

School-related bullying
Analysis of bullying preventive programs
and analysis of power from perspective of social philosophy
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Viktorija Aizkalna
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Mari-Anne Okkolin



JYVÄSKYLÄN YLIOPISTO

ABSTRACT

Author: Viktorija Aizkalna	
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<p>Abstract: The present thesis is dedicated to a problem of school-related bullying. Bullying is a global problem that affect big number of students, and has serious short- and long-term consequences. Bullying can be manifested in various forms: it can be physical, emotional, and lately also cyber-bullying. Being a complex phenomenon, bullying can be difficult to identify, to intervene or prevent. It originates from power imbalance in a social group, and can target anyone who qualifies as "different" in any way. In order to provide analysis of bullying, in the present paper are presented definitions and analysis of the phenomenon of bullying as well global statistics of bullying across the countries in order to understand the scale of the problem and get deeper knowledge of the phenomenon of bullying to be able to prevent it more effectively. Since power is complex metaphysical concept that can not be easily defined, analysis of phenomenon is presented in the thesis. The last part of the present thesis is dedicated to analysis of two stories from former bullying victims. Both respondents who shared their experience are adults and has been conscious decision: since traumatizing experience has taken place over a decade or two ago, both respondents have had opportunity to reflect on the experience, and also can share what long-term effects they have experienced due to bullying. From the perspective of Educational Leadership, the subject of prevention of bullying is important since it affects the whole school environment. As school leaders, it is in principals' competence and power to encourage prevention of bullying, to create positive learning environment to educate generations of emotionally and academically intelligent young people.</p>	
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Introduction: the key concepts and theories

The present thesis is dedicated to a problem of school-related bullying. Bullying is a global problem that affect big number of students, and has serious short- and long-term consequences. Bullying can be manifested in various forms: it can be physical, emotional, and lately also cyber-bullying. Being a complex phenomenon, bullying can be difficult to identify, to intervene or prevent. It originates from power imbalance in a social group, and can target anyone who qualifies as “different” in any way. Therefore, to understand causes of bullying and its mechanisms, first step for a researcher is to clarify how to define phenomenon of power and the role it has in social groups, in particular in schools, and how it affects dynamics of relationships between involved parties.

In order to provide analysis of bullying, in the present paper in chapters of part **1.1.** are presented definitions and analysis of the phenomenon of bullying as well global statistics of bullying across the countries in order to understand the scale of the problem and get deeper knowledge of the phenomenon of bullying to be able to prevent it more effectively. As mentioned above, bullying originates in power imbalance in a social group. Since power is complex metaphysical concept that can not be easily defined, analysis of phenomenon is presented in chapters of part **1.2.** For the purpose of the present research, phenomenon of power was approached from philosophical view of french philosopher Michel Foucault. The choice was made since Foucault successfully analyzed power relations in society, and gives good insights on importance of self-knowledge and self-care. Both self-knowledge and self-care can be utilized in prevention and intervention of bullying. Developing deep self-knowledge, an individual is capable of better understanding of self and others, and can successfully handle complex and potentially harmful situations.

Nowadays exist several preventive programs to intervene and prevent bullying. In the present paper an overview of one of the Finnish preventive programs KiVa. The key idea of the KiVa program is engage in bullying preventive and intervening actions both

students and teachers. It does not involve only those students who directly are involved in an act of bullying, but also peers and so called bystanders: students who may not actively support nor intervene bullying. Bystanders have a big role in an act of bullying, since their encouragement implies approval of the actions and can lead to more extensive harmful behavior against a victim, which results in heavy trauma, both physical and psychological for a victim. Even their inaction can have similar consequences: not receiving any support from their peers, victims can feel rejected and lose bonds to their peers that leads to long-term harmful consequences.

The last part of the present thesis is dedicated to analysis of two stories from former bullying victims. Both respondents who shared their experience are adults and has been conscious decision: since traumatizing experience has taken place over a decade or two ago, both respondents have had opportunity to reflect on the experience, and also can share what long-term effects they have experienced due to bullying. They have different backgrounds, age, gender and country of origin, but they share traumatizing experiences that had affected them and still have effect on their lives by preventing them to create meaningful bonds with other people and to trust others. Stories they have shared are deeply personal and emotional. As a researcher, I have chosen this approach to analyze bullying both from academical, philosophical perspective, as well as to see myself and present in my finding the effect it has on the victims even through the time. It is importance to know since when addressing the matter of bullying, feelings of victims should be addressed. Also, in my opinion, using such stories from former victims who and the effect bullying still has on them can trigger deep emotions in youth that would help them comprehend the scale of damage that can be done to an individuals' life by careless, harmful behavior.

From the perspective of Educational Leadership, the subject of prevention of bullying is important since it affects the whole school environment. As school leaders, it is in principals' competence and power to encourage prevention of bullying, to create positive learning environment to educate generations of emotionally and academically intelligent young people. In both stories, presented in the last part of the present thesis,

respondents emphasized that educators did not take enough actions to prevent nor intervene with bullying in the described situations, which created opportunity for bullying to escalate further. Therefore, it is of high importance for the leaders and educators in general to understand importance and potential harm that bullying can cause to young individuals, and to be capable to prevent and intervene, as well as provide necessary support to the victims to ensure that they can handle the trauma in efficient way that would not cause serious damage in their future life.

The thesis consists of two main parts. In part one the theoretical background is presented that includes analysis of the phenomenon of bullying, global statistics of bullying, analysis of the phenomenon of power in philosophical theories of Michel Foucault. In part two is presented analysis of two stories of former bullying victims. The thesis also includes Introduction, Table of content, Conclusions, References, and Appendix where the transcript of both interviews is presented.

1. Bullying: overview

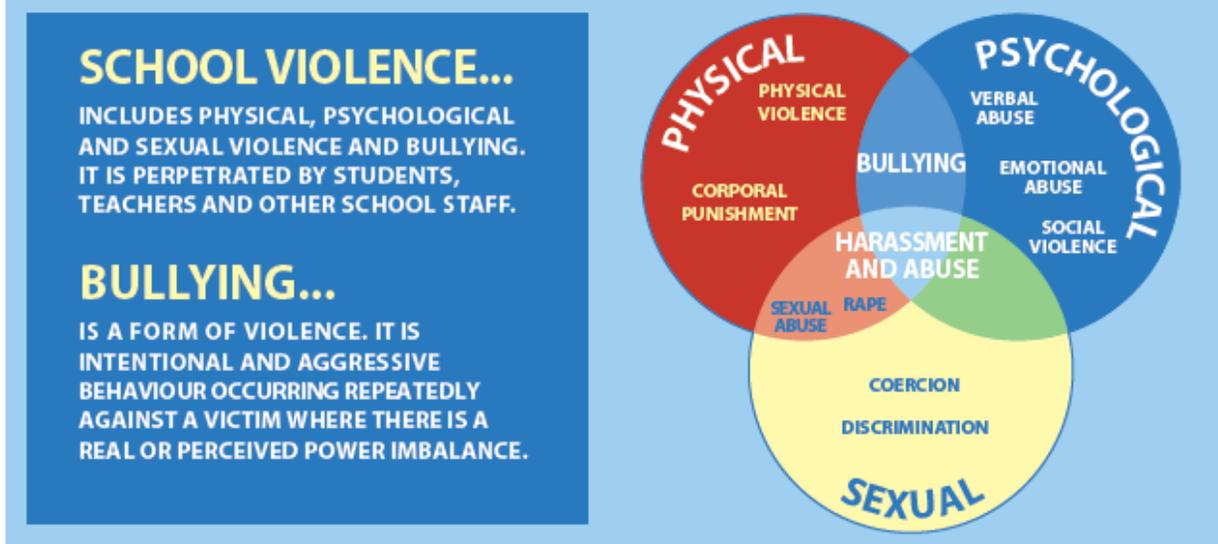
1.1 Characteristics, types of bullying

Bullying is the problem that many schools across the world encounter. Literature identifies behaviors as bullying when it meets following “three criteria of intention, repetitiveness, and imbalance of power”. (Olweus, D., 2009, p.11). Or, using a definition of bullying used in UNESCO Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) “School Violence and Bullying: Global Status Report”: “[b]ullying constitutes a pattern of behavior rather than isolated incidents, and it often gets worse if it is unchallenged. It can be defined as intentional and aggressive behavior occurring repeatedly against a victim where there is a real or perceived power imbalance and where the victims feel vulnerable and powerless to defend themselves.” (School Violence and Bullying: Global Status Report, UNESCO, 2017, p.15). According to the analyzed data, gathered from bullied students’ reports, victims are bullied by: “a small group of two or three students (Olweus & Solberg, 1998), often with a negative leader”. (Olweus, 2009, p.10). Based on expanded questionnaire by Olweus, it can be stated that a student is bullied: “when another student, or several other students,

- say mean and hurtful things or make fun of him or her or call him or her mean and hurtful names;
- completely ignore or exclude him or her from their group of friends or leave him or her out of things on purpose;
- hit, kick, push, shove around or lock him or her inside a room;
- tell lies or spread false rumors about him or her or send mean notes and try to make other students dislike him or her;
- and other hurtful things like that” (Olweus, 2009, p.12).

From aforementioned it can be concluded that there are two main types of bullying that present themselves in face-to-face encounters: physical and psychological bullying.

WHAT IS SCHOOL VIOLENCE AND BULLYING?



(Figure 1, bullying. *School Violence and Bullying: Global Status Report, UNESCO, 2017, p.15*)

According to statistics, different types of bullying vary with age. Physical bullying is more typical for students of primary school, but psychological bullying, and in recent years cyberbullying, are more common in secondary school (School Violence and Bullying: Global Status Report, UNESCO, 2017, p.19). According to Faye Mishna's research, younger children are more likely: "to bully overtly in order to establish social status. Since peer hierarchies are typically formed among older children, overt bullying may no longer be needed or even useful. (Bernstein&Watson, 1997). [...] It appears that children advance their social status by bullying more vulnerable groups (Veenstra et al., 2007). [...] [D]irect bullying is typically associated with attaining instrumental goals valued by younger age groups whereas indirect aggression tends to be associated with relational goals, which older youth value" (Mishna, 2012, p.18). Considering aforementioned, power imbalance presents itself in youth from an early age. At first youth uses it in direct, physical way, to achieve desired goals in establishing themselves in a peer hierarchy. In time, when personality develops, type of bullying tends to change to indirect, psychological bullying. Strongest peers who take a position high in hierarchy have a better chance for establishing desired relationships and have respect due to their position in a peer group: "in grades six to eight who acknowledged bullying others reported being more advanced in their pubertal development, more likely to be

involved romantically, and more apt to disclose verbal and physical aggression in their romantic relationships than students who did not report bullying others (Connolly, Pepler, Craig & Tardash, 2000)” (Mishna, 2012, p.19).

Cyberbullying is another type of bullying that has become wide-spread due to development of technology in past decades. “Cyberbullying involves posting or sending electronic messages, including text, pictures or videos, aimed at harassing, threatening or targeting another person via a variety of media and social platforms such as online social networks, chat rooms, blogs, instant messaging and text messaging. Cyberbullying may include spreading rumors, posting false information, hurtful messages, embarrassing comments or photos, or excluding someone from online networks or other communications. It allows perpetrators to remain anonymous, can affect the victim at any hour and on any day, and messages and images can quickly reach a very wide audience.” (School Violence and Bullying: Global Status Report, UNESCO, 2017, p.15). However, in the present paper the focus is on face-to-face bullying. Despite of the fact that cyberbullying does possess similar traits, methods and effect on a victim, in addition it tackles issues of anonymity to enhance sense of impunity, emotional detachment from a victim, and many others that demand separate research.

Another issue that complicated intervention when bullying occurs is lack of communication between victims and responsible adults. In despite of some victims reporting abuse, many feel reluctant about sharing their problems for various reasons: “[...] including fear of retaliation by those who bully them, shame, and the belief that adults cannot help” (Mishna, 2015, p.20). In interviews presented in part 2 issue of not reporting bullying is explored in details: victims indeed feel that adults are unable to provide necessary support, have been in a situation when teachers have explicitly stated that children have to learn to stand for themselves, or even encouraged bullied by setting an example of harmful behavior targeting certain students with verbal abuse and

humiliation. Depending on a situation in a family, victims can be reluctant in sharing the problems they are facing with their parents. They may feel guilty for upsetting parents with their problems, and be a burden.

In this study the main focus is on face-to-face, emotional and physical bullying. Both respondents who were interviewed for the purpose of this study, have been bullying victims in schools, and in both cases it has been direct bullying, and emotional bullying.

