VIOLENCE AGAINST TEACHERS: SPEECHES FROM BRAZILIAN'S DIGITAL MEDIA

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Abstract

This research aimed to understand the treatment given by digital media for violence against teachers. It was observed how violence manifests itself, where it comes from, how it happens and the reasons for its occurrence, from news that addressed the violence suffered by teachers. The theoretical referential that guided the work was the Social Representation Theory proposed by Moscovici (1978). This research examined 96 articles, published in mainstream news sites in Brazil, whose main content were cases of violence against teachers. For these analyses, the content analysis from Bardin (2009) was used. The results showed that the discourse that circulates in digital media on violence against teachers refers to any form of physical or moral violence performed by students or their parents in the school environment, causing physical and moral damages to teacher's integrity. The violent acts are triggered by situations that alter the dynamics of the classroom, such as assigning low marks or making complaints. It's emphasized that this characterization is important to the development of possible actions for combating violence against teachers, which proved as an element that is part of the pedagogical dynamic of teachers.
Key words: *education, digital media, social representation, students, teachers, violence.*

Introduction

Searches related to the issue of violence in schools have been made since the 1950s in the United States. Since then, studies on school violence have been conducted in different perspectives around the world. It is observed that initially the violence in the school environment was accepted by society. The children left their familiar means and joined in a school of strict discipline that used methods of punishment through physical punishment. It is understood, therefore, that situations of violence in schools are far from being a phenomenon of today (Estrela, 1994).

Urban violence that covers events such as drug dealing, murderers, among others, constitutes relevant part of media news and it gains increasingly expression in medias of mass communication. This violence that occurs in society is also part of the school environment. Therefore, the phenomenon of violence is becoming a recurring object of study in social science research and in education.

The school can not prevent acts of violence. Educational institutions interact with society and end up being the scene of the phenomena that manifest themselves in other social spheres. Almost daily, different media around the world publicize acts of violence occurring within schools. This violence is not manifested only physically, but also by disrespect and violation of human rights. The physical and verbal aggression among students, between teachers, the invasion of gangs, drug trafficking, have been elements present in schools that cause insecurity, fear , bewilderment and anguish to students, teachers, principals and parents. (Zaluar, 2002; Gonçalves e Sposito, 2002).

Sposito (2001) shows that concerns about school violence in Brazil appear more expressively starting from the 1980s. Physical and verbal aggressions among students and teachers, gang invasions and drug dealing have been present elements in Brazilian schools since then. Thus, causing insecurity, fear and distress to students, teachers, principals and parents.

In a research entitled School Violence, funded by UNESCO and published in book format, Abramovay & Rua (2002) outline the characteristics of school violence nationwide. According to the authors, studies about the subject appear more strongly in Brazil starting from the 1980s, and the results of investigations made at this time indicate that the main forms of school violence were related to crimes against public property, such as predation and graffiti.

Starting on 1990, researches that deal with this subject focus on interpersonal forms of aggressions, especially among students. From this problem, studies about bullying and other issues of violence among students arise.

From the 2000s, it is clear that another aspect has been configured in the relations of school violence. In addition to the factors mentioned previously (violence against public property and between students), violence against teachers by students and parents has taken the headlines. Not that this kind of violence did not happen before, but in the mid-2000s there was an increasingly number of headlines with teachers as victims. In fact, it has become common in schools to have teachers confiscating firearms, white arms (knives, daggers, etc.), drugs and other artefacts that are used for their own coercion in their work environments.

This way, it is understandable that many dimensions of the daily work of teachers are involved in scenes of violence, and this situation brings implications to schools and to the work developed on them. Given the reality faced by teachers, the efforts in understanding the aspects of violence against them culminated in a research that analysed social representations of violence against teachers, built from teachers from both public and private sectors in the metropolitan area of Recife, Pernambuco, Brazil.

This research shows the results of this study that aimed to analyse discourses on violence against teachers that were produced and disseminated by digital media. It tries to explain how this violence is presented, where it comes from, how it happens and what are its causes. In order to do so, it uses the Social Representation Theory, comprehending its heuristic value to understand the symbolical dimensions that involve events, subjects and phenomena that sensitize people in society (Moscovici, 2003).

It is admitted that, with the increasing ease of access to the Internet, people have fast access to news anywhere, almost in real time. News can be accessed several times, recorded and shared on social networks with just a click of the user.

