



*symbolic violence practised against assets from the point of view of
secondary school students*

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Abstract:

This field study aims to identify forms of symbolic violence directed against elders (parents and grandparents) through the dimensions of marginalization and belittlement, despite the social status enjoyed by this group in light of the social perceptions among a sample of high school students. This necessitates shedding light on the phenomenon, as well as revealing the factors that contribute to this type of violence. The study found that marginalization ranked first among these factors, while the relational aspect occupied the top position as one of the leading causes of symbolic violence against elders.

Keywords: Violence, symbolic violence, social perceptions, the elderly.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Families play a functional role within society, influencing and being influenced both positively and negatively. They consist of a set of interpersonal interactions among their members and work to prepare the next generation for life with a set of values and standards to adapt and integrate into the external environment or the individual's social life.

The course of family life has undergone changes at all levels, given the social changes inherent in the nature of human society. The modern generation inherits the social heritage from the previous generation, often modifying or adding to it, leading to changes in the structure and dynamics of human society in various aspects.

In this context, one of the most significant social issues affecting the structural nature of the family today is the emergence of individualism within the family. Children might perceive their parents and grandparents as conservative individuals due to their adherence to traditional family values and customs, separate from modernity and progress.

As a result, there has been a change in the value and relational system of the family. The structural shift has transformed families from extended families where the father holds absolute power in decision-making and family affairs to nuclear families consisting only of parents and children.

Furthermore, women's roles within small families have changed as they now contribute to the family's income and decision-making alongside their husbands. This shift in power distribution challenges the traditional concept of male dominance within the family and highlights the significance of working women in society, as seen from a Marxist perspective that relates authority to the ability to provide and support the family.

Western culture has also influenced our societies through the widespread use of modern media and communication technologies. This has led to changes in the behavior and values of youth, who may seek independence from the family to assert their individuality, creating a gap between real-life and virtual life, particularly affecting family relationships. This has sometimes escalated to symbolic violence, even if not expressed physically or verbally.

Based on this analysis, we can formulate the following question:

➤ What are the social perceptions of the forms of symbolic violence practised by children towards their parents from the perspective of students?

From this main question, the following sub-questions arise, which we seek to answer:

- What are the social perceptions of symbolic violence practised by children towards their parents from the students' point of view?
- What are the social perceptions of the reasons for symbolic violence practised by children towards their parents from the students' point of view?

2. Hypotheses:

There are different forms of symbolic violence practised by children towards their parents according to the social perceptions of the students.

There are different reasons of symbolic violence practised by children towards their parents according to the social perceptions of the students.

3. Study Objectives:

This study aims to:

the social perceptions of symbolic violence practised by children towards their parents from the students' point of view.

the social perceptions of the reasons for symbolic violence practised by children towards their parents reasons the students' point of view.

4. Theoretical Framework of the Study:

4.1. Social Perceptions:

4.1.1. Definition of Social Perceptions:

Emile Durkheim: "Social perceptions are phenomena that differ from other natural phenomena; their production is not due to certain ideas that occupy individuals' attention but rather remnants of our past lives. They are acquired habits, preconceived judgments, and inclinations that move without us being aware. In short, they are everything that constitutes our moral characteristics." (Emile D. , 1967, p. 11)

Jean Piaget: "Perception is the mental mechanism that allows the construction of a mental image. It involves referring something from the past to the present as an idea, topic, or specific event. Perception is the primary representative of the subject that is symbolically repeated. " (Jean, 1967, p. 08)

Fernand Laplantine's Definition: Laplantine suggests that the concept of social perceptions includes the following elements:

- ✓ Social perceptions exist at the intersection of the individual and the social.
- ✓ Social perceptions encompass three research fields: the cognitive field (perception as knowledge), the evaluative field (perception as judgment), and the practical field. (Boumediene, 2004)

4.1.2. Characteristics of Social Perceptions:

Always About a Subject: Social perceptions are always connected to a specific subject, and this subject is linked to the individual. Therefore, perception is the process through which the relationship between the thing and the subject is realized (Denise, 2003, p. 366).

Have a Pictorial and Symbolic Quality: Perceptions have duality in terms of image and meaning, where the semantic meaning is inherent to the perceptual structure. (Serge, 2003, p. 363).

Are Constructive in Nature: Each social perception is a mental construction, meaning it's a cognitive and intellectual process through which individuals create it. When an external subject is introduced at the personal level, it is connected to pre-existing topics within the cognitive sphere and is dealt with through modification or addition (Serge, 2003, p. 364).

Are Independent and Creative: Perceptions are not simple production; they are arrangements that require an independent and creative element in communication, whether individually or collectively. (Claudine, 1969, p. 15).

Have a Social Quality: Social perceptions are shaped and defined based on the environment of the society in which the individual develops. They are a social construction that arises through social interaction and communication. (Serge, 2003, p. 365).