1.2 International statistics of school-related bullying

Bullying, according to a UNESCO report, is a global problem. Lower are presented global statistics on rates of bullying in different regions around the globe:

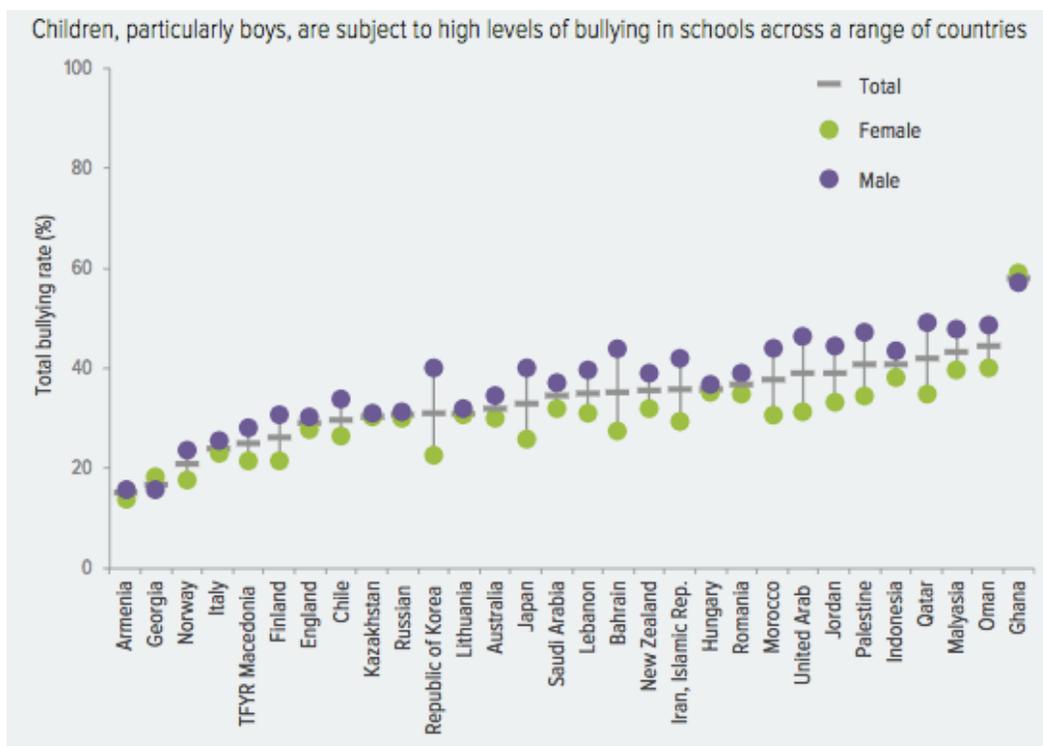
- “ [...]Data collected by various surveys from 106 countries showed that the proportion of adolescents aged 13-15 who say they have recently experienced bullying ranged from 7% in Tajikistan to 74% in Samoa. In 14 of the 67 low- to middle-income countries with available data, more than half of this age group said they had recently experienced bullying.
- A study compiling datasets between 2003 and 2006 from 19 low- and middle-income countries from the WHO GSHS found that 34% of students aged 11-13 reported being bullied in the previous month and 8% reported daily bullying.
- Research conducted between 2003 and 2005 in a number of developing countries for the GSHS found a wide variation in national experiences: in China, 17% of girls and 23% of boys aged 13-15 reported having been bullied in the previous 30 days but in Zambia these figures were 67% for girls and 63% for boys.
- Information from European countries suggests a similarly wide variation with 15% of girls and boys in Sweden aged 11, 13 and 15 reporting having been bullied within the past couple of months, but around 65% of girls and boys reporting this in Lithuania.

- During the 2007-2008 school year in the USA, 32% of students between the ages of 12 and 18 reported being bullied. Of these students, 21% said they were bullied once or twice a month; 10% reported being bullied once or twice a week; and 7% indicated that they were bullied daily. Nearly 9% reported being physically injured as a result of bullying.
- In a UNESCO study in 2006 in 16 Latin American and Caribbean countries, based on data from around 91,000 students aged 10-14, 51% overall reported experiencing some type of bullying in the last month, with national figures ranging from 13% in Cuba to 63% in Colombia. Being robbed was the most commonly reported experience, followed by being insulted or threatened.
- In a 2011 study in France carried out by the International Observatory on Violence in Schools based on a national survey of 12,326 9-11 year olds, around 32% reported that they were sometimes victims of verbal bullying and 35% that they were sometimes victims of physical violence at school, in both cases mostly from other students.
- The Australian Covert Bullying Prevalence Survey in 2007, a national survey of students between aged 9 and 15 years, found that 27% reported experiencing frequent bullying, while 9% admitted to bullying others.
- The same 2015 survey of youth in grades 9-12 in the USA mentioned above found that 20.2% reported being bullied on school property and 15.5% reported being bullied electronically during the 12 months before the survey.
- The UN World Report on Violence against Children 2006 notes that in a survey in Laos, 98% of girls and 100% of boys reported that they had witnessed bullying in school and the victims were mainly girls or ethnic minorities.
- In a survey in Kenya of Nairobi public schools, between 63% and 82% of students reported various types of bullying, while a survey in South Africa found that more than half of respondents had experienced bullying once or twice in the last

month” (School Violence and Bullying: Global Status Report, UNESCO, 2017, p. 21-22).

Global statistic from across the globe serves as an illustration of the scale of the problem of bullying. Bullying is not local program, and can not be connected to one geographical region, nation, religion, gender and etc. As discussed further in details, bullying originates from power imbalance in social groups, and all social groups engage in power relations to different extent. Therefore, since the problem is global and manifests itself across the nations, it is crucial to get better understanding of power and ways to help youngsters to learn to have a balance in power relations with others. Below, in chapter 1.2.4. **Foucault on self-care and self-knowledge** it is discussed further how self-knowledge and self-care can lead to decrease of harmful behaviors towards self and others.

Also in another UNESCO report is presented data on bullying statistics among genders. According to the statistics, boys are more exposed to becoming a bullying victim.



(Figure 2, international scale of bullying rate in schools among secondary school students.

“TIMSS 2011, grade 8. Self-reported victimization by bullying include one or more of the following acts: (1) made fun of (2) left out of games, (3) others spread lies (4) others steal from me (5) hurt by other students (6) forced to do something by other students.

GMR team calculations based on 2011 TIMSS data”. School-related gender-based violence is preventing the achievement of quality education for all, 2015, p.6).

Youth of both genders are involved in bullying, and are experiencing approximately similar rate of victimization. However, as discussed above, youth tends to use different types of bullying based on age, and also on gender, and it: “appeared to be linked to values. Since friendships are central for girls the goal is to damage relationships, for which indirect bullying, such as relational, reputational, or psychological, is most effective. In contrast, establishing dominance is most important for boys, for which overt aggression most effectively attains the goal (Craig&Pepler, 2007; Crick&Dodge, 1996). [...] Bullying was associated with popularity and sexuality of boys and girls. Boys tended to use physical force toward other boys as a way of being seen as strong and popular and of increasing their desirability. Girls, in contrast, used indirect bullying such as gossip, rumors, and exclusion as a way of minimizing competition with other girls in order to heighten their sex appeal” (Mishna, 2015, p.19). Thus it can be concluded that by reaching puberty, sexuality becomes one of the strongest motives for gaining more power and taking a position of power in a hierarchy.

Based on the evidence presented in the afore listed statistics, it is safe to claim that the problem of bullying is global, spreads across the countries and cultures, and can be connected to basic motivation: reaching position of power among peers. One of the dominant goals for older youth can be considered sexuality. Therefore it would be wrong to assume that use of power, and power imbalance is characteristically applicable to a certain nation or race – it is rooted in a very human nature. Higher level of direct bullying among boys can be explained from cultural-historical perspective that for men

to prove their worth and entitlement to take a better position in a society, they had to use physical strength to get in a position of power. Girls, on the other hand, are more prone to use soft power, and choose indirect, psychological bullying, as it is more effective in reaching their goals.

1.3 Vulnerable groups

Vulnerable groups are the groups that are more exposed to risks of becoming a bullying victim. Any child or adolescent is exposed to that risk, belonging to a certain group can increase the risk because of socioeconomic factor, disabilities, physical appearance, ethnicity, gender, cultural differences. “Children who are chronically victimized are often described as likely to be shy, smaller, weaker, more anxious, insecure and impulsive, and less empathetic, as well as less popular and more isolated (Bernstein & Watson, 1997; Bollmer, Harris & Milich, 2006; Craig & Pepler, 2007; Owens, Shute, & Slee, 2000). Some children who are bullied are depicted as acting in ways considered to be irritating, such as being disruptive (Miller, Beane, & Kraus, 1998; Olweus, 1993; P. K. Smith, 1991). Unfortunately, some adults and peers may view these children as provoking the aggressor and therefore their own victimization (Owens et.al., 2000)” (Mishna, 2015, p.19). By blaming a victim for being a target for harmful behaviors one can make an attempt of not taking responsibility for harmful actions against an individual. As rational being, people can rationalize and find an explanation to any kinds of actions, however it can not be used in order to escape responsibility for actions and their consequences.

According to UNESCO School Violence and Bullying: Global Status Report, 2017 data: “In the 2016 [...] opinion poll on the experience of bullying to which 100,000 young people in 18 countries responded, among those who had experienced bullying, 25% reported that they had been bullied because of their physical appearance, 25% because of their gender or sexual orientation and 25% because of their ethnicity or national origin. [...] Children and adolescents who are socially and economically

disadvantaged often face increased stress, discrimination and denigration in school. Poverty can contribute to a lack of self-esteem, and those who are victims of bullying, humiliation and abuse may feel powerless to speak out for fear that they will not be believed or that they will be blamed for having caused the incidents of violence” (p.17). Based on this data, it can be concluded that factors that make a person feel different, also make them feel more vulnerable and unable to defend themselves in case of being targeted by bullies. Being a part of disadvantageous group diminishes sense of self-worth, and low self-esteem puts a person in a vulnerable position from various points: they are more likely to be targeted by bullies, because they are less likely do defend themselves, and from another side, they may not try to defend themselves because they do not want to attract additional attention to avoid risk of taking a blame for the situation, as mentioned above, but also having low self-esteem may make them feel that such attitude is “normal”, especially if these individuals experience violence outside school as well in school. However, this approach to dealing with bullying is highly harmful to person’s wellbeing, both emotional and physical, and it will be discussed further in part 2 of the present thesis.

Gender and sexuality is another common cause for bullying. Historically, power gap between genders has been disproportionately large. With raise of feminism, over the last century a gap seem to decrease. However, many people of both genders still face discrimination due to their gender and/or sexuality. Gender-based bullying is grounded in power imbalance between genders that leads to stereotypical, often misleading attitude towards sexuality, and lack of tolerance. “Children and adolescents whose sexual orientation, gender identity or expression does not conform to traditional gender norms are also at increased risk of school violence and bullying. This is a specific type of gender-based violence that is perpetrated as a result of gender norms and unspoken, unconscious or hidden attitudes that promote gender stereotypes. For example, in some contexts, boys may be taunted about their lack of masculinity or girls about their lack of femininity” (Mishna, 2015, p.18). Thus it can be concluded that bullying is based on

vague stereotypes about “traditional” gender norms that are not supported by any objective arguments, reasons or empirical data. Terms like “femininity” and “masculinity” do not have explicit definitions, and are defined through assumptions of general knowledge and “norms” associated with male and female “traditional” behavior and societal expectations¹

1.4. Bullies and peer relations

Bullying usually involves three parties: bully (usually a group of two or three individuals with a negative leader), a victim, and bystanders (Olweus, 2009, p.14). Bullies often are described as more impulsive, stronger than their peers, assertive. Even though some researches suggested that bullies have lower self-esteem than their peers who do not participate in bullying: “other findings indicate that children who bully do not have poor self-esteem (Olweus, 1993). Indeed, children who use physiological bullying may have confidence and self-esteem and may justify their behavior by negatively labeling those they victimize, which is a way of minimizing the impact of their aggression and of blaming the very children they victimize (Brendtro, 2001)” (Mishna, 2015, p.20). As was mentioned earlier in the present thesis, bullies tend to rationalize their behavior using personal traits of a victimized peer as an excuse to their aggression towards them. Thus they morally free themselves of a responsibility regarding the consequences, but can utilize the results of their harmful behavior for their own benefit.

