

# Exploring the Root Causes of Violence in Secondary Schools in Cameroon: A Grounded Theory Perspective of Students from Six (6) Schools in Bamenda, North West Region of Cameroon.

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## ABSTRACT

School violence has emerged as a critical challenge affecting educational development and learner well-being globally, with increasing concern in sub-Saharan Africa. Cameroon has recorded increase incidents of school violence. Despite this surge, there are no empirical studies examining their underlying causes particularly from students' perspective and response approaches remain administrative.

This study explores the root causes of school violence in with focus on secondary schools in Cameroon using a qualitative grounded theory approach. To achieve this, the study researcher engaged 17 focus group discussions involving 335 students drawn from six secondary schools, including government, mission, and lay private institutions in the North West Region. Open-ended questionnaires were used to provide the participants with the opportunity to freely share their perspectives on the subject. The data collected through the focus group discussions was analysed using standard guidelines for grounded theory studies employing open, axial, and selective coding procedures.

Findings from the study reveal that school violence is provoked by a complex interaction of economic, personal, psychosocial, and school-related factors. Psychosocial factors particularly jealousy, anger, peer influence, and strained relationships emerged as the most dominant contributors. Based on these findings, this study concludes that school violence is largely relational and emotionally driven, underscoring the need for a more holistic and preventive responses rather than just administrative actions. The study recommends that address violence, policymakers, school administrators, and curriculum developers should proactively adopt a more holistic approach composing of psychosocial support, value-based education, and systematic monitoring mechanisms which are missing in most cases.

**Keywords:** School violence; Secondary education; Grounded theory; Psychosocial factors; Cameroon

## BACKGROUND

Violence in schools has become a growing global concern, undermining learners' academic performance, psychological well-being, and social development across diverse contexts. International bodies such as UNESCO and UNICEF consistently warn that school-related violence affects millions of children each year, with long-term consequences including trauma, reduced academic engagement, and diminished life opportunities. Recent global estimates indicate that “*an estimated 246 million children and adolescents experience violence in and around the school yearly*”, highlighting the scale and urgency of the problem.

In Cameroon, the situation mirrors global patterns but with unique contextual complexities. Reports from educational stakeholders and empirical studies reveal a troubling rise in violent incidents within secondary schools. According to David (2023), “*violence in secondary schools in Cameroon seems to be a pervasive problem which all stakeholders... have the daily task of dealing with*”. This emphasizes the disruptive impact of

violence on school functioning and safety. Similarly, Afor (2023) observes that despite institutional efforts, “the prevalence of school violence is still on a raise and the consequences devastating on the victims”. These findings underscore the persistence of the problem despite policy reforms, disciplinary measures, and community-based interventions.

Despite the rising prevalence of school violence, scholarly engagement with the phenomenon in Cameroon remains limited. Existing studies often prioritize administrative, disciplinary, or quantitative perspectives, leaving significant gaps in understanding the lived experiences, perceptions, and social dynamics that shape violent behaviour among learners. Noting other school violence include drugs & alcohol abuse, embarrassment from some teachers... bullying, corporal punishment, age, past traumatic experiences, peer influence, poverty, [and] negative family dynamics as major cause of violence, Afor (2023) states that school violence is a complex issues that cannot be fully captured through surface-level or policy-driven analyses.

This gap is particularly evident in the scarcity of qualitative, student-centred research capable of generating context-specific insights into how learners interpret, experience, and respond to violence within school environments. Without such grounded perspectives, interventions risk being misaligned with the realities of those most affected. Strengthening the body of qualitative research is therefore essential for developing evidence-based, contextually relevant strategies that address not only the manifestations of violence but also its root causes.

