

4. Adolescents as Victims of Violence

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4.1 Introduction and purpose of the study

According to the German Police Crime Statistics, adolescents and older youths – individuals aged 14 to 20 – have the greatest prevalence of violent crime both as victims and perpetrators. Therefore various studies in Germany have addressed violence in this age group with special focus on prevalence and determinants of perpetratorship. These studies on violent behaviour as well as on victimisation have one limitation in common: They are not representative¹ for Germany, but only for specific regions (mostly cities or federal states) or types of school. In 2007 and 2008, the Criminological Research Institute of Lower Saxony conducted the first nationally representative self-report study among juveniles. Presenting the results of that study is the purpose of this paper.

The focus in the present study is on forms of physical violence that are prosecuted under criminal law and can therefore be compared with Police Crime Statistics. These violent acts are robbery, extortion, sexual violence and (aggravated) assault. In the survey we asked for committing such violent acts as perpetrator as well experiencing these acts as victims. Experience of victimisation in school context, which was already a subject of earlier studies (cf. e.g. Fuchs et al. 2005, Holtappels et al. 1997) is likewise included; assaults of this kind mostly take place in largely controlled surroundings, however, and are therefore likely to be of minor severity.

Three past studies shed initial light on violent behaviour of adolescents in Germany. In 1998, Wetzels et al. (2001) surveyed over 16,000 mostly ninth-grade adolescents in nine cities about their experience of violence. At least a fifth of adolescents reported that they experienced at least one of the above-mentioned forms of violence in the preceding year, but only a

1 Representative means that elements of a population (here: pupils in Germany) have been randomly selected (cf. Schnell et al. 2005, p. 304). With regard to past self-report studies, pupils were randomly selected only on the level of cities, regions or federal states but not for Germany in total.

small proportion of those offences were reported to the police. The risk of an offence being reported to the police was especially high for non-German perpetrators whose victims were of German origin. As this is a relatively common perpetrator-victim combination, rising crime rates in the Police Crime Statistics may be “seen as a phenomenon of violent delinquency becoming more visible because of an increase in the one perpetrator-victim combination that has the greatest likelihood of being reported” (Wetzels et al. 2001, p. 169).

Baier et al. (2006) confirmed this finding in a survey among over 14,000 adolescents carried out in nine cities and administrative districts. In this survey, victim rates in these areas ranged from 16.4 to 21.9 percent. About one in 25 adolescents also said they had experienced at least five violent acts. The most common form of violence was assault; the lowest rate was found for extortion. With the exception of sexual offences, victimization rates of boys are significantly higher in comparison to girls.

In 2006, Enzmann (2010) conducted a survey among 3,400 seventh to ninth grades adolescents (i.e. pupils aged 13 to 15) in seven German cities as part of the Second International Self-Report Delinquency Study (Junger-Tas et al. 2010). Enzmann (2010) reports that a third of all adolescents experienced at least one victimisation in the year before the survey, with theft being included in the survey alongside violence. Victimization rates in cities were much higher than in towns. Once again, incidents were rarely reported to the police (robbery: 15.4 percent, assault: 10.4 percent).

The findings from these studies, which are relatively similar with regard to prevalence rates of victimisation and violent behaviour, support the assumption that a nationally representative survey would produce similar results. The present study, however, extends the focus of previous studies in several ways and, by taking various aspects into account, provides a more comprehensive picture of victimisation experienced by adolescents in Germany. The central research issues addressed in this paper can be summarised in four points:

1. Based on extensive data, the paper starts with a detailed description of different kinds of violence experienced. The analysis is more detailed because it combines different groups (for example by gender and ethnic origin), covers different types of violent offence and also looks at various contexts in which victimisation takes place (victimisation at home, in school, etc.). With regard to criminal forms of victimisation,

the paper also aims to provide a comparison with the Police Crime Statistics.

2. The paper also addresses the question how violence has developed in the last decade on the basis of self-report survey data. This development shall be compared with Police Crime Statistics in order to investigate if violence has actually increased or has merely become more visible (in Police Crime Statistics). This can be answered by looking at a small number of cities where repeated surveys have been conducted. Although these repeated surveys are not sufficient to draw conclusions at national level, they allow inferring certain trends.
3. Due to the meaning of reporting behaviour for the ratio between reported and unreported crime, we further analyse the willingness to report violent acts to the police. The paper aims to determine the reporting propensity for various types of offence and trends in reporting behaviour in the four cities in which repeat surveys have been carried out. Additionally, we try to explain reporting behaviour by offence, perpetrator and victim variables.
4. In order to identify factors influencing violent offending, cross-sectional data is often used. This approach is legitimated by well-developed theories and numerous sets of empirical findings that provide longitudinal or experimental evidence of a directional relationship. With regard to violent victimisation theoretical explanatory approaches or empirically supported findings are almost completely missing. Nonetheless, this paper subjects a number of potential influencing factors related to violent victimisation to bivariate and multivariate analysis. Furthermore we will also investigate consequences of violent victimisation; this includes both short-term consequences (injury and material loss) and long-term consequences (well-being).

4.2 *The samples*

The empirical analysis in this paper is based on written standardised surveys among ninth grade pupils² conducted by the Criminological Research Institute of Lower Saxony in various regions of Germany at irregular intervals since 1998. Questionnaires were completed in the classroom in the

2 In Germany ninth-grade pupils are usually aged between 14 and 16 years.

presence of a test leader and usually the teacher. Ninth-grade pupils are chosen because a representative survey can be achieved with lower effort and this is an age group with particularly high exposure to violence both as perpetrators and victims. After ninth grade, educational careers diverge rapidly: Some leave school and enter vocational training, others leave school without a training place, and some stay at school to achieve a higher secondary school leaving qualification. With some exceptions (i.e. truants, those who are ill at the day of the survey), nearly all adolescents can be achieved in such a survey. Ninth-grade surveys are designed to be representative for the survey region – usually towns and cities or administrative districts. Representativeness is achieved either by including all ninth-grade classes in the survey or selecting classes to survey at random from a list of all classes. The survey always aims to cover a large number of pupils to produce reliable findings about offences that occur rather seldom. As entire classes are included in the survey, very high response rates are achieved of at least 50-60 percent.

Two samples are selected for the analysis (Table 4.1): A nationally representative survey of school students in Germany and a repeated survey in four German towns and cities. With regard to the repeated survey the same age cohort (ninth grade pupils) but not the same pupils were interviewed twice, i.e. this is a trend and not a longitudinal sample. The national schools survey took place in 2007 and 2008 in a total of 61 randomly selected administrative districts, towns and cities in Germany (cf. Baier et al. 2009 for further details on the study). The survey reached 44,610 adolescents. The trend study was conducted in 1998 and 2005/2006 in three major cities and one town.³ The first survey covered 7,205 pupils and the second survey 8,490 pupils (cf. Baier 2008). The composition of both samples does not perfectly match that of the statistical population in terms of school type. Thus a weighting factor was constructed to correct any imbalance (i.e. if too many grammar schools were surveyed in a given area). If not explicitly mentioned the following analyses are based on weighted data.

3 Only in Hannover the repeated survey was conducted in 2006.

Table 4.1 Sample description

	Schools survey 2007/2008	Trend survey	
		1998	2005/2006
Representativeness	Nationwide	4 towns and cities (Munich, Stuttgart, Hannover, Schwäbisch Gmünd)	
Number of respondents	44,610	7,205	8,490
Percentage male	51.3	51.9	51.2
Average age	15.28	15.07	15.16
Percentage with migrant background	27.4	32.2	31.7
Percentage from major city	13.5	96.1	95.8
Percentage attending grammar school (<i>Gymnasium</i>)	29.8	38.9	41.0

In the various samples, about half of respondents were male and the average age is slightly more than 15. The samples differ substantially in some cases with regard to other socio-demographic characteristics. The trend survey almost exclusively comprises pupils from major cities with a population of at least 500,000; in the representative survey, only 13.5 percent of the pupils come from such cities. Grammar schools account for 29.8 percent of schools nationwide but approximately 40 percent of schools in the trend survey. In the representative survey, 27.4 percent of pupils have a migration background, i.e. at least one biological parent does not have German citizenship or was not born in Germany. The percentage reported for the trend survey is somewhat higher but is comparable to that for the nationwide survey as nationality is determined solely by reference to the respondent's current nationality or nationality at birth. This solution had to be taken out of necessity on account of migrant background being recorded differently in different years. In other surveys among pupils in major German cities, migrant background was recorded the same as in the representative survey, resulting in proportions of migrants around 40 percent or more (e.g. Baier/Pfeiffer 2011 for Berlin, Rabold et al. 2008 for Hannover).

4.3 Findings

4.3.1 Prevalence of violent victimisation

Violent victimisation was measured by three different questions: First, pupils were asked about criminal victimisation, second about victimisation in school and third about parental violence. The focus always was on physical assault; verbal or relational forms of aggression⁴ were only asked with regard to the school context. The findings on criminal violent victimisation will be presented first; this form of victimisation can be compared with Police Crime Statistics. The following analyses are based on the national representative survey.

Adolescents were asked about their experience of victimisation with the question “Has anyone ever been violent towards you, have you ever been a victim of violence?” and, by way of explanation, “We do not mean situations where you have fought with others for fun.” This was followed by questions on five offences:

- Robbery: “Something was violently snatched from you or taken from you with the threat of violence such as your bag or money.”
- Extortion: “Someone demanded that you hand over money or things (such as a jacket or a watch) and threatened you with violence if you did not hand them over.”
- Sexual assault: “You were forced with violence or under threat of violence to perform sexual acts or to tolerate sexual acts.”
- Aggravated assault: “You were intentionally injured with a weapon or an object or several others intentionally hit you so hard that you were injured.”
- Assault: “A single person intentionally hit you so hard that you were injured (e.g. with a bleeding wound or a black eye). No weapon or object was used.”

