

Mentoring valorization in combating violent and aggressive behaviour in preadolescence and adolescence

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ABSTRACT

The present work combats the problem of violence and aggressive behaviour through mentoring. The theoretical point of view certified studies that highlight various aspects of the problem of violent and aggressive behaviour remediation of preadolescents and adolescents. At present there are no publications that completely synthesize the institutional and normative field of mentoring. The existing publications reference to the regulation regarding the establishment of the mentoring system for teaching staff in education. Thus, the problem of mentoring valorization in combating violent behaviour among preadolescents and adolescents remains unresolved. The viable solution to solving these actual problems of the postmodern world is to focus on the personality value system.

KEYWORDS

mentoring, violence, aggressiveness, behaviour, value, preadolescence age, adolescence age

INTRODUCTION

The problem of mentorship ensuring is a topical one, which highlights a complex process, and varies from one situation to another depending on the social context. In the scientific literature (Balan & Andriţchi, 2015; Morgan & Rochford, 2017; Ezechil, 2008; Tolan et al., 2014) we find

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various ideas about mentoring and its value in solving various problems such as the specificity of mentoring in professional development, quality assurance in educational mentoring, effectiveness of mentoring relationships in formal and informal contexts, mentoring programs to affect delinquency and associated outcomes of youth at-risk. Notwithstanding circumstances of the mentoring implementation, the mentor and mentee express their dedication to the mentoring process, share common purposes and expectations, based on tasks, respect, understanding and mutual trust, and express their vision of guidance as they engage in effective collaboration.

The synthesis of the scientific sources and their own experience allowed the authors Antoci and Mîslițchi to define mentoring as a complex, multi-aspectual process (cognitive, socio-affective, moral) focused on the set of interconnected, bilateral, continuous, synergistic actions and relationships between the mentor (person with experience and performances) and mentee (less experienced person) in formal, non-formal and informal contexts, based on respect, confidentiality, support, feedback, in order to develop competences, pro-social behaviours, values that ensure success in professional and personal development.

The authors Antoci and Mîslițchi from psycho-socio-pedagogical perspectives consider that one of the topical problems solved by the valorization of mentoring is to combat the phenomenon of violence and aggression among preteens and adolescents. The viable solution to solving this prominent problem of the postmodern world is focusing on the personality value system. Values indicate what is desirable from both a personal and social point of view, predicting tendencies as well as our implicit direction and path in terms of our actions and personal ideals. The influence of values on personality development occurs largely on a conscious level. It works by initiating cognition and exercising long-term formative actions and can polarize reactions and behaviour during confrontation in social situations while values are systematically incorporated into the personality system as a whole.

THE NORMATIVE AND SYSTEMIC APPROACH OF THE MENTORING ACTIVITY IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

Mentoring is a new professional initiative in the Republic of Moldova, initiated in 2013, within the project 'Global Partnership for Education', carried out by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Moldova, in partnership with the World Bank and UNICEF. The purpose of the Mentoring Program is to enhance the quality of education, starting with the early education stage, by creating a professional development system in the workplace. The essence of the mentoring program aims to transfer the experience accumulated by the teachers with performances. To offer support in learning and professional development to those involved in the education process, from mentors, teachers and managers to children from preschool institutions, students and people involved in the process of learning and in the process of personal and professional development.

In an attempt to provide a complete definition of the mentoring activity, we will make a direct reference to the [Education Code of the Republic of Moldova \(2014\)](#), which in art. 3 expressly stipulates that 'mentoring is a process of guidance, support of learning, education and/or professional development, carried out between the mentor and another person, being based on the premise of the interactive involvement of both parties, of assuming their obligations according to the held status'. [According to the Regulation nr. 3125 \(2016, p. 1\)](#) regarding the



institutionalization of the mentoring activity in education, the mentor is an experienced teacher or manager, with a role of tutor for other teachers or managers, beginners or experienced in the profession, implicitly, for children and students, young people, for which they provide support for personal and professional development. In this context, we will present the legal framework of reference that provides normative support to the mentoring activity. Thus, all mentoring activities have as a starting point the provisions derived from:

- [Education Code of the Republic of Moldova No.152 of 17.07.2014](#), in force since 23.11.2014 (articles no. 55, 58 and 134).
- [Regulation nr. 3125](#) regarding the institutionalization of the mentoring activity in education (hereinafter – the Regulation), which is elaborated in accordance with the provisions of the Education Code.
- [Education Development Strategy for the years 2014–2020 ‘Education-2020’](#), approved by Government Decision 994 of 14.11.2014.

From the general to the particular, we will mention here that in the textual content of the [Education Code \(2014\)](#), at art. 55, lit. D, we identify that the normation of the didactic activity, besides other activities, also includes the mentoring activity. Art. 58 emphasizes the idea that in general education the mentoring activity is promoted whereby an experienced person (mentor) offers support, help and exchange of experience and knowledge to another person in order to promote their professional and personal development, ensuring their acquisition of skills or knowledge. The teacher or manager can become a mentor if he has a special training obtained in the initial or continuous training and experience in the professional field.

The content of the [Education Code \(2014\)](#) also provides that the mentoring activity is carried out in the following forms: (a) practice mentoring; (b) mentoring of professional insertion; (c) professional development mentoring. The practical mentoring is realized by the guidance of an experienced teacher of the trainee, implicitly understanding that the trainee can be the young people from the higher education institutions, who can be residents of the urban or rural environment, with differentiated incomes and social integration capabilities. The professional mentoring insertion is carried out in the workplace and ensures the professional integration and development of the young beginners in the career. The mentoring of professional development is carried out in the workplace and ensures the professional development and career advancement of the teachers. We mention here that the provisions of the Education Code have been taken over in other normative documents. Thus, these three types of mentoring are expressly provided for in the *Regulation on the institutionalization of the mentoring activity in education* and in the *Education Development Strategy for the years 2014–2020 ‘Education-2020’*.

The Regulation regarding the institutionalization of the mentoring activity in education offers a more comprehensive perspective on mentoring. We will focus our attention on the content of art. 2, which defines the object of the *Regulation*, which includes:

- (a) The forms of mentoring activity in general education.
- (b) The goals of the mentoring activity.
- (c) The basic principles of the mentoring activity.
- (d) The status of the teacher-mentor.