This study seeks to respond to this need by exploring the underlying drivers of violence in secondary schools from the perspective of students who constitute both perpetrators and victims. Using a grounded theory approach, the study intends to generate empirically grounded insights into the psychological, relational, and environmental factors that shape violent behaviour. The goal is to contribute to a deeper, context-sensitive understanding of school violence in Cameroon and to inform prevention strategies that resonate with the lived realities of learners.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Conceptualizing Violence in the School Context

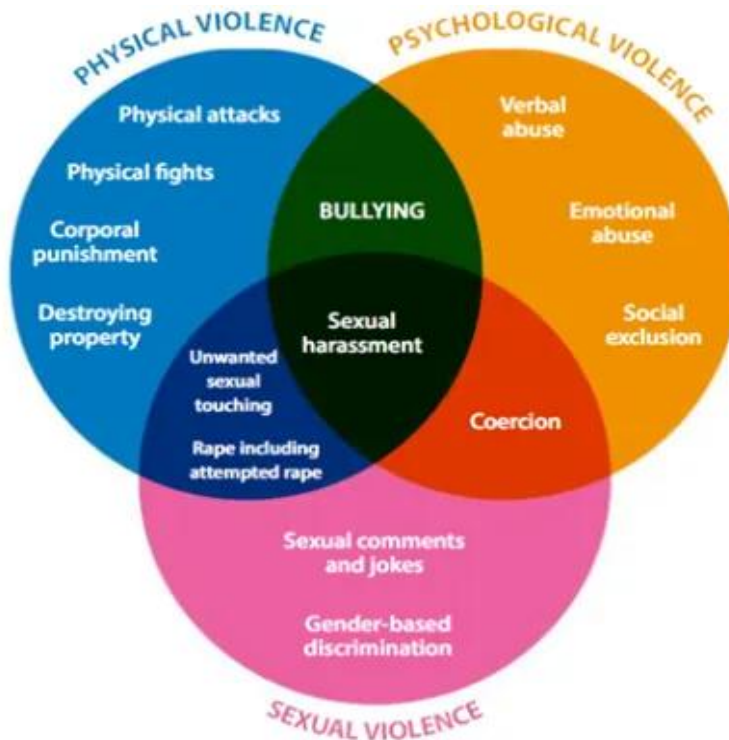
Violence has been widely recognized as a multidimensional and socially embedded phenomenon examined across sociology, psychology, public health, and education. The World Health Organization defines violence as “*the intentional use of physical force or power... that results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation*”(WHO, 2019). The United Nations adopts a child-centered framing, describing violence as “*all forms of physical or mental injury, abuse, neglect or exploitation, including sexual abuse*” (Pinheiro, 2006). According to a recent report by UNICEF, School violence is a widespread concern and occurs in all countries affecting many children and adolescents. The report conceptualizes school violence as acts occurring “*in and around schools, including on school premises, during commutes, and at school-related events*”(UNESCO, 2026) thus emphasizing that violence is not limited to physical aggression but can include psychological, sexual, and structural forms.

Scholars increasingly argue that school violence is relational rather than merely behavioral. Bluestein (2001) highlights that emotionally unsafe school climates normalize aggression and create environments where hostility becomes embedded in daily interactions. Similarly, other scholars have linked school violence to disciplinary practices, peer dynamics, and institutional culture, arguing that punitive or inconsistent disciplinary systems may inadvertently reinforce aggression.

In African contexts like Cameroon, school violence has been considered to be shaped by socio-economic pressures, cultural norms, and systemic educational challenges such as overcrowded classrooms, limited counseling services, and strained teacher–student relationships (David, 2023; Leberatus et al., 2025; Yurtal, 2014). Evidence from Cameroon reinforces this complexity. According to David (2023) “*violence in secondary schools in Cameroon seems to be a pervasive problem which all stakeholders... have the daily task of dealing with*”. In a related view, Afor (2023) emphasizes that “*the prevalence of school violence is still on a raise and the consequences devastating on the victims.*” These perspectives underscore the need for context-specific conceptualizations that account for cultural, institutional, and socio-political realities.

## Manifestations of Violence in Secondary Schools

Scholars hold that school violence manifests in multiple, overlapping forms reflecting the complexity of adolescents' social and emotional interactions. According to UNESCO school violence extends beyond physical aggression to include psychological, emotional, and sexual dimensions, many of which remain normalized or underreported.



(UNESCO, 2026)

Physical violence including fighting, hitting, kicking, pushing, and weapon use are among the most visible forms reported within the school milieu. According to Mayer & Leone (1999) argue that acts of physical violence are common in unsupervised spaces and are linked to interpersonal conflicts, retaliation, or competition. In recent years, Cameroon' educational sector have recorded several high-profile cases involving stabbings and fatal assaults (David, 2023).