With regard to these offences, respondents were asked about lifetime prevalence (whether or not they had ever experienced these offences), the number of attacks in the last twelve months (twelve-month prevalence/twelve-month incidence) and the age in years at which they first experi-

4 Relational aggression means behaviour intended to harm others through damage of their peer relationships, for example by spreading rumours or exclusion from common activities (cf. Crick 1995).

enced the offences. The results are presented in Table 4.2. In addition to the individual offences, a catch-all ‘violence’ category is also reported. This indicates whether someone experienced at least one of the five offences and at what age any one of the offences was experienced for the first time.

With regard to sexual assault, 2.2 percent of students said they had experienced at least one act in their life; assault was significantly more frequent (20.1 percent). Almost a third of respondents experienced criminal victimisation at least once (30.5 percent) in their life so far. The twelve-month prevalence is about half of these figures. No less than 16.8 percent of pupils experienced at least one violent offence in the past year. Pupils victimised in the past twelve months were assaulted on average between 2.60 times (robbery) and 4.59 times (sexual assault). This does not mean that a majority experienced repeated victimisation; between 49.2 and 61.0 percent of victims (according to the offence) were victimised only once in the preceding year; the higher means are due to respondents who were victimised on a large number of occasions.⁵ The fact that it is mostly sexual assaults that tend to be repeated is shown by the percentage of pupils who were victims of offences on at least five occasions: For sexual assault this figure is 26.5 percent, while for robbery and extortion it is only 12.6 percent; i.e. one in four respondents who experienced sexual assault did so at least five times in the past year. Such victims only account for 0.3 percent of all students, however, sexual assaults are the least common form of offence. Of all respondents, 3.9 percent stated that they had experienced violent assaults five times or more in the past twelve months.

On average, violent victimisation is first experienced around the age of twelve. Notably, the stated ages at first victimisation are somewhat lower than in surveys that are representative of the entire population and include older age groups. The adolescents surveyed have an average age of 15; those who have had no experience of violence so far may yet do so at some point in the future, which would increase the average age at first victimisation. The age at first victimisation is lowest for robbery (11.53 years) and highest for aggravated assault (12.76 years). The survey also records the average age at which the various crimes are perpetrated. Perpetration was recorded elsewhere on the questionnaire analogously to vic-

5 The reported incidence figures are an underestimate because respondents were only able to state up to 20 incidents of victimisation. Answer categories were 0, 1, 2,... to ‘20 or more times’.

timisation. The prevalence rates for perpetration are somewhat lower (cf. Baier et al. 2009, p. 64); for example, only 13.5 percent of respondents have perpetrated at least one violent offence. The average ages at first offence are significantly higher; only for assault the difference is about six months. This does not necessarily mean that victimisation is a causal factor of later offending. Firstly, any such relationship would have to be examined with longitudinal data. A number of studies are able to confirm a directional relationship of this kind (cf. Baier 2013, Schwartz et al. 1998). Secondly, the victims and perpetrators group in cross-sectional surveys are not usually identical. The comparison of age at first victimisation and first offence would at least have to be restricted to respondents who are both victims and perpetrators. Applying this to the sample used here shows that for the various forms of offences, victimisation preceded perpetration in at least 40 percent of cases; it is rarer for the two to come in the opposite order or at the same age. Thus, experience of victimisation seems to precede offending rather than the other way round.

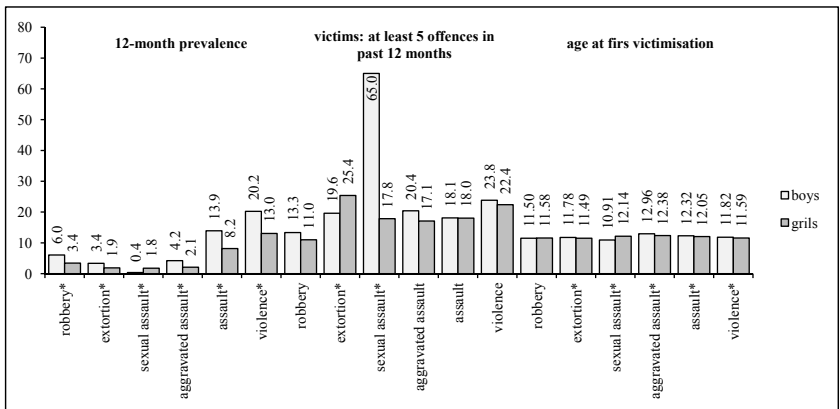
Table 4.2 Prevalence rates and age at first victimisation for various offences (percent or means)

	Lifetime prevalence	12-month prevalence	Incidence in past 12 months	Victims: at least 5 offences in past 12 months	Overall: at least 5 offences in past 12 months	Age at first victimisation	Age at first offence
robbery	10.6	4.8	2.60	12.6	0.6	11.53	13.30
extortion	5.9	2.6	3.46	21.5	0.6	11.68	13.57
sexual assault	2.2	1.0	4.59	26.2	0.3	11.98	13.55
aggravated assault	5.4	3.2	3.31	19.3	0.6	12.76	13.71
assault	20.1	11.1	3.08	18.1	2.0	12.23	12.85
violence	30.5	16.8	4.21	23.3	3.9	11.74	12.81

There is a marked gender gap with regard to both prevalence rates and the age at first victimisation, as shown in Figure 4.1. With the exception of sexual assault, male respondents experienced the various forms of violent offences significantly more frequently than girls in the past twelve months. At least one violent offence in the past twelve months was reported by 20.2 percent of boys compared with 13.0 percent of girls. However, the first experience of violence tends to come at a somewhat earlier age for girls than for boys, at least with regard to extortion, aggravated assault and assault. This could be a milieu effect: Girls who experience violence

may grow up more frequently in social milieus where physical violence is more widespread. Confrontation with violence then tends to come at an earlier age. With boys, in contrast, experience of violence is not concentrated on such milieus, but is an experience that belongs to the world of male children and adolescents across all groups. Where boys and girls become victims of violence, there is scarcely any difference with regard to frequency: 23.8 percent of male victims and 22.4 percent of female victims reported having experienced five or more violent offences. An exception is experience of sexual assault, where substantially more male victims than female victims stated they had been assaulted on repeated occasions (65.0 percent versus 17.8 percent). Boys are thus significantly less frequently exposed to sexual assault; when they are, however, in most cases it is on multiple occasions.

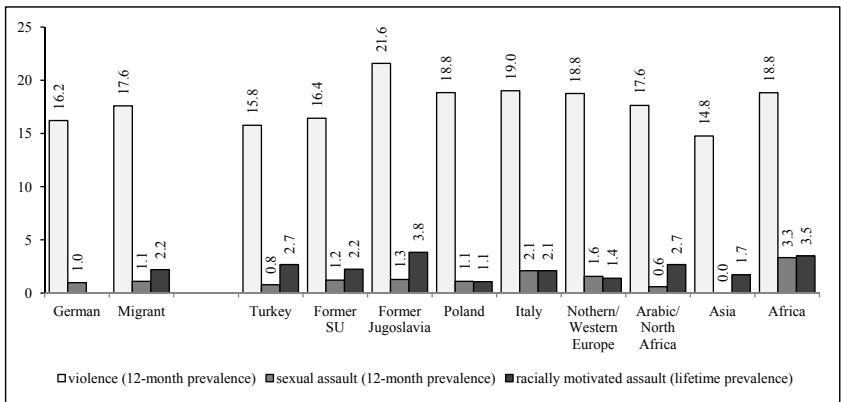
Fig. 4.1 Prevalence rates and age at first victimisation for various offences, by gender (percent or means; *differences significant at $p < .05$)



The differences in victimisation rates between the various ethnic groups are not as pronounced as the gender differences (Figure 4.2). Comparing German respondents against respondents with a migrant background, the percentages who have experienced at least one violent offence are 16.2 percent versus 17.6 percent. The rates are also similar if sexual assault is looked at separately (1.0 percent versus 1.1 percent). Looking at the data for specific ethnic groups, more differences in violence rates can be found. Migrants from Asian countries have the lowest prevalence rate for assault

(including sexual assault) in the past year, and migrants from countries of the former Yugoslavia the highest; sexual assault is experienced most frequently by African adolescents. Prevalence rates for the two largest migrant groups living in Germany – Turkish students and students from countries of the former Soviet Union (SU) – are equal to those for their German schoolmates. Figure 4.2 additionally shows the percentage of migrants who have experienced racially motivated assaults (hate crimes) at least once in their life.⁶ This type of offence was included in a questionnaire module addressed solely to migrants (cf. Baier et al. 2010, p. 41ff). Of all migrants, 2.2 percent said they had been injured this way in their lifetime to date. Once again adolescents from countries of the former Yugoslavia have the highest prevalence rates while Polish adolescents rarely experienced this kind of violent behaviour.