- (e) The frame of reference for obtaining the status of teacher-mentor (the conditions of studies and professional training, the evaluation and certification of the teacher-mentor).
- (f) The specific competences and responsibilities of the teacher-mentor.
- (g) The rights and obligations of the teacher-mentor.
- (h) Organizing the mentoring activity.
- (i) The conditions for norming and paying the activity of the teacher-mentor.

The forms of the mentoring activity have been listed and analysed above, when we referred to the contents on the mentoring in the Education Code, specifying that the forms of the mentoring activity are of 3 types: (a) practical mentoring; (b) mentoring of professional insertion; (c) professional mentoring development.

Mentoring is an interactive process, in which the participants assume, in accordance with their status, the responsibility for the results of the professional learning and development activity. Art. 5 of the Regulation highlights the general purpose of mentoring activities which consists in contributing to the quality of education through actions aimed at supporting the mentored person in the process of self-observation and reflection on their own professional and personal experiences, and facilitating the self-evaluation process of the mentored person for determining the professional needs development.

Like any domain that involves the participation of the human factor, the mentoring activity is outlined by certain basic principles which consist in:

- (a) The principle of respecting the human rights and dignity of any person, regardless of gender, ethnicity, nationality, age, religion, social condition, physical or intellectual abilities, etc.
- (b) The principle of ensuring equal opportunities for professional development for all.
- (c) The principle of confidentiality and mutual trust.
- (d) The principle of impartiality and objectivity.
- (e) The principle of shared responsibility for quality assurance of activity.
- (f) The principle of professional integrity.
- (g) The principle of moral integrity.
- (h) The principle of stimulating innovation.
- (i) The principle of ensuring common success through collaboration and cooperation, but not through competition.

The mentor or the person providing assistance and mentoring services must have specific skills to ensure the quality of the mentoring process. Thus, art. 10 of the Regulation provides for the assistance of the teacher-mentor who assists the child, the student, the trainee student, the young person or the mentored teacher in the elaboration of the teaching, learning or evaluation activity. The teacher must follow the design of the specific components and the compliance between the competences, content, teaching strategies, time allocation and assessment tools, to help the child, the student, the trainee student, the young person or the mentored teacher to fully support the training progress. As the child, student, youth, or mentor trainee accumulate the necessary experience, mentor assistance is reduced. The teacher-mentor, together with the child, the student, the young person or the trainee student, identifies variants of improvement of the didactic project as an instrument of ensuring a learning process centred on the needs of the learners. The teacher-mentor develops the ability of the child, pupil, young person or trainee



student to observe and critically analyse the activity. The teacher-mentor realizes the feedback based on an objective analysis of the realised activity.

The Regulation regarding the institutionalization of the mentoring activity in education, in chapter VII provides institutional roles and responsibilities to ensure the quality and continuity of the mentoring process. Thus, art. 25 expressly stipulates that in the institution of general education, a person with a managerial function is appointed as the responsible for the mentoring activity (the deputy director for studies or another qualified person). The activity of the teacher-mentor of insertion and professional development is coordinated by the person with managerial function designated within the respective institution of general education. The director of the institution appoints the manager responsible for the mentoring activities in the institution. The manager responsible for the mentoring activities will elaborate and propose for discussion and approval the work plan for carrying out the mentoring activities. The manager's role includes: facilitating the coordination of the program, the association between mentor and trainee; supporting mentor and trainee training; knowledge of the trainee's needs and their evolution; facilitating community integration; to act as a resource person for the trainee and as a liaison between the institutions involved in mentoring and the trainee; participation in the working meetings of the mentoring team.

The general education institution will promote and support mentoring of all types, including in its organizational chart and strategic planning aspects related to establishing mentorship as a system of professional development in the institution and to empowering employees regarding the broad involvement in this process, both the teacher-mentors and the direct beneficiaries (child, student, trainee, young or mentor teacher). The education will facilitate the activity of the mentoring teachers by providing space for the mentoring sessions, by including in the schedule of the methodical activities the mentoring activities, but also by creating the conditions of professional development of the mentoring teachers.

The Education Development Strategy for the years 2014–2020 'Education-2020', approved by the Government Decision 994 of 14.11.2014, constantly takes over the provisions of the Education Code. The Strategy offers a consolidated argument in favor of creating and developing the mentoring activity. In its content it is expressly mentioned that even if there are standards for the development of children from birth to 7 years, educators cannot correctly apply in designing the educational activity professional standards for teachers in early education, curricula, guides for educators, which affects the quality of early education. It highlights the need to initiate an effective system of continuous training of teachers, such as mentoring, and of the system of monitoring and evaluation of the quality of early education services.

In chronological order, we will elucidate the most important actions undertaken by the authorities in order to create a functioning system for organizing and carrying out the mentoring activity. Thus, starting with December 2012, the National Council for Curriculum adopted the initiation of the piloting process of the Standards for the specialized services of the inclusive kindergarten. In order to promote the preschool education programs capable of satisfying the cognitive, affective, social and physical needs of all children, within the framework of the REPEMOL project, realized in partnership with the Moldova branch of the Foundation 'Center for Health Policy and Services', the Curriculum was developed and Methodological guide of the educator 'Basics of life security'; teaching materials for children to develop protective behaviours against accidents occurring in domestic and road conditions. In order to



improve the process and the evaluation tools, there was conducted the piloting of the Monitoring Tool for the Preparation of Children for School.

Starting with 2013, the PRO DIDACTICA Educational Center has provided services to the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Moldova for training mentors in the field of early education, within the project 'Global Partnership for Education'. Over 300 educators and kindergarten managers participated in mentor training courses. The aim of the project 'Global Partnership for Education' is to improve access, quality and inclusion in early education in the Republic of Moldova, including through the professional development of teachers, able to apply a curriculum focused on children and on new educational standards. The objectives of the mentor training program focused on addressing the fundamental aspects of the mentoring problem in adult education and the continuous professional development of teachers and managers in kindergartens; on the operationalization of the mentor's activity by offering functional tools for observation, counselling, debriefing, etc. The training activity of the mentors was carried out based on the interactive methods, with emphasis on training the professional competences of equitable approach of all the educational actors. To create a friendly learning/development environment, was included the competence of active observation; competence of empathic communication and listening; competence of psycho-pedagogical counselling; the competence to encourage personal and professional development; the competence of self-development and self-improvement. Thus, mentoring was promoted as a learning process in which a mutual relationship is built, based on mutual help and growth, focused on providing professional and emotional support, establishing professional goals, difficult goals, challenging experiences. The benefits come not only from the quantity or quality of knowledge, skills, but especially from such processes as, learning, building and personal development.

