

Theoretical Analyses

Parental Violence against Educators: The Case of Greek Teachers

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Abstract

This research article examines the growing phenomenon of parental violence against educators, focusing on the case of Greek teachers. Drawing on systematic content analysis of Greek press and electronic media reports, it explores the main causes, forms, and consequences of parental aggression, as well as the adequacy of the existing institutional protection framework. Five principal causes are identified: questioning of teachers' evaluative and pedagogical competence, overprotective and interventionist parenting, weakening of institutional trust and teacher authority, dysfunctional school-family communication, and heightened psychosocial stress within families. Parental aggression manifests in multiple forms, including verbal and psychological abuse, institutional and legal harassment, public targeting through digital media, and, in rare cases, physical violence. These behaviors significantly affect teachers' professional autonomy, psychological well-being, and job satisfaction, often leading to defensive teaching practices and increased intentions to leave the profession. A comparative overview reveals that, unlike several European countries with clear preventive frameworks, Greece lacks a unified and specialized system for teacher protection. This study underscores the need for comprehensive institutional, communicative, and psychosocial interventions.

Keywords: Parental violence; teachers' victimization; school bullying; teachers' security

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Violence is innate in humans, as it has always been beneficial for survival and coping with the harshness of everyday life. Militancy, rivalry and the struggle for life and as well as the quality of life have always been fundamental to humanity's efforts to overcome the destructive forces of nature and environmental hazards that threaten human survival, whether intentionally or accidentally. As Heraclitus once said ([Danezis & Theodosiou, 2017](#)) "*War is the father of all*", meaning that it was through man's timeless and unceasing struggle that the technological achievements of civilization, the organization of life in societies and the securing of food, shelter and many other guarantees of existence were born – at an enormous cost, of course.

Given that violence is inherent in human nature, it is inconceivable that modern social organization, with all its institutions and features associated with civilization, would be unable to foster a passion for non-violence, peaceful coexistence, avoiding conflict and limiting domination over others ([Wrangham, 2019](#)). Due to the aggressive and violent nature of humans, situations of violence between people occur for various reasons and on various occasions in all societies and social systems, and in all places where people live together, such as families, workplaces, etc. Even in places where calm is required, such as schools, hospitals, care centers for the elderly and shops, tensions often prevail for trivial reasons precisely because many people meet and spend a long time together.

The phenomenon of violence, especially in education, is a global scourge today. Thousands of discussions have been held and various texts and studies have been written to highlight the phenomenon and propose solutions to reduce it. The hope is that one day they will succeed in eliminating it, although this seems rather impossible. Unfortunately, the situation in education seems to have got out of hand, with violence spreading among children, between teachers, as well as between teachers and parents. Teachers, often unprotected by

the state and institutions, find themselves at the center of aggression from a variety of sources, including administrative supervisors, students and parents, who take out their anger on them for a variety of reasons and in a variety of ways, with implications for their physical integrity and psychological resilience.

As known, the role of the modern teacher is complex and multifaceted. Teachers are sometimes required to advise and guide children, admonish them, solve administrative issues, collect or create teaching materials, evaluate children, themselves or school structures, and respond to superiors, parents or students, etc. This naturally leads teachers to various positions and situations. Depending on the situation, teachers can appear pleasant or unpleasant, formal or relaxed, approachable or inaccessible. They try daily to maintain a delicate balance in their several and varied interactions in order to carry out their difficult, yet important work and offer the best to children and society. Teachers need to enjoy trust and esteem, as well as a safe and calm environment, which enables them to do their demanding and varied work in an effective way ([Stamatis & Nikolaou, 2022](#)).