Fig. 4.2 Prevalence rates of various offences by migrant background (in percent)

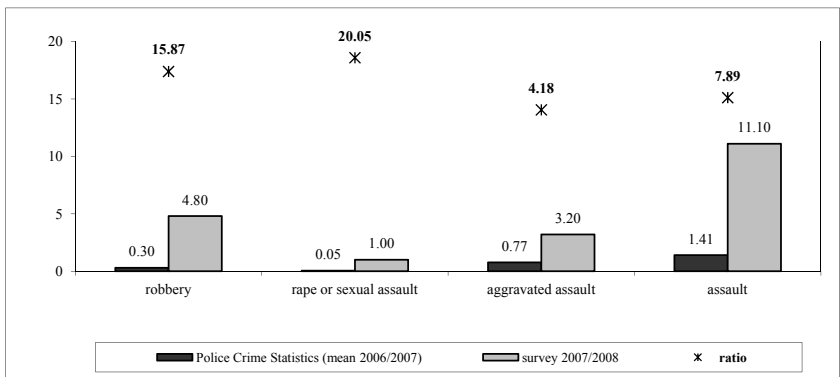


The offences were described in the questionnaire in such a way that comparison is possible with data on offences in the Police Crime Statistics. Among other information, the Police Crime Statistics state the number of adolescent (age 14 to 17) victims of criminal offences and in particular violent offences. The way the data are collected is nonetheless not fully compatible: In self-report studies, respondents ultimately decide how they

6 The question in the questionnaire was “I was hit and injured because I am not a native German.”.

classify a given experience; the classification of criminal acts in the Police Crime Statistics is the responsibility of police officers largely working to objective criteria. The Police Crime Statistics do not have a standardised classification for extortion; hence no comparison is made with regard to this form of offence.⁷ Comparison of reported crime and self-report data shows that prevalence rates are at least four times higher in self-report data. Aggravated assault is reported to police by only 0.77 percent of adolescents, whereas in the survey, 3.2 percent said they had experienced such an injury. The discrepancy is particularly large for rape, which is stated 20 times as often in the self-report survey as it is reported to the police. For robbery, too, there is a considerable difference between the two sources. The key factor in the discrepancy between reported and unreported crime is reporting behaviour. Not all offences committed are reported to or discovered by the police. People appear to be least inclined to report offences in the case of violent sexual offences. As victims' reporting behaviour was asked about in the survey, these assumptions can be empirically investigated (see below).

Fig. 4.3 Prevalence rates for various offences in the Police Crime Statistics and in the 2007/2008 schools survey (in percent)⁸



7 Extortion is recorded in the Police Crime Statistics under both category 6100 (extortion) and category 2100 (robbery, extortion accompanied by violence, and assault on motorists with intent to rob).

8 As respondents were asked in the questionnaire to state victimisation experienced in the past twelve months (i.e. in 2006 and 2007), the figures were taken from the Police Crime Statistics for 2006 and 2007.

Spotlight 1: School violence

The school is a special social space for adolescents. They spend a substantial part of their day there, are mostly together with others of their own age but are almost constantly under adult supervision. On the one hand it should therefore come as no surprise that when peers of the same age are frequently together, conflicts can arise that may be played out with violence. On the other hand, the adult supervision ought to prevent such conflicts from taking a serious course. Physical assault represents only one part of the potential forms of escalation. Damage to property, theft and more subtle types of aggression (such as relational aggression) also play a part. To take in the full range of aggressive acts, five school-related forms of victimisation were asked about, including victimisation by teachers as well as by schoolmates:

- Physical violence: This was covered by answers relating to two items: “I was intentionally hit or kicked by schoolmates” and “Schoolmates blackmailed me or forced me to hand over money or things.”
- Damage to property: Pupils were asked here to answer how frequently “schoolmates deliberately damaged their things.”
- Relational aggression: Three items in the questionnaire relate to this form of aggression (“Schoolmates teased me or said bad things about me”, “I was excluded from common activities because schoolmates wanted it that way” and “Schoolmates acted as if I was not there and deliberately ignored me”).
- Mental violence by teachers: Pupils were asked if they were made a laughing stock in front of schoolmates or if a teacher had been really mean to them.
- Physical violence by teachers: Pupils were asked here if they had been “hit by a teacher”.

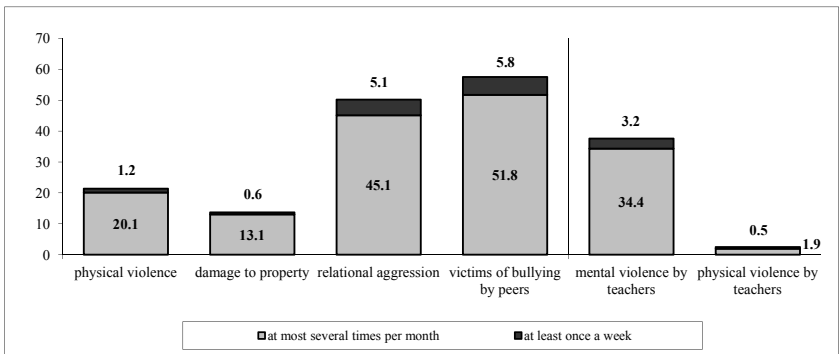
The answers were intended to relate to the past half school year and could be given on a scale from ‘never’ to ‘more than once a week’. If a form of aggression was measured across several items, the maximum was recorded.⁹ Figure 4.4 shows the proportion of adolescents who experienced the various forms of violence at most several times a month and the proportion of adolescents who experienced that at least once a week. An overall

9 For example, if a pupil was teased but not excluded, the answer for teasing was recorded in the relational aggression index.

bullying index is also shown, stating how many adolescents experienced at least one form of violence (from peers, not from teachers).

A total of 21.3 percent of respondents said that they were exposed to physical violence, with about one in 80 pupils (1.2 percent) saying that they had such experiences more frequently (at least once a week). Damage to property was less frequently and relational forms of aggression were significantly more frequent. Over half of all pupils were subjected to at least one form of violence in the past half school year, with 5.8 percent exposed to frequent bullying. At an average class size of 20, this means that on average there is one bullying victim per class. Attacks by teachers are likewise no exception, although they mostly take verbal form: 37.6 percent of pupils said they had experienced verbal denigration (mental violence), while 2.4 percent reported physical violence by teachers.

Fig. 4.4 Prevalence rates for school violence (in percent)



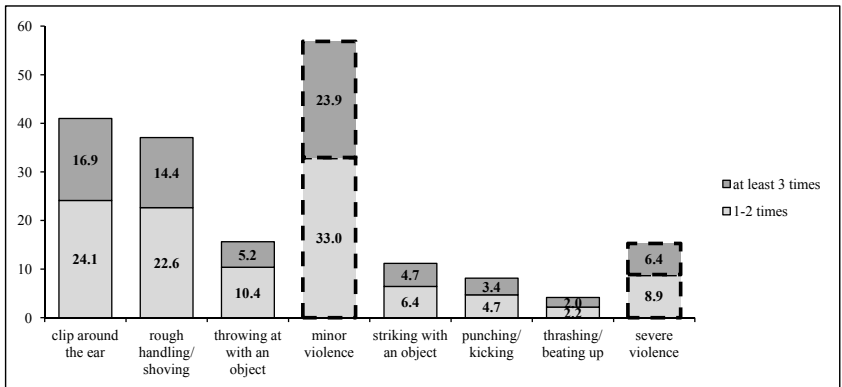
Physical forms of violence occur more frequently at lower school types (*Hauptschule*) than higher school types (grammar school/*Gymnasium*). However, pupils at higher school types more frequently reported having been victims of relational aggression (by schoolmates or teachers). A similar effect can be observed for gender: Girls experience physical violence significantly less frequently than boys but show a higher prevalence of relational aggression by schoolmates.

Spotlight 2: Parental violence

In addition to victimisation in school, the survey also provides information on experiences of violence in the family, dealt out by the parents. Pupils

were asked to say if their father or mother showed any of the behaviours in Figure 4.5 before they reached the age of twelve; the items are based on the conflict-tactic scale according to Strauss (1979). The various forms of violence are asked about separately for the father and the mother; in the following, however, the two items are combined by taking the maximum response, i.e. if a pupil experienced violence from the father but not from the mother, the answer for the father is included.¹⁰ The frequency was scored on a scale from 1 (never) to 6 (several times a week). As choices upwards of 4 (several times a month) were selected very rarely, Figure 4.5 only distinguishes between sporadic (once or twice) and recurring (three times or more) experience of violence. The various forms of violence are compiled into two index values. The ‘minor violence’ index comprises the first three items and the ‘severe violence’ index the remaining three. Once again, the maximum value was coded in each case. In other words, if a pupil only received a clip around the ear but not rough grappling or throwing of an object, the value for the clip around the ear was included in the index.

Fig. 4.5 Childhood experience of various forms of parental violence (in percent)



10 The correlations between the answers in relation to respondents’ mothers and those in relation to their fathers are at least .40 (Person’s r). Separate analysis by parent gender also show that mothers and fathers display violence towards children in almost identical ways (Baier et al. 2009, p. 53).

As Figure 4.5 shows, the majority of respondents reported at least minor violence in childrearing, with 56.9 percent of adolescents saying they had experienced such violence, mostly in the form of a clip around the ear or being roughly handled. Somewhat more adolescents reported one or two acts than more frequent incidents. No less than one in seven adolescents (15.3 percent) experienced severe violence in childhood, with 6.4 percent experiencing such violence at least three times.

Male and female respondents do not differ concerning intrafamilial experience of violence. Both sexes reported both minor and severe parental violence with equal frequency. There are pronounced differences, however, between ethnic groups: While only 11.4 percent of native Germans reported having experienced severe parental violence at least once, the equivalent figure for students with migrant backgrounds is more than twice as high at 25.2 percent. The lowest rates can be found for Northern and Western European adolescents (15.9 percent) while Asiatic, African and Turkish adolescents have particularly frequent experience of such violence (above 27 percent).

There is a close correspondence between being a victim of violence in the family and being subject to violent victimisation elsewhere. This connection is even stronger for female respondents than for male respondents, confirming findings that the experience of parental violence generally appears to have more serious consequences for girls (for example with regard to the risk of becoming perpetrators of violence themselves; cf. Baier 2011). Girls with more frequent (at least 3 times) experience of severe parental violence in childhood have a higher violent victimisation rate in terms of criminal offences than boys (38.6 versus 34.2 percent); these rates are also at least twice as high as for respondents without experience of parental violence (10.2 percent for girls, 18.4 percent for boys). The connection is likewise confirmed for school violence, although in this case girls subjected to intrafamilial violence do not attain the same level as boys. Various reasons can be put forward why victims of violence tend to become repeat victims. One possible explanation is that adolescents who experience violence at home seek out friends and free time activities with a certain affinity to violence. It is also possible that the experience of violence shapes the personality in such a way (with low self-esteem and timidity) that perpetrators preferentially seek out such individuals as victims.