The 'Global Partnership for Education' project, implemented by the Ministry of Education, focuses on increasing access to education by rehabilitating pre-school institutions and equipping them with furniture, books, teaching materials and toys. To improve access to early education for children with special needs, in situations of increased risk it is providing quality early education services by training teachers and managers in pre-school institutions and actively involving parents in this process. From the sources of the project 'Global Partnership for education', the following works were edited for all the teachers and managers in the system: 581/5,000:

- Standards of learning and development of children from birth to 7 years.
- National professional standards for teachers in early education.
- The guide '1,001 ideas for a quality early education'.
- The guide 'The socio-educational inclusion of children with disabilities in the preschool institution'.

There was developed the guide of teachers and specialists from specialized services for the rehabilitation of children with disabilities in kindergartens with inclusive practices 'Evaluation for inclusive education of preschool and young children'.

In 2014, there was organized the program 'A quality early education for all children: mentors – educators – children'. 260 mentors and 40 school inspectors from all the districts of the country participated in the first training of mentors, organized by the Ministry of Education to ensure a quality early education for all children. By participating in the Program, trained mentors had the opportunity to train, in their turn, other educators in the country: 7,000 rural



educators and 3,240 urban educators benefited from a fundamental training. After the training, the mentors offered the educators permanent support in the application of the good educational practices presented and practiced in the training.

Keeping our attention on early education, we will find that at this level a series of concrete actions have been carried out aimed at ensuring the relevance of early education. The most important of them were aimed at improving the normative framework of early education, designing and implementing the modern methodology for developing the professional competences of teachers (mentoring) and contributing to the provision of modern educational institutions with modern teaching materials. Within these objectives, the following were achieved: 1. In order to improve the normative framework, the Attestation Sheet of the teacher was adjusted to the current requests, including the mentoring activities. 2. The training of teachers for the effective application of child development standards from birth to 7 years was developed. Two hundred and fifty-two teachers and managers from 55 pre-school institutions (community centres and kindergartens) were trained on the application of standards of child learning and development, as well as national professional standards for early education in the project 'Improving access to quality education services for the most disadvantaged children in the Republic of Moldova' (2011–2013), carried out with the support of UNICEF.

In order to design and implement effective methodologies for training the professional skills of the teachers, the mentoring system was designed and created; mentoring programs have been implemented to facilitate the professional inclusion of young specialists. Through the mentoring activities 336 young specialists were guided; 25 national mentor trainers, 260 local mentors and 40 specialists from the district education departments (100% of the expected number), responsible for early education, were trained in the field of pedagogical mentoring; mentoring activities were organized for 120 teachers and managers from 43 community centres. In total, 215 mentoring activities were undertaken; 130 mentoring centres (100%) from all the districts of the country were created and equipped with electronic equipment for training of teachers and managers for conducting mentoring in the field of early education (Bolboceanu, 2014, p. 36).

Ministerul Educației, Culturii și Cercetării on December 28, 2018 there was approved order no. 1934 on the Instruction on the organization of distance learning for children with disabilities. The order was approved in accordance with the provisions of the [Education Code of the Republic of Moldova, no. 152 of 2014](#), art. 27, 29 and 31, point 8, sub-item. 12) of the Regulation on the organization and functioning of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research, approved by the Government Decision no. 691 of 2017 (Official Gazette of the Republic of Moldova, 2017, no. 322–328, art. 793), based on the Concept regarding the achievement of the primary, secondary and high school distance education of persons with learning difficulties, caused by disabilities, approved by the Order Ministry of Education no. 372 of May 15, 2017, for the purpose of implementing the Program for the development of inclusive education in the Republic of Moldova for the years 2011–2020, approved by the Government Decision no. 523 of 2011. Point 35 of the Instruction on the organization of distance learning for children with disabilities states that in providing distance learning, the teacher will create a teaching/learning experience, ensuring efficiency and effective involvement of the student in the planned educational process. In this respect, the teacher will manage a network of relationships, assuming the role of facilitator or mentor.

The relevance of education at all the levels of the education system, as an element of educational policy, is reflected in the documents of the Government of the Republic of Moldova



and in a series of normative documents of the Ministry of Education. It impresses on the approach, the importance and the imposing dimensions of the changes foreseen by the sectoral Strategy for development 'Education-2020', whose achievement would mean a fundamental change in the education system in the Republic of Moldova. As prospective benchmarks for the development of mentoring at all the levels of education, the following can serve: improving the professional training of teachers; creating the network of mentoring centres in the field of education, professional and personal development; training of mentors trainers at national and local level and activating mentoring sessions; Providing methodological support for professional growth in the workplace through teachers' training and mentoring.

THEORETICAL APPROACHES

Bilesamni (2011, as cited in [Morgan & Rochford, 2017](#), pp. 3–4) remarks that mentoring typically involves two parties (a mentor and a mentee or protégé), a relationship (formal or informal), and the transfer of skills, knowledge and attitude with the objective of development and growth of the mentee (Bilesamni, 2011, as cited in [Morgan et al., 2017](#), pp. 3–4). From Megginson and Clutterbuck (1995, as cited in [Morgan & Rochford, 2017](#), pp. 3–4) point of view, it can be defined as 'offline help by one person or another in making significant transitions in knowledge, work or thinking'. The role of mentor is usually undertaken by someone in a more senior position than the mentee, with the aim of supporting the professional development of a less experienced mentee.

There is substantial evidence supporting the effectiveness of mentoring not only as a professional development intervention, but also as a targeted intervention for children and young people. In fact, mentoring is one of the most widely used approaches in promoting prevention of aggression and delinquency among youth ([Tolan et al., 2014](#), as cited in; [Morgan & Rochford, 2017](#), p. 8).

A recent review of the research in this area found significant improvements in behaviour and even academic achievement as a result of youth mentoring ([DuBois et al., 2011](#), as cited in [Morgan & Rochford, 2017](#), p. 8).