Role of bystanders can't be underestimated, as they play a key role in bullying, as they are put in a position between bullies and a victim, and can either encourage violence by supporting bullying by expressing approval and amusement, or by their

¹ In Merriam-Webster online dictionary, femininity is defined as “the quality or nature of the female sex”, and masculinity – as “having qualities appropriate to or usually associated with a man”. Thus, using these terms, speakers force onto a listener their assumptions of qualities that are supposed to be appropriate or natural for the genders based on their personal beliefs, and it can not be treated as a logical, nor consistent argument.

inaction; or they can interrupt bullying by intervening on behalf of a victim, and reporting an incident to school staff. “Research that entails videotaping students on the playground and in classrooms found that in both locations peers were involved in some role in 85 percent of the bullying episodes (Atlas & Pepler, 1998; Craig & Pepler, 1997; O’Connell et.al., 1999). Peers’ role include observing, actively participating in the bullying, or intervening. Although most children report that they are against bullying and express that they support the victimized child, peers are reluctant to actually assist the child who is bullied (O’Connell et al., 1999; Stevens, Van Oost, & De Bourdeauhuij, 2000). The discrepancy between children’s statements and their actions can be partly attributed to self-preservation and the fear of retaliation and difficulties inherent in challenging peer dynamics and the power of the child who bullies (O’Connell et al., 1999; Salmivalli, 1999).

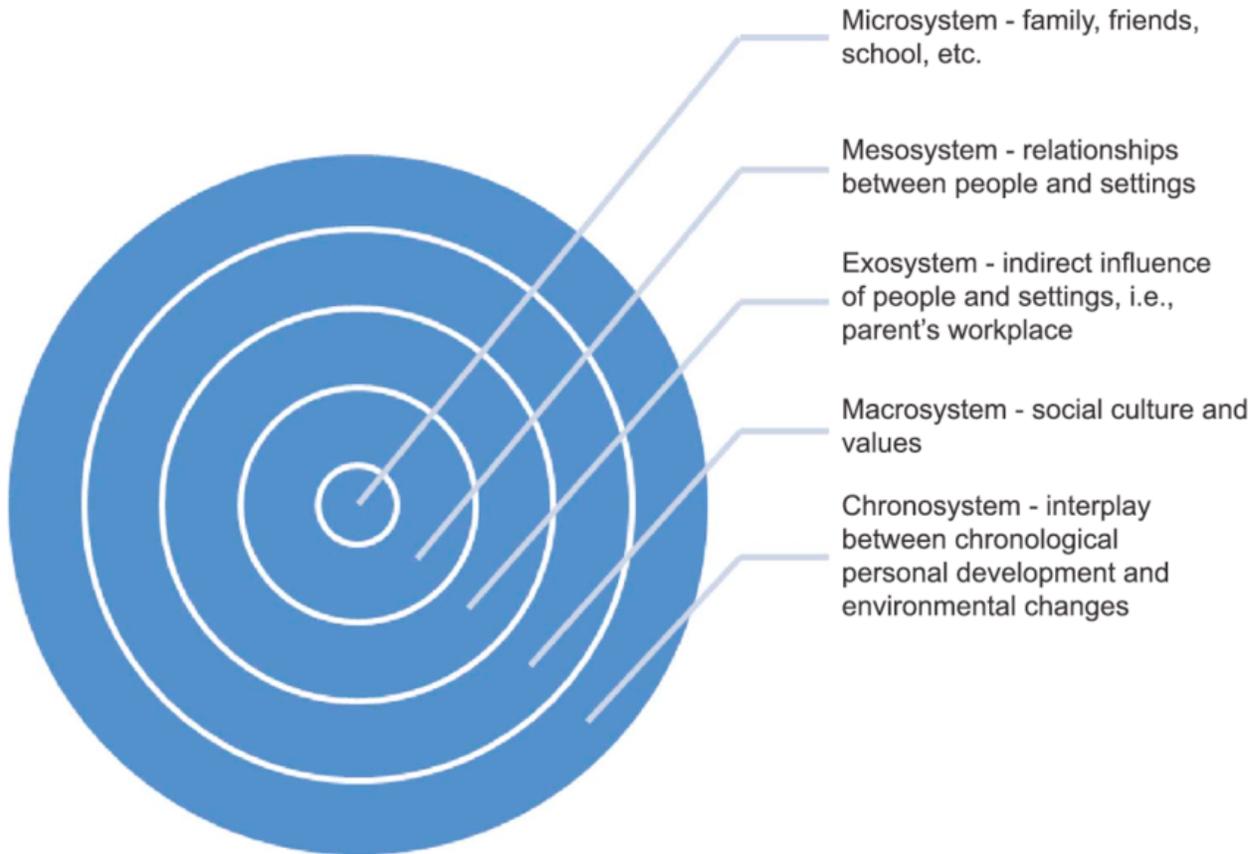
Children who bully are able to establish the norms within a peer group, for example the standards for appearance and beliefs (Guerra et al., 2011)” (Mishna, 2015, p.20). From afore stated can be concluded that bystanders are reluctant in interfering due to fear of becoming a victim or being excluded from a group. Negative leader takes a position of high power and respect (or fear) and sets norms of behavior and beliefs for the rest of the group. Each peer takes their own position, and openly opposing the leader can harm their status and expose them to violence, especially if the rest of the group does not support them in opposition. Lack of peer support, or especially in cases when peers support bullies, increases feelings of helplessness and betrayal. This problem is explored in a part 2 of the present thesis.

Significant role in bullying belongs to siblings, as bullying among siblings is common phenomenon, even though for a long time it has been dismissed and neglected as a subject for a research. For the present thesis it is significant to mention bullying among siblings, considering that one of the research subjects reported that he has been bullied by his sibling (Subject 1). According to previous researches: “30 percent of children reported being often bullied by their siblings and that 41 percent admitted to

often bully their siblings. Children who both bully others and who are bullied were much more likely to be both victimized by and to bully their siblings (Duncan, 1999).” (Mishna, 2015, p.23, 24). Some researchers connect this behavior to child’s relationship with parents, when parents do not express enough affection and pay enough attention to a child. (Mishna, 2015, p.24). Based on the data gathered from interviews conducted for this research’s purpose, it is challenging to confirm or contradict. Both subjects indeed did not include their parents into a problem solving process, or did not share their problem with being a victim at all, regardless of who was bullying them. However, it does not give enough evidence for coming to any kind of conclusions regarding their relationship with parents.

From aforementioned it can be deducted that there not one, but many aspects of victim’s living environment that are involved in a process. As a subject does not live in isolation, when a certain event appears, it usually affects and/or engages multiple areas of one’s life. It was well explained by Bronfenbrenner in a theory of ecological system (1979) which can be used as a framework when explaining complex social phenomenas, including bullying. Appealing to one level of ecological system, a responsible educator should appeal and engage other relevant levels. “For instance, after referral of a family due to a child’s victimization by peers, a practitioner may determine that work with the parents and child is needed to improve their communication and enable the child to assert himself to herself” (Mishna, 2015b, p.103). Disregarding other levels, or to use Mishna’s terminology, variables, an educator risks to miss important issues that lead to bullying or affect victim negatively (for example, bullying by siblings, exclusion from peer a group, cyberbullying, and etc).

In the present thesis, ecological system and an environment of an individual is not of a main focus of a research, but on power relationships between bully and victims. However, it does not disregard importance of the ecosystem. In order to understand



(Figure 3, Ecological Systems Context, (adapted Bronfenbrenner, 1979) (Mishna, 2015, p.25)

nature of harmful behavior that manifests itself in bullying, it is necessary to take into consideration all levels of individual's ecosystem: individual factors (individual traits, gender, race, sexual orientation, emotional and

psychological strength, and etc.), family, peer relations, cultural and societal norms in term of self-knowledge, relationship between self and the others. Through learning individual's attitude towards self, level of self-care and understanding of self in respect of others, it can allow educators to trace whether one has predisposition to become a bully, or whether some of the peers are more vulnerable and exposed to victimization, and to use this knowledge to prevent possible bullying.

According to a research results summarized by Faye Mishna: “[f]actors that foster victimization in schools include a lack of clear rules on aggression, low principal involvement with students, weak staff cohesion, minimal teacher and student involvement in decision making, and inadequate supervision” (2015, p.24). Thus, also conducting a research from a perspective of leadership, it is crucial for a positive school environment to understand characteristics and main triggers of bullying to be able to prevent it or interfere at early stages, taking into consideration the fact that children often do not report bullying to adults, it is essential for educators to have deeper knowledge about children and teen behavior to identify worrying signs and change of a dynamic in a peer group.

1.1.5. Locations of bullying

In the present thesis the subject of research is school-related bullying, however, it would be wrong to assume that school-related bullying stays within school territory. School related bullying can occur in different educational and social settings. According to existing research, at a school territory, bullying is: “more likely to occur in places such as toilets, changing rooms, corridors and other locations where children and adolescents are less easily seen or supervised by teachers and other school staff” (School Violence and Bullying: Global Status Report, UNESCO, 2017, p.19). From that, it can be noticed that perpetrators choose locations where their actions are most likely to be unnoticed and unpunished. However, acts of bullying are not limited to listed locations. As is described in part 2, both subjects were bullied outside school by their school mates. In past recent years, bullying has also expanded to a cyberspace (cyberbullying). Considering that bullying in certain cases take place outside school, it is harder to control, prevent or intervene with the situation. Also, “[b]ased on the results of the National Survey of Children’s Exposure to Violence in the USA, conducted in 2008, “Of those who reported any direct victimization, 64.5% reported more than one type. A significant number of children reported high levels of exposure to different types

of violence in the past year: more than 10% reported five or more direct exposures to different types of violence” (School Violence and Bullying: Global Status Report, UNESCO, 2017, p.20). In the same report, it is stated that adolescent girls are likely to experience cyberbullying with sexual nature. Thus it is highly important to work towards a system that would appeal to each individual on a personal level, and not to force individuals onto individuals idea of negative effects of bullying and its wrongness, but rather ask *what* triggers violent behavior towards certain individual, and *how* it makes them feel both at the moment of bullying and its long-term effects. Therefore, in the present research a lot of attention is towards self-care, self-knowledge, and relation to the other.

In the present research the focus is not on finding a way of preventing bullying through any system that would appeal to potential bullies, bystanders, or victims, but through exploring a concepts of self-care and self-knowledge to encourage taking a...

As aforesaid, when becoming a victim of bullying, for a student it is hard to defend him-/herself. Number of studies show, that victims often express signs of anxiety, depression, have negative self-view, are socially isolated and do not process aggressive traits, have less control over the situation and seek for more social support, compared to other groups (Olweus, 2009, p.14). However, it is not an abstract, ungrounded imbalance, but is rooted in the perception of self as such, and perception of *self* in relation to *the other*. Thus, studying a social phenomena of aggressive behavior, it is crucial to explore philosophical theories on self-perception, self-knowledge and relation to the other. For this purpose, in the present paper theory of three philosophers: Michel Foucault, Martin Heidegger, Karl Jaspers on a matter of the self - the other relations are explored.

People are social beings, have a need of companionship and sense of belonging. However, the role of *the Other* in individual’s life is not one of a distraction and self-verification through a feeling of being needed. According to the French philosopher

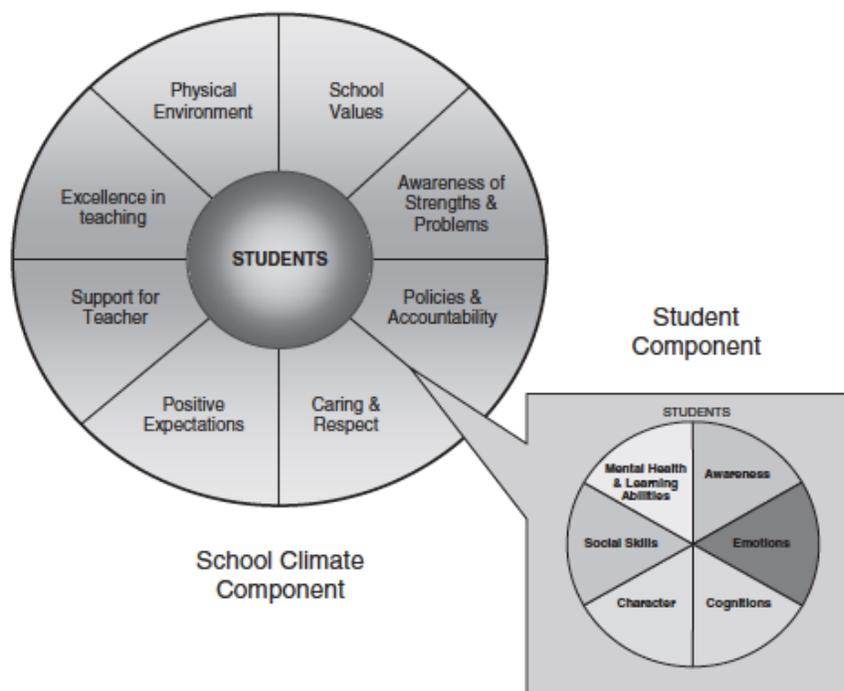
Jean-Paul Sartre, *the Other* (Heidegger, “Being and nothingness”, 1993) can be understood as an out-itself, that is distant and even hostile for *I*. *The Other* puts in the state of shame, has affection on in-itself identity, however, *I* still strives for verification of own value from *The Other*. When talking about romantic relationship, what one seeks from the loved one, is verification of own value by their affection, and desire to be accepted – *owned*, but not in the freedom-limiting sense, but rather in term of acknowledgement of own importance according to *the Others*’ need for them. Thus, can see that role of *the Other* is vital only in the sense of self-verification, not survival or *being human*.