4.3.2 Trends in violent victimisation

According to the Police Crime Statistics, the number of adolescents who became victims of violent crime increased significantly between 1997 and 2005, from 32,423 to 39,432, but then decreased again to 30,953 in 2010.¹¹ As the number of adolescents in Germany decreased between 2005 and 2010, it is not accurate to compare absolute victim numbers. Instead, these must be placed in relation to the number of adolescents, which is done by stating the number of victims per 100,000 population – in this case the number of adolescents becoming victims of a criminal offence per 100,000 of the same age group. The number of victims per 100,000 rose from 886.5 (1997) to 1,019.3 (2005) and then decreased only slightly up to 2010 (955.8). Victimization risk thus increased between 1997 and 2005 for adolescents in Germany regardless of how the figures are looked at. These two years have been chosen for analysis because the trend sample surveys were carried out in 1998 and 2005/2006 to collate twelve-month prevalence figures that consequently related to the years 1997 and 2004/2005. Looking at individual violent offences, however, the conclusion that there has been a general rise in victimisation risk cannot be maintained: For robbery-related offences, the number of victims per 100,000 decreased over the period in question (from 381.8 to 291.0); there has only been an increase in the number of victims per 100,000 for rape (from 41.5 to 51.9) and aggravated assault (from 457.3 to 673.2).¹²

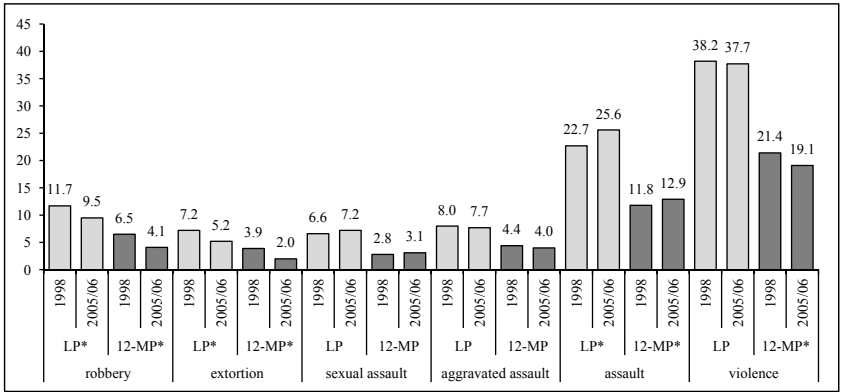
The self-report survey findings (which only relate to four towns and cities) contradict the trends in the Police Crime Statistics in several ways (Figure 4.6). Firstly, the percentage of adolescents who have experienced at least one violent offence in the past year has decreased from 21.4 percent to 19.1 percent. Secondly, both for sexual assault and aggravated assault, victimisation rates prove to be broadly constant with no perceptible increase. Thirdly, prevalence rate for assaults shows only a slight increase from 11.8 percent to 12.9 percent. Fourthly, prevalence rates for robbery fell even more steeply on the basis of the self-report survey data than in the reported statistics (from 6.5 percent to 4.1 percent). Generally speak-

11 In the Police Crime Statistics, the violent crime category covers murder and manslaughter, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault; this only partly corresponds with the violent offences covered in the survey of students.

12 Assaults, which are not classified as violent crime in the Police Crime Statistics, likewise shows an increase (from 811.0 to 1,275.7).

ing, the self-report survey findings allow a less dramatic picture to be painted than do the Police Crime Statistics. Youth violence remains broadly constant or is on a slight decreasing trend; there is no sign of any sharp increases. These discrepancies between official crime statistics and self-report survey data can largely be explained by trends in reporting behaviour (see below).

Fig. 4.6 Prevalence rates for various offences, by survey year in percent; LP: lifetime prevalence; 12-MP: 12-month prevalence; * differences significant at $p < .05$)



With regard to school violence, comparison of the survey years shows only a slight decrease in relational forms of aggression (cf. Baier 2008, p. 29ff). Experience of parental violence, on the other hand, shows a significant decrease: In 1998, 59.1 percent of adolescents said they had experienced minor or severe parental violence in childhood, in 2005/2006 the figure was down to 48.2 percent (Baier 2008, p. 50). Both German and migrant families display declining trends. The improvement is largely restricted to minor forms of violence, however; there are only small (insignificantly) differences between severe forms of violence reported in 2005/2006 and in 1998 respectively. The finding that there has been a decrease in parental violence (and especially minor forms of violence) is in line with surveys among other age groups. For example, comparison of two victim surveys representative of the German population (age 16 to 40) in 1992 and 2011 shows nonviolent childrearing to have increased from 26.4 percent to 52.1 percent (minor violence down from 58.4 percent to

36.0 percent; severe violence from 15.2 percent to 11.9 percent).¹³ A decrease in the experience of parental violence also emerges on analysis of the various age groups from the 2011 victimisation survey (Pfeiffer 2012).

Analysis of the trend sample can also rebut two further assumptions about changes in youth violence: Firstly, there are no indications that adolescents are showing greater brutality today when they exercise violence. In fact, the opposite trend applies. In cases of assault, the number of victims who have to seek medical attention for their injuries is decreasing (cf. Baier 2008, p. 24). The second assumption is that girls are now more frequently involved in violence, not only as victims but also as perpetrators. The data show on this point that both the victimisation and offense rates are falling both for boys and for girls, with the gender gap remaining largely constant (see Baier 2008, p. 22 and 29).

4.3.3 *Phenomenological description of assaults and of reporting behaviour*

In order to describe characteristics and circumstances of youth violence in detail, adolescents who had become victims of violence were asked to report various details on the most recent victimisation. This was done solely with regard to violent criminal offences.

As Table 4.3 shows, only up to a quarter of such violent crime takes place at school or on the way to school; with sexual assault this is very rare indeed. Almost half of all sexual assault takes place at home/at relatives and at friends, i.e. in places which should actually be sheltered surroundings. This is in line with findings of a victimisation survey on sexual abuse among children and adolescents conducted by the Criminological Research Institute of Lower Saxony in 2011: Of all victims of sexual abuse with physical contact, over three quarters of respondents reported the perpetrator to be a (male) relative or acquaintance (Stadler et al. 2012, p. 36).

A relatively large proportion of youth violence takes place elsewhere. It is not possible to give detailed information on where such violence took place because respondents were not given an opportunity to provide this information. It can be inferred from another survey that the locations in-

13 Identical items were used for parental violence in the two survey years.

volved include public spaces such as roads, squares, playgrounds and parks (see Baier et al. 2010a, p. 44).

Table 4.3 Selected characteristics of the most recently experienced of-fence (in percent)

		robbery (N=957)	extortion (N=438)	sexual assault (N=211)	aggravat- ed assaults (N=527)	assault (N=3579)
Location of assault	School/on way to school	21.8	24.9	7.5	14.3	25.4
	At home/relatives	8.1	5.6	21.0	3.8	9.5
	Friends	3.3	2.8	24.5	1.8	3.9
	Public transport	14.3	18.4	4.0	15.9	9.5
	Elsewhere	52.5	48.2	43.0	64.1	51.7
Male perpetrator(s)		90.6	88.1	94.7	90.3	85.0
Individual perpetra- tor		44.1	41.2	76.8	20.3	59.8
Age of perpetra- tor(s) between 14 and 18		70.6	66.3	41.3	61.1	70.6
Familiarity of perpetrator(s)	Unknown	60.8	46.1	27.5	52.4	37.7
	Known, first offence	31.9	43.5	52.7	36.3	46.4
	Known, repeat offence	7.4	10.4	19.8	11.3	15.9
Origin of perpetrator(s)	German	44.4	42.6	59.3	38.3	55.6
	Turkey	26.3	27.8	14.9	30.4	20.4
	Former SU	8.8	8.8	2.6	11.7	8.7
	Other	20.6	20.8	23.2	19.6	15.4
Offence pho- tographed/ videoed		2.9	1.1	9.1	9.1	4.1
Monetary loss	No loss	16.2	44.7	92.3	83.1	92.2
	Small loss (up to €25)	29.2	35.5	2.9	6.2	4.1
	Medium loss (up to €100)	26.4	11.4	3.3	6.6	2.6
	Large loss (€100 or more)	28.2	8.4	1.4	4.1	1.2
Bodily injury	No injury	76.5	77.4	45.6	5.3	6.3
	Slight injury (no medical attention)	18.4	15.6	40.3	32.8	66.6
	Medium injury (medical at- tention)	4.4	5.6	11.2	43.7	23.5
	Severe injury (hospitalised)	0.7	1.4	2.9	18.2	3.6
Told someone else	Yes	91.2	82.8	84.8	90.2	88.3
	Of which: parents	73.8	56.0	34.1	57.6	56.5
	Of which: friends	75.7	76.2	88.8	82.8	81.4
	Of which: teachers	15.5	10.6	17.3	18.4	17.6
Reported to police		40.2	18.8	18.0	36.8	18.9

The majority of perpetrators are male. Regardless of the form of violence, about nine out of ten perpetrators were of male gender. Individual perpetrators are most frequent in the case of violent sexual offences and least frequent in the case of aggravated assault. A majority of perpetrators were in the adolescent age group (between the ages of 14 and 18) at the time of the offence; a higher proportion of older perpetrators is only seen for violent sexual offences.

There are likewise major differences between the different forms of offence with regard to the familiarity and origin of perpetrators. With the majority of sexual assaults the perpetrator is known and in a particularly large number of cases will already have assaulted the victim in the past. The majority of robberies, on the other hand, are carried out by unknown perpetrators. Compared with the percentage of the sample accounted for by migrants (27.4 percent), the responses on the presumed origin of perpetrators indicate disproportionate involvement by migrants, with the proportion of perpetrators with a presumed migrant background ranging from 40.7 percent to 61.7 percent. Analysing the self-report data on violence, the offender rates are consistently higher for almost all migrant groups, and in some cases substantially higher than for native Germans (cf. Baier et al. 2009, p. 70), hence it can be inferred from victims' responses that migrants in Germany are more readily inclined to violence than Germans; at the same time, however, this greater inclination is not in evidence for all offences (cf. Baier/Pfeiffer 2009, Rabold/Baier 2011).