The general processes underlying mentoring are the same, regardless of context, that they involve one individual helping, guiding and offering assistance to another more junior individual. While youth mentoring usually takes place in the form of a more formalised program, the strength of the evidence lends itself to considering the usefulness of this approach with other groups ([Morgan & Rochford, 2017](#), p. 8).

There are numerous definitions of violence from psychological, sociological, pedagogical perspectives which highlight the specificity of this complex phenomenon.

The Latin root of the term violence is 'vis', which means 'force' and refers to the idea of power, domination, the use of physical superiority, i.e. the idea of force over another.

Debarbieux (1996, as cited in [Sălăvăstru, 2003](#), p. 121) offers a definition that describes the whole phenomenon of violence: 'Violence is the brutal or continuous disorganization of a personal, collective or social system, which results in a loss of integrity, which can be physical, mental or material. This disorganization can operate through aggression, through the use of force, consciously or unconsciously, but there can be violence only from the point of view of the victim, without the aggressor having the intention of doing harm' (as cited in [Sălăvăstru, 2003](#), p. 121).



Michaud (1978, as cited in Sălăvăstru, 2003, p. 121) defines violence based on three categories of factors: 'There is violence when, in an interaction situation, one or more actors act directly or indirectly, masked or distributed, harming others to varying degrees, either in their physical or moral integrity, either in their possessions, or in their symbolic and cultural participations' (as cited in Sălăvăstru, 2003, p. 121). Three elements can be identified that define the meaning of this concept: violence is a situation of *interaction* (involving one or more actors); it is an action that *damages* others (bodily, morally, etc.); these damages are manifested through different *modalities* (direct or indirect).

For Jaouadi (2000, as cited in Sălăvăstru, 2003, p. 121) there are some important things when defining violence: the type of relationship (abuse of power), the actor (an individual, a group, a community) and the cause (dissatisfaction of a need) (as cited in Sălăvăstru, 2003, p. 121).

THE NOTION OF VIOLENCE IS DISCUSSED IN RELATION TO THAT OF AGGRESSION

From a behaviourist perspective (Watson & Torndike, 1913, as cited in Doron & Parot, 2007, p. 38), aggression is considered to be any behaviour that harms or damages others. The neo-behaviourist (Hull & Tolman, 1930) position aims at the fact that aggression implies the intention to harm or damage others, and the cognitivist position emphasizes the idea that a behaviour is considered as aggressive only if it is at the same time intentional and is a violation of the norm that governs the situation in which it occurs (as cited in Doron & Parot, 2007, p. 38).

Aggression has been defined by Havârneanu (2013, p. 196) as the intention to harm another person who wants to avoid that harm or as the intention to increase one's position in a hierarchy to the detriment of another person. A similar concept is violence, considered as an aggressive act that aims at external evil (extermination).

It is difficult to differentiate the two concepts: aggression and violence.

Floro (1996, as cited in Sălăvăstru, 2003, p. 122) attempts such a differentiation on the basis of three criteria:

- (a) A topological criterion: aggression would be mainly internal, while violence is external. In this regard;
- (b) A functional criterion: aggression is a the potentiality force which can allow for the action to be directed; it is more about thinking, projecting, analysing, while violence is the order of our action, an action adapted to the objective which must be achieved. It is a relation between thought and action, which ensures the function of adapting to the circumstances, the constraints, the environmental problems.
- (c) An ethical criterion, which refers to the distinction between acceptable and unacceptable. While aggression, understood as the underlying potential which allows the individual to face problems, can be considered acceptable, violence, an action which produces pain and suffering, which is unacceptable (even if it is an effective or symbolic action, such as verbal violence) (as cited in Sălăvăstru, 2003, p. 122).

Neculau (2004, p. 135) pays attention to the diversity of forms of aggression, which he classifies according to various criteria:



- Dependent on the aggressor or the person who adopts an aggressive behaviour: the aggression of the young person and the aggression of the adult; male aggression and female aggression; individual aggression and collective aggression; spontaneous aggression and premeditated aggression.
- Dependent on the means used to complete the aggressive intentions: physical aggression and verbal aggression; direct aggression, with direct effects on the victim, and indirect aggression, between the aggressor and the victim being intermediaries.
- Dependent on the objectives pursued: the aggression that aims at obtaining benefits, a material gain; aggression predominantly aimed at hurting and even destroying the victim.
- Dependent on the form of aggression: violent aggression and nonviolent aggression; latent aggression and overt aggression.

The authors [Cristea et al. \(2006\)](#) designate the types of violence that pupils and teachers are exposed to. Among the types of violence pupils are exposed to are:

- Emotional violence, vulgarity of language from the pupils with undesirable behaviour.
- Physical violence from the older or stronger peers.
- Aggression of parents or other family members, as a method of solving the child's dissatisfaction.
- Stress caused by the parents, by the too high demands on the children in relation to their school performance.
- Exaggerated criticism and sanctions coming from teachers who do not know their pupils well enough.
- Street violence, scams, blackmail by young people without occupation, neighbourhood gangs.
- Frustration due to socio-economic problems ([Cristea et al., 2006](#), p. 126).

[Buzducea \(2005\)](#) determines the following causes of violence: socio-economic context (poverty of a large segment of the population; unemployment; lack of educational alternatives for children for spending free time); weak development of specialized services for identifying, investigating and solving registered cases; perpetuating the abusive parental model; lack of education and ignorance regarding violence; the stress generated by the decrease in the standard of living; alcohol consumption; mental illness etc. The author also notes that parents who abuse their children have behavioural problems and a distorted life experience by not meeting their own needs: unstable marriage, the child is unwanted; the parents themselves were abused, neglected and lacked love, as well as the protection from their parents; they present psychological and psychiatric disorders ([Buzducea, 2005](#), p. 89).

[Bucică \(2006, p. 67\)](#) states that the main causes of children's violence are: aggressive behavioural patterns learned in the family; adopting models of behaviour promoted among pupils who appreciate imposition on others; attracting attention through defiant attitudes; the display of prestige by force; the impression of peers through noisy attitudes to aggression.