4.1.3. Forms of Social Perceptions: Social perceptions can take several forms, summarized as follows:

Individual Perceptions: These are built on individual experiences (interactions) of the individual with their physical, social, and cultural environment. (Benabdelmalek, 2005, p. 17).

Collective Perceptions: These serve as a common nucleus that translates the way a group or specific organization thinks about interactions with physical and social entities. (Benabdelmalek, 2005, p. 18).

4.2. Symbolic Violence: Pierre Bourdieu defines symbolic violence as "any power that succeeds in imposing meanings and defining the limits of what can be said and done, by securing the adherence of those who submit to it through the 'misrecognition' of the limits of their own freedom of will." In other words, symbolic violence operates by legitimizing the domination and control of one group over another through the imposition of meanings, often through legitimate symbols of authority. This type of violence is subtle and not easily noticeable but affects ideological and social representations by imposing them as legitimate, reinforcing the power dynamics. (P. Bourdieu & J.-C. Passeron, 1970).

4.3. Elderly :

4.3.1. Definition of Elderly :

From a time perspective: The elderly can be divided into more specific categories based on age, including middle-aged (60 to 75 years old), elderly (75 to 85 years old), very old (85 to 100 years old), and supercentenarians (over 100 years old).

From an economic perspective: The elderly are those who have ceased their professional activity, typically starting from the age of 50 or 60, based on administrative retirement age criteria, which generally represent the threshold of old age.

From a medical perspective: A person may be considered elderly if they exhibit symptoms such as skin diseases, hearing and vision impairments, lung and heart diseases, gastrointestinal disorders, mental health issues like depression, etc. (Fahmy & another, 1999, p. 25).

Therefore, the concept of "elderly" should be considered in the context of these various perspectives.

4.3.2. Characteristics of the Elderly:

Physical Characteristics: The elderly often experience physical changes, including sensory impairment (hearing and vision loss), decreased appetite, digestive problems, osteoporosis, joint stiffness, muscle weakness, increased susceptibility to diseases, and fluctuations in environmental conditions such as colds and extreme temperatures. They are also more prone to chronic conditions like high blood pressure, atherosclerosis, diabetes, and heart diseases.

Cognitive Characteristics: Cognitive functions may decline with age, leading to memory problems, forgetfulness, dementia-like symptoms, slowed thinking, reduced ability for innovation, decreased cognitive awareness, and limited learning abilities due to changes in brain cell activity caused by aging, poor nutrition, illness, or accidents.

Emotional Characteristics: Emotional issues in the elderly can include stress, anxiety, psychological distress, and feelings of psychological pain. This can lead to various psychological disorders, especially after the loss of a partner, the marriage of children, increased self-focus, and emotional fertility, which is essentially nostalgia and attraction to the past before

it becomes sexual power. Emotional reactivity within themselves can manifest in several ways, such as self-admiration, inflexibility and criticism, indifference and mockery, and feeling of insignificance.

Social Characteristics: As individuals age, their social relationships often decrease significantly, leading to feelings of loneliness and isolation due to retirement, reduced social roles, and reduced social flexibility.

Psychological Characteristics: Psychological characteristics of the elderly include self-centered emotions leading to peculiar patterns of selfish behavior, inability to control behavior properly, stubbornness, inclination toward praise, encouragement, and flattery, anxiety, self-doubt, distrust of others, withdrawal, and negativity (Ibrahim, 1997, pp. 42-52).

5. Study Methodology: This study employs a descriptive approach to shed light on the phenomenon of symbolic violence in the school environment, analyze it, and interpret it by collecting and analyzing the responses of participants.

5.2. Spatial and Temporal Boundaries of the Study:

Spatial Boundaries: The study was conducted at Rizak Mohammed Essghir Ben Amar High School in Ain Senour, Souk Ahras Province.

Temporal Boundaries: The field study took place during the months of January and February of the academic year 2022/2023.

5.3. Study Population and Sample:

Study Population: The study population consists of secondary school students at Rizak Mohammed Essghir Ben Amar High School in Ain Senour, with a total number of 357 students for the academic year 2022/2023.