German existentialist, Martin Heidegger, claims that an individual can achieve pure self-knowledge and understand self exclusively in solitude. Surrounded by others, an individual is being distracted by constant communication, talks, activities, and easily loses connection with true self. Heidegger emphasizes the meaning of existential boredom, achieved in solitude, where beingness is susceptible to an individual, and they can see own place in a pattern of existence. Standing for what he preached, Heidegger, being a public person, spent significant amount of time in a distant location, in solitude of his cabin, avoiding any kind of interaction for longer stretches of time. There he was able to dedicate his time to reflecting upon serious matters of being, and writing his papers.

On the other hand, another German thinker and Heidegger’s colleague, Karl Jaspers, has claimed that only by interacting with others the one can achieve full self-understanding and get a purpose in life, by serving others. It does not mean that Jaspers’ idea contradicts Heidegger’s views. Heidegger’s understanding of Being, or using his terminology, “Dasein”, which means to be *there, in* the world. What Heidegger stood for, was an individuals’ ability to understand the self and find a meaning of being in the world by withdrawing self from it. Based on aforementioned, the world where an individual *is*, is an independent from an individual, is the place an individual is born into (or, talking in Heideggerian terms, *thrown into* (Heidegger, 1978) regardless her (pronoun is used in gender-neutral sense) desires. The great struggle is to understand

own purpose and place *in* the world, among things and the others. Thus, the world is not welcoming, nor nourishing for the one, but a hostile, strange place to adapt into. Society is a mass of individuals, struggling to adapt in the world. They, thrown into the place, put an effort to build a comfortable environment for own existence, to build a bond to the place and the others. This connection to the others is, however, not something makes them human, or is sacral, but vital in a very practical and trivial way. Humans create a social circle they feel good in, and flee from connections that are not pleasant or is harmful. Being in the world, an individual chooses what is the best for her in the current moment (the rightness and truth of the decision is made only in the first person, present time terms, and is not universal for all times). The decisions an individual makes should ensure a better life in the world, even if in long-term they may not bring expected results, still, the decisions can not be considered as bad, considering that an individual has made them based on existing data in the particular present situation, based on which it was considered to be the best possible decision. Thus, it can be said that in the world, an individual is struggling to find *own* way to reach mindful and satisfactory existence. The role of *the other* is to ensure safety, reproduction and self-validation for an individual, which makes a society a unit, consisted of plurality of individuals, united for self-benefit.

Harmful, aggressive, repeated behavior against the chosen target, bullying usually appears on a ground of inequalities: physical strength, social status, appearance, or can be targeting impairment, disability. However, studies have shown, that gender does not have a significant role in bullying. Despite the stereotype of boys being more aggressive, evidence shows that: “gender differences in aggression are minimal (or nonexistent) when both physical and relational forms of aggression are considered” (Crick et.al., 1999, p.19, quoted by Olweus, 2009, p.23). However, there is certain difference in ways of bullying, used by boys and girls: female groups more often choose non-physical abuse, versus physical bullying in male groups (Olweus, 2009, p. 26).



*(Figure 4, School Social Competence Development and Bullying Prevention Model
(Orpinas & Horne, 2006)*

In previous paragraphs, types and features of bullying were discussed, as well as personality traits of bully-victim. However, studying the phenomena of bullying, important is to identify at least some of the motives for bullying. In their article “Creating a positive school climate and developing social competence”, Pamela Orpinas and Arthur M. Horne highlight four motives: “attention, revenge, power or inadequacy” (2009, p.49). As aforementioned, self-identity and recognition of value of another is to be considered as a key in personal development, and affects a person, and a social group one belongs to. Possessing the ability to acknowledge the value of the other offers capacity to have a healthy interaction with other members of a social group. Class room, being a small social group, requires this ability for personal and academical benefit of the members. Positive climate is: “inviting, and students and teachers feel energized to perform at their best. [...] increase[s] the sense of connectedness to peers and belonging to the school, and students will perform better academically; thus, reducing the likelihood of aggressive behaviors” (Orpinas, Horne, 2009, p. 49). To

create such environment, authors refer to the Social Competence Development model, presented below, and distinguish eight critical areas that support creation of a positive school climate:

- “excellence in teaching;
- school values;
- awareness of strengths and problems;
- policies and accountability;
- caring and respect;
- positive expectations;
- teacher support;
- physical environment characteristics.” (Orpinas, Horne, 2009, p.50)

To encourage students and to create positive, safe and trustful environment, *caring and respect* are crucial. In the classroom, activities that promote cooperation and embrace meaningful discussions and inclusion of students into decision making processes can be helpful. Decreasing sense of competitiveness and celebrating diversity and appreciation of different social, racial, sexual groups in a classroom, and avoiding inappropriate and aggressive behavior, such as shouting or use of strong, emotional vocabulary, create environment where students grow to respect a teacher and each other (Orpinas, Horne, 2009, p.52).

Studying the problem of bullying in a class is very important because it is directly connected to children emotional and physical well-being, and is considered to be the major threat to children’s mental well-being. “In 2000 about one fourth of 13 year-old boys and girls reported being bullied at least once during the previous months. In 2005 12 % of students in 8th or 9th grade in school had moderate or serious depression” (Mental Health Briefing Sheets, 2015). Victims of bullying stand a risk to be traumatized for life, having low self-esteem, and various issues in their social and professional life. Being in distress can demotivate children to study, which has long-

term negative effects on their future life. Thus, it is important to study phenomenon of bullying in order to get better understanding of it to be able to develop effective intervention systems that are capable to protect vulnerable parties in case if bullying still appears. However, a better case is prevention of bullying on a conscious level, by encouraging youngsters to come to realization of possible consequences of harmful behaviors, to make them aware of long-lasting effects on victim in forms of emotional trauma of various degree.

1.1.6. Conclusions about a phenomenon of bullying

Bullying is a complex and multi-leveled phenomenon. Bullying is a harmful behavior that leads to long-term negative effects. By engaging or initiating act of bullying: “compromises their [victim’s]² development and threatens the core value of the fundamental human right of protection from abuse” (Mishna, 2015, p.24). Bullying leads to multiple, long-last effects that affect victims’ ability to adapt in society, create meaningful relationships. Besides affecting social skills, bullying has a strong effect on individuals’ mental health. It affects self-esteem, creates trust issues, depression, and may lead to a substance abuse (Subject 1 in interviews). For educators, essential is to dispose of misconceptions regarding bullying: bullies do not necessary lack social skills, but rather can have good social skills, intellectually and logically advanced in order to take and keep the position of power in a peer group. Bullying is based on power imbalance, when one peer in a social group has a position of power where they can influence their peers and shape norm of behavior in a group, in case of abuse of the power, they can be corrupted by the power and use it for negative cause, for example to harm, exclude, or otherwise humiliate a certain peer. Reasons for bullying vary from gender/race/nationality/religion based, to a personality based bullying. Peers can use child’s personality traits as an excuse for their harmful behavior against him or her,

² Present research’s author’s note.

channel societal prejudice, or in case of bystanders – support their negative leader in an act of bullying.

Caring and respect are crucial for changing atmosphere in the classroom where bullying occurs. By creating bonds with and among students, teacher can set an example of celebrating diversity instead of demonizing it, to teach respect and acceptance.

1.2 Bullying as as result of power imbalance

In this part bullying is viewed as a result of power imbalance in a peer group. As aforementioned, predisposition for bullying is concealed in power imbalance. Previous researches' results have affirmed that bullying is used for acquiring dominating position in a group, especially among males. "Boys who use the combination of aggressive and affiliation strategies are more valued by their male peers and are considered more appealing by female peers" (Mishna, 2012, p.31). When reaching adolescence, one of the core resources for dominance and power is sexuality. Both, further study of this theory as well as analysis of conducted interviews are based on theories of sexuality and power relations in French Philosopher's Michel Foucault's philosophy.

1.2.1 Michel Foucault: background information and theories overview

"Foucault was born in Poitiers, France, on October 15, 1926. His student years seem to have been psychologically tormented but were intellectually brilliant. He became academically established during the 1960s, when he held a series of positions at French universities, before his election in 1969 to the ultra-prestigious Collège de France, where he was Professor of the History of Systems of Thought until his death. From the 1970s on, Foucault was very active politically. He was a founder of the Groupe d'information sur les prisons and often protested on behalf of homosexuals and other marginalized groups. He frequently lectured outside France, particularly in the United States, and in 1983 had agreed to teach annually at the University of California

at Berkeley. An early victim of AIDS, Foucault died in Paris on June 25, 1984. In addition to works published during his lifetime, his lectures at the Collège de France, being published posthumously, contain important elucidations and extensions of his ideas” (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy). Foucault is one of the most influential 20th century intellectuals. Despite his theories meeting certain skepticism in philosophical society, his contribution to social sciences can not be underestimated. In his deep historical research, Foucault offered a new understanding of power relations, power of knowledge, self-knowledge and self-care, which is discussed further in the present thesis. Foucault rejects traditional European understanding of an object being a foundation and concentration of all knowledge. Through attempts to apply scientific approach to language, sexuality, and etc.: “human being are made subjects” (Foucault, 1982, p.777).

Dehumanizing and subjectifying human beings, it becomes easier to detach from consequences of harmful actions towards an individual, and to justify them. Approach where a victim is limited to mere set of qualities that are perceived by a subject in a position of power who instrumentalists approach to human emotions, it creates welcoming conditions for emotional detachment and rationalization of violence, by creating an image of a victim as a “monster” – someone, who deserves punishment. Foucault in his work defines three types of “abnormalities”, those that do not fit in a societal understanding of normality: human monster, the individual to be corrected, child masturbator. Monster represents natural manifestation of abnormality and forbidden, and stands outside the law (Foucault, 1976, p.55-60). For the present research paper, relevant is a term of “human monster”, as the most extreme of abnormality in society and easiest to detach from. In the present paper term “monster” is not with a negative connotation but rather as illustration for a justification for emotional detachment from a victim.

1.2.2. Foucault on power relations

According to Foucault, there is no universal, global power, regardless whether concentrated or divided, but the only existing power is the one that enables “one” to influence “another” as power exists only when exercised. Foucault claims that historical understanding and repression of power has major misunderstanding of the nature of power. In traditional understanding of power, power is:

1. negative mechanism of oppression,
2. above “power games”, or in other words, a meta concept that is above other structures,
3. in its nature related to unacceptance.

According to Foucault, however, the core role of power is production, and more specifically fabrication of norms. As norms are produced based on specifics of a certain society, and power in itself is a phenomenon that manifests itself through subject, in his essay **The Subject and Power** (1982), Foucault turns from researching power to the subject itself. “It is true that I became quite involved with the question of power. It soon appeared to me that, while the human subject is placed in relations of production and signification, he is equally placed in power relations which are very complex. Now, it seemed to me that economic history and theory provided a good instrument for relations of production and that linguistics and semiotics offered instruments for studying relations of signification; but for power relations we had no tools of study. We had recourse only to ways of thinking about power based on legal models, that is: What legitimates power? Or, we had recourse to ways of thinking about power based on institutional models, that is: What is state?” (Foucault, 1982, p.778).

Thus it becomes apparent that a subject, being placed in the world (or as discussed earlier, in Heideggerian philosophy, thrown in a world) is between several dimensions of relations: production, signification, and power. If production and signification can be observed by their results and respond from other subjects, power is rather metaphysical phenomenon that manifests itself through other dimensions of being in the world, is

rooted to a subjects' relations to others, and determined subjects' position in the world. Foucault dismissed analysis of power from the point of view of its "internal rationality", and instead analyzes power relations "through the antagonism of strategies" (1982, p. 780). "For example, to find out what our society means by sanity, perhaps we should investigate what is happening in the field of insanity.