According to the authors [Cristea et al. \(2006, pp. 127–128\)](#) determine the causes that generate violent behaviour among adolescents. These cases are classified according to several criteria:

- *Genetic causes*: explanatory behavioural deviations based on genetic data; timidity, emotional lability, low level of resistance to conflict, serious emotional disturbances that determine the



disharmonious structure of some pupils' personality; affective deficits of cognitive stimulation; personal failures of school adaptation and integration.

- *Causes: related to age of school children*, the hormonal changes characteristic of the school age also determine behavioural changes, sometimes undesirable; adolescents' rudeness; the acute feeling of loneliness when parents are obsessed with financial gains, not giving time and patience to their children/youngsters.
- *Legislative deficiencies*, at the level of the social system in general and of the school system, in particular: the legislative incoherence, the instability of the legislative system generally determines the challenge of the laws, regulations or norms of social coexistence without the risk of sanctioning the facts.
- *Moral causes*, the general crisis of the value system: the lack of superior reasons in the school and professional preparation generates the pupils and parents' disinterest towards the school; the financial potential of some parents determines parasitic attitudes on the part of their sons/daughters; visible disappearance/depreciation of the traditional family model; the concept of democracy taken over in a deformed manner on all levels of the society.
- *Causes of a pedagogical nature, at the school and family level*, the excessive volume of information does not leave time necessary for education concerns; the aggressive tone of the educators, the pupils' abruptness, the unjust evaluation with marks or qualifications; attitudinal, relational mistakes and gaining the moral-professional authority; emotional and physical abuse by teachers or parents; careful supervision of pupils in some activities or during the breaks; lack of authority of some teachers; the wrong approach of the pupils during some lessons, some teachers generates frustration and aggression; the indulgence and superficiality with which some pupils' serious behavioural problems are treated generate defiance and contempt for school regulations and norms; low level of education and cultural deficiencies of parents; parents' inability to educate and master their children; conflicts between the pupils' families; incoherence in sanctioning deviations; formal, inefficient educational programs – including for parents; psychologists' absence in most rural schools and localities; diminishing the traditional links between school and family, teachers seem increasingly disarmed in their attempt to make parents be the main partner in education.
- *The socio-moral and economic situation in some families*: poverty and promiscuity in many families; aggressive behaviour in the family, due to material needs, alcohol consumption or general crisis of moral values; large number of disorganized families, with divorced parents, configured consensually, atypically.
- *Aspects born of the crisis of the society in transition*, the existence of too many discos with non-stop program, bars and other places of entertainment in localities, including in villages; lack of communication between children and parents, either because of parents' going abroad or because of differences in mentality; the abandonment by parents of the educational function because of the exaggerated concern for the accumulation of money and material goods; pupils' unlimited access to information that is inappropriate for their age or individual characteristics, via TV, internet, etc.; uncontrolled listening to uncensored music; access to alcohol and drugs.
- *Causes generated and/or caused by the media*: aggression, violence and sexuality are the main content of some TV shows; lack/rarity of positive models in the media.
- *Causes of school management*, at the micro and macro-social level: lack of spaces and concerns of the school and community for recreational, educational, comforting, fun activities (youth clubs, sports grounds, amusement parks, etc.); the depreciation of the school image following the presentation on TV of isolated events in schools.



Russian scientists [Salakhova, Oschepkov, Lipatova, Popov, and Mkrtumov \(2016\)](#) guided a theoretical-experimental study in addressing the concept of attitudes from the perspective of their relation with value orientations in young people and adolescents with self-aggressive behaviour. In order to understand attitudes, the scientists have found a critical point in building the attitude exhibited by [Thomas & Znaniecki \(1918, as cited in Salakhova et al., 2016, p. 9019\)](#) and interpreted as 'value' + 'relationship to value'. The same authors defined attitude as 'psychological process, considering relations to the social world and taken primarily in relations to social values' (as cited in [Salakhova et al., 2016, p. 9019](#)). [Asmolov & Kovalchuk \(1977, as cited in Salakhova et al., 2016, p. 9019\)](#) mentioned that the social attitude 'is conditioned by the understanding of value as a social object that makes sense for the individual', or, otherwise, the social attitude describes the interrelation between the individual and the society in which the society is presented by social and individual value – through the relationship with this value.

The study of values is not a novelty in the field of pedagogy, psychology, sociology and it is not the least discussed topic in philosophy. The immediacy of values is maintained in the given fields due to permanent changes in social, economic, political, and educational environments. Therefore, in the educational system, the value formation of the youth remains a critical issue.

[Jung \(1931, 1933, as cited in Ewen, 2014, p. 57\)](#) highlights that value orientations have the ability to change within the individuals' life and expresses themselves in the following way: 'values are particularly likely to undergo radical changes as we grow from the morning of youth to the afternoon of middle age, with religious needs gaining ascendance while material and sexual urges become less important'.

[Silistraru \(2006\)](#) considers that value orientations are often given the same meaning as beliefs – the product of the later development of the individual. The phenomenon of conviction means that the disciple has discovered himself and has realized what values he has internalized. It follows that social directives become convictions due to a beneficial knowledge acquisition. Not all social directives are elevated to convictions, many of them remain unconscious regulators of behaviour.

Value orientation can be manifested through a large number of attitudes, beliefs, behaviours, and be in relation with other ones which are the integral part of the personality value system.

Based on the position described, the researchers were preoccupied with the study of the interrelationship of the system of social attitudes and the system of values orientation of young people and adolescents as a basis for the regulation of behaviour, which influences the manifestation of certain forms of behaviour, including self-aggression. Scientists obtained the following results from their research: the values system of young people predisposed to self-aggressive behaviour shows a higher rating of the values orientation of social power, which indicates the tendency towards greater influence on people and events, towards the authority, which they must obey. At the same time, for young people who are not predisposed to self-aggressive behaviour, the value given is related to the right to govern their own life through cooperation with the environment, having a higher social culture oriented towards reciprocity in relationships. However, the system of social attitudes in young people who are not predisposed to self-aggressive behaviour shows a greater significance to values achievement, support of traditions, social culture and spirituality ([Asmolov & Kovalchuk, 1977, as cited in Salakhova et al., 2016](#)).