Psychological violence expressed through insults, threats, mockery, humiliation, intimidation, and social exclusion is also common in the school milieu. Yurtal (2014) argues that emotional violence often has deeper and more enduring effects on learners' self-esteem and mental health than physical harm. This is justified by the fact that while it is less visible, emotional violence frequently persists unchecked within school cultures.

Bullying whether physical, verbal, relational, or cyber-based is equally gaining grounds within school settings. This is characterized by power imbalance and repeated aggression. Victims often experience anxiety, depression, school avoidance, and academic decline (Achuo & Dinga, 2024). Adolescents are particularly vulnerable due to heightened sensitivity to peer hierarchies and identity formation.

Sexual violence and harassment expressed through unwanted touching, coercion, sexual comments, and gender-based abuse remain pervasive and fast-growing form of violence yet underreported (Abraham, 2023). According to the United Nations, girls and gender-nonconforming students are disproportionately affected (Pinheiro, 2006). Teacher–student sexual violence, though less frequently documented, represents a severe abuse of power with long-term psychological consequences.

These forms of violence are mutually reinforcing. As Afor, (2023) observes, “*other causes of school violence include... embarrassment from some teachers... bullying, corporal punishment... peer influence, poverty, [and] negative family dynamics,*” illustrating how relational and structural factors interact to normalize aggression.

## Prevalence and Patterns of School Violence

Globally, UNESCO (2020) estimates that 246 million children experience school-related violence annually. In sub-Saharan Africa, prevalence is shaped by socio-economic inequalities, political instability, and limited institutional resources. Studies report high levels of bullying, corporal punishment, and peer aggression, often exacerbated by overcrowded classrooms and weak student support systems (Yurtal, 2014). Studies equally show gender disparities in the manifested of violence. Boys are more likely to experience physical violence, while girls face higher risks of sexual and emotional abuse (Abraham, 2023; Pinheiro, 2006)

Although Cameroon lacks comprehensive national statistics, available studies and administrative reports indicate rising incidents of student-to-student and student-to-teacher violence. For example, David (2023) documents cases where students fatally assaulted teachers and peers, noting that “*school violence... causes the school to be dysfunctional for a period of time.*”

Afor (2023) on her part, provides quantitative evidence showing that narcissism, substance use, and negative family dynamics contribute significantly to violent behavior. Her study found that “a combined 22% of the respondents could be labeled as mostly narcissists,” and that narcissism significantly predicted physical, sexual, psychological violence, and bullying. Mouafo & Ngamaleu (2024) argue that the significant increase of violence can be explained by numerous factors which are linked to the student, the school, the family and the community or society.

Research shows that crisis affected communities have higher prevalence. For example, over the past 9 years, the socio-political crisis in the North West and South West Regions has intensified stressors within school environments. Displacement, trauma, and insecurity heighten emotional tension and aggressive behavior among learners, contributing to elevated levels of school violence (Gladys Ngoran & Ngoran, 2016; Leberatus et al., 2025). Patterns of violence are set to vary by developmental stage, institutional culture, and community context. Adolescents in secondary schools face heightened vulnerability due to identity exploration, peer pressure, and emotional volatility. School systems with weak disciplinary structures or authoritarian cultures may experience higher levels of violence.

## Consequences of School Violence

School violence has profound psychological and emotional consequences for learners, often extending far beyond the immediate incident. Exposure to aggression be it physical, emotional, or sexual, has been proven to significantly increases the risk of anxiety, depression, trauma, and post-traumatic stress symptoms resulting to poor academic performance. Victims of school violence reportedly suffer from depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)... and in extreme cases it can lead to the loss of human lives (Afor, 2023).

According to Achuo & Dinga, (2024), school violence produces wide-ranging negative effects that undermine both individual well-being and the broader educational system. The author goes ahead to present four consequences of violence which can be linked to academic performance, institutional health and the society summarized as following.