And what we mean by legality in the field of illegality.

And, in order to understand what power relations are about, perhaps we should investigate the forms of resistance and attempts made to dissociate these relations." (1982, p.780).

If applying antagonism strategy in case of bullying it is up to researchers to come to a unified agreement whether it is non-violence, acceptance of others as equal to oneself. For the purposes of the present thesis, as of main interest is a long-term effect of bullying on a victim, antagonism of bullying is respect and de-subjectification of a victim, or in other words not reducing a victim to a mere set of "abnormal" qualities.

According to previous researches, bullying is one of the reasons for school drop outs. Victimized students not willing to encounter with violence decide to avoid what they perceive as a source of violence – school, – regardless of the consequences for their future life. Foucault explains such kind of reasoning as follows: "[i]n such struggles people criticize instances of power which are the closest to them, those which exercise their action on individuals" (1982, p.780). School as institution of power creates a setting where children first learn struggles of power relations in a peer group. These struggles are not anti-authority, as Foucault emphasizes, but "transversal". Foucault discusses these struggles in a context of global politics, however it can be transferred and applied to educational institutions, as they are, as aforementioned, representatives of power institutions. These struggles, he states: "develop more easily and to a greater extent in certain countries, but they are not confined to a particular political or economic form of government" (1982, p.780). From this it is possible to continue that struggles are not limited to certain cultures, religions, and etc., but may occur in any setting. Thus in case of bullying prevention changing a school setting would not be enough, as the

struggle caused by imbalance merely manifests itself in a school setting, but has more complex nature.

Importance of discussing these struggles and their effect on an individual is such that: “[t]hey are struggles which question the status of the individual: on the one hand, they assert the right to be different, and they underline everything which makes individuals truly individual. On the other hand, they attack everything which separates the individual, breaks his links with others, splits up community life, forces the individual back to himself, and ties him to his own identity in a constraining way” (1982, p.781). As aforementioned, victimized students tend to have difficulties with creating bonds with their peers, and meaningful relationships later in life, they feel isolated and have no sense of belonging to a group, develop mental and emotional problems, such as anxiety and depression, and face other complications in their social life. Power imbalance that manifests itself through bullying is usually directed towards those who diverge in any way, which creates a strong controversial message to victimized individuals, as in modern society, particularly in the Western part of the world, individuals are encouraged to express themselves and manifest their “otherness”, and then face rejection from their peers. “This form of power applies itself to immediate everyday life which categorizes the individual, marks him in his own individuality, attaches him to his own identity, imposes a law of truth on him which he must recognize and which others have to recognize in him. It is a form of power which makes individuals subjects. There are two meanings of the word “subject”: subject to someone else by control and dependence, and tied to his own identity by conscience of self-knowledge. Both meanings suggest a form of power which subjugates and makes subject to” (1982, p.781).

Model of power exercised in a modern school (as a power institution) can be described with what Foucault calls “pastoral power”. Unlike pastoral power in classical, religious sense, new pastoral power does not take as its responsibility to lead people to salvation in Christian understanding of a term. “Salvation” in this case has “different

meanings: health, well-being (that is, sufficient wealth, standard of living), security, protection against accidents. [...] [T]he multiplication of aims and agents of pastoral power focused on development of knowledge of man around two roles: globalizing and quantitative, concerning the population; the other, analytical, concerning the individual” (1982, p.784). School as an institution provides individuals with tools for creating quality life, both social/emotional and material through skills and knowledge individuals learn and develop during their education. In order to succeed in this mission, a school has to ensure positive environment that would enable individual to reach these goals.

1.2.3 Foucault on specific nature of power

As aforementioned, Foucault denies universal or concentrated existence of power, and exists only when it is put in action. According to him: “[t]he exercise of power is not simply relationship between partners, individuals or collective; it is a way in which certain actions modify others. [...] In itself it is not a renunciation of freedom, a transference of rights, the power of each and all delegated to a few (which does not prevent the possibility that consent may be a condition for the existence or the maintenance of power); the relationship of power can be the result of a prior or permanent consent, but it is not by nature the manifestation of a consensus” (1982, p. 788). So, power in itself does not enables imbalance, nor it diminishes individuals rights or freedom. Actions of one individual towards another, however, can bring imbalance in a relation of power. “The exercise of power consists in guiding the possibility of conduct and putting in order the possible outcome. Basically power is less a confrontation between two adversaries or the linking of one to the other than a question of government. [...] “Government” did not refer only to political structures or to the management of states; rather, it designated the way in which the conduct of individuals or of groups might be directed: the government of children, of souls, of communities, of families, of the sick” (1982, p.788, 789).

Another crucial element of power relations is freedom. “Power is exercised only over free subjects, and only insofar as they are free. [...] Consequently, there is no face-to-face confrontation of power and freedom, which are mutually exclusive (freedom disappears everywhere power is exercised), but a much more complicated interplay. In this game freedom may well appear as the condition for the existence of power” (1982, p.790). Thus power relation is possible only between free individuals, and even though actions in power relationship can be directed towards submission of the other individual, it can not continue after an individual loses his freedom. Therefore, in power relations one free individual exercises his freedom of action towards abusing and limiting freedom of another individual. Victimized individual, meanwhile, engages in a relation either by defending own freedom by actively resisting power exercised over him (in case of bullying it can be physical or psychological), or surrenders his freedom in attempt to be in a safe, non-life-threatening position. Power relations are not inflicted from “above” onto individuals but “are rooted deep in the social nexus. [...] [T]o live in society is to live in such a way that action upon other actions is possible – and in fact ongoing. A society without power relations can only be an abstraction ” (1982, p.791). Individual being thrown in the world is forced to be a part of society and encounter with others. In order to avoid abuse of power, individuals first and foremost need to practice self-knowledge and self-care. Through learning self, individual develops understanding of human nature and apprehension of others emotions, and value of freedom of all individuals who conduct society.

1.2.4. Foucault on self-care and self-knowledge

In this chapter the question of sexuality, self-care and self-knowledge in philosophical ideas of Michel Foucault is explored. Sexuality as phenomena and moral unit is important for understanding power imbalance in a peer group of adolescent, as reaching puberty sexuality can be a powerful reason for developing aggressive behavior

in order to establish strong reputation, and reach a high position of power in a peer group, especially for boys. For Foucault, self-care and self-knowledge are one of the significant subjects in relation to power and sexuality. Without responsible attitude towards pleasure, exercising self-knowledge and self-care, an individual exposes himself to a risk of being overtaken by misuse of pleasure that leads to immoral and self-destructive behavior.

In “The History of Sexuality, vol.2: The Use of Pleasure” (1978), Foucault explores a reason behind sexuality being treated from a perspective of morality. Foucault emphasizes that already in ancient Greece and Rome sexuality was treated as a moral entity, and included set of practices that were used for people to set – willingly and voluntarily, – rules of behavior or “self-practices”, and to change selves for lives to have aesthetic values. Foucault highlight four dimensions regarding a question of sexes in ancient greek and roman society:

1. life of a body,
2. the institution of marriage,
3. male friendship³
4. wisdom.

However, even though self-practices were discussed for many centuries, there is no unified ground for self-practices, as societal, legal, and religious prohibitions do not share core prohibitions. Although, also a definition of “moral self” is not clear. In order to clarify a notion of a moral self, Foucault turn to examination of ancient greek/roman techniques of uses of pleasure to analyze how were created principles of a strict self-discipline that expands to four crucial aspects:

1. attitude towards body (diet ethics),
2. attitude towards wife (economics),

³ In ancient Greece male friendship played a crucial role in society. Descriptively described in Plato’s works, male friendship was intimate, however not sexual, between an older and a younger man. Older man provided guidance for a young man, including self-practices. These friendships, as mentioned, were never sexual, and any sexual encounter between men was deeply shamed and could lead to a loss of a position in a society. Self-control, on the other hand, was a high virtue.

3. attitude towards young men (erotics),
4. attitude towards truth (philosophy).

Foucault studies these aspects through four ancient greek phenomenas:

1. *aphrodisia* (this term does not have any equivalent translations in French (Foucault's native language), nor English) which defines aesthetic substance of sexual behavior,

2. *chrēsis* or “usage” that defines a type of submission that regulates use of pleasure that embodies moral virtue,

3. *enkrateria* or *power over self*, that defines methods of treating self in order to be a moral subject,

4. the art of *temperance* and *sagesse* – *chastity* and *prudence*, that characterizes moral subject in his final stage of *self-fulfillment*.

According to Foucault, as it was mentioned above, there is no unified, fundamental and universal structure of sexual morale. However, he adds, anthology of this phenomena does not create norms of nature, but is anthology of power that connects *acts, pleasure, and desire*. In a theory of the art of *temperance* and *sagesse*⁴ Foucault focuses on *the use of pleasures*, which does not set prohibitions, but rather how to better regulate and control individual's sexual life. Desire should not be narrowed down to a strict set of rules, but there should be found a balance between desire and pleasure to have a balance between needs of a body and nature's demands. The core of moral behavior when it comes to pleasure is defined by fight for power (The Use of Pleasure, 1978), and fights with an enemy are agnostic struggles with self as power over others and over self have the same core principles. Thus exercising asceticism to get power over self leads to a balanced power relations with the others.

⁴ French terms are more common in discussion of this subject. Also in the present research they are used to address the matter instead of English.

However, for moderate use of pleasure an individual requires knowledge. School as the main source of knowledge for young individuals thus plays a major role in contributing of development of self-knowledge. In the present thesis no set of rules or practices presented, as based on mentioned before, there are no unified nor universal methods nor rules which does not free one of a responsibility to developing self-knowledge for creating better understanding of self and others to eliminate or at least decrease power imbalance also in society. When discussing a matter of bullying that is based on power imbalance, it is essential to have a framework to understand the phenomenon of power, power relations and individual's role in engaging in power relationships. Since school is a power institution, and power relations are on many levels: between administration, educators/teachers, and students, understanding power in Foucauldian interpretation, through self-knowledge and self-care can improve learning environment by decreasing imbalance in power on various levels due to ability to gain better self-knowledge, by not subjectifying any of the participants, and providing stronger guidance to young generations of students.

1.3. Anti-bullying programs

This chapter is dedicated to examination of anti-bullying program the KiVa that has a main focus on preventing bullying in a school environment. The KiVa (an acronym for Kiusaamista Vastaan, “against bullying”; the Finnish adjective kiva also means “nice”) is a Finnish anti-bullying program, developed in University of Turku and had its first implementation in a school at 2009, and by 2012 was implemented already in 82% of Finnish schools. Currently the KiVa has certified partners in Belgium, Chile, Estonia, Hungary, Italy, The Netherlands, New Zealand, The United Kingdom, Sweden, Spain, Argentina, Colombia, Mexico and Peru, and has a list of upcoming partner countries that is constantly updated. Considering popularity and effectiveness of the program, it

was chosen as an example of bullying prevention in schools for the present thesis. In this chapter is presented an overview of the program, and statics, as well as analysis of methods used by the KiVa from perspective of philosophical concepts of power imbalance and self-care, that were discussed earlier in a context of intellectual ideas of Michel Foucault.

1.3.1. Research background of the KiVa

The KiVa anti-bullying program is a research-based program that focuses on role of bystanders in bullying. Bystanders are not bullies nor victims, but peers who are in a neutral position and can either support bullies or protect victims. “The bystanders’ behaviors carry consequences for the targets of bullying, as well as for the children engaging in bullying. For the targets, the most painful experience involved in being bullied is not necessarily the attacks by one or two mean kids, but the perception that the whole group is against them: no one seems to care about their pain. Research evidence shows that victims who are supported or defended even by a single classmate are less depressed and anxious, have higher self-esteem, and are less rejected by their peers than victims without defenders” (Salmivalli, Poskiparta, 2012, p.43). As was discussed earlier in the present thesis, victims often feel isolated from a group, and part of the reason is that they do not receive enough support from their peers (bystanders) when act of bullying occur. Bullies, on the other hand, receiving positive feedback from a peer group, may get more encouraged for further action and continue aggressive and harmful behavior.

The KiVa sets a goal of involving classmates who are not participated in bullying in order to intervene whenever an accident occurs. “An important message from these studies is that in order to reduce victimization, it is not necessary to somehow make the victims “less vulnerable.” And the behavior of the aggressive bullies might be difficult to change directly if the peer context is ignored: the perpetrators of bullying are often successful in gaining prestige. Influencing the behaviors of classmates can reduce the

social rewards that the bullies gain and, consequently, their motivation to bully in the first place” (Salmivalli, Poskiparta, 2012, p.43).