There are major differences between the various forms of offence with regard to their direct financial and physical consequences. In the case of assaults the monetary loss tends to be small, whereas with robberies more than one in four offences results in a loss of at least €100. At the same time, robbery or extortion tend more rarely to have major physical consequences. It is mostly assaults involving that necessitate hospitalisation. The impacts of assaults on well-being were not asked about; such impacts can be explored indirectly in the section of this paper addressing further consequences of victimisation. One possible consequence is that victims become re-victimised when pictures or videos of the assault are distributed. However, this appears to be relatively rare. Only sexual assault and aggravated assault, a substantial fraction of victims (9.1 percent) reported the assault being photographed or videoed.

A majority of victims subsequently turn to trusted individuals; almost nine out of ten report having done this, regardless of the type of offence. Reasons for not doing so were not asked in the survey. Findings from an-

other schools survey show that adolescents who do not speak to someone often do not consider the victimisation to have been serious (Baier et al. 2009a, p. 89). The first port of call for victims comprises friends, especially where experience of sexual assault is involved. Victims turn to parents especially infrequently when it comes to sexual assault and especially frequently in cases of robbery. Teachers can be rated as trusted individuals only for a small fraction of adolescents. On average, one in six or one in seven victims of violence turn to teachers in order to tell someone what they have experienced.

The last topic covered in Table 4.3 is reporting behaviour. Adolescents who were victims of a violent assault were asked to say if the most recent offence was reported to the police. The purpose of choosing the most recent offence is because details are likely to be relatively fresh in the victim's memory. For all types of offence, the number of unreported incidents is higher than the number of reported incidents. Reporting rates are especially high for robbery (40.2 percent) and aggravated assault (36.8 percent) and only half as high for sexual assault (18.0 percent), extortion (18.8 percent) and assault (18.9 percent). Discrepancies between reported and self-report victimisation rates in Figure 4.3 can be partly explained by these findings on reporting behaviour. The discrepancy between the two sources is only disproportionate for robbery. It is possible that there is a heightened tendency for incidents to be classified as robbery in the school pupils survey that would not be so classified on legal examination, for example because of the minor nature of the incident. Interestingly, sexual assault has the largest discrepancy between the two data sources but the lowest reporting rate. The opposite is true for aggravated assault.

Based on the repeated survey it is also possible to draw conclusions on trends in reporting behaviour. Four of the five offences show an increase in reporting rates (not: extortion), with the strongest rise for violent sexual offences (from 9.8 to 17.3 percent) and robberies (from 34.3 to 49.4 percent; aggravated assault: from 21.6 to 23.5 percent, assault: from 14.8 to 19.7 percent). Across all violent offences, no less than nearly 12 percent more offences were brought to the attention of the police in 2005/2006 (an increase from 19.4 percent to 21.7 percent). From a constant or decreasing number of unreported offences, then, an increasing proportion of offences is being reported, and by definition this means a rise in reported crime in the official statistics. The increases in violent crime identified in the Police Crime Statistics thus at least partly reflect previously unreported crime being reported (as a result of a greater inclination to go to the police). The

schools survey data thus provide an important example of how changes in reported crime statistics may relate to reporting rates and conceal true trends.

As reporting behaviour is central to the assessment of the Police Crime Statistics, determinants of reporting were additionally subjected to multivariate logistic regression analysis (cf. Backhaus et al. 2003). Results of this analysis are presented in Table 4.4. The coefficients indicate whether a factor is associated with enhanced (values greater than 1) or reduced inclination to report an incident to the police (values less than 1). The first model includes only the type of offence and confirms that extortion, sexual assault and assault are reported significantly less frequently than robberies. These differences do not disappear in Model II, where other characteristics of an offence are controlled for; i.e. the greater inclination to report robbery is not solely a result of the greater monetary loss. Why robbery is more frequently reported cannot therefore ultimately be answered from the data; the reporting rates for the remaining types of offence, on the other hand, are bunched together, as can be seen from the similar coefficients in Model II. The greater inclination to report aggravated assault is thus attributable to the more severe harm inflicted.

Incidents at home or at relatives or friends are significantly less frequently reported than assaults at school, on public transport or elsewhere. Male and known offenders run a lesser risk of being reported, as do individual offenders and adolescent offenders. Offenders with a migrant background are more frequently reported, and most of all those with an 'other' origin. Additional analyses shows that the combination of ethnicities involved is also crucial: The highest reporting rate is seen where non-German offenders come up against a German victim (cf. Baier et al. 2009, p. 45f). Reasons for the greater risk of being reported faced by non-German offenders could be that victims see less opportunities for reaching agreement on informal terms; possibly, they desire that individuals who are 'guests' in Germany be sanctioned for their delinquent behaviour.

Assaults resulting in greater material loss or physical injury are significantly more frequently reported. Incidents that are photographed or videoed are likewise more likely to be reported. It is possible that victims do not want pictures to be circulated.

The final model (Model III) additionally included socio-demographic variables of the victim. The coefficients show that different groups of pupils differ significantly in their reporting behaviour. Male victims and victims with migrant backgrounds less frequently report incidents to the

police. This could be because these groups have less confidence in the police (cf. Baier et al. 2010, p. 141) and expect to achieve little by pressing charges, or that their victimisation occurred in the context of violence in which they were also involved as perpetrators, causing them to refrain from reporting the incident to the police. It also emerges that reporting rates are lower in southern Germany and in rural areas. The overall reporting rate for violent crime is about a fifth lower in southern Germany and in rural administrative districts than in northern, western and eastern Germany or in urban areas (Baier et al. 2009, p. 42). This puts a different perspective on the north-south and urban-rural differences seen in the Police Crime Statistics.¹⁴

Table 4.4 Factors determining whether an offence is reported to the police (logistic regression; coefficient: $Exp(B)$)

		Model I	Model II	Model III
Violent assault	Robbery	<i>Reference</i>	<i>Reference</i>	<i>Reference</i>
	Extortion	0.343 ***	0.413 ***	0.413 ***
	Sexual assault	0.330 ***	0.468 **	0.419 ***
	Aggravated assault	0.867	0.450 ***	0.473 ***
	Assault	0.346 ***	0.366 ***	0.311 ***
Location of assault	At home/relatives		<i>Reference</i>	<i>Reference</i>
	School/on way to school		2.234 ***	2.260 ***
	Friends		1.020	0.974
	Public transport		2.034 ***	2.020 ***
	Elsewhere		1.703 **	1.739 **
Male perpetrator(s)			0.641 ***	0.741 *
Individual perpetrator			0.851 *	0.859
Age of perpetrator(s)	18 or older		<i>Reference</i>	<i>Reference</i>
	Between 14 and 18		0.653 ***	0.660 ***
	Under 14		0.705	0.710
Familiarity of perpetrator(s)	Unknown		<i>Reference</i>	<i>Reference</i>
	Known, first assault		0.593 ***	0.591 ***
	Known, repeat assault		0.571 ***	0.550 ***

14 See Baier and Hanslmaier in this volume.

		Model I	Model II	Model III
Origin of perpetrator(s)	German		Reference	Reference
	Turkey		1.136	1.154
	Former SU		1.065	1.167
	Other		1.497 ***	1.545 ***
Offence photographed/ videod			1.775 ***	1.761 **
Monetary loss	No loss		Reference	Reference
	Small loss (up to €25)		0.597 ***	0.616 **
	Medium loss (up to €100)		1.285	1.308 *
	Large loss (€100 or more)		3.322 ***	3.292 ***
Bodily injury	No injury		Reference	Reference
	Slight injury (no medical attention)		0.841	0.852
	Medium injury (medical attention)		3.506 ***	3.508 ***
	Severe injury (hospi- talisated)		5.118 ***	5.198 ***
Gender: Male				0.792 *
Origin: Migrant				0.800 **
Home surroundings: Rural				0.795 **
Home region: Southern Ger- many				0.841 *
Number of cases		5566	5566	5566
Nagelkerk's R²		.059	.226	.233

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

4.3.4 Regional differences in violent victimisation

Analysis of the 2007/2008 schools survey not only reveals regional variation in reporting rates; victimisation rates in general likewise show a broad range across the 61 areas included. The total violent victimisation rate was only 9.6 percent in at least one area and 25.2 percent in at least one other (Table 4.5). For sexual assault, there was at least one area where not one respondent reported being a victim, whereas at least one other area showed a rate of 2.3 percent. A very wide range also emerges for extortion. The victimisation rates for the various offences correlate across the 61 areas. Where assault is more frequent, there are also more robberies,

and so on. Only correlations with sexual assault are low, meaning this form of violence is less dependent on the prevalence of other violent crime.

Table 4.5 Victimization rates by area and correlation between victimisation rates across 61 areas (in percent resp. Pearson's *r*)

	Lowest prevalence area	Highest prevalence area	Extortion	Sexual assault	Aggravated assault	Assault
Robbery	1.3	9.4	.66***	.17	.45***	.66***
Extortion	0.3	6.2	-	.28*	.59***	.50***
Sexual assault	0.0	2.3	-	-	.33*	.22
Aggravated assault	0.7	5.3	-	-	-	.56***
Assault	7.5	16.6	-	-	-	-
Violence	9.6	25.2	-	-	-	-

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

It is not yet possible conclusively to identify the factors behind these area to area differences due to insufficient data. It would doubtless be necessary to systematically survey the work of the police, social workers and others involved in violence prevention and to link the results to victimisation rates. Another point open to discussion is the suitability of analysis at the level of administrative districts. Can administrative districts or towns and cities really influence their citizens' behaviour as regards violence? This appears a legitimate question because administrative districts are unlikely to be internally heterogeneous. Towns and communities within a mixed urban-rural administrative division are likely to differ with regard to violence rates just like districts and neighbourhoods within a city. It is not without reason that the investigation of macrosocial units has focused in recent years on urban districts and neighbourhoods (cf. e.g. Sampson et al. 1997, Oberwittler 2004, Rabold/Baier 2009). Neighbourhoods are places where children and adolescents spend their time and which can thus have a socialising influence; the greater the regional unit, the weaker their socialising influence is likely to be (cf. Nonnenmacher 2007).