1. Disruption of the teaching-learning process, which impacts negatively on both the student and teacher’s output, thereby leading to falling educational attainment rates,
2. Psychological, emotional and mental trauma, depression, frustration, perpetual disability and death of the victimized individual (learners, teachers, and school administrators), and this negatively impacts on the educational life of students,
3. Destruction of school property, thereby leading to huge financial burdens on the educational stakeholders, which inevitably weakens existing social ties among students, teachers, parents and the school administration, thereby making it difficult to foster peace within the school environment and,
4. Social unrest, high crime wave, school dropout, and loss of lives, which generally constitute an impediment to socioeconomic development of the country.

Global evidence supported by meta-analytic findings show that repeated exposure to violence is strongly associated with long-term emotional dysregulation and heightened vulnerability to mental health disorders

(Joshua R. Polanin et al., 2020). According to David (2023) school violence can render a school temporarily dysfunctional, noting that it “causes the school to be dysfunctional for a period of time.”

### **Theoretical Perspectives on School Violence**

Understanding school violence requires a multidimensional theoretical lens, as no single framework fully captures the complexity of aggressive behavior within educational settings. Social Learning Theory remains one of the most influential explanations. According to Bandura (1978), individuals learn behaviors including aggression through observation, imitation, and reinforcement. In school environments where students witness peers, teachers, or community members using violence to resolve conflict, such behaviors become normalized. Evidence from Cameroon based research supports this as it reveals that students exposed to humiliating disciplinary practices or aggressive peer interactions often reproduced similar behaviors, illustrating how modeled aggression shapes school culture (Afor, 2023).

The Frustration–Aggression Theory further explains how blocked goals, perceived injustice, or unmet expectations can trigger violent responses (Dollard et al., 1939). Research opinion holds that in many secondary schools, academic pressure, competition, favoritism, and inconsistent disciplinary practices create conditions that heighten frustration among learners. When these frustrations accumulate without constructive outlets, aggression becomes a coping mechanism. This perspective aligns with findings from David (2023) in which principals reported that poor academic performance and perceived unfair treatment often precipitated violent incidents among students.

Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory expands goes further situate school violence within the enlarged social systems. According to this framework, violent behavior emerges from interactions across the microsystem (family, peers, teachers), mesosystem (school–home relationships), exosystem (community influences), and macrosystem (cultural norms, socioeconomic conditions). Afor (2023) observes that “poverty, negative family dynamics, intoxicated communities, and peer influence” are major contributors to school violence, demonstrating how external stressors infiltrate school environments and shape student behavior.

Psychosocial and developmental perspectives strengthen this position by emphasizing the vulnerabilities of adolescence. This period is marked by emotional sensitivity, identity exploration, heightened peer influence, and increased susceptibility to risk-taking. The injury-related study by Christelle et al. (2014) reinforces this view, showing that adolescents with a “violent profile” commonly characterized by impulsivity, emotional instability, and risk-taking were significantly more likely to experience injuries and engage in aggressive behavior. These findings highlight the developmental roots of school violence and the need for interventions that strengthen emotional and social competencies.

Building on the above theoretical perspectives, we understand that school violence is not merely an individual behavioral problem but a multifactorial phenomenon. This is shaped by social learning, emotional processes, institutional dynamics, and broader ecological influences. Interventions thus requires response mechanisms to be tailored to address both the immediate school environment and the wider social contexts that shape learners’ experiences and behaviors.

### **Gaps in Existing Literature and Justification for the Study**

Despite growing talks and consciousness on school violence, significant gaps remain, in the areas of scholarly research especially in the Cameroonian context. Most researchers have often depended on quantitative surveys or administrative reports, which do not offer into the lived experiences and perspectives of students. This is further worsened by the fact that in Cameroonian socio-cultural landscape, children and adolescents are rarely provided with formal platforms through which they can express their views, articulate concerns, or participate meaningfully in decision-making processes that affect their daily lives. This absence of participatory structures both at home and within school governance limits opportunities for students to voice experiences of violence or challenge harmful norms. Consequently, these studies fail to capture the nuanced, lived realities of learners whose perspectives are systematically muted by broader cultural expectations of deference, silence, and adult authority. This study addresses these gaps by generating empirically grounded explanations of violence in secondary schools from students’ perspectives.

## METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative research design informed by grounded theory methodology, which is well suited for generating theory from systematically collected and analyzed data. Grounded theory was chosen because it enables the emergence of context-specific explanations of school violence based on participants lived experiences rather than imposing pre-existing theoretical assumptions.

The research was conducted in six secondary schools in the North West Region of Cameroon, including government, mission, and lay private institutions. These schools were selected to capture diverse educational environments and social dynamics. A total of 335 students participated in the study through 17 focus group discussions. To ensure equal participation opportunities, a random sampling technique was applied at both class and student levels. Each school designated a focal person who coordinated the recruitment process and facilitated the organization of the focus group sessions. Depending on school size and availability, some institutions hosted multiple focus groups while others conducted a single session.

Data collection was done using open-ended questionnaires administered during the focus group discussions. This approach allowed participants to freely express their perceptions, experiences, and interpretations of violence within their school environments aligning with the day to day realities and modes of expressions of students. The open-ended format encouraged rich, nuanced responses and supported the grounded theory emphasis on capturing participants' voices and meanings.

Data analysis followed the systematic coding procedures recommended in grounded theory. The process began with open coding, conducted first at the school level. For schools with multiple focus groups, data were harmonized into a single dataset representing that institution. Codes were generated based on their significance and recurrence across participants' narratives. The initial open coding process produced 50 codes. A subsequent review grouped similar codes, resulting in 32 refined codes. Axial coding was then used to identify relationships among categories, followed by selective coding to integrate the emerging concepts into a coherent explanatory framework. This iterative process ensured that the final theoretical insights were firmly grounded in the data.

Ethical considerations were central to the research process. Participation was voluntary, informed consent was obtained from all participants, and confidentiality was strictly maintained. No identifying information was collected or used in the analysis, ensuring that students' contributions remained anonymous and protected throughout the study.

## FINDINGS

Analysis of the 17 focus group discussions generated four major categories explaining the root causes of violence in secondary schools: economic factors, personal factors, psychosocial factors, and school-related factors. While each category contributed to the overall pattern of violence, their relative significance varied across schools. Economic and personal factors appeared primarily as *triggers*, whereas psychosocial factors emerged as the most dominant and recurrent drivers of violent behavior.

Core Category	Sub-Categories / Codes	Frequency Across Schools	Relative Significance
Economic Factors	Poverty	1/5 schools	Low
	Hunger	1/5 schools	Low
	Stealing	2/5 schools	Moderate
Personal Factors	Lies telling	1/5 schools	Low
	Drug use	3/5 schools	High
	Pride	3/5 schools	High
	Sexual anxiety	3/5 schools	High
	Selfishness	1/5 schools	Low
	Isolation	1/5 schools	Low
	Illegal possession of weapons	1/5 schools	Low
	Indecent dressing	1/5 schools	Low
	Exploitation	2/5 schools	Moderate

Psychosocial Factors	Bullying	2/5 schools	Moderate
	Discrimination	1/5 schools	Low
	Peer pressure	1/5 schools	Low
	Differences (age, sex)	1/5 schools	Low
	Anger	3/5 schools	High
	Frustration	1/5 schools	Low
	Trauma	1/5 schools	Low
	Mockery / provocative language	2/5 schools	Moderate
	<b>Jealousy</b>	<b>4/5 schools</b>	<b>Very High</b>
	Hatred	2/5 schools	Moderate
	Rumour	1/5 schools	Low
	Misunderstanding	1/5 schools	Low
	Wickedness	1/5 schools	Low
	Bad friends	1/5 schools	Low
	Lack of home training	1/5 schools	Low
School-Related Factors	Competition	2/5 schools	Moderate
	Admission of rough boys	1/5 schools	Low
	Lack of discipline	1/5 schools	Low
	Liberty	1/5 schools	Low
	Aggressive teachers	1/5 schools	Low

### Economic Factors:

Our studies revealed a category of factors which we grouped under economic factors. These factors we could consider as triggers for violence. Our studies brought out 3 codes under economic factors which were poverty, hunger and stealing. Among these three factors, stealing has a higher significance with a 40% rating. While there is yet to be a comprehensive study on the aspect of stealing in schools, those who have gone through school have been victims. Violent attitude can be developed by a student towards his or her peers triggered by the stealing of their items.