1.3.2. Implementation of the The KiVa program in a school

The KiVa program is developed for a long-term use for the sustainable results, and requires involvement of all personnel of a school to support execution of a program. “The KiVa involves several universal actions, such as student lessons (primary school) and themes containing several lessons (secondary school), accompanied by virtual learning environments that are closely connected to their contents. During the evaluation study (a randomized controlled trial) of the KiVa, the three versions of the KiVa student lessons and themes were delivered in grades 1 to 3, 4 to 6, and 7 to 9. For continuing implementation of the KiVa, we recommend that at the primary school level, student lessons are delivered in the first and fourth grades. There are ten double lessons (a double lesson lasts ninety minutes) for both of these grade levels. In lower secondary and middle school, the four themes are recommended to be targeted at seventh graders. A student in a the KiVa school will thus attend the lessons and themes three times during his or her compulsory education: first at the beginning of the school career, then in grade 4, and for the last time in grade 7, right after the middle school transition. The lessons and themes, carried out by the classroom teacher, involve discussion, group work, short films about bullying, and role-play exercises. The contents of the lessons proceed from more general topics, such as emotions, the importance of respect in relationships, and group pressure, to bullying and its mechanisms and consequences. Several lessons (themes) concern the role of the group in either maintaining bullying or putting an end to it. The group exercises involve, among other things, brainstorming ways to support and help the bullied victims and practicing these skills. Studies have shown that empathy toward the victimized peers, as well as self-efficacy to defend and

support them, are important characteristics that should be promoted if we want to make defending more common” (Salmivalli, Poskiparta, 2012, p.44, 46).

<i>Month</i>	<i>Staff</i>	<i>Students</i>	<i>Parents</i>	<i>All cases of bullying coming to attention</i>
August	Staff meeting	Kick-off (all students), lesson 1 (grades 1 and 4)	Newsletters to homes	Immediate response to bullying cases and follow-up (KiVa team plus classroom teacher)
September		Lesson 2 (grades 1 and 4), theme 1 (grade 7)	Back-to-school night for parents	
October		Lesson 3 (grades 1 and 4)		
November		Lesson 4 (grades 1 and 4), theme 2 (grade 7)		
December		Lesson 5 (grades 1 and 4)		
January		Lesson 6 (grades 1 and 4), theme 3 (grade 7)		
February		Lesson 7 (grades 1 and 4)		
March		Lesson 8 (grades 1 and 4), theme 4 (grade 7)		
April		Lesson 9 (grades 1 and 4)		
May		Lesson 10 (grades 1 and 4), KiVa student survey (all grades)		

(Figure 5, Implementation of the the KiVa anti-bullying program during one school year.)

The KiVa is a highly structured, ongoing program that involves not only students, but school personnel: teachers undergo training, and as seen from Figure 5, throughout the year hold lesson on various subjects related to interpersonal relations, including importance and respect towards emotions of others. In a framework of ideas of Foucault, it can be classified as a practice of pastoral power: ensuring protection against incidents, security, emotional well-being.

In the KiVa program of attention become both cases of bullying, and specific action that have negative qualities and can lead to harmful behavior: “specific actions are also needed to tackle the cases of bullying that come to the attention of school personnel. In KiVa, the indicated actions are effectuated by school KiVa teams, together with classroom teachers. The KiVa team consists of three teachers (or other school personnel) in each participating school, whose main task is to tackle, with the classroom teachers, the cases of bullying that come to their attention. This happens through a set of

individual and group discussions that one or two team members go through with the victim and with the bullies and systematic follow-up meetings. In addition to these discussions, the classroom teacher arranges a meeting with two to four selected classmates in order to encourage them to support the victimized child. The teacher manuals include detailed guidelines about how the discussions are carried through” (Salmivalli, Poskiparta, 2012, p.46).

In case of the KiVa program, peers are encouraged to protect a victimized child and they do have teachers’ support. Unlike what has been discussed above, students in schools that work with the KiVa program do not have concerns of exposing themselves to violence and taking a victimized peer’s position by becoming a new target due to their attempts of protection. Sense of safety encourages young peers to express their opinion freely and stand against violence. As Foucault stated about power relations: power is not inflicted on individuals from the above, but manifests itself in actions from one individual towards another. Thus, if power imbalance is being interrupted by the third party (in the present case by bystanders), power abuse can not increase.

1.3.3. Evaluation of the KiVa program effectiveness

In order to evaluate effectiveness of the program among 234 schools in all Finnish provinces (both Finnish- and Swedish-speaking schools) was evaluated through a Web-based questionnaire. “Besides bullying and victimization, the data contain information about children’s and adolescents’ family structure, possible immigrant status, school and class atmosphere, school motivation and well-being, learning outcomes, peer acceptance and rejection, friendships, peer networks, self-esteem and generalized perception of peers, and social-emotional problems such as social anxiety, depression, and loneliness. Self reports peer reports, and dyadic questions are used. [...] In the randomized controlled trial, KiVa was found to reduce bullying and victimization significantly at primary school levels 1 to 6. In grades 7 to 9 the effects were more mixed, and they

seemed to depend on gender (larger effects among boys) and the proportion of boys in the classroom, so that even among girls, larger effects were in many cases found in classrooms with higher proportions of boys. The average effect sizes across all grade levels, with odds ratios of 1.28 (victimization) and 1.30 (bullying), are clearly larger than effect sizes from other bullying intervention studies using a similar design (schools randomly assigned to intervention and control conditions). The effects sizes indicate that after being exposed to the KiVa program for nine months, the odds of being a victim or being a bully were about 1.3 times higher for a control school student than for a student in an intervention school. In primary school, the effects were even larger, with the largest effects in grades 3 and 4 (1.58 and 1.83 for victimization and 2.08 and 1.30 for bullying).

During the broad dissemination of KiVa, the effects on bullying and victimization were somewhat smaller than those obtained in the randomized controlled trial, and again they varied across grade levels, being largest in grade 4 and smallest in middle school (grades 7 to 9)” (Salmivalli, Poskiparta, 2012, p.49/50).

Grade	Sample size				ICC	DEFF	Control			KiVa			OR	95% CI	p
	N	Control	KiVa	Schools			Nonbully	Bully	%	Nonbully	Bully	%			
1	34,238	16,369	17,869	675	0.07	1.65	15,445	2,424	13.6	14,410	1,959	12.0	1.15	[1.04, 1.28]	.007
2	34,440	16,611	17,829	664	0.09	1.77	15,600	2,229	12.5	14,970	1,641	9.9	1.30	[1.16, 1.47]	<.001
3	35,164	16,903	18,261	668	0.08	1.77	16,501	1,760	9.6	15,602	1,301	7.7	1.28	[1.12, 1.46]	<.001
4	35,696	17,154	18,542	694	0.12	1.99	16,800	1,742	9.4	15,919	1,235	7.2	1.34	[1.15, 1.55]	<.001
5	34,230	16,297	17,933	651	0.09	1.84	16,378	1,555	8.7	15,127	1,170	7.2	1.23	[1.06, 1.42]	.006
6	31,342	14,768	16,574	602	0.11	1.91	14,920	1,654	10.0	13,509	1,259	8.5	1.19	[1.03, 1.38]	.021
7	28,168	13,410	14,758	231	0.05	2.06	13,084	1,674	11.3	11,958	1,452	10.8	1.05	[0.90, 1.23]	.505
8	26,547	12,488	14,059	221	0.05	1.96	12,385	1,674	11.9	11,058	1,430	11.5	1.05	[0.90, 1.21]	.557
9	21,177	10,486	10,691	195	0.03	1.69	9,276	1,415	13.2	9,178	1,308	12.5	1.07	[0.93, 1.23]	.328
1-9	297,728	141,099	156,629	888	0.05	3.11	139,266	17,363	11.1	127,569	13,530	9.6	1.18 ^a	[1.09, 1.27]	<.001

Note. ICC = school-level intraclass correlation for the dichotomous victimization variable (estimated with Mplus 6.1). $ICC = \tau_0^2 / (\tau_0^2 + \pi^2/3)$, where τ_0^2 = intercept variance and $\pi^2/3 \approx 3.29$ (Snijders & Bosker, 1999). DEFF = design effect; % = prevalence of bullying in percentages; OR = odds ratio; CI = confidence interval.

^a The corresponding average weighted odds ratio across Grades 1-9 was 1.18, 95% CI [1.15, 1.21].

(Figure 6, Odds ratios indicating the intervention effects on self-reported bullying, Kärnä, Voeten, Little, Poskiparta, Alanen, & Salmivalli, 2011)

Besides these improvements, the evaluation results revealed that “KiVa has been shown to increase school liking, academic motivation, and even academic performance among students in KiVa schools as compared to students from control schools. Furthermore, KiVa reduces internalizing problems and negative peer perceptions and increases empathy, self-efficacy to defend the victimized peers, and constructive bystander behaviors.” (Salmivalli, Poskiparta, 2012, p.50).

According to the presented data it can be concluded that the KiVa program effectively reaches set goals and significantly reduces rate of bullying in schools. Reports show that when receiving peer support, victimized students liking of school, self-esteem is increasing, and level of anxiety, depression and isolation decrease. For bystanders it is a strong morale practice: to identify a relation of power imbalance and interfere to protect a vulnerable party.

2. Analysis of bullying victims' stories

This part of the present paper is dedication to the analysis of two stories narrated by former bullying victims for the purpose of illustrating long-term effects and to have an insight to the events and their effect on the victims. In order to receive more accurate reflections on the traumatizing events, I have made a decision to interview adults (one respondent is 26 years of age, the second one – 37). The decision was based on the ability of adults to give a deeper and more detailed description of the events and the consequences throughout the time. Since they have a distance from the events, they can be more open when describing their experience, have better understanding of own emotions. However, despite the fact that these events took place a decade or even two ago, the subject is still emotional for both respondents.

During the interview, respondents were asked to describe their experience, both physical and emotional, talk about intimate sufferings and share their suggestions on

what needs to be done to prevent situations like theirs in the future. Also, from the point of a researcher, analyzing these stories has been challenging. Both interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. In the present paper, only a written version of the interviews is available, which represents only a small part of emotional load that is present in the stories. It is important for the researchers and educators to be aware of long-term emotional damage the bullying is causing, and emphasize it when discussing power imbalance with students, both those who are involved in bullying, and those who are not. Awareness of long-term effect on emotional health and the consequences it has on individual lives can turn “power imbalance” from abstract term to a very real issue of high capability to negatively effect lives for years to come. Therefore, both stories are analyzed from the perspective of power imbalance in Foucauldian understanding of the problem of power relations, including not only the issue of power imbalance itself, but also self-knowledge and self-care, since these phenomena are closely connected among each other and related to power imbalance, as was discussed in chapter **1.2. Bullying as a result of power imbalance.**

For the purposes of the present research, respondents of a different background, origin, gender and age were chosen. As aforementioned, one respondent is female, born in Latvia and has had attended school in Riga, the capital of Latvia. She has provided insightful description of one of the bullying incidents that had the strongest impact on her. Interview with this respondent was divided into two parts, since even though over a decade has passed since the time of the events, it has been emotionally difficult for her to relive those events, and she has asked for a break.

The second respondent is male, born in Finland and has had attended school in the Central Finland. He has given an overall description of acts of bullying he was subjected to, and focus on emotional side of the experience. Both respondents shared long-term emotional effects of being victims of bullying, as well as its effect on their ability to create bonds and relationships with others in their adult life. Detailed analysis

both stories is presented below. Grammar and style of the stories are preserved as in the original narration.

Respondents have shared their stories and their suggestion on handling bullying in schools, which will be discussed in the last chapter of the present part.

Both respondents participated in the interviews voluntarily, gave permission to share their stories and information, presented above. Names of respondents are not revealed to protect their privacy.

2.1 Analysis of the bullying story one

In the present chapter is presented analysis of the bullying story one. Respondent is female. As aforementioned, she is born in Latvia and has attended school in Riga, the capital of Latvia. In her story she has focused on one example of bullying that she has experienced, giving a detailed description of the situation, actions of bullies and bystanders, as well as her response, behavioral and emotional at the time, as well as long-term effects on her emotional well-being and personal life. She also gave an insight on how bullying was treated in her school and in particular by the classroom teacher.