[Sisler](#) believes that value orientations are essential in the development of adolescents' personal, social and cultural lives, having a significant impact on their relationships, identity, well-being and life prospects. A cross-cultural study fulfilled by [Kasser and Schwartz \(2011; 1994, as cited in Sisler, 2016, p. 13\)](#) made the conclusion that when value sets are extrinsically



linked or oriented toward external goals, they are associated with increased stress and inadequacy, lower levels of empathy and attitudes and harmful intergroup behaviour and harmful lifestyles. In contrast, according to Grouzet (2005), Kasser (2002), Maio et al. (2009) as cited in [Sisler, \(2016\)](#), when values are self-transcendent or intrinsically goal-oriented, that is, oriented towards autonomy and agentic growth, close affiliate relationships, belonging to widespread community and harmony, they are largely associated with greater life satisfaction, well-being and pro-sociality.

EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN

The purpose

The purpose of the study: theoretical and experimental foundation of the mentoring optimization process focused on combating violent and aggressive behaviour during of preadolescence and adolescence with the limits of 13–17 years.

Presentation of the research methods: theoretical – analysis, synthesis, generalization, systematization, the analysis of the contents of the regulatory reference documents; empirical – scientific observation, testing, conversation, questioning; mathematical and statistical.

The purpose of experimental study at the ascertain stage was to determine the indices and forms of violent/aggressive behaviour and to identify the values of preadolescent and adolescent children.

The experimental group

The research undertaken by Antoci & Mîslițchi in September–October, 2019, involved 405 pre-adolescents and adolescents between the ages of 13–17 years from general educational institutions, of which: 100 persons were 13–14 years old; 150 children – 14–15 years old; 100 subjects – 15–16 years old; 55 people – 16–17 years old.

Methodology

The following tools were used in the experiment to diagnose the violent/aggressive behaviour: The technique for diagnosing the indicators and forms of aggressiveness by [Buss-Darkee \(1957\)](#); The self-assessment questionnaire of mental states by Eysenck (as cited in [Batog, 2015](#), pp. 106–107); Hand Test by Wagner (Wagner, 1971, as cited in [Savca, 2008](#), pp. 119–123).

We undertook our research of values through the following: the technique of identifying the value orientations ([Ghid de orientare profesională a tinerilor și planificare a carierei, 2008](#)) and the test ‘My values and goals’ ([Ghid de orientare profesională a tinerilor și planificare a carierei, 2008](#)).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The processing and interpretation of the experimental data allowed for the identification of the results obtained by the investigated subjects regarding the indications and the forms of aggression ([Table 1](#)).



Table 1. Indices and forms of aggression of the whole sample according to Buss-Darkee Test (points)

Forms	Ages, years				Average
	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	
Physical aggression	5.09	5.09	4.58	4.59	4.84
Indirect aggression	4.56	4.77	4.65	4.72	4.68
Irritability	4.89	5.24	5.1	4.89	5.03
Negativism	2.12	2.3	2.04	2.31	2.19
Resentment	5.04	4.62	4.6	4.39	4.66
Suspicion	6.34	6.37	5.78	6.65	6.29
Verbal aggression	6.38	6.7	7.13	7.5	6.93
The feeling of guilt	5.88	6.1	5.77	6	5.94
Aggressiveness indexes	15.22	15.87	16.35	16.81	16.06
The enemy index	10.81	10.47	10.37	11.04	10.67

The analysis of the data allows us to ascertain the highest indices in the category of *verbal aggression* (6.93 p.), which prevails allowable nominal score of the range of 5-6 points. This fact characterizes the subjects by expressing the negative feelings in different forms, such as: quarrels, screams or by using a content of verbal answers such as reproaches, threats, derision. The index of *suspicion* is also higher than the one admitted and constitutes 6.29 p., which denotes the domination of distrust in the relationship with other people, based on the belief that the people around them want to cause them suffering. If we examine the data according to the age criterion, we find that *verbal aggression* is in positive dynamics until the age of 16-17 years, increasing almost by one point and reaching 7.5 p. These data can be explained by the psychological particularities of the age of investigated persons. As for the index of *physical aggression* within the age limits of 13-17 years, we notice that it gradually decreases. *Indirect aggression* is kept constant throughout the period of age examined.

The lowest index was obtained for the variable *negativism* (2.19 p.), which corresponds to a behaviour oriented to the wishes of the current educational and social system, the acceptance of the existing rights and laws, which do not lead to the manifestation of the negative actions of the subjects. At the same time, the *aggression index* and the *enemy index* determined throughout the sample do not extend beyond 20, i.e. they are within the limits of the low level of aggression.

For the confirmation of data veracity regarding the manifestation of the violent/aggressive behaviour, we applied the self-assessment questionnaire of mental states according to Eysenck on the entire sample of subjects. The results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Indices of self-assessment of mental states according to the self-assessment questionnaire of mental states by G. Eysenck (points)

Ages, years	Psychic states			
	Anxiety	Frustration	Aggression	Stiffness
13-14	7.96	8.37	8.42	10.97
14-15	7.79	7.5	9.36	10.88
15-16	8.42	7.8	8.93	11.03
16-17	8.56	8.07	9.74	11
Average	8.18	7.94	9.11	10.97



The analysis of the research results shows a relatively insignificant increase in the entire sample of *anxiety* (from 7.96 p. to 8.18 p.), *aggression* (from 9.36 p. to 9.74 p.) and *frustration* (from 7.8 p. to 8.07 p.), which reveals the average level of these mental states.

The highest results were obtained for the variable *rigidity* (10.97 p.), which indicates that the subjects are not flexible to fluctuating situations in the social environment, they are resistant to the changes that have occurred, which explains the presence of reduced adaptability. The *aggression index* (9.11 p.) is kept in slow dynamics during the ages studied and the average level is 8–14 points. The lowest index for *frustration* (7.5 p.) is found at persons aged 14–15 of the total number of subjects investigated.

We applied the ‘Hand Test’ in order to confirm the data on violent/aggressive behaviour, which was studied in order to predict obvious aggressive tendencies. The data obtained are presented in Table 3.

The analysis of the *communicability* and *aggression* (*K*) Coefficient allows us to conclude that aggression manifests itself as a strong tendency in the researched subjects, being 0.76 per sample, less than 1 ($K < 1$).