### Personal Factors

Student's personal factors can either make them violent or victims to violence. Our research revealed the following personal factors. Lies telling, drug use, pride, sexual anxiety, selfishness, isolation, illegal possession of weapons, indecent dressing, and exploitation. Among these factors, drug use, pride and sexual anxiety had a significantly higher effect with a rating of 60%. There is a steady increase in the number of drug users within the school milieu ranging from students to teachers.

### Psychosocial Factors

Our studies revealed that the highest risk factors associated to violence in the school milieu are related to psychosocial factors. Out of the 32 codes retained for the studies, 15 were associated to psychosocial factors. All of the 15 codes had an associated risk to violence ranging from 20-80%. According to Ankey, 1998, anti-social people are selfish and irresponsible people, who cannot empathize, violate social customs and laws, do not respect the rights of others. Because they are extremely comfortable and want instant gratification, they can easily commit crimes.

The fact that violence is expressed towards human being makes it a relational concept. Unhealthy relationships can actually provoke violent situation. This is justified by the fact that victims and perpetrators of violence always live in strain relationships. Several factors can account for strain relations within the school milieu, and which can be expressed through acts of violence.

Among all the psychosocial factors, jealousy was rated as the highest cause of violence in the school milieu with an overwhelming appearance in codes (4/5) giving a percentage of 80%.

Participants indicate that this is the major cause of violence in the school milieu. According to dictionary.com, jealousy is defined as resentment against a rival, a person enjoying success or advantages. According to Robert E. A. (2002), envy and jealousy are the biopsychosocial response patterns of the mental functions of perception, cognition, affect, and intention keyed to two basic conditions of human existence.

This can be seen as true because the school milieu is aside being a complex setting bringing learnings from different background is equally a competitive setting where everyone struggles to be at the top. Both learners and teachers are therefore exposed to the temptation of being jealous of each other of different reasons which could be lined to successes or advantages enjoyed by the other party. It should be noted that all human beings have jealousy tendencies and which if not controlled can be expressed in different ways including violence. This account to way both teachers and students are can be perpetrators of violence caused by jealousy.

From this understanding, it will be fair to say that violence in most of our school is an expression of excursive jealousy on the part of the perpetrator as a way of retaliating and attempts to deprive victims from the opportunities they enjoy.

### **School Related Factors**

In discussing the situation of violence in the school milieu, it is important to look at the school related. School related factors were considered as factors that are associated with the school set up or in its functioning making it vulnerable to violent occurrences. Our studies brought out the following codes which felt under this category; lack of discipline, liberty and aggressive teachers with all having an occurrence rating of 20%.

The dominance of psychosocial factors aligns with prior research emphasizing the relational nature of school violence. Jealousy, in particular, reflects competitive school environments where perceived inequalities in achievement, attention, or social status fuel resentment. Consistent with Anderson (2002), such emotions can escalate into aggression when unregulated.

The findings suggest that traditional punitive approaches may be insufficient. Instead, interventions must address emotional regulation, peer relationships, and school climate.

## **DISCUSSION**

The findings of this study reveal that school violence in secondary schools in the North West Region of Cameroon is primarily an emotionally driven relational phenomenon, shaped by a complex interplay of psychosocial, personal, economic, and school-related factors. This aligns with global and regional research showing that violence among adolescents is rarely the result of a single cause but emerges from layered social interactions, emotional triggers, and contextual pressures (Christelle et al., 2014; David, 2023; UNESCO, 2026). The prominence of psychosocial factors particularly jealousy, anger, mockery, and strained peer relationships, reveals the emotional related factors significantly shape violent behavior. This aligns with Anderson (2002) perspective that emotions such as envy and perceived disrespect can escalate into aggression when emotional regulation skills are underdeveloped.

The dominance of psychosocial factors in this study reinforces the relevance of Social Learning Theory and Frustration–Aggression Theory. Students frequently described violence as a reaction to provocation, humiliation, or perceived injustice, echoing Dollard et al. (1939) argument that frustration arising from blocked goals or unmet expectations can trigger aggression. The recurrence of mockery, provocative language, and peer pressure in the dataset suggests that school environments often function as social arenas where status, identity, and belonging are negotiated sometimes violently. This is aligns with Bandura (1978) perspectives where he suggest that aggression is learned through observation and reinforcement, particularly in contexts where peers model violent responses and where such behaviors are rewarded with social recognition or dominance which is common within education circles.