Nevertheless, the contemporary educational landscape portrays teachers as facing various challenges in the school environment, which are unfortunately not only positive, but negative as well. These negative challenges are related to the aggression that teachers, particularly those who are working in public schools as civil servants, experience from various sources, including the state, senior education officials, colleagues, parents and students. This makes teachers keep a defensive and introverted position which is not conducive to their pedagogical role and mission. Both require them to be outward-looking, open, cooperative, and to foster mutual understanding and solidarity with all members of the school community. Failing to formally and effectively defend teachers against any form of aggression hinders their work, weakens their resolve and deprives the school of the joy of the pedagogical relationship, which is the main source of energy for effective, democratic and enjoyable learning.

Method

Within the context mentioned above and taken for granted that there is insufficient bibliography worldwide dedicated to parental aggression against teachers, the present article aims to shed more light on the growing global phenomenon of parents attacking teachers. While this issue is of great importance and interest, it has not yet attracted much attention from the domestic or even international research community. However, it is expected to become a focus for academic researchers soon, as it is linked to issues of teacher safety,

teacher well-being and professional development and the quality of educational work provided.

Greek teachers are often victims of violent and unjust attacks in the course of their work. So, based on Greek-language newspaper and electronic media reports, the article focuses on describing the forms of aggression and reasons invoked by parents for their attacks, as well as the effects on teachers' professional, social, moral and personal lives inside and outside school, hoping this article will be one of many that aim to prevent aggressive behavior, bullying, harassment and any other form of violence against school teachers.

As follows from the content analysis of Greek press publications, carried out according to the principles of systematic coding and thematic categorization ([Krippendorff, 2018](#); [Neuendorf, 2017](#)), the factors examined and analyzed focused on the aggression, harassment and violence that parents inflict on teachers, in order to identify and document the main causes of these behaviors.

To be more specific, in present research, the sample based on published newspaper articles and other reliable digital material texts related to the subject of the research. The sample based on specific inclusion criteria. The criteria considered the content of the articles to be focused on parental violence against teachers in contrast to Greek related legislation, the reactions of Greek teachers to this phenomenon, and the public opinion regarding the core of the research. Also, the sources related to the research' data was reliable as all articles and texts belonged to well-known Greek media. Finally, the content analysis based on international standards, as they are published ([Mayring, 2021](#); [Krippendorff, 2018](#)).

Results

Content analysis of the aforementioned data, gathered from printed or digital Greek newspaper and e-journal material, as well as other related material, led to the following illuminating results. The results are presented analytically as follows:

Parents' reasons for opposing teachers

The following five main reasons were identified in the exploration of the topic regarding the aggressive behavior that parents exhibit towards teachers:

Questioning teachers' evaluative and pedagogical competence

Questioning teachers' ability to evaluate students and the grades they give their child if they are below parental expectations makes parents dismissive and aggressive. Moreover, questioning teachers' ability to manage student discipline in the classroom and their

diagnosis or treatment of learning difficulties emerged as two more common reasons for aggressive behavior towards teachers.

In educational systems that focus on pre-entrance or entrance examinations and emphasize student performance, parental sensitivity towards assessment is heightened. This is often experienced by parents as a threat to their child's future educational and social prospects ([Saitis, 2008](#)). Research findings reveal that teachers, according to their self-reports of relevant experiences, receive threats and abuse after making evaluative judgements about students that disagree with parental views ([McMahon et al., 2014](#)). [Riley et al. \(2011\)](#) report that 'assessment threat' acts as a trigger for parental aggression. Other research conducted after the pandemic documents an increase in conflict incidents. These incidents were related to assessment and educational practices due to an increase in parental involvement in the learning process at home during tele-education ([Pressley, 2021](#); [Longobardi et al., 2021](#)). Through this process, some parents experienced an enhancement of their 'teaching' role, which naturally occurred at the expense of the established and positively enshrined role of teachers.