2.1.1 Description and analysis of the example of bullying in the story one

The example of bullying the respondent one has decided to share in her story had occurred outside the school that she was attending, but involved her present and former classmate who engaged in bullying. The present example address the point of school-related bullying does not always occur exclusively at a school territory, but can appear outside school ground still including victim's school mates. This point is worth noticing since outside school territory it is not likely for educators to be able to control and interfere with the situation of aggressive and harmful behavior, therefore victim is more vulnerable. Thus, referring to the aforementioned data in a chapter **1.1.4 Bullies and**

peer relations, role of peers is crucial in the situations where bullying occurs since they are present in the situation and can take actions to interfere or to encourage bullies. In the present example, the situation has been possible partly due to inaction of bystanders. Below is presented the part of the respondent's one story, describing the situation. The part is extensive, telling most of the details that the respondent has shared. The decision to keep the whole piece in tact and not divide it into a small parts while analyzing the situation was made due to the fact that the story covers various aspects: relationship between peers, actions of bullies, actions of bystanders and the response of the victim. Sharing the whole story, therefore, gives better overall understanding of the situation, and prevents from disregarding crucial points in understanding the whole act of bullying. In italic are highlighted the points that are discussed more below:

“Ok, so my class mates. I have to say that it took place in... not in school, but on a school holidays, on one birthday party, and the situation that lead to it was like my *class was not particularly friendly* [...]. There were *numerous conflicts* during the whole year. And on the school Summer holidays one friend of mine, – my class mate, – had a birthday and she invited us. We went to a cafe first, and then we went to the another city, to X, where she lived, and I didn't know that there will be so many people invited, and *if knew, I'd probably not go there*, because in the evening I discovered that there were some people whom I really disliked [...]. My relationship with this guy was really terrible from the very beginning. Like, he really hated me, and I can't explain why, you usually can't explain hate. [...] So, it wasn't enough for him that we didn't see each other anymore, as he dropped out from school and, yeah, so, returning to this birthday situation. We arrived to a home of this friend, there were these guys, him, and his friend who was also our classmate: he continued his school studies, but our relationship was also not that good, but although he was pretty sly person, because *sometimes he behaved really badly*, but sometimes he was *like a friend*. Well, not a friend, but a really good acquaintance.

On that evening, because there was this company, that felt quite strong as they were the only guys all others were just girls, and as I already said, the relationships even between the girls were not that good, and *we really didn't support each other*, and could not support each, and *couldn't provide some kind help* and so. So, they, these guys, somehow they started *to insult me, to touch me, to hit...* well, not to hit exactly, but like, there was some *kind of physical assault*. And as, this was the birthday party, and this girl, who was like a *friend of mine, she really didn't pay attention*. Like, maybe *she didn't know what to do*, maybe it was strange to her as well, and she didn't know how to cope with this situation, but there were 10 maybe 12 people in the apartment, and *no one spoke out*, absolutely no one. And there was one point at which it became really scary for me, because these guys, we were locked in a kitchen, they didn't let me out, and they were already drunk, and *they started to pull my clothes off* and so. And we were all 16 and 17 years old, well, they didn't manage to do much, but there is.. I have a suggestion that if it took place 2 years later when were in the 12th grade⁵, well, I don't know, maybe everything *would end up with rape* but at that time that didn't happen. I don't know, they probably didn't have this idea in mind, but they wanted to do something and this is what occurred to them, what would be *fun to do*. What really stroke me then, is that all the other girls just stated in the room and didn't come and then *one girl came and took photos* which was absolutely out of my... beyond my comprehension. Even then, when I was in a complete shock and didn't analyze the situation. But it was still absolutely incredible for me: why the hell are you taking photos, maybe can come help me or what? And... afterwards we went to the sea, because this town is located on the sea, and I must say that I was probably that shocked that *I didn't even consider a possibility of going away*, although I could call a taxi, but I didn't do it. I decided that it's *better to stay and forget* about it, and just do something else. And while we were going to the sea, it was at night already, I heard their conversation that *it would be nice to do something with me on the sea* because on the

⁵ In Latvian educational system, 12th grade is the final grade of high school and students mostly are 18-19 years old.

beach there will be no people probably, so we could probably throw her in the sea and do something else. And was really scary, like *really really scary*. When we finally got to the beach, there actually were people, quite many and even the police, I don't know why, but, well, it was lucky for me, of course, because no one did nothing, we just stayed there for half-an-hour, some people drank more, and then we returned home and then everyone fell asleep and I just had to wait for the morning.”

As aforementioned, the present example of act of bullying is one illustration of series of action – respondent also has mentioned that the relationship among classmates was not good, and there were multiple conflicts during the year. In the chapter **1.2 Bullying as a result of power imbalance** was discussed that when reaching adolescence, sexuality is one of the tools for establishing power position. The situation described above can be interpreted as sexual harassment as well as physical assault as the respondent called it herself. Boys used their masculinity to establish their sexual dominance over a respondent who was in a vulnerable position in the situation of power imbalance. Receiving approval from his peer, bully was enabled to pursue with his harmful behavior. Only when the location of events has changed and he was exposed to the public and representatives of authorized power (police), he had to abandon his original plan of causing more harm to the bully.

Importance of emphasizing sexuality in this context is related to understanding power imbalance in a framework of self-knowledge, aforementioned in chapters from part **1.2**, in a context of Michel Foucault's philosophical ideas. Since adolescence lack self-knowledge, their control over impulses to gain power is not as well controlled as of those who practice self-knowledge and acknowledge the importance of self-control both towards others and towards self. Lack of it can lead to uncontrollable attempts to reach power and pleasure, related to it, including sexual, and manifestation of such behavior is described by the respondent one.

The role of bystanders in the described situation shows the importance of support of peers. As discussed above, peers (or bystanders) have a crucial role in bullying. Not being directly involved in the act of bullying, they are in the position where they can either support bullies with their approval or inaction, or interfere and prevent continuation of the bullying. As the respondent mentioned, in the present situation bystanders might have been confused, but “no one spoke out”, but even “took photos” of this act of violence by which they expressed approval of the harmful behavior and abuse of the victim. Considering that all the parties of the present case were adolescence, and based on the theory of power imbalance and sexuality as a tool for achieving higher position in the peer group, it can be speculated that actions of the female peer who has taken photos can be connected to the desire to establish a position of power in the present peer group in order to be more desirable to a dominant male peer. However, this assumption can and should only be treated as a speculation in this case, since there is not enough data to establish it as a fact. Nevertheless, this action can not be dismissed, and within the present framework can be interpreted as such.

One of the issues of identifying bullying as was discussed earlier is that victims often are hesitant to reveal that they were subjected to violence. As shared in the story, respondent “*didn't even consider a possibility of going away*”, but “*decided that it's better to stay and forget*”. Further during the interview, she has admitted that she has not shared her experience with her family either:

“After some time I mentioned it to my mum and said that I had a terrible row with some of my classmates and that we are not friends anymore. I guess she understood that something more serious happened but never asked me to explain it in details. However, I don't blame her for it, because *it would have been really difficult for me to go through the situation once again.*”

This way, instead of seeking for support and protection, adolescence tends to close up for various reasons: not to relive the traumatic situations again or not to attract attention, or not to add additional pain to their family, as will be discussed in analysis of the story too further below. Lack of self-knowledge leads to lack of self-care, and by disregarding importance of their feelings and experience they risk to expose themselves to a long-term unresolved emotional issues:

“Back then I didn’t ponder on this situation a lot, probably because it was a great shock, and for some time I just carried on and just continued my life as if nothing happened, but afterwards, probably after the graduation this school, when I started my university studies, I started to analyze this situation and I guess, I understood that it affected me in a negative way, because it was hard to believe that other people are truly interested in me as a person, because, um... ok... [Subject became emotional. Brief exchange of comforting and encouraging phrases. She agreed to continue the interview, but skipping this question].”

To use Heideggerian terms, being thrown in the world, individual has to learn about self in relations to others. Facing such traumatic experience in the early age, when one lacks self-knowledge and is not able to protect self or resolve complicated emotional situations, person is vulnerable and is exposed to trauma and inability to create bonds further in life, and have distorted perception of self:

“I guess it has had an effect on my ability to communicate with other people. I used to make new contacts easily, but afterward I found out that it had become really difficult for me to speak with strangers, to talk about myself. It is as if I know from the very beginning that other people are unfriendly to me, not interested in me, and have other, “true” friends to be with. It was particularly painful at the university because I was literally unable to speak to anyone except for studies. So, I didn't make a single friend at the undergraduate level, although I really hoped that going to university will change

everything. It became easier at the graduate school, but I still feel long-term effects. Most of the time it is terribly difficult to speak with other people when it is not a work necessity. Sometimes something clicks, I don't feel it and everything runs smoothly. But most of the time I feel communication, especially small-talk, to be pointless and even harmful.

I sometimes think of what I could have become if there had not been this incident. I mean, *I could have gone to a better university, get a better job, have better skills if I hadn't this idea that people are always conspiring behind my back, make mean plots and spot from the very beginning that I am "different"*. Which obviously doesn't happen, but I can't get rid of this false perception."

As was discussed in the previous chapters, the victim usually is chosen on the grounds of them being "different" in any possible sense: behavior, looks, religion, background, and etc. "Different" is used as justification for not accepting someone, by subjectifying them and therefore belittling the value of their feelings and being per se. Therefore, it is easy to get detached from an individual and do not feel responsibility for the damage, but for a victim it means that they are rejected from a group where they were supposed to belong, and can lead, as in this case, to a false believe that they are less than others and can not be appreciated accept for who they are. Considering the young age, as also was aforementioned, they do lack self-knowledge and can not yet distinguish harmful opinions from reality. This problem is discussed further in the analysis of the story two.

When sharing her story, respondent mentioned that there were numerous conflicts in her cohort and school in general, which were mostly: "personal conflicts, and maybe emotional bullying". However, when asked whether teachers and school administration was aware of the situation and if any measures to prevent and interfere with bullying were taken, the respondent answered that: "I'm pretty sure they knew nothing" regarding the administration, and when talking about teachers: "of course they didn't

know about my situation. [...] Class[room] teacher was to some extent aware, but she was quite strange. She could organize some trips, school parties, but she was really incapable of dealing with difficult situations. [...] But she never reacted to any other conflicts. *She was not aware how to deal with these situations*, because sometimes *she said absolutely irresponsible things*, for example she is sitting in front of our class, talking about our marks or something about the study process, and then she tells me, I asked her something because I wasn't at school on some particular day so I didn't know about something, so I asked her, like what is happening then, or what is the homework, could you please tell me. And she answers: "you could have asked your friend, or isn't she your friend anymore," – and she is referring to that girl who was organizing this birthday party. And I remember that at this moment there was a moment of silence in class because everyone heard it. And I guess like those *who were interested in bullying they somehow grasped this idea that aha, our relationship is not that good anymore, and even teacher knows it and says it publicly, so let's remember this*. And it is something so, so, I can't understand it at all, how a teacher can say something so stupid which could have implications."

Lack of communication and inability or unwillingness to understand the importance of experience of others can be a great problem when living in a society. Children and adolescence being more vulnerable a priori, since they lack experience of being in the world, lack self-knowledge and understanding of others do need guidance from more mature and experience individuals, in particular educators who are in position of power in relation to students, and have authority to make a difference. As described in chapter **1.3. Anti-bullying programs**, specifics of anti-bullying program KiVa is that it involves both educators and students. Sharing responsibility of preventing and intervening with the acts of harmful behavior teaches to respect feelings of the other, by that de-subjectifying individuals and seeing them and their feeling as valuable as their own, which is of a high value for young individuals, who are in the process of learning of being in the world.

2.1.2 Conclusion of the analysis of the story one

From the story one it is clear that harmful consequences of bullying extend school-time, and the timeframe of when bullying actually occurred, but can affect a victim through time, and this should be noted when addressing the issue. Victims of bullying tend to oppress feelings at the time, as being of young age, they do not comprehend the scale of the emotional damage that is done to them. Lack of self-knowledge leads to neglecting of own feelings and sufferings from victims' side, and thoughtless, impulsive, harmful behavior to reach a position of power from bullies' side. Teachers and responsible educators can not disregard cases of bullying and be careless with comments that are made publicly, since a vulnerable party can get more exposed to violence, have stronger sense of not-belonging, while bullies get encouragement of no authority figures interfering with their harmful behavior.

2.2 Analysis of the bullying story two

In the present chapter is presented analysis of the bullying story two. Respondent is male. Born in Finland, attended school in the Central Finland. In his story the responded has shared his experience of being a bullying victim with examples of abuse he had to face, and the consequences it lead to. Respondent two in his story dedicated more attention to his emotional health and the damage that has been done to it. Similar to the respondent one, respondent two has developed trust issues, did not share his feelings about the traumatizing experience, developed difficulties to create bond with people in his adult life, and admits that he is still suffering from depression, and recovers from a substance abuse that he has developed in a young age as a mechanism to cope with the situation.