Given this context, it is worth noting that in order to a phenomenon to become a social representation, it must be a subject of discussion of groups and it must produce strangeness or annoyance. Violence against teachers fits these characteristics and, so, is taken as an object of social representation, since it messes with routine and intimacy of people. Social representations help to understand and justify this social reality, as well as the conduct of individuals, positions that are taken by them and the ideas shared between groups. (Sá, 1998)

Media and Social Representation

Since the inaugural mark of the Social Representations Theory (SRT), the work La Psychanalyse, son image, son public (1961), Moscovici defines that social representation is a particular modality of knowledge whose function is the production of behaviours and the communication between individuals. Being a preparation for action, the social representation guides the behaviours and remodels and reconstitutes the environment where those behaviours take place. From these considerations, it is possible to observe two basic functions of social representations: to establish common standards of knowledge and conduct (consensus) and to forge behaviours according to established standards and conventions.

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The subject does not interact with the social object neutrally, as if it was a subjective copy of reality, but, instead, he prints its characteristic in the representations of this object, particularizing it. This is why Jodelet (2001) states that the process of building the SR does not happen in a vacuum, but in the social, historical, geographical and cultural context where the individuals are inserted, shaping them according to their values, evaluating them according to their judgement filters, and then, guiding their practices.

The relationship between the subject and the object in the SRT is so intrinsic that social representations do not have a definitive status, but the relations, information and experiences of the subject influence its construction process, associating and relating values, images, concepts, beliefs and symbols.

One of the factors that contribute to the building of the social representations of a given object is the dispersion of information, i.e., the various circulating versions about the unknown phenomenon. Therefore, in modern societies, media plays a decisive role in the construction of these cognitions. Moscovici (1978) in the early 1960s had already acknowledged the potential of social media by studying, in the mass-circulation magazines in France, what was written about psychoanalysis. According to Ordaz and Vala (1998), the information propagated by the media is characterized as one of the elements that constitute the individual, group and collective thinking.

According to Sabat (1999), media is one of these social instances that produce culture, drive and build meanings and representations. Thus, media, particularly digital media, has been presented as a field of study, since its power has been increasingly intensified in the current context. Within the object of study of this work, violence against teachers, it is understood that media is an element of major importance, generating social representations.

Following Ramos and Novo (2003), headlines influence the understanding of reality, since they bring a vision that offers the reader senses and trends on a given subject in advance. Mass media reach an audience that, in addition to heterogeneous and dispersed, consists of anonymous members to the source, even if the message, based on the objectives of the broadcaster or the marketing strategy, is directed specifically to a certain share of the public, a particular gender, age range, etc.

Therefore, media can both contribute to the dissemination and maintenance of stereotypes related to violence, as can cause reflections that help the development of new representations on the subject. Hence, it is possible to understand the relevance of studying "violence against teachers in digital media".

Methodology of Research

For this research, the qualitative approach was used. This approach is used when the aim is to explore the meanings of the studied phenomena and the interactions that are established, allowing the development of new ways of explaining social events (Alves-Mazzotti, 1991).

It is assumed that with the increasing ease of access to the internet, people have access to several news quickly, almost in real time, anywhere in the world. These news can be accessed several times, recorded, disclosed on social networks with a single click of the user. This breadth of digital media has been recognized as an opportunity to understand how violence against the teacher was taking place in Brazil .

The research took place through an Internet search across several websites lasting approximately 1 month. The websites chosen were considered the largest circulation in Brazil and addressed issues with frequent news on politics, economics, culture and society. The criteria utilized for selecting the websites was that they presented video or written news, regarding violence against teachers. The descriptor used for searching these reports was "violence against teachers", during the period of 2005 to 2011. This period was chosen given the increasingly number of occurrences in recent years. Finally, 96 (ninety-six) reports that dealt with this theme were found in this research.

For analysing the results of the research, the categorical analysis proposed by Bardin (2009) was used. The categorical analysis is considered a technique for the processing of data which aims to identify what is being said about a certain topic. Bardin (2009) conceptualizes categorical analysis as a set of techniques for analysis of communications in order to obtain, for systematic and objective procedures, the content of messages that allow the inference of knowledge concerning the conditions of production / reception of these messages. Thus, this type of analysis seeks to identify the units of meaning that make up a communication whose presence or frequency mean something for the targeted analytical objective.

This kind of analysis consists in disassembling the text in categories, which can be determined beforehand, subsequently or both. In general, the technique of categorical analysis usually starts by a brief reading, in which the researcher will outlining the analyzed text with your own findings, coming the first registration units. These units will help researchers to find what need in the information the text. Identify and classify the clearest possible manner the reporting units, is the purpose of content analysis.

The objectivity in relation to units of record prints impartiality of the researcher in the research, because the analysis takes shape in a systematic and accurate manner. In a few lines, the ultimate goal of content analysis is to provide useful pointers to the research objectives. After the systematization, the researcher can interpret the data in a way that conforms to what your research is intended (Bardin, 2009). In this research, the categories were defined in advance, because it was aimed to identify the following categories: what is violence against teachers, how it manifests itself, who are the aggressors, how it happened and what are the main causes or reasons for this violence in general.