Overprotective parenting and interventionism

Overprotective parenting is associated with a changing parental identity, as well as increased psychological and educational expectations regarding the child's academic success ([Gotovos, 2013](#)). Parents who believe they have the right to dynamically intervene in their child's education often have low tolerance for negativity and an increased tendency to control. This perception stems from their belief in the child's learning abilities and their high expectations for their professional future, which they believe can be secured through education ([Segrin et al., 2015](#)). [Riley et al. \(2011\)](#) point out that parents with high levels of intrusive dispositions are more likely to be verbally aggressive towards teachers. The experience of distance education has made this dynamic even more intense by increasing confrontational communication between school and family ([Bubb & Jones, 2020](#); [Kim & Asbury, 2020](#)).

Weakening of institutions and reduction of teachers' authority

Aggression towards teachers is part of a broader context of institutional mistrust and the social delegitimization of the school's role. Reduced institutional trust has been linked to difficulties in cooperation and a decline in teachers' prestige ([Andréou & Stalikas, 2010](#)). [McMahon et al. \(2014\)](#) suggest that the deliberate disempowerment of teachers' social roles is associated with an increased targeting of teachers, particularly those working in public schools. [OECD \(2019\)](#) findings indicate that education systems with low institutional trust in

teachers exhibit higher levels of school-family conflict. Since 2020, public questioning of educational policies appears to have reinforced dismissive rhetoric against teachers on the part of policymakers as an excuse for their own educational incompetence or poor educational decisions ([Billett et al., 2022](#)).

Dysfunctional school–family communication

The absence of institutionalized mechanisms for mediation and complaint management in the educational system, which are accessible to all members of the school community, increases the likelihood of conflicts escalating ([Koutouzis, 2008](#)). [Epstein \(2011\)](#) points out that a lack of structured, transparent communication in school settings reinforces conflict. [De Wet \(2009\)](#), on the other hand, argues that incidents of aggression escalate when there are no clear procedures for resolving disputes. At the same time, the extensive use of digital media has increased the frequency of both direct and conflictual encounters between parents and teachers ([Thompson et al., 2022](#)). However, the immediacy of communication is always positive, in contrast to the increase in conflict ([Stamatis, 2015](#)).

Psychosocial stress and family pressures: shifting responsibilities

During economic or other crises, sociological analyses have documented an increase in psychosocial pressures on families ([Maloutas, 2012](#)). According to the family stress model, economic insecurity is associated with increased irritability and a greater likelihood of aggressive reactions ([Conger et al., 2010](#)). Studies highlight a positive correlation between parental stress and aggressive behavior towards teachers. Post-pandemic studies have also documented an increase in both parental psychological distress and conflict incidents in the school environment ([Pressley, 2021](#); [Longobardi et al., 2021](#)).

Under conditions of increased family stress, there is often a shift in responsibility for a child's poor school performance from parents to teachers. This behavior can be interpreted in the context of defensive psychological mechanisms, particularly projection, as described by psychodynamic theory ([Kernberg, 1975](#)). The externalization of responsibility acts as a protective factor for parental self-image, preventing recognition of personal limitations or difficulties. Research findings indicate that in cases of low student achievement, the responsibility is systematically attributed to the teacher ([Riley et al., 2011](#)). Recent studies have confirmed that this practice contributes to maintaining positive parental self-concept, even through aggressive behaviors ([Billett et al., 2022](#)).

According to the main reasons mentioned above, parental aggression towards teachers seems to be a multifactorial phenomenon rooted in pedagogical, social, institutional and psychological processes. Understanding these mechanisms is crucial for designing

interventions that strengthen school–family cooperation, protecting teachers' professional status and contributing to creating a safe and supportive school environment. This environment is essential for teachers to carry out their duties without fear or distraction and focus on the multifaceted task of education.

Forms of parental aggression

Parental aggression towards teachers is a complex, multidimensional phenomenon that manifests in various forms and levels of intensity, ranging from mild interventions to extreme institutional and physical attacks. Systematically mapping these forms is necessary to allow for a detailed understanding of the extent, frequency, and qualitative variation of aggressive behaviors in the school environment ([De Wet, 2012](#)).