2.1.1 Description and analysis of the example of bullying in the story two

The story shared by the respondent two is more emotionally loaded since he decided to focus more on the emotional effect that bullying has had in him. Bullying took place in the primary school, in the third grade when the responded has started attending a new school, and was happening over a longer time period. It has involved multiple bullies, including respondent's older brother who has bullied him also at home, which exacerbated the situation for him since he was not able to share the problem with his family.

“It was physical and then kind of psychological bullying. It was all kind of bullying. And there were couple of guys who started it. I was little bit... I think *I was little bit different kind of person* and I don't know if that's the main reason, but I think it is. But they started to bully me, they attacked, they attacked me when I came to school and dragged me to a school hall, and took my stuff and throw away and that kind of, and yeah. [...]

I think we never talked about that. That I was bullied at school. Because we had little bit problems at our home with my big brother, and he was kind of problem child. And *he was often bullying me at home*, so I think *I wasn't safe at school or at home, or anywhere*. And I think we talked at home about that situation, and that same teacher noticed that also that my big brother was bullying me also at school, sometimes. And he probably told to my parents, I'm not sure about that, but we were talking about that. My brother, not about other bullying. And I didn't tell anything to anyone, ever.”

As aforementioned, young people learn how to create bonds and find their place in the world they are thrown into. Sense of belonging and acceptance helps to feel safe and create healthy bonds, gain self-knowledge, and keep emotional balance. In this case, the respondent did not have a sense of belonging to any major groups of the time: school environment and home were not safe places for a young individual, since he was not

accepted in either, had no chance to seek for protection. Peers at school did not provide support either, bystanders either encouraged bullies or stayed indifferent:

“They.. they didn’t do anything. Some of them were laughing, because I think they really wanted to embarrass me and to make.. and *it was fun for those guys who were bullying me*, it was just fun. And, and *there were classmates who joined it and were laughing, and were staring, just staring at it and laughing, laughing at me*. And it was, yeah, I think *it was some kind of circus for those people*. But they, yeah, there were *no one who did anything*. Some people didn’t take any part of it, they didn’t bully, they didn’t laugh, but *they didn’t do anything*, but I think *they were afraid of that situation*, they were afraid of those guys. *Those guys were kind of leaders of that class and tough guys*, and I think those who didn’t do anything they were just afraid they would have just the same... that they would go to the same kind of situation that I was, if they say anything. That’s what I think.”

Similar to the respondent one’s story, bystanders either encouraged or passively observed the situation. Perhaps, they lacked knowledge or capacity to handle the situation, and were concerned for their own safety. It can be speculated that all members of groups were striving to have sense of belonging to the group and for that matter did not stand against the “natural order of things” – dominant parties, so called negative leaders of the groups were not to be doubted in their actions. These actions were performed for amusement, and by diminishing one party, leaders could get a higher power position in the group. The victim was made into a “human monster” – someone different, who deserves being treated that way, and is not supposed to feel the same as bullies or bystanders do. By detaching selves from the victim, parties could justify violence and were not obliged to feel remorse.

Both respondents emphasize inaction of their peers. Peer support, as was discussed in previous chapters, is essential not only for intervention or prevention of bullying, but also for emotional well-being of the victim and the social group since it is the first

social group where individual can create meaningful bonds outside their family, to start learning and understanding their place in relation to others. If that is denied, an individual can seek for alternative ways to sublimate bonds that can lead to a development of unhealthy habits, and causes damage to emotional well-being:

“I was very anxious, and I get depressed, I think maybe when I was 14-15, I was just, I just started to think that I won’t live over 20 years old, that I.. yeah, that kind of depressed thoughts. My life was worthless, and I was thinking like that. But mostly I was just very anxious, anxious person, and... yeah... I get these, what is this, obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) [brief encounter about the correct term for the disorder]. Yeah, because of my anxiety, because I was just keeping everything inside of me, and I never talked to anyone about my problems. And I was... I am quite sensitive person, so keeping everything inside, it... it can make quite big harm to my mind. [...]

I have still problems with my feelings, it’s hard to notice what I felt, and, yeah, I have depression, I am quite anxious person. I think most of those things come from this bullying, and I *started to use drugs and alcohol when I was 18, I was using sometimes when I was younger*, but when I was 18 it became a big problem for me and it was, it was my way to handle this situation. Settle everything inside of me I just couldn’t, couldn’t stand those feelings anymore, so that was, that was a good way to escape, and that I used 9 years pretty much everything, so that has caused, that *has caused very much damage inside of me, mostly, mostly in kind of spiritual way*, what is this... mental, mental way. And still have some, some mental problems with me. And I, I think many things will, maybe, will follow me the rest of my life.”

Respondent two, after facing rejection from his peer group through indifference and violence, not feeling safe at home, and developing multiple disorders, such as OCD, anxiety and depression, lacked self-knowledge or power over self – or *enkrateria*, that was discussed in a chapter 1.2.4. **Foucault on self-care and self-knowledge**, – had found a temporary salvation from reality by uncontrollable means of use of pleasure and escape

through harmful substances. What Foucault has described regarding sexual pleasures and use of pleasures, in this particular case the respondent had another power relationship, but with substances instead of other individuals. Without balance, he had given control to substances, that did not meet nature's demands of his mind and body, and in the result, as he has mentioned: "*has caused very much damage inside of me, mostly, mostly in kind of spiritual way*". Quoting the aforementioned in the chapter 1.2.4: "[w]ithout responsible attitude towards pleasure, exercising self-knowledge and self-care, an individual exposes himself to a risk of being overtaken by misuse of pleasure that leads to immoral and self-destructive behavior" (p.27). In the case, described by the respondent, it is seen that in an attempt to deal with one harmful situation, without good self-knowledge, one got engaged in another harmful abuse that lead him to self-destruction.

In case of respondent two, one of the teacher tried to intervene with bullying:

"There were one teacher who talked many times to those guys. And I think he was really concerned about this situation. And I... I don't know... I believe he was that kind of teacher, *I believe he would tell to another teachers about that*. Yeah, yeah, I believe so. *But no one else did do anything*. He was the only person. And bullying stopped sometimes for a while. Because, yeah, he had, that teacher had authority. And when he was angry, he was very angry man (laughing), so I think those guys who were bullying me, *they were afraid, a little bit afraid of that teacher*. But, but then some time goes and they started again, and maybe, and yeah, sometimes outside school time, it moved from school yard to that way where I was coming to school and leaving school, yeah. And there were that one teacher."

From what can be understood from the story, the teacher has been an authoritative figure and had certain power over bullies. However, considering that individual power of the teacher is limited, bullies had found alternative ways and location to continue the

abuse. Since school is an institution of power with its own social environment, an individual alone has limited resources in prevention of bullying. In the process should be involved multiple parties, such as bystanders and other responsible educators to eliminate power imbalance in a peer group, since educators are a priori in a higher position of power and due to their position are assumed to have deeper self-knowledge, they are capable of guiding young individuals towards creation of healthy environment in the peer group, and eliminating any imbalance that leads to harmful behavior.

As discussed above, bullying victims often hide their emotions and do not share their experience for various reasons: they are ashamed of the situation, afraid to aggravate the situation, do not want to be a burden, and etc. Nevertheless, when the respondent two was asked what could have helped him to handle the situation at the time, he admitted that:

“[...] the biggest thing is that there, if there were someone to talk, because I didn't talk, and... it.. would be so great if there were someone who had noticed that and came, then came to talk to me about it and really, really tried to find out what I'm *really* thinking, and get me to say what I am really, *really* thinking and *really* feeling, because I was just acting that everything is ok. I think this is, talking... talking would... it would have really great effect. Because nowadays I talk a lot about myself, I *have learned to talk and it has helped me a lot*. But, yeah... I don't... know, was there anyone who really saw that situation. There was that one teacher, but... but, I... yeah, I think he did his best to help me, but it wasn't enough in this situation, and I think I needed some psychotherapy or something, very young, and it would helped me. But of course I didn't know anything about that kind of stuff, and I couldn't get any help by myself, because I just had decided that I just don't talk.”

Since children and adolescence, especially when being under stress, have a tendency to hide their feelings, do not share their experience and create a distance, it is essential for the responsible adults, and in particular educators, to be knowledgeable and

attentive to notice such changes and find an approach to a victim. By expressing support and showing guidance in dealing with the complicated emotions in the traumatizing situation, an educator or other responsible adult helps a young individual to learn to create bonds and get sense of belonging, which can ease recovery from the experience.

2.2.2 Conclusion of the analysis of the story two

In the story two, similar as in story one, it is clear that trauma from being a bullying victim extends the time of harmful actions towards individual. Trauma can last for decades, causing life-long sufferings in form of anxiety, depression, trust issues and substance abuse with all its consequences to one's life. Respondent two has chosen harmful way to deal with consequences of trauma due to his young age, which lead him to more negative experiences. Similar to the respondent one, he has chosen not to share his experience at the time and to conceal it in himself. In both situations role of the bystanders was crucial: encouraging bullies by their actions or inactions, they have made the experience extensively traumatizing for the victims. Teachers did not take active role (except for one) in intervening or preventing bullying, leaving the victim vulnerable and exposed that caused long-term damage in both cases.

2.3. Respondents suggestion on handling bullying in schools

In the present chapter are presented suggestions from both respondents on how, after long-term reflection since their traumatizing experience, they consider bullying should be prevented in schools. These suggestions are further interpreted in a context of aforementioned anti-bullying program KiVa and in context of Foucauldian philosophical theory of self-knowledge.

Both respondents, in the end of the interview, were asked to share their opinion on how bullying can be prevented. Both respondents expressed their doubts that educators

do “their best” in handling bullying: “in schools they just should take these things more seriously, they are all the time talking about bullying, what to do about it, and what should be done, but I think they don’t really do their best. Teachers can do better what they are doing now” – said respondent two. Respondent one has expressed her opinion on teachers’ lack of willingness to get engaged in the problem solving: “school administration or some educators should raise awareness that there actually is bullying violence in schools and it’s not up to students to solve this situation, because in my school and maybe in other Latvian school where there is bullying, teachers say that it’s your personal problem and if you can’t figure out how to communicate with your classmates, then, it’s like almost your own fault”. She also suggested, that educators should have deep knowledge of children and teenage psychology, and to find suitable approach to eliminate power imbalance in the school environment.

Since students who are involved in bullying have a tendency to keep their emotions and suffering within themselves, respondent one has shared a suggestion that opportunity to express opinions anonymously can help in such situation. For educators, it could be a useful tool, since in certain situation educators who are willing to help lack information upon which they could act, and in case of extreme bullying as was presented in respondent’s two, receiving anonymous information would help educators to intervene, and would help victim to reveal their struggle.

Both respondents share opinion that educators are not involved enough in prevention of bullying, that the debate about bullying is theoretical, and there are not enough practical tools to resolve it and provide needed support to victims. Anti-bullying program KiVa involves multiple parties in the process of prevention of bullying: both educators and peers. Perhaps, bullying should be discussed both as harmful behavior with short-term effects, but also long-term effects , such as described above that concern mental health, relationships and overall quality of life should be mentioned.

Conclusions

It can be concluded that bullying is harmful behavior that can be traced all across the globe. Victims of bullying are chosen based on them being in any way different from others: origin, nationality, religion, sexuality, appearance, and etc. Bullying can manifest in physical abuse, mental abuse and nowadays also in cyberspace. In the present thesis, the main focus was on physical and mental bullying. Since bullying is based on power imbalance, in part 1.2 chapters attention was dedicated to a phenomenon of power, power relations, self-knowledge and self-care in philosophical ideas of french philosopher Michel Foucault. Self-knowledge and self-care can be utilized in the future debate on prevention of bullying as strong resources both for future life of youngsters, and to prevention of bullying. By having good understanding of power and deep self-knowledge, one is more conscious about own needs and comprehends own place in relationship to others. Being thrown in this world, people need sense of belonging. For youngsters, the first meaningful bond and belonging is to their peer group in school. Thus it is crucial for them to have a healthy bond for the ability to form meaningful relationships in the future. As was shown in examples in the second part of the thesis, when children and adolescence are denied that bond, it leads to various consequences, such as trust issues, anxiety, depression.

The purpose of the analysis of two stories of former bullying victims was to illustrate graveness of consequences of bullying. Decades past from the traumatizing events, former victims still experience consequences. In a debate about bullying it is useful to utilize examples as such to appeal to youngsters on a more intimate, emotional level, to help comprehend that even small harmful action or word can affect in a strongly negative way, and echoes of the trauma will follow the victims for years to come.

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