The coefficient of *aggression* and *demonstrativity* (CAAD) is the highest at the age of 16–17 years (36.58) with a tendency to decrease towards 14–15 years (25.82).

The *coefficient of aggression, dependency and communicability* (CACD) is higher in subjects aged 14–16 years. If the coefficient is closer to 1 we can talk about the diminution of the aggressive tendencies, correspondingly the more intense aggression tendencies are manifested at the age of 13–14 years.

The examination of the behavioural tendencies of the subjects reveals the highest results in *affectivity* – 8.81 p., a fact which speaks about the orientation of the subjects towards affection, positive attitude, and benevolence towards those around them. The lower score was accumulated

Table 3. Indices and coefficients of aggressive tendencies/behaviours according to the ‘Hand Test’ (points)

Tendencies/Behaviours	Ages, years				Average
	13–14	14–15	15–16	16–17	
Ag/Aggression	3.61	3.44	5.55	5.15	4.44
Dt/Directing	5.98	4.73	4.35	5.91	5.24
F/Fear	1.33	0.81	1.14	0.37	0.91
Af/Affectivity	8.16	7.69	9.56	9.81	8.81
Cm/Communicability	1.62	3.65	4.27	2.63	3.04
Dp/Dependency	0.52	0.23	0.37	1.04	0.54
Ex/Demonstrativity	0.65	0.95	1.1	0.72	0.86
H/Handicap	1.41	0.44	0.56	0.44	0.71
Ao/Impersonal active tendency	6.94	6.85	5.4	5.8	6.25
Po/Impersonal passive tendency	1.08	1.47	1.52	1.85	1.48
Ds/Description	0.94	1.09	0.54	0.81	0.85
CAAD/Coefficient of aggression and demonstrativity	34.38	32.25	34.85	36.58	34.52
CACD/Coefficient of aggression, communicability and dependence	23.2	25.82	26.97	25.5	25.37
K/Coefficient of communicability and aggression	0.67	0.84	0.82	0.72	0.76



at *directing* (5.44 p.) and *aggression* (4.44 p.), which denotes the inclination towards leadership, active influence on other people, the desire to be a leader, the tendency to dominate with the possible challenge of the offense. The lowest results are found in the *dependency* (0.54 p.), which indicates that the accomplishment of the activities does not depend on the benevolent attitude of other people.

According to the positions presented in the theoretical part regarding the relation of values with the behavioural tendencies and the manifested behaviours, we considered that it was necessary to identify the values of the subjects involved in the research and applied the tools to evaluate the values of the preadolescents and adolescents with the subsequent determination of the relation between the violent/aggressive behaviours manifested and the values held.

One of the tools applied was the technique of identifying the value orientations. From the 37 values offered, the subjects determined the significant hierarchical order of their values and contents existing in reality in frame of their personality. The results are shown in [Table 4](#).

The analysis of the results highlighted the same priority values for all the studied periods of time accumulating gradually increasing points in the next values: *family happiness, health, realization and fulfilment, friendship, balance, financial security*. Less priority values are: *spirituality, risk taking, fame, competitiveness, teamwork*.

My Values and Purposes Test was applied in order to ensure the accuracy of the previous data, which allowed de-facto and dominant values to be determined according to the ranks established among the preadolescents and adolescents included in the study. The data are reflected in [Table 5](#).

The analysis shows that first three dominant values are present at all ages: *power, money, help offered to others*. It seems a little unusual to see the presence near such values as *money* and *power of value* as *help offered to others*. The least appreciated values that have been established according to the investigated subjects are: *personal development, family life and knowledge*.

Therefore, using the mathematical-statistical methods, the Bravais-Pearson test was applied to determine the r linear correlation coefficient.

Statistical calculations regarding variables 'values – violent/aggressive behaviours' allowed establishing significant correlation coefficients. [Table 6](#) shows the most representative correlations between studied variables. We find that the *achievement* is in a strong significant positive relationship with: *physical aggression* ($r = 0.82, P \leq 0.01$), and *irritability* ($r = 0.743, P \leq 0.01$), which means that obtaining significant results, and successful completion of tasks and projects depend on physical power, and the use of the physical force. Irritability is the consequence of exhaustion in light of the requirements and expectations of the person to achieve the expected results. A significantly intense negative relationship was established between *realization* and *verbal aggression* ($r = 0.695, P \leq 0.01$) and the *aggressiveness index* ($r = 0.596, P \leq 0.01$), which indicates that achieving goals is achieved by subjects by raising the tone while disregarding aggressors and threats.

A strong significant negative correlation was determined between the *balance* and the *indirect form of aggressiveness* ($r = -0.449, P \leq 0.01$) and *irritability* ($r = -0.423, P \leq 0.01$), which is interpreted by reaching the state of tranquillity and stability with the help of manifestations of ignorance, non-objective evaluation of situations, brutality, and use of inappropriate words.



Table 4. Average indexes of hierarchical values of preadolescent and adolescent subjects according to the Technique of Identifying Values (points)

Values	Age, years				Average
	13–14	14–15	15–16	16–17	
Realization/Fulfillment	10.99	12.09	10.55	10	10.88
Advancement	16.46	15.16	14.73	13.37	14.93
Autonomy	17.17	16.93	15.04	16.75	16.47
Balance	15.29	13.5	11.47	13.13	13.35
Membership	22.3	21.74	18.81	23	21.46
Creation	17.99	17.29	14.81	15.32	16.35
Challenge	20.22	20.71	20.95	23.48	21.34
Competitiveness	22.77	22.21	22.41	23.43	22.71
Creativity	17.83	19.67	14.47	15.52	16.87
Charity	16.84	17.68	16.97	15.04	16.63
Entrepreneurship	22.72	21.18	19.84	23.54	21.82
Equality	20.3	19.38	17.05	16.86	18.4
Enthusiasm	22.19	22.06	17.84	18.38	20.12
Fame	22.67	23.2	22.46	23.56	22.97
Family happiness	8.42	7.38	8.67	5.29	7.44
Financial security	15.41	14.46	14.71	13.39	14.49
Friendship	11.39	11.72	12.83	12.61	12.14
Harmony	18.47	17.66	15.13	13.6	16.22
Health	8.66	9.52	8.08	8.19	8.61
Help offered to others	19.73	20.6	21.43	18.96	20.18
Independence	14.34	16.73	13.64	15.54	15.06
Integrity	22.43	21.91	21.19	20.51	21.51
Management	21.67	22.58	21.24	21.86	21.84
Learning	16.37	17.42	16.72	15.14	16.41
Free time	17.39	19.15	17.83	16.51	17.72
Personal perfection	19.4	19.28	18.34	18.4	18.86
Physical activity	21.25	22.03	20.53	20.88	21.17
Recognition	20.66	23.71	22.54	20.85	21.94
Respect	16.99	16.48	15.35	13.27	15.52
Risks taking	23.28	24.05	22.69	21.9	22.98
Safety	18.59	20.73	18.01	13	17.58
Protection	19.52	20.2	20.18	20.12	20.01
Self-expression	20.83	21.86	20.21	17.54	20.11
Spirituality	23.4	22.58	23.38	19.83	22.3
Status	22.45	22.09	20.48	18.9	20.98
Teamwork	21.49	24.03	21.94	22.47	22.48
Prosperity	21.69	18.9	17.47	18.17	19.06