The most frequently documented form is *verbal aggression*. This includes name-calling, insults, and derogatory comments, shouting, and questioning a teacher's professional competence, either directly or indirectly. Verbal violence can occur during face-to-face meetings or via telephone or electronic communication, thereby widening its scope and intensifying the conflict ([Thompson et al., 2022](#)). Threats, whether explicit or implied, relating to consequences for services, denunciations or personal attacks also fall within this framework.

Psychological or moral aggression is of particular importance. It is characterized by less obvious and often indistinguishable manifestations that last longer. Examples include systematically questioning pedagogical judgement, constantly undermining professional credibility, disseminating negative comments within the school community, and attempting to isolate the teacher socially. This form of aggression has been associated with increased levels of teacher burnout and psychological distress ([Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2018](#)). Similar behaviors have been described as forms of moral harassment that undermine the school climate and the professional well-being of teachers ([Konstantinou & Kyriakidis, 2016](#)).

Another important category is *institutional or legal aggression*, which manifests itself through complaints to administrative authorities and appeals to higher administrative bodies, as well as lawsuits. Shifting conflict from the pedagogical to the legal sphere is linked to the legalization of school life, intensifying teachers' sense of insecurity while increasing their bureaucratic and psychological burden ([Olsen & Huang, 2020](#)). In the Greek educational context, this practice has been associated with the breakdown of trusting relationships between schools and families ([Papadopoulou, 2019](#)).

At the same time, *forms of social and public targeting* are emerging, particularly on social media. Public shaming, online defamation, and publishing teachers' personal details extend

the scope of conflict beyond the school and further victimize teachers ([Kyriacou & Zuin, 2016](#)).

In a smaller number of cases, except from one that are particularly worrying, aggression takes the form of *physical violence*. Although it is statistically rare, it includes pushing, shoving and manhandling, as well as other acts of *physical aggression*. These acts demonstrate a complete breakdown of institutional boundaries and an intense escalation of conflict ([Wilson et al., 2011](#)).

Finally, *interventionist aggression* manifests as persistent and coercive interference in educational work, without necessarily involving direct conflict. This includes requests to change grades, pressure to vary disciplinary measures, attempts to influence teaching methodology, and exerting pressure through administrative channels. Such practices distort role boundaries and undermine teachers' professional autonomy ([Addi-Raccah & Arviv-Elyashiv, 2008](#)).

Overall, parental aggression towards teachers takes many forms, ranging from *verbal and psychological violence* to *institutional, public and physical assault*. The phenomenon can only be studied systematically and interventions designed to prevent and deal with it.

Parental aggression impact on teachers

Parental aggression against teachers is rarely an isolated incident of interpersonal conflict. For many parents, it is a frequent and entrenched practice, negatively affecting teachers' professional and personal lives. The effects of parental aggression against teachers are felt both inside and outside the school environment, impacting their professional activities, psychological state, social relationships, and ultimately, their quality of life. Teachers who experience parental aggression feel that they are operating in an environment of increased pressure and insecurity, which significantly affects their daily life both at and outside of work ([De Wet, 2012](#)).

Systematic questioning of teachers' pedagogical and evaluative judgement by some parents, combined with verbal, institutional or legal attacks, often creates a climate of professional insecurity for teachers. According to [Addi-Raccah and Arviv-Elyashiv \(2008\)](#), teachers who work under the threat of complaints, disciplinary controls or legal proceedings believe that the exercise of their professional autonomy is directly affected. This has led to the emergence of defensive strategies in teaching practice, such as avoiding strict evaluations, loosening disciplinary standards, and being cautious when taking teaching initiatives, all with the aim of minimizing the risk of conflict with parents. Constant exposure to verbal or psychological abuse from parents also strains the work environment and undermines trusting

relationships between teachers, parents and administrators, weakening the cohesion of the school community ([Olsen & Huang, 2019](#)).