Results and Discussion

The phenomenon of violence encompasses social, political, economic and psychological issues (Pino, 2007). In its complexity, is a phenomenon studied by many theorists, who emphasize their different aspects and multiplicity of meanings attributed. However, although there are many conceptions about the phenomenon, violence is usually understood as a content of coercion, aggression or violation of people with regard to their physical or moral rights and integrity (Michaud, 1989).

As general results, the prevalence of violence against teachers in the Southeast region was observed, totalling 37.5 % of the events. The places with the highest incidence of such violence were public schools, with 44.70% of the events and the most frequent practitioners of these actions were adolescents, with 38.5% of authorship. News reported that 76% of aggressions were of physical nature, mostly arising from revolts due to low grades or reproving, totalling 37.5%.

Then, the Northeast region appears, with 29.1% of the reported cases, followed by the South region, with 21.8% of the events of violence against teachers. The Midwest region is the penultimate, with 8.3% of the cases and the region with fewer occurrences is the Northern Region, with 3.1% of news media about this kind of violence.

The main places where violence against the teacher happened in Brazil were in state schools (44.7% of cases). Municipal schools came next with 32.2% of the cases. Schools of higher education also appear as stages for aggressions against teachers, with 18.7% of the occurrences and, finally, 4.1% of these aggressions happened in public walks.

Considering the facts described above, as well as in Brazil, in many countries there are social problems affecting the quality of teaching and provision of teaching, among these problems are the low wages and poor working conditions. But as was shown through these news, in well developed regions also violence against students and teachers occur.

The violence from social, psychological and pedagogical factors demonstrates the challenge of socializing and mutual respect that have been lacking in educational environments. It is known that currently the school is required to pass on knowledge. The school is required, often

replacing the conduct that should be taught by parents and, above all, is driven to repeat knowledge and training to the labor market, without a deep concern about the education of citizens.

This is visible especially when the news indicate the main perpetrators of teachers. The main practitioners of these crimes were adolescents, with 38.5% of the cases. Children come in second, with 29.1% of the episodes. Parents of the students come in third place, with 16.6% of the cases. Finally, adults that somehow participate in the school environment total 15.6% of the episodes.

It was found that the predominant kind of aggression is the physical aggression, with 76% of the cases. These aggressions involve punching, slapping, hair pulling, throwing objects and attempts of murdering against teachers. Most of them happen in classrooms. Secondly, teachers suffer verbal violence, totalling 14.5% of the aggressions. An alarming fact is that 9.3% of the episodes ended up on the death of the teachers, either by firearms or spanking.

It was also observed that the main reasons for this kind of violence were disapprovals or grades given by teachers, summing 37.5% of the events. Another reason for violence against teachers was the interference of teachers in moments of fights between students, with 29.1% of the events. Complaints made by teachers during classes motivated 19.7% of the aggressions. 9.3% of the teachers were aggressed for no apparent reason and 4.1% were aggressed during their working hours.

Apparently, there is a biological perspective on violence expressed through aggressiveness understood as inherent to individuals. Charlot (2002) defines aggressiveness as a predisposition biopsychic, which can trigger situations of aggression and violence. Freud (1980) also considers the aggressiveness as instinctual human being, creating competitive situations and / or of violence.

The violence against the teacher , explained from the aggression factor , can be understood as a manifestation of conflict reissued students in the school environment .The assaulted teacher was not intentional target, but the professional who embodies the school standard, continence pointed to by Winnicott (1939/1987a) . To Freller (2001) , aggressive students in school can be children and teenagers who put their hopes in the school , as the school could meet the need for attention or care that these students are seeking, the possibility of expression , the establishment of limits and that the school did not meet expectations .

Therefore, this biological or psychological pulsion as a language for these students. It manifests itself in routine attacks the school institution, its users and their representatives (teachers and employees) and can be characterized, in most cases, and apparently for trivial affronts free, as well as for cases of extreme violence, deteriorating relations in this environment. And thus the biopsychic characteristic aggressiveness stands out in the general content of social representations of teachers, through the news digital media.

In the state of Pernambuco, where the research was developed, the occurrence of 12 (twelve) cases was detected, totalling 42.8% of the cases in the Northeast region. As in other Brazilian regions, physical aggression was also predominant in the cases, with the caveat that 100% of the news presented in Pernambuco involved physical aggression. These aggressions were caused by complaints of students' behaviour in 58.3% of the occurrences and involvement in fights of the students, in the other 41.7%.

The place in which these cases occurred more frequently was the Metropolitan Region of Recife, with 66.6% of the occurrences and the place of most recurrence was once more the Public State School with 58.3% of the cases. When regarded to the aggressors, firstly are the adolescents responsible for 50% of the cases, secondly the children with 33.3%, followed by student's parents with 16.6%.

