in inappropriate behaviour towards students (28.7%,  $n = 180$ ) and that not all students are satisfied with the respect shown to them by both peers (17.5%,  $n = 110$ ) and teachers (11.8%,  $n = 74$ ). A much higher percentage of students experiencing physical and psychological violence is reported, for example, in the research by Makaruk (2022) (44% and

31%, respectively). In turn, Kaczan et al. (2025) speak of 32.9% of students who have ever experienced peer violence. Other researchers show that about 6% of teenagers use peer violence, and about 11% have experienced bullying at school (Cosma et al., 2024). Bullying occurs less frequently and with less intensity in classrooms where there is a friendly atmosphere and good relationships (Kaczan et al., 2025).

Students who have been victims of physical or verbal violence do not feel safe at school (Smokowski et al., 2014) and have a more negative perception of safety, bonds and diversity at school (Nickerson et al., 2014). As the research presented in the article shows, psychological and physical violence are strongly related and correlated with the presence of teachers using verbal violence. Students experiencing violence were less likely to indicate receiving support from their peers, and were also more likely to indicate the presence of teachers who use verbal violence at school. The relationship between the occurrence of peer violence and teachers' violent behaviour was also confirmed in the study by Kaczan et al. (2025). Additionally, they proved that the more often students perceive the supportive attitude of teachers, the less bullying occurs. Fernández-Rouco et al. (2022) showed that school mentoring implemented by teachers plays a key role in the relationship between school climate and peer victimization. Developing mentoring programs can be an effective strategy in preventing peer violence. In schools where difficult topics are openly discussed, students are more likely to perceive their school as accepting diversity. Acceptance of diversity is strongly associated with a sense of acceptance among students and an atmosphere of respect. Peer and teacher relationships are interconnected – when students feel respected by teachers, they are more likely to notice respect among peers as well. According to IBE research, the ideal teacher is one who activates, engages in activity, does not limit themselves to the teaching process, but is open and ready for conversation (Nowakowska & Przewłocka, 2015). Students notice and appreciate teachers' attitudes that express respect and justice towards their students (Tłuściak-Deliowska & Czyżewska, 2020). Students who do not feel accepted and cared for tend to be demotivated and unwilling to go to school (Sánchez et al., 2005). Students' perception of interpersonal bonds, both with other students and teachers, and a sense of belonging to the school community are associated with reduced problematic behaviours in the classroom and aggression (see Reschly et al., 2020; Steffgen et al., 2013; Thapa et al., 2013; Valido et al., 2021). At the same time, research indicates that students with stronger bonds with school are more likely to engage in activities supporting peers who experience peer violence or other forms of aggression, acting as defenders or mediators (cf. Barhight et al., 2017; Espelage et al., 2014).

## CONCLUSION

Bilding a safe and supportive school environment is essential for the proper development of students. For a school to be a place where everyone feels at home, it is necessary to support students, prevent violence, and promote a culture of respect and acceptance. Peer and teacher relationships are interconnected – when students feel respected by teachers, they are more likely to notice attitudes of respect and acceptance among their peers. Students feel better in schools where diversity and difficult topics are openly discussed. The acceptance of diversity fosters the creation of an atmosphere of respect and interpersonal bonds. Students who experience violence are less likely to report receiving support from peers and teachers, and they also less often notice that their peers respond to the harm done to others. Schools where students perceive teachers as supportive tend to have a stronger culture of responding to violence.

## STUDY LIMITATIONS

Surveys conducted in an online environment are an effective and convenient method of collecting data, but their results may be burdened with errors resulting from the limited representativeness of the sample, self-selection of respondents and lack of control over the conditions in which they are conducted. It is worth noting that although it was addressed to entire school communities, not everyone responded. The highest percentage of students attended high schools, and the smallest – to vocational schools of the first degree, which could have influenced the results. The data obtained are students' subjective assessment of aspects related to the atmosphere in schools, safety in institutions, bilateral relations between students and students and teachers. The described studies are only fragmentary in nature, they constitute only a part of a larger whole.

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## BEZPIECZEŃSTWO UCZNIÓW JAKO ELEMENT KLIMATU SZKOŁY PONADPODSTAWOWEJ

**Wprowadzenie:** Bezpieczeństwo jako wymiar klimatu szkolnego, jest badane w kontekście relacji rówieśniczych, relacji uczniów i nauczycieli, zaplecza technicznego szkoły itd. Podjęty w badaniach temat koncentruje się na wybranych aspektach funkcjonowania uczniów, które wiążą się w ich percepcji z subiektywnym poczuciem bezpieczeństwa.

**Cel badań:** Celem badania jest poznanie opinii uczniów na temat ich subiektywnego poczucia bezpieczeństwa, ujmowanego jako element klimatu szkoły oraz ustalenie związku pomiędzy doświadczaniem przemocy fizycznej i psychicznej a uzyskiwanym wsparciem, a także poziomem akceptacji i wzajemnego szacunku w relacjach uczeń-nauczyciel. Aby zrealizować cel, poddano analizie odpowiedzi uczniów odnoszące się do atmosfery panującej w szkole, poziomowi akceptacji, różnorodności i wsparcia między uczniami oraz między uczniami a nauczycielami, a także zidentyfikowano problemy związane z przemocą i wyrażaniem szacunku w środowisku szkolnym.

**Metoda badań:** Sondaż diagnostyczny oparty na technice ankietowej z wykorzystaniem elek-

tronicznego kwestionariusza ankiety.

**Wyniki:** Uczniowie umiarkowanie wysoko ( $Me = 4$ ) oceniają atmosferę w szkole, aspekty związane z różnorodnością i akceptacją ich osoby przez innych, możliwość uzyskania wsparcia od innych osób, jak również poczucie wzajemnego szacunku ze strony rówieśników i nauczycieli. Prawie 30% badanych stwierdziła, że w szkołach są nauczyciele dopuszczający się niewłaściwego zachowania w stosunku do uczniów. Analiza korelacji rang Spearmana wykazała zależności pomiędzy przemocą w szkole, postawami nauczycieli i relacjami rówieśniczymi. Uczniowie doświadczający przemocy psychicznej częściej wskazywali także doświadczanie przemocy fizycznej ( $r_s = 0,528, p < 0,001$ ). Okazywanie szacunku innym koreluje z akceptacją różnorodności ( $r_s = 0,465, p < 0,001$ ) oraz akceptacją ( $r_s = 0,455, p < 0,001$ ).

**Wnioski:** Budowanie bezpiecznego i wspierającego środowiska szkolnego jest niezbędne dla prawidłowego rozwoju uczniów. Aby szkoła była miejscem, w którym każdy czuje się jak u siebie, konieczne jest wspieranie uczniów, przeciwdziałanie przemocy i promowanie kultury szacunku oraz akceptacji.

**Słowa kluczowe:** bezpieczna szkoła, bezpieczeństwo, szkoła, młodzież, klimat szkoły