At an organizational level, parental aggression has been linked to an increased bureaucratic burden for teachers. This is because it often requires documentation, report writing and the management of administrative conflicts, which consumes valuable teaching time. Furthermore, psychological research indicates a clear correlation between teachers' exposure to aggressive behaviors and increased levels of burnout, anxiety and emotional exhaustion ([Cherkowski & Walker, 2018](#)). Repeated questioning of teachers' professional competence and role by parents is a form of abuse that can undermine their professional identity and self-esteem, leading to feelings of unworthiness and reduced professional satisfaction. In cases of prolonged or intense conflict, psychosomatic symptoms acting as a subconscious self-protection mechanism have been documented, such as headaches, sleep disturbances, gastrointestinal disturbances, increased irritability and tendencies towards emotional detachment from the educational task ([Parsons, 2005](#)).

The effects of parental aggression are not limited to teachers' workplaces; they often extend beyond professional environments. When conflict spills over outside the school, it becomes more difficult to let go of and intensifies the emotional burden. Public targeting via social media or the mainstream media has also been linked to heightened feelings of social exposure, a diminished sense of security, and a fear of stigmatization ([Englander, 2023](#)).

The emotional tension resulting from conflicts with parents can affect teachers' interpersonal relationships, limiting the quality of their family and social life, and leading to social withdrawal ([Dworkin et al., 2019](#)). In extreme cases, fear of further attacks or legal consequences can lead to a reluctance to participate in social activities, creating phobias and a constant sense of vigilance. These situations reduce teachers' psychological resilience and gradually weaken their mental and physical health.

Repeated experiences of aggression over time are associated with an increased intention to leave the school or even the teaching profession ([Olsen & Huang, 2019](#)). At the same time, the gradual weakening of the prestige of the teaching profession, combined with a sense of insufficient support from the state and institutions, reduces victim-educators' desire to remain in their profession. This has a negative effect on the retention and stability of human resources in education.

In conclusion, aggressive behavior from parents towards teachers has far-reaching consequences that affect multiple dimensions of teachers' professional and personal lives. The consequences range from destabilizing the school climate and exacerbating

professional uncertainty to causing significant psychological distress and transferring tension into personal and family life. Parental aggression is not usually limited to an individual incident of conflict; rather, it creates a stable environment of pressure by persistently forming an abusive context, which negatively affects the quality of educational work, professional satisfaction, and the long-term retention of teachers in their profession. These dimensions highlight the need for the systematic development of prevention mechanisms, institutional support and protection, and the cultivation of cooperative, mutually respectful relationships between schools and families.

Legislative protection and institutional framework

In several European countries, protection for teachers against aggressive behavior from parents and others has been embedded in clear, specific legislation as part of an organized, preventive regulatory framework. For instance, Germany has specific provisions addressing aggression against teachers and offers immediate legal support in cases of insults or physical assault ([BMJV, 2026](#)). In the UK, teachers are protected by the Education Act 1996, a key piece of legislation that regulates the structure, function and discipline of the education system in England and Wales. The Act outlines the rights and responsibilities of pupils, parents, and school authorities, as well as the responsibilities of teachers in maintaining order and ensuring the smooth running of the school. Together with national standards for bullying prevention and the Ministry of Education's ([Department for Education \(DfE\), 2019](#)) guidelines, as well as the support of strong trade unions, a coherent framework of institutional and legal protection for teachers is emerging.

The approach in the Nordic countries is more holistic. It involves institutionalized incident management protocols, counselling centers for teachers and digital systems for recording and monitoring violent incidents ([OECD, 2019](#)). Similarly, although national legislation is not always uniform and regional variations occur, countries such as Spain and Italy offer teachers criminal and administrative protection, with regulations that recognize their public status ([Calderón-Orellana et al., 2025](#)). Overall, these countries have more systematic and proactive institutional care aimed at reducing incidents of violence, enhancing professional safety, and ensuring educational quality.