Most of strong and average significant positive correlations are found between values and behavioural manifestations of the children at preadolescent and adolescent age such as: *indirect aggression, irritability, verbal aggression and aggression index*.

We can say that the manifestation of physical aggression is less pronounced in comparison with indirect and verbal aggression. This fact can be explained by the psychological



Table 5. Average indices of the values of preadolescent and adolescents according to the test 'My values and purposes' (points)

Values	Age, years				Average
	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	
A (Independence)	11.85	12.9	11.99	12.58	12.33
B (Social recognition)	12.24	13.08	12.29	12.18	12.45
V (Money)	9.82	11.4	10.2	9.78	10.3
G (Power)	9	10.4	8.9	9.98	9.57
D (Success)	12.36	13.49	12.49	13.06	12.85
E (Creation)	13.01	13.44	13.45	12.94	13.21
J (Help for others)	11.68	12.38	11.62	11.8	11.87
Z (Personal Development)	13.9	14.83	13.74	14.1	14.14
I (Family life)	13.38	14.61	13	13.62	13.65
K (Knowledge)	13.58	14.43	13.23	13.04	13.57

particularities of the age group which corresponds to individuals in secondary and high school. At the same time, the complex school programs or the parents' desire to see their children only in positive, favourable, praise contexts have negative effects on the personality of pupils. Children acutely feel their own powerlessness, which can lead to the dominance of inferiority complexes and their attempt to protect themselves by using defense mechanisms that are largely behaviours of indirect and verbal aggression, irritability.

CONCLUSIONS

The theoretical and experimental study carried out permits to conclude that mentoring is the most effective way to combat the violent, aggressive behaviour of preadolescents and adolescents.

The effectiveness of the impact depends on the constituent elements of the mentoring promoted and carried out within the educational institutions coordinated with the educational policies of the country.

The planning of a mentoring partnership must first consider the needs of the beneficiaries before determining its priorities and direction. It is also necessary to consider relevant research results which can give insight on concrete problems which must be solved through the mentor and mentee relationship.

An important pillar in the effectiveness of mentoring in combating the violent/aggressive behaviour of preadolescents and adolescents is the process of promoting values and, therefore, the formation of appropriate value orientations.

The study confirms the presence of the relationship between the behavioural manifestations of preadolescents and adolescents and the values held by them.

The importance of the study results can be found in: the analysis of the existing normative framework dedicated to mentoring and combating the violent behaviour of preadolescents; finding relevant current data regarding violent/aggressive behaviour among preadolescents and



Table 6. Correlation coefficients (*r* Pearson) between violent/aggressive behaviours and values at the preadolescent and adolescent age

Values	Behaviours							Aggressiveness indexes
	Physical aggressiveness	Indirect aggressiveness	Irritability	Negativity	Anger	Suspicion	Verbal aggressiveness	
Realization	0.820		0.743				-0.695	-0.596
Advancement		-0.641		-0.467			-0.974	-0.984
Balance	0.778	-0.449	-0.423				-0.696	-0.740
Creation					0.766	0.342	-0.896	-0.890
Challenge	-0.683	0.433		0.553		0.541	0.887	0.857
Competitiveness	-0.452						0.549	0.455
Charity							-0.723	-0.641
Entrepreneurship			-0.757					
Equality								-0.954
Enthusiasm								-0.857
Family happiness							-0.665	-0.659
Financial security		-0.711		-0.691	0.927		-0.879	-0.894
Friendship	-0.974				-0.772		0.900	0.894
Health							-0.604	-0.511
Physical activity	0.843	0.396	0.500				-0.566	-0.483
Respect		-0.395		-0.364			-0.967	-0.936
Risk taking			0.670		0.511		-0.811	-0.726
Safety	0.724						-0.791	-0.713
Protection	-0.516				-0.879			
Self-expression							-0.828	-0.754
Spirituality		-0.496		-0.743		-0.738	-0.750	-0.730
Status		-0.339	0.338		0.830		-0.981	-0.947
Teamwork		0.896	0.751					
Prosperity		-0.666	-0.408				-0.822	-0.876

Significant levels: $P \leq 0.01$, $r \geq 0.129$; $P \leq 0.05$, $r_c \geq 0.098$ (for 405 subjects).



adolescents; effectively combating violent/aggressive behaviour at preadolescence and adolescence ages in the context of developing value-based mentoring.

Ethics: The study procedures were carried out in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki. The Institutional Review Board of the Institute of Educational and Cultural Sciences (IPLT 'N.Jorga', IPLT 'G.Meniuc', IPLT 'E.Alistar') accepted the research procedure.

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Authors' contribution: The authors, Antoci Diana, Mîslițchi Valentina, Diacon Maria, had full access to all data in the study and take responsibility for the integrity of the data and the accuracy of the data analysis. Antoci Diana & Mîslițchi Valentina studied the main concepts from psychological, pedagogical, sociological, philosophical points of view in the article, i.e. mentoring, violence, aggressiveness, behaviour, value, preadolescence age, adolescence age; fulfilled the experimental research in educational institutions, analysed and interpreted the data obtained, and implemented statistical analysis; Diacon Maria studied the normative and systemic approach of the mentoring activity in the Republic of Moldova.

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