Table 4.6 nonetheless shows the aggregate correlations between various indicators describing the social and economic structure of the 61 areas and the victimisation rates in those areas. Data relating to the economic environment are seen to be only weakly related to violence: While a high unemployment rate correlates with higher rates of robbery and extortion,

there are no further relationships to be found either for unemployment rates or for average income. A large share of migrants¹⁵ is related with higher rates of aggravated assault but, once again, further relationships are not evident for this indicator. The largest number of relationships all pointing in the same direction is for the proportion of single parents and for social cohesion. Both of these indicators are aggregated out of the schools survey data. The adolescents were asked if they currently live with one parent (father alone, mother alone or alternately with the mother or father) or with both parents together. With regard to cohesion, the pupils were presented five statements such as ‘People in my neighbourhood help each other’¹⁶; higher values stand for greater perceived social cohesion. It can be seen that higher victimisation rates are observed where there is a large proportion of single parents and low social cohesion. This speaks in favour of control theory considerations: Where social control is weak on account of structural constraints (less frequently two parents performing childrearing and supervision) or sociocultural circumstances (little mutual interest due to low cohesion), there are more opportunities for offenders to be violent. Although these findings require confirmation from multivariate analysis including other potential explanatory factors, they indicate that it is possible for relationships with individual behaviour to be meaningfully interpreted for larger units; somewhat greater attention should therefore be paid in future to investigating the influence of regional characteristics both on victimisation and offender rates.¹⁷

Table 4.6 Correlations between victimisation rates and various area indicators (Pearson’s *r*)

	Unemployment rate (2006/2007)	Average income (2006)	Proportion of single parents	Proportion of migrants	Cohesion
Robbery	.30*	-.19	.40**	-.01	-.37**
Extortion	.37**	-.15	.54***	.08	-.54***
Sexual assault	-.03	.16	.19	.20	-.11

- 15 The share of migrants relates to ninth-graders and is aggregated from the survey data.
- 16 Cronbach’s alpha for the scale is .78 (cf. Baier 2011a, p. 56 for exact wording of all items).
- 17 The same incidentally also applies to the influence of other contexts such as school and school class. As school violence is not the focus of this paper, potential school-related factors in violent victimisation are not presented here.

	Unemployment rate (2006/2007)	Average income (2006)	Proportion of single parents	Proportion of migrants	Cohesion
Aggravated assault	.10	.04	.39**	.43**	-.39**
Assault	.23	-.19	.34**	-.03	-.23

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

4.3.5. Determinants of violent victimisation

Investigation of the factors influencing violent victimisation using a cross-sectional survey faces a central problem: Victimisation and offending are reported in some cases by the same population. The investigation of the factors influencing victimisation is thus simultaneously an investigation of the factors influencing offending. Using data from the 2007/2008 schools survey, the overlap between victims and offenders with regard to criminal offences can be illustrated. In the twelve months before the survey, 24.7 percent of all students perpetrated or fell victim to some form of violent offence. 11.2 percent of respondents were exclusively victims and 8.0 percent were exclusively offenders; 5.5 percent of adolescents were both victims and offenders. The ratio between both groups varies from offence to offence, but for all offences there is a group of adolescents, of varying size (between 0.1 percent and 3.8 percent), who were both victims and offenders. While it is not necessary to exclude this group when analysing the factors influencing victimisation, it does need to be analysed separately.

Including adolescents who were both victims and offenders adds a further problem: To the extent that physical violence is a domain of male adolescents, this group includes a disproportionate number of male respondents. Looking at violent behaviour as a whole, the number of boys in the group of school pupils who were neither victims nor offenders is 45.8 percent; in the victims only group it is 54.6 percent, whereas in the victims and offenders group it is 76.5 percent. For sexual assault, on the other hand, the victims only group contains scarcely any male adolescents (12.3 percent), while the victims and offenders group consists almost entirely of boys (80.8 percent); at the same time, this group is so small in number (21 pupils) that detailed analysis does not appear meaningful. For this reason, the focus in the descriptive analysis that follows is on boys when looking at violent behaviour as a whole and on girls when dealing with sexual assault (excluding those respondents who were both victims and offenders).

There is far less agreement among criminological researchers regarding the factors relating to violent victimisation than regarding the factors relating to violent offending. One of the few criminological approaches to supply possible explanations for victimisation is routine activities theory (Cohen/Felson 1979). This directs attention simultaneously at offenders, victims and the situations in which they encounter each other. Three factors are needed for an assault to be committed: Firstly, a motivated offender, secondly, a suitable target or opportunity and, thirdly, the lack of a guardian or preventing circumstances. Cohen and Felson (1979) set out their thoughts in further detail by the example of violent offences: A combination of greater prosperity and shorter working hours means that more and more people go out in their free time (most of all in the evening). This includes spending time in places such as bars and discos where potential offenders are more likely to be encountered and there is less social control. By going to such places, victims expose themselves to a greater risk of assault and so take an 'active' part in the victimisation process. People for whom it is less important to go to such places or do not frequent them for other reasons have a lesser victimisation risk.

Engagement with a range of free time activities should therefore be looked at when investigating influencing factors of victimisation. In addition, as the analysis presented further above already indicated, earlier victimisation influences later victimisation. For these reasons, the factors shown in Table 4.7 are to be investigated with regard to their relationship with victimisation.

Factors included with regard to family make-up consist of growing up with only one parent (15 percent of respondents) and experience of severe parental violence in childhood (likewise 15 percent of respondents). These variables as well as cohesion have already been presented. It should be noted that the cohesion variable is recoded for the analysis; as risk factors for victimisation are under investigation here and it is assumed that a low level of cohesion in the neighbourhood raises the risk of assault.

Responses are collected for four variables relating to leisure time activities and lifestyle. The adolescents were first asked if they spend time going to bars, discos, etc.; 73 percent said yes. Secondly, they were asked about their affiliation with delinquent groups of friends; 65 percent of the adolescents said they knew at least one such friend. Contact with such groups of friends ought to increase the risk of involvement in violent encounters. Thirdly, respondents were asked if they had played truant for at least one day in the last half school year (27 percent of respondents). As

truants usually avoid home and spend their time instead at places where there is less adult supervision, they are likely to face greater risk of violent victimisation. Fourthly, the survey asked about binge drinking, which 54 percent of the school students said they had engaged in at least once in the preceding 30 days. Excess alcohol intake releases inhibitions, which in turn goes hand in hand with greater exposure to violence.

The effect of two personality factors also requires investigation. According to self-control theory (Gottfredson/Hirschi 1990), low self-control ought to go with heightened risk not only of offending but also of victimisation. Risk seeking was asked about as a dimension of low self-control. People who advocate violence more than others are also likely to be more frequently involved in violent encounters in the context of which they also become subject to victimisation.

Table 4.7 Items and descriptive statistics for influencing variables

	Items	Response categories	Mean	Standard deviation
Growing up with single parent	Individuals currently lived with	0: With both biological parents, with mother and partner or with father and partner; 1: With mother alone, with father alone or alternately with mother and father	0.15	0.36
Childhood experience of severe parental violence	Struck with object, punched/kicked, thrashed/beaten up at least once by mother or father before age 12	0: No; 1: Yes	0.15	0.36
Low neighbourhood cohesion	Five items, e.g. "There is often conflict between neighbours where I live" (Cronbach's alpha = .78)	1: Not true; 4: Exactly true	2.04	0.68
Time spent every day going to bar, disco etc.	Time spent on school day or at weekend going to bar, disco, cinema or other event	0: No; 1: Yes	0.73	0.44
Contact with at least one delinquent friend	Number of friends who have committed shoplifting, robbery, assault, damage to property or drugs dealing	0: No delinquent friends 1: At least one delinquent friend	0.65	0.48
At least one day's truancy in last half school year	Number of whole school days truancy in last half school year	0: No days; 1: At least one day	0.27	0.44
Binge drinking at least once in last month	Drunk five or more glasses of alcohol in succession on at least once occasion in past 30 days	0: No; 1: Yes	0.54	0.50

	Items	Response categories	Mean	Standard deviation
High degree of risk seeking	Four items, e.g. "I like to test my limits by doing something dangerous" (Cronbach's alpha = .85)	1: Not true; 4: Exactly true	2.11	0.80
High acceptance of violence	Four items, e.g. "A bit of violence is part of having fun" (Cronbach's alpha = .87)	1: Not true; 4: Exactly true	1.54	0.72

Table 4.8 shows the various factors by group affiliation. The proportion of male adolescents who have been neither victims nor perpetrators of violence in general and grow up with a single parent is 14.2 percent; significantly higher percentages are found for male adolescents who have been victims of violence (17.0 percent for victims only; 19.0 percent for victim-offenders). For sexual assault, on the other hand, family composition appears to be irrelevant. For all other factors analysed, significant differences are found between the groups, and all in the direction that is to be expected (greater prevalence among victim groups). One striking point is that the victim-offender group has greater prevalence figures still than the victim group, underscoring that the factors included can also affect the likelihood of offending.