Unlike the above examples, Greece does not have a single, specific regulatory framework for the institutional and legal protection of teachers and school principals. Instead, it emerges piecemeal from general administrative and criminal law provisions, as well as individual educational system regulations ([Papadopoulou, 2019](#)). Teachers in the public education sector are mainly subject to law 3528/2007 and law 5090/2024. Both laws are stipulating that the state must protect teachers while they are performing their duties. This protection applies

to acts directly related to the legitimate exercise of their duties and may include administrative coverage and legal assistance in cases of lawsuits or actions relating to pedagogical or administrative decisions, under certain conditions. However, this coverage is not automatically activated and often depends on the attitude of the administrative hierarchy. This leads to inconsistency in how similar incidents are dealt with and reinforces feelings of professional insecurity.

At a criminal level, Greek teachers are protected by the general provisions of the Criminal Code relating to insults, threats, bodily harm, and disruption to public services. While performing their duties, they are recognized as public officials, which may worsen the situation for the perpetrator in cases of aggressive behavior. However, this protection is primarily reactive and only comes into effect after the event. Many teachers avoid resorting to criminal proceedings for fear of exacerbating conflicts or due to the time-consuming and costly nature of the process in relation to their salary.

The Ombudsman plays a key role in examining cases of conflict between schools and parents, particularly when issues arise concerning boundary overstepping or the questioning of the pedagogical and administrative autonomy of school units ([The Greek Ombudsman, 2024](#)). While the Ombudsman's interventions are primarily mediation and advisory in nature, they help clarify the rights and responsibilities of those involved.

At the same time, trade unions such as the Greek Federation of Primary Education Teachers (DOE) and the Federation of Secondary Education Teachers (OLME) provide occasionally legal and institutional support to teachers who are the target of abusive lawsuits or public complaints. While this support is essential, it does not negate the need for a state protection regime designed specifically for this purpose. According to law 5130/2024, the Greek state only provides pedagogical measures to address parental aggressiveness (or that of students or others) against teachers. The state considers the school counsellor, school psychologist and school social worker to be the perfect team for providing specific psychosocial support to students, parents and teachers. Furthermore, the state believes that further teacher education/re-education in school mediation programs is sufficient for addressing complicated and critical incidents inside schools. According to the above statements, the government is not going to change anything or improve the current legislation to support teachers' security and dignity inside or outside schools.

To sum up this section, while several European countries have a clear, preventive and institutionalized framework in place to protect teachers from parental attacks, Greece's protection is fragmented and mainly based on general legislative provisions. The absence of

a comprehensive, specialized framework for protecting teachers exacerbates their sense of institutional insecurity, underscoring the necessity for enhanced institutional safeguards to bolster their pedagogical autonomy and enable them to perform their educational duties without hindrance.

Discussion

Violence against teachers is a global phenomenon with similar characteristics and outcomes. These experiences have a negative impact on teachers' well-being and affect their physical, mental and emotional health ([Berlanda et al., 2019](#)). Teachers' victimization is associated with low levels of connectedness to school and less job satisfaction ([Moon et al., 2019](#)). [Curran et al. \(2019\)](#) assert that teachers are more prone to attrition in the absence from school leadership support.

In the study by [McMahon et al. \(2014\)](#) teachers reported at least one form of victimization, which was related to property damage and physical harassment during the year that this research was conducted as well as the previous year. The above researchers categorized 11 forms of offenses into 3 categories of harassment (obscene comments, obscene gestures, verbal threats, cyberbullying), property damage (theft, property damage) and physical offenses (physical attacks that may result in seeking medical help, threat with a weapon, throwing objects). 94.4% of teachers reported having been victimized at least once. Of these, 37% were victimized by parents and 21% by colleagues. Insults from parents and colleagues were classified as harassment. 48% of teachers who had been victimized were victimized by two or more perpetrators. Gender was found to be associated with the risk of victimization. Teachers in rural and semi-urban areas were more likely to experience bullying than other forms of victimization.