These findings also resonate strongly with Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory, which emphasizes that behavior is shaped by interactions across multiple social systems. Students’ references to poverty, negative

family dynamics, and “bad friends” illustrate how microsystem and mesosystem influences spill over into school settings. Afor (2023) argue that that poverty, peer influence, and negative family environments can contribute to school violence is reflected in the economic and personal factors identified in this study, even if they appeared less frequently than psychosocial triggers. The presence of drug use, pride, and sexual anxiety among the personal factors further underscores the developmental vulnerabilities of adolescence, a period marked by identity exploration, heightened emotional sensitivity, and increased susceptibility to risk-taking (Christelle et al., 2014)

School-related factors, though less dominant in the study, reveal important institutional dynamics. The study highlighted competition, lack of discipline, and aggressive teacher behavior as contributors to violence, echoed Mayer & Leone (1999)’ argument that students behaviors are highly influenced by school climate and disciplinary practices. This aligns with David (2023) study which observed that poor teacher–student relationships and weak institutional structures can exacerbate tensions and contribute to violent incidents.

Overall, the findings from this study reveals that school violence from the perspectives of study and within the context of the North West is not merely a behavioral issue but a relational and emotional process embedded within broader social, economic, and institutional systems. Considering the centrality of jealousy, anger, and interpersonal conflict, the study suggests that interventions must go beyond punitive measures to address the emotional and social competencies of learners. Instituting system for guidance and counseling, promoting positive peer relationships, and fostering emotionally supportive school climates are therefore very relevant in the fight against violence within the school milieu. The ecological nature of the identified factors underscores the need for holistic interventions that engage families, communities, and school authorities with the intention of not treating violence from its manifestation but rather exploring and addressing the root causes of violence.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study demonstrates that violence in secondary schools in Cameroon is primarily rooted in psychosocial and relational dynamics. Understanding and responding to the situation requires a close examination of the economic, personal, psychosocial factors of a person not ignoring the school related factors. While psychosocial factors have a significant associated risk, it is important to give importance to personal factors, school related factors and economic factors.

While personal factors and psychological factors may not apply to all students, the effect of social factors remains very high as all students are bound to relate event with those whose personal factors create an unconducive environment for them.

With an understanding of the above causes, there is need for educational stakeholders and authorities to tailor their responses towards addressing each of the cause categories but also addressing specific codes. Based on the findings, the following actions are recommended:

1. **Establish a School Violence Monitoring System:** Develop and implement periodic assessments to measure the prevalence, patterns, and emerging forms of violence in schools. Regular data collection will enable early detection of risk trends and inform targeted interventions.
2. **Integrate Violence Prevention and Social Cohesion into the Curriculum:** Design and implement a curriculum that educates students on non-violent communication, emotional regulation, conflict resolution, and the values of respect, empathy, and social cohesion.
3. **Develop and Promote Common Behavioral Standards:** Establish clear, school-wide behavioral expectations to reduce the influence of conflicting personal norms that may create dysfunction within the school environment. These standards should be collaboratively developed with students, teachers, and parents.
4. **Introduce Violence Thermometers or Scorecards:** Implement simple reporting and tracking tools that allow students and teachers to flag, document, and monitor acts of violence. These tools can help schools identify hotspots, track progress, and promote accountability.

## Limitation

This study was limited to schools in Mezam North West Region of Cameroon whose specificities are a little different from other regions of the Country as a result of the socio-political crisis. It should be noted that among the sectors highly affected by the crisis, the educational sector is top. For the result of this study to be applied in other regions of the country, it will require that a similar study be conducted in one or two region and a comparative analysis done to capture the situation of the country.

## Future orientations

This study exposed us to what we can consider the root causes of violence in the school milieu from the student's viewpoint. The root causes revealed by this study should serve as a foundation on which other researchers and explore looking at the specific root causes but equally the cause categories. For example, exploring into jealousy as a root cause for violence in the school can further give not only clarity but equally serve a basis to inform strategies on how to curb violence.

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