Table 4.8 Influencing factors, by group affiliation (percent or means)

	Violence: Male respondents			Sexual assault: Female respondents	
	Neither victim nor offender	Victim only, not offender	Both victim and offender	Neither victim nor offender	Victim only, not offender
Growing up with single parent	14.2	17.0	19.0	15.4	18.7
Childhood experience of severe parental violence	11.3	18.0	28.0	14.5	39.9
Low neighbourhood cohesion	1.95	2.03	2.16	2.07	2.30
Time spent every day going to bar, disco etc.	62.8	71.5	87.0	77.6	89.4
Contact with at least one delinquent friend	61.5	75.9	95.1	58.6	83.2
At least one day's truancy in last half school year	19.2	29.0	52.6	26.2	51.8
Binge drinking at least once in last month	51.4	64.8	84.6	47.9	71.1
High degree of risk seeking	2.13	2.36	2.83	1.90	2.34
High acceptance of violence	1.56	1.66	2.33	1.32	1.73

Bold: Differences significant at $p < .05$

To assess which factors are especially closely related to victimisation with the other factors taken into account, multivariate logistic regression models have been calculated, the results are presented in Table 4.9. Gender and offending were controlled for. All independent variables were also z-standardised to make the coefficients directly comparable. The three most important factors influencing violent victimisation are seen to be violent delinquency, contact with delinquent friends and childhood experience of severe parental violence. The composition of the family and whether adolescents frequent certain kinds of location in their free time (bars, discos, etc.) are only weakly related to the risk of assault. The influence of acceptance of violence is ultimately reversed: Adolescents with strong affinity to violence are less frequently victims. This could be connected with such adolescents appearing particularly self-confident and thus deterring potential attackers. It also cannot be ruled out that being the target of an assault contradicts their self-image, as a result they do not perceive assaults as victimisation or fail to disclose them in surveys.

Table 4.9 Factors influencing victimisation (binary logistic regression; coefficient: $Exp(B)$)

	Model: Violence	Model: Sexual assault
Gender: Male	1.154 ***	0.311 ***
Offender	1.403 ***	1.142 ***
Growing up with single parent	1.047 *	1.015
Childhood experience of severe parental violence	1.254 ***	1.370 ***
Low neighbourhood cohesion	1.075 ***	1.103
Time spent every day going to bar, disco etc.	1.043 *	1.185 *
Contact with at least one delinquent friend	1.316 ***	1.259 **
At least one day's truancy in last half school year	1.115 ***	1.245 ***
Binge drinking at least once in last month	1.203 ***	1.205 **
High degree of risk seeking	1.178 ***	1.301 ***
High acceptance of violence	0.948 **	1.302 ***
Number of Cases	37416	36938
Nagelkerke's R²	.146	.147

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

The findings on sexual assault differ in part from those on violent victimisation in general. The three most important influencing factors are gender,

childhood experience of parental violence and personality traits such as risk seeking and affinity to violence (this time in the expected direction). Family composition and neighbourhood cohesion are not relevant. This latter finding can be explained by the fact that sexual assault tends to take place not in the public but in the private arena, where the controlling effect of neighbourhood reaches its limits. The analysis speaks in favour of a multi-causal explanation of victimisation, with particular importance being attached to intrafamilial violence. Victims within the family have a certain likelihood of becoming victims of violent crime at a later date. At the same time, the small size of the explained variances indicates that the included variables only explain violent victimisation to a small degree. Rather than speculate about further influencing factors here, it may be more useful to highlight another point: It may not be possible to attain the same levels of explained variance for victimisation as for delinquency for the fundamental reason that victimisation is partly random and random events cannot be predicted. Whereas delinquency requires a conscious act and hence a decision by an individual to behave one way or another, victimisation is something that is experienced. The victim experiences an assault and is sought out by the offender possibly for the sole reason that he or she is in the wrong place at the wrong time.

4.3.6 Consequences of violent victimisation

The direct financial and physical effects of victimisation have already been addressed. The 2007/2008 schools survey also allows various other consequences of victimisation to be investigated. Using a cross-sectional survey, however, it cannot be said with finality that the proposed effects are not also part of the cause. This can at least be ruled out for one aspect because of the way the question is worded. That aspect is well-being. The adolescents were asked to say how they felt in the last week. For the great majority, the violent victimisation took place before the last week before the survey (sometime in their lifetime or in the last twelve months), and to this extent the cross-sectional data are open to causal analysis. For this reason, the focus in the following is on mental state as a potential (longer-term) effect of victimisation.

Well-being was measured using three sub-dimensions of the KINDL scale for adolescents (cf. Ravens-Sieberer et al. 2007). The three dimensions are physical distress, emotional distress and low self-esteem (Table

4.10). Respondents were asked to make responses to various questions for the last week on a scale from 1 (never) to 5 (all the time).¹⁸ The items in the various scales correlate closely enough to be combined into a mean scale. The highest mean is for low self-esteem. An overall measure for poor well-being was also constructed from all three scales; the reliability of this measure constructed from the three subscales can be considered adequate (Cronbach's alpha = .68).

Table 4.10 Survey items for mental state

	Items	Answer categories	Mean	Standard deviation
Physical distress	Four items, e.g. 'During the past week I felt ill' (Cronbach's alpha = .65)	1: Never; 5: All the time	2.54	0.79
Emotional distress	Four items, e.g. 'During the past week I felt alone' (Cronbach's alpha = .56)	1: Never; 5: All the time	2.08	0.68
Low self-esteem	Four items, e.g. 'During the past week I was proud of myself' (reverse item; Cronbach's alpha = .62)	1: Never; 5: All the time	2.78	0.78
Poor well-being	Three scales: Poor physical well-being, poor emotional well-being and low self-esteem (Cronbach's alpha = .68)	1 to 5	2.47	0.59

There are significant gender differences for all three subscales and for the aggregate scale, with girls reporting poorer well-being than boys. The connection between victimisation and mental state should therefore be analysed separately for boys and girls as there are gender differences with regard to the independent variable (victimisation).

Table 4.11 looks at four groups of victimised adolescents with regard to overall experience of violence (i.e. without distinguishing separate offences): Adolescents with no lifetime experience of victimisation; adolescents with experience of victimisation, but more than twelve months in the past; adolescents with infrequent experience of victimisation (a maximum of four times) in the last twelve months; and adolescents with frequent experience of victimisation (four times or more) in the last twelve months.

18 The exact wording of the questionnaire can be seen at kindl.org/cms/fragebogen. An explorative factor analysis with all twelve items only partly confirms the theoretically expected factor structure. The scale is nonetheless used here as proposed by Ravens-Sieberer et al. (2007), as this is replicated in various other studies.

The findings are almost identical for the various subscales and for both sexes. The poorest well-being is found for adolescents with multiple victimisation experience. Significantly better well-being values are found for the two middle groups, where no significant differences can be found. The best well-being values are seen for adolescents without experience of victimisation. Victimisation experience thus goes along with more negative well-being on several counts (physical, emotional and in terms of self-esteem); adolescents subjected to repeat victimisation are particularly affected. The connection is also somewhat stronger for girls than for boys, as shown by higher F-values across the board.

Table 4.11 Well-being, by victimisation experience (means)

	No violence in lifetime to date (1)	Violence in lifetime to date but not in last 12 months (2)	Violence in last 12 months: Maximum 4 incidents (3)	Violence in last 12 months: At least 5 incidents (4)	F-value	Significant differences (p < .05)
Boys	Physical distress	2.27	2.37	2.41	75.077 ***	1 vs. 2, 3, 4; 2 vs. 4; 3 vs. 4
	Emotional distress	1.97	2.05	2.07	61.528 ***	1 vs. 2, 3, 4; 2 vs. 4; 3 vs. 4
	Low self-esteem	2.64	2.66	2.66	9.732 ***	1 vs. 4; 2 vs. 4; 3 vs. 4
	Poor well-being	2.29	2.36	2.38	67.962 ***	1 vs. 2, 3, 4; 2 vs. 4; 3 vs. 4
Girls	Physical distress	2.71	2.88	2.92	112.636 ***	1 vs. 2, 3, 4; 2 vs. 4; 3 vs. 4
	Emotional distress	2.11	2.27	2.28	132.821 ***	1 vs. 2, 3, 4; 2 vs. 4; 3 vs. 4
	Low self-esteem	2.89	2.98	2.98	30.973 ***	1 vs. 2, 3, 4; 2 vs. 4; 3 vs. 4
	Poor well-being	2.57	2.71	2.72	136.562 ***	1 vs. 2, 3, 4; 2 vs. 4; 3 vs. 4

* p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001

The results for the various subscales are similar – with the low self-esteem dimension showing the smallest differences – the analysis in the following can concentrate on the overall scale. Two questions remain to be addressed here: Do the effects of victimisation experience persist when other factors affecting well-being are taken into account? And do the different types of offence have different effects on well-being?

The findings from Table 4.12 answer the first question with the help of multivariate OLS regressions. As the coefficients shown are standardised, they can be compared with each other and are to be interpreted as correlation coefficients (ranges between 0 and 1 or –1). The first model confirms that girls have significantly worse well-being values than boys. Experience of violence is also seen to have a significant effect.¹⁹ Interaction variables between gender and the victimisation groups were also specified. The findings confirm that victimisation has a significantly stronger impact on well-being for female than for male respondents; the differential effect is relatively minor, however, and only partly persists after controlling for other factors. This does not apply for the main effect of victimisation itself; i.e. victimisation can continue to be considered as significant factor in well-being after controlling for other variables that affect well-being. Model II includes various factors from the central socialisation domains of family, friends and school. As the survey was not primarily designed as a study dedicated to the explanation of well-being, no other factors are available for analysis. Separation of parents, death of a parent or moving home²⁰ are associated with poorer well-being; here again, however, the effects are not very pronounced. Childhood experience of severe parental violence, lack of contact with friends and poor school grades, on the other hand, have a significantly stronger impact on well-being.²¹ The impact of victimisation is only slightly weaker than the impact of these variables. Also, there is no longer any difference to be seen between the two groups comprising adolescents subject to infrequent and frequent victimisation.²²

19 The two middle groups were combined into one group for this analysis.

20 Respondents were asked only about moves in which they lost friends.

21 With regard to friends, respondents were asked if they have a group of friends whom they spend time with outside school. The school performance variable combined the most recent report grades in German, mathematics and history.