According to [Martinez et al. \(2016\)](#), 861 teachers reported being victimized by parents once or more times. Violence from parents is more likely to be occasional, as teachers and parents do not interact daily.

In the study by [McHanon et al. \(2023\)](#), 54% of teachers had experienced written, verbal, or online harassment from a parent. These incidents included shouting, swearing, or slandering. 21% of teachers reported psychological distress, fear, or insecurity as a result of these incidents. The investigation of the physical safety parameter included threats of physical aggression from parents. Few incidents of physical violence were observed, however, teachers reported that these incidents were traumatic, harmful, and sometimes life-threatening. The most common forms of verbal violence reported by parents were pushing, grabbing, and throwing objects. Parent aggression was associated sometimes with grades

and academic decisions for students with disabilities. Parental offenses could lead to the feeling of helplessness and disappointment with the teaching profession. Teachers expressed that they would like more support from leadership and that the administration could deter parents' aggression in some instances.

The meta-analysis by [Badenes-Ribera et al. \(2022\)](#) showed that teachers are commonly verbally victimized by parents (they receive insulting comments for example), while physical attacks occur less frequently. The rates of victimization vary from study to study. According to the results of the meta-analysis, 15% of teachers reported insulting comments, 9% slandering and 4% shouting. At the same time, 4% reported offenses and less than 3% reported public humiliation and physical attack.

The research by [Dirzyte et al. \(2024\)](#) showed that the percentages of teachers who have experienced various forms of victimization are particularly worrying. The forms of victimization include bullying by teaching staff, verbal victimization by students' parents, and various forms of victimization by students. Over a third of teachers experience bullying by colleagues and verbal violence by students' parents. Teachers who have been victimized by colleagues are at increased risk of being victimized by students and parents. Teacher victimization is a multidimensional phenomenon that refers to various situations where teachers experience various forms of mistreatment, harassment or aggression in the workplace. These forms of violence are manifested by students, parents, colleagues or principals. Teachers are victimized by students' bad behavior that includes insults, disrespect, intimidation or verbal aggression. Teachers also face conflicts with parents that include arguments, accusations, and disrespectful behavior stemming from misunderstandings, academic concerns, or disagreements over teaching methods.

[Reddy et al. \(2025\)](#) assert that school climate, teacher/student relationship problems, student behavior problems, and positive parent-teacher relationships are predictors of verbal violence. Teacher characteristics, gender, race, and tenure did not appear to influence verbal victimization. Secondary school teachers are more likely to experience verbal violence. Moreover, teachers who teach in urban schools are more likely to experience verbal violence. Special education teachers are more likely to report experiencing at least one incident of physical violence. Violence against teachers is a public health problem with significant impacts on school staff, students, and community. 44% of teachers of the sample of [Reddy et al. \(2025\)](#) research had been victimized. The most common form of victimization was verbal. This was followed by property destruction and physical assault. Special educators are more vulnerable to incidents of violence. Positive school climate can prevent violence against teachers and promote teacher well-being.

As shown in the above paragraphs of this discussion section, the results of the present research are in line with the conclusions of other related studies and agree with them very much. This indicates that parental violence against teachers does not differ significantly internationally in terms of style, reasoning, forms or the impact of violence, despite such violence being almost impossible to be observed in schools in many countries due to tough legislation.

Concluding statements and proposed interventions

Parental aggression toward teachers constitutes a complex and multifactorial phenomenon that cannot be reduced to isolated interpersonal tensions but rather should be understood within a broader framework of pedagogical, social, institutional, and psychological processes. The analysis of its causes, forms, and consequences demonstrates that it is a dynamic process fueled by the questioning of teachers' evaluative and pedagogical competence, the reinforcement of overprotective and interventionist parenting patterns, the gradual weakening of the institutional authority of schools, dysfunctions in school–family communication, and the broader psychosocial pressures experienced by contemporary families.