The violence against the teacher appears as a result of a social and economic breakdown causing physical violence and symbolic violence. In literature, social inequality is also cited as one of the factors that lead to urban violence. According to Wanderley (1999), the contradiction of an unequal society can contribute to manifestations of physical violence and ethics.

The news suggests a direct relationship between violence against the teacher and social inequality. The social need of the students does not bind only extreme poverty, but the more general situations of social inequality that cause exclusion. It should be noted that, according to the news analyzed, social inequality can both trigger aggressive behaviors for the economically deprived, and for students from wealthier classes, which assign values only trade to education.

Therefore, the events of a social nature are configured as guiding aspects of social representations about what causes violence against the teacher. These events can be expressed through social and political inequality, constituted as a reflection of current society (crisis of values, civilization crisis) and through the implications of family breakdown, either through the commodification of education, as through neglect of this educator role inherent in the family institution. These findings corroborate studies that have shown that the roots of violence in school are social violence in the family, and structural conditions such as poverty and social inequality (Guimarães, 1996).

After identifying general characteristics of the violence cases against teachers served by the media, the phenomenon's particularities were analysed grounded by the previously defined categories. It was identified that on the news conveyed by the sites, the violence against teachers binds to predominantly physical aggressions by students or their parents, which happen inside de school walls and especially in the classroom. This aggression is manifested through students' rage or their parents, causing damages to teacher's physical and moral integrity. This features the way the media is representing violence against teachers: physical violence mostly. According to Michaud (1989), the empirical referent of violence is configured to physical violence.

The violence episodes in general elapse from situations in which the student feels offended or injured by the teacher. The most common examples are the student to be reprimanded for behaving bad, failing, getting low grades, etc. In retaliation, this student or its parents aggress physically the teacher, in the classroom, sometimes in front of other members of the school's community.

The reasons for the students to aggress their teachers are varied, it can be explained psychologically (depression, mental illnesses, delusions); by the use of illicit substances (drugs); chemical dependence; drug dealing; domestic violence; bullying, or also for banal reasons, as betting with friends. However, they are mainly triggered by pedagogic situations, as we have indicated previously, such as teachers' complaints, low grades, failing, etc.

Second Debarbieux (2006), Charlot (2002) and Abramovay (2002), in some schools incivilities are incorporated in everyday behavior, in which students and teachers are deeply affected with regard to professional identity and personal dignity. Incivilities are becoming violence. What is considered commonplace which becomes trivialized can lead to feelings of helplessness, of conformism. And even worse, the banal violence can be naturalized in some situations in interpersonal relationships at school. The deterioration of the situation is demonstrated through physical violence as demonstrated in the news analyzed.

Given the analyzed news, actions to combat violence against the teacher will be peculiar to the specificities of each institution . Thus , the specificities of educational institutions and the nature of violent acts , demand by coping strategies that consider the social, economic and cultural characteristics of the population in which the school is located. The involvement of teachers, employees, parents and students seem to be vital to reduce violence in schools, considering the complexity and dynamics of the phenomenon in question .

Conclusions

The research results indicated that violence against the teacher involves elements of different orders, behavioral, psychological, cognitive, affective, among others. The violence against the teacher can express themselves through verbal abuse, but physical violence is prevalent in cases where teachers are assaulted in Brazilian schools. The study on violence against teachers in digital media reveals that social, biological and psychological factors may explain

violence against teachers in the classroom. The analysis of news published on the websites indicate that the social representation of violence against the teacher is physical violence.

It was identified that, in the news, violence is bound to physical aggressions from students and their families that happen inside school walls. It concerns to fury crisis from this group, causing damages to physical and moral integrity of teachers. As digital media is a vehicle that has strong influence on the construction of social representations, this study was a fundamental key to understanding the phenomenon of violence against teachers.

It can be stated, therefore, that the circulating speech, in digital media, on violence against teachers refers to any kind of physical or moral aggression, undertaken by students or their parents inside the school environment, causing physical or moral damages to teachers. The violent acts are triggered from situations that change classroom dynamics, such as assigning low grades, reproving students, among others.

It was also noted that actions to combat violence against teachers are based in the specificities of each institution. Thus, the specificities of school institutions, as well as the nature of the predominant violent acts in the interpersonal relationships in schools, require the development of coping strategies to consider the social, economical and cultural aspects of the population in which the school is located. The involvement of teachers, staff and parents was also identified as essential to reducing violence in schools, given the complexity and dynamic of the phenomenon.

It also emphasized that the characterization placed here steams from a specific and temporal cut for this work, since the definitions of violence vary according to changes in social conjectures. However, this characterization is important for preliminary understanding of how this phenomenon of violence has been portrayed by Brazilian digital media, as it is a media vehicle that has strong influence on the construction of social representations.

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