22 Model II once again included violent delinquency as a control variable. This proves to have a negative effect: Offenders have slightly better well-being. Exercising power over others may boost the individual's own self-esteem, with adolescents thus experiencing self-effectiveness.

Table 4.12 Factors influencing well-being (OLS regressions; coefficients: beta coefficients)

	Model I	Model II
Gender: Female	.26 ***	.26 ***
No violence in lifetime to date	<i>Reference</i>	<i>Reference</i>
Violence in lifetime to date (maximum 4 incidents) (1)	.08 ***	.06 ***
Violence in last 12 months (at least 5 incidents) (2)	.09 ***	.07 ***
Interaction between gender and (1)	.03 ***	.01 *
Interaction between gender and (2)	.03 ***	.02 ***
Violent delinquency in lifetime to date		-.03 ***
Parental separation/divorce experienced		.04 ***
Death of parent experienced		.02 ***
Moving home experienced		.02 ***
Childhood experience of severe parental violence		.10 ***
No group of friends		.07 ***
Poor school performance		.11 ***
Number of cases	40624	40624
R²	.073	.105

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

The second question, regarding potential differences in the impact of individual offences, is addressed by the OLS regressions shown in Table 4.13. In models Ia to Ie the lifetime prevalence of each crime is analysed together with gender. Lifetime prevalence figures are used because as the multivariate analysis in Table 4.12 confirmed, the crucial distinction is between victims and non-victims and the number of victimisation experiences is not ultimately the deciding factor. The coefficients for the various offences are almost equal; a somewhat higher coefficient is only found for assault. This is also confirmed when all forms of victimisation are included in model II. That the strongest impact should be for assault appears somewhat surprising, this being per se the slightest form of offence compared with all offences. An explanation may be that assault is the most widespread form of victimisation. It is experienced across a range of population groups, including groups which generally have little experience of violence. For these groups, any such experience will have a greater impact. Other forms of violence may be more restricted to specific social milieus. Early experience of violence (e.g. in the family) in such milieus has

the effect that later experiences have a lesser impact on well-being, possibly because the individual has become accustomed to adverse experiences over time.

Table 4.13 Victimization as a factor influencing well-being (OLS regressions; coefficients: beta)

	Model Ia	Model Ib	Model Ic	Model Id	Model Ie	Model II
Gender: Female	.25 ***	.25 ***	.24 ***	.25 ***	.25 ***	.25 ***
Robbery (over lifetime)	.06 ***					.04 ***
Extortion (over lifetime)		.05 ***				.03 ***
Sexual assault (over lifetime)			.06 ***			.05 ***
Aggravated assault (over lifetime)				.06 ***		.02 ***
Assault (over lifetime)					.08 ***	.06 ***
Number of cases	42628	42628	42628	42628	42628	42628
R²	.063	.062	.062	.062	.065	.072

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

4.4 Summary and outlook

The analysis has shown that violent victimisation in adolescence is very common. No less than one in six adolescents report falling victim to assault, robbery or extortion. The majority of assaults are relatively slight; only in cases of aggravated assault did nearly one in five victims have to be hospitalised. It is important to reiterate that the respondents were ninth-graders, i.e. individuals with an average age of 15. On the age-crime curve, this is an age group with one of the highest levels of crime risk (from both a victim and an offender perspective). Other age groups can be expected to face lower risk of victimisation; however, representative self-report studies that investigate violent victimisation at such a detail level for other age groups are not yet available for Germany. A comparison of findings from surveys carried out in different years in four towns and cities clearly shows that the violent victimisation rate for adolescents is slightly falling. The background to this trend has not yet been conclusively investigated. Firstly, however, there is a demonstrable decline in intrafamilial violence. Secondly, an attitude of aversion to violence is becoming increasingly widespread among adolescent groups of friends (cf. Baier

2008, p. 55ff). Thirdly, schools are also likely to have a hand in the positive trend. Most of all, the recently stepped up prevention programmes in schools (cf. Baier et al. 2010, p. 228ff) may be one explanation for the decline in violence.

The greater risk to offenders of charges being pressed and hence of police pursuit and apprehension is not to be ignored. Heightened risk of this kind is a stronger deterrent than the level of sanctions that potential offenders expect to face (cf. Hawkins/Zimring 1976). Change in reporting rates also helps explain the trend discrepancy between reported and unreported crime: Whereas the victim numbers rose in the analysis period according to the Police Crime Statistics, victim numbers according to self-report surveys declined or held constant. If there is a doubling of reporting rates, as has happened in the case of sexual assault, then significantly more offences will be reported in the official statistics while the self-report figures stay the same. Reporting behaviour is consequently very important in the interpretation of the Police Crime Statistics. The explanatory model on reporting behaviour has shown that the inclination to report an offence depends on the severity of loss or injury (the greater the severity, the more likely an offence is to be reported), on the perpetrator (e.g., charges are less frequently brought if the offender is of the same age as or is known to the victim) and on the victim (e.g., male adolescents and migrants are less likely to report an offence).

Of those violent offences investigated, sexual assault differs notably from the other forms of violence. The proportion of offences that are unreported is still expected to be largest for sexual assault despite the increased reporting rate. The age at first victimisation is lowest for male adolescents, while a very high proportion of boys are subject to repeat victimisation. In many cases, this form of violence does not take place between individuals of the same age, the majority of offenders being older individuals, in almost half of all cases relatives or acquaintances. It therefore comes as no surprise that victims relatively rarely go to their parents for help. The determinants and impacts of experience of sexual assault, on the other hand, resemble those of other violent offences. A crucial influencing factor is childhood experience of parental violence: Adolescents who report severe violence from their parents are two to three times as likely to be victims of violence in adolescence – in the form of sexual assault just as much as other violent offences. Contact with delinquent peers and personality traits such as low self-control likewise help explain violent victimisation.

With regard to potential long-term consequences, well-being was selected for analysis. It emerges very clearly that violence and victimisation adversely affected physical and emotional well-being and, to a somewhat lesser degree, self-esteem. The connection is closer for girls than for boys. The recency of victimisation experience and its recurrence ultimately appear to have less of an impact on well-being. Merely the fact of experiencing violence once in one's lifetime so far is enough to significantly lower well-being. The various types of offence show hardly any difference in this regard: Assault reduces well-being somewhat more than other offences, which may be due to assault being experienced by a larger number of adolescents, including those with no prior experience of violence (and for whom such an experience is then particularly salient).

Alongside these findings, the analysis also points to various issues that should be given attention in future. Four research questions deserve brief mention here. Firstly, a variance in victimisation rates is evident for the 61 survey areas. The rates vary with external factors that can be interpreted with reference to control theory. It is questionable whether these findings would hold up to multilevel analysis. This was found not to be the case either for delinquency or right-wing extremism (cf. Baier et al. 2010, p. 190ff; Baier/Pfeiffer 2010). Therefore the question is which area-related factors truly affect individual victimisation risk. This is also a key question with regard to another context: The school classes and schools included in the survey likewise differ significantly in victimisation rates; to date, however, little attention has been paid to the potential influencing variables at aggregate level.

A second future research topic is under what conditions crimes make the transition from unreported to reported crime data. Various factors were included in the present analysis, but the explained variance is remarkably small. It may be necessary to look closer at whether victims are encouraged to press charges by people around them (friends, parents, etc.), whether they had prior contact to the police, and what confidence they have in the police. Indications that police contact and confidence in the police can affect reporting behaviour are found by Baier et al. (2010, p. 135ff). The question of how crimes become reported can only be partly answered by analysing reporting behaviour. It would be interesting, for example, to carry out research on police work targeting adolescents. In what urban districts and at what schools are the police present and can contribute in catching violent offenders? How are suspects treated once charges have been pressed? Are they actually recorded in the Police Crime

Statistics or does some police diversion take place that results in victim and offender not being included in the statistics?

A third research topic gone into at various points in this paper is the double vicious circle of victimisation. Earlier victimisation experience (for example in the family) is related to later violent victimisation; however it also increases the risk of becoming a violent offender. Victims become victims and victims become offenders. These vicious circles, which is only analysed on a cross-sectional basis here, needs to be subjected to more longitudinal analysis, and especially the link between delinquency and victimisation. Additionally, the specific mechanisms responsible for these linkages are not yet conclusively understood. Learning theory, personality theory, milieu-specific and other explanations are conceivable and would have to be subjected to comparative testing. It is also particularly important to include factors – known as resilience factors – that prevent such a vicious circle from developing in the first place. While the findings show that nearly twice as many (18.0 percent) of male victims of violence have experienced violence from their parents than adolescents without experience of victimisation, the equivalent figure for the latter group is still 11.3 percent; i.e., there is a group of victims for whom intrafamilial experience of violence is not reflected in further victimisation. It is possible that these adolescents receive special encouragement and control in their surroundings (for example at school). Genetic characteristics could also provide a possible explanation for such resilience. It will probably be revealing to shift the focus away from cases who fail to escape the vicious circle and towards those who do succeed in escaping it.

Fourthly, this paper focused on offences that involve physical violence. A similarly detailed analysis of victimisation experience for other types of offences is likely to be highly informative. This includes other types of criminal offences such as theft and damage to property. Given the growing public debate on cases of school bullying (and especially cyber-bullying), investigation of these forms of aggression would also appear important for Germany. As cyber-bullying especially represents an ongoing experience of aggressive behaviour no longer restricted to the school context, it is likely to have a particularly severe impact on well-being. There are as yet no representative studies on this topic for Germany so far.

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