Parental aggression manifests across a wide spectrum of forms, including verbal and psychological attacks, institutional or legal interventions, public targeting through digital media, and, in rarer cases, physical violence. This multiplicity highlights that the phenomenon may appear either as direct and visible conflict or as indirect and persistent undermining of teachers' professional roles. The escalation and recurrence of such behaviors create an environment of heightened pressure and insecurity, adversely affecting both the quality of educational practice and the overall functioning of school community.

The impact of parental aggression on teachers is particularly serious and multidimensional. At the professional level, it often leads to restrictions on pedagogical autonomy, the adoption of defensive practices, and increased administrative burdens, as the management of conflicts and complaints consumes time and energy that would otherwise be devoted to teaching. At the psychological level, systematic exposure to aggressive behavior is associated with elevated stress, emotional exhaustion, professional disengagement, and reduced job satisfaction. Furthermore, the spillover of conflict beyond the school context negatively affects teachers' personal and social lives, reinforcing feelings of devaluation and insecurity. Over time, repeated experiences of aggression may increase teachers' intentions to leave either their school unit or the teaching profession altogether, with broader implications for the stability and quality of the educational system. Teachers often feel totally exposed in great danger and insecure, especially in cases that lead to justice.

A comparative review of institutional frameworks indicates that, while several European countries have established clear, preventive, and well-organized regulatory systems to protect teachers, in the Greek context protection remains largely fragmented and derives mainly from general provisions of administrative and criminal law. The absence of a unified and specialized framework intensifies feelings of institutional insecurity and limits the systematic prevention and effective management of incidents of aggression. Some teachers suspect that the lack of interest shown by Greek governments in recent decades is due to their constant efforts to undermine the administrative function, teaching quality and learning effectiveness of public schools, in order to encourage students to move to better private schools, as parents seek a better school environment for their children.

In light of these findings, the development of a coherent and multi-level strategy to address the phenomenon is deemed necessary. At the institutional level, the establishment of a unified and clearly defined regulatory framework for the protection of teachers is required. Such a framework should include specific protocols for incident management, mechanisms for systematic data collection and monitoring, and the provision of automatic legal support in cases related to the lawful exercise of professional duties. Strengthening institutional clarity may also function preventively, discouraging arbitrary or abusive targeting practices.

Simultaneously, improving the communicative structure between schools and families constitutes a critical factor in de-escalating conflicts. The institutionalization of transparent complaint-management procedures, the clear delineation of roles and responsibilities, and the professional development of teachers and educational leaders in mediation and conflict-management skills can substantially contribute to the prevention of escalation. Moreover, fostering a culture of collaboration and shared responsibility through informative and participatory initiatives may strengthen mutual trust and respect among all stakeholders.

Equally important is the provision of psychosocial support structures for teachers who have experienced aggressive incidents, alongside the development of mechanisms for professional empowerment and resilience-building. Safeguarding teachers' mental health is a fundamental prerequisite for maintaining the quality and effectiveness of educational practice. Finally, the explicit recognition and institutional reinforcement of teachers' professional autonomy and status by the state constitutes a necessary condition for restoring public trust in schools.

Overall, parental aggression toward teachers reflects deeper social and institutional transformations and cannot be addressed solely through punitive measures. A holistic, preventive, and institutionally grounded approach is essential to ensuring a safe, stable, and pedagogically functional school environment – one that enables teachers to perform their

duties without obstruction and strengthens cooperation and trust between schools and families.

Limitations of the research

This study has some limitations. It focuses solely on the Greek educational context rather than considering the situation internationally. Consequently, the conclusions drawn from it are limited to Greece and cannot be generalized. Furthermore, this study is based on data derived from newspaper articles and texts published in public periodicals or on websites, which despite being generally reliable, may contain subjective elements reflecting the personal views of their authors.

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