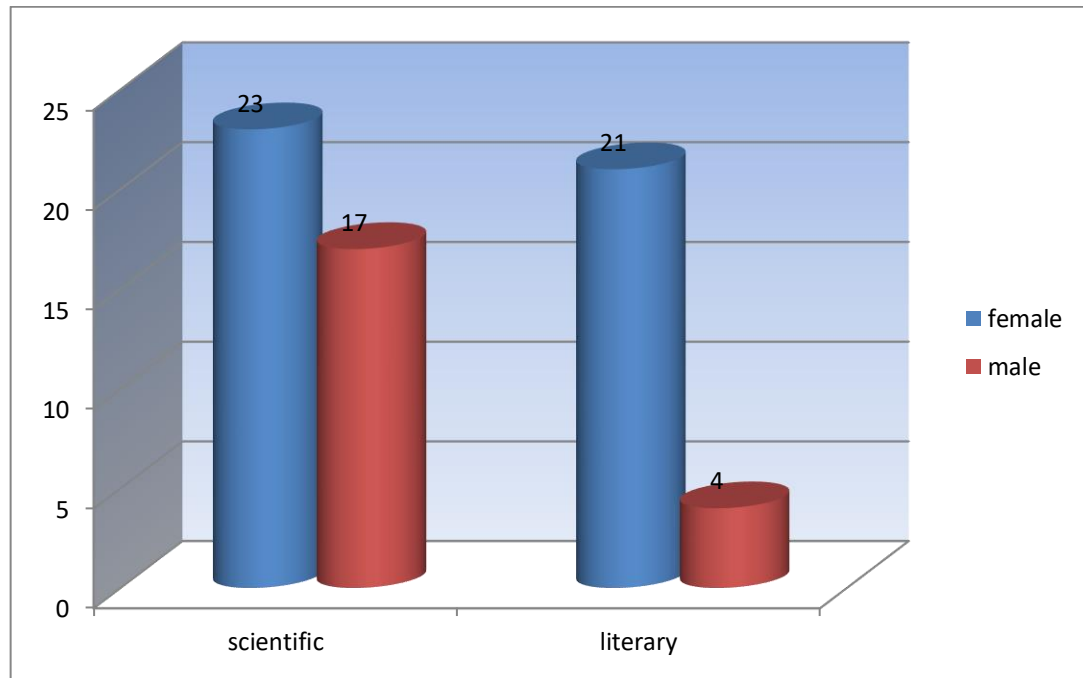
5.4. Study Sample:

A random sample was selected from the study population, with a sample size of 60 students. These students were chosen based on three main characteristics believed to impact the study's results. These characteristics include gender, academic level, and specialization.

Personal Information Distribution Table for the Study Sample: (Table 01) represents the distribution of sample members according to personal information.

sex		Scientific	%	literary	%	total
Specialization	male	17	85.0%	3	15.0%	20
	Female	23	57.5%	17	42.5%	40
total		40	62.5%	20	37.5%	60

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the outputs of the 23 SPSS program



6. View and discuss the results of the study:

6-1 Presentation and discussion of the results of the children towards sample response about the first question:

* In your perception, what are the forms of symbolic violence against elderly parents?

Table No. (02): Repetitions and percentages of the content of the expressions extracted from the sample response to the first question

Num	Persons' content	Repetitions	%
1.	Abandoning Elderly Parents in Nursing Homes.	48	80
2.	Restricting Communication with Elderly Parents:.	46	76,66
3.	Making Elderly Parents Feel Like a Burden.	46	76,66
4.	Verbal Insults Directed at Elderly Parents in Front of Others:.	43	71,66
5.	Isolating Elderly Parents in a Separate Room.	43	71,66
6.	Arbitrary Transfer of Elderly Parents' Care Between Siblings:.	40	66,66
7.	Intentional Neglect of Direct Verbal Communication with Elderly Parents:.	39	65
8.	Preferring Children Over Elderly Parents.	39	65
9.	Public Complaining About the Health of Elderly Parents.	35	58,33
10.	Leaving Elderly Parents Alone During Visits.	35	58,33
11.	Sibling Rivalry in the Presence of Elderly Parents Regarding Their Care.	35	58,33
12.	Elderly Parents Feeling Shame.	31	51,66

13.	Neglecting Medical Care for Elderly Parents.	31	51,66
14.	Delaying Meeting Various Needs of Elderly Parents:.	28	46,66
15.	Disgust Over Using Elderly Parents' Belongings:.	28	46,66
16.	Neglecting the Emotional State of Elderly Parents:.	28	46,66
17.	Lack of Attention to Providing Recreation for Elderly Parents:.	28	46,66
18.	Deliberate Harm to Elderly Parents Through Misbehavior:.	25	41,66
19.	Neglecting Personal Hygiene of Elderly Parents.	25	41,66
20.	Avoiding Sharing Meals with Elderly Parents	25	41,66
21.	Elder Abuse:.	23	38,33
22.	Prioritizing Wife's Demands Over Obedience to Elderly Parents.	23	38,33
23.	Disregarding the Advice of Elderly Parents:.	21	35
24.	Relying Solely on Phone Calls as an Alternative to In-Person Visits:	20	33,33
25.	Prohibiting Elderly Parents from Participating in Family Events:.	19	31,66
26.	Continuously Reminding and Criticizing Elderly Parents for Past Parental Mistakes:	19	31,66
27.	Openly Comparing the Quality of Food Provided to Family Members vs. Elderly Parents	17	28,33

From Table 02, it can be observed that the study participants perceive various forms of violence against elderly parents to be distributed across four main dimensions:

Marginalization Dimension: This dimension includes statements 2, 4, 7, 8, 9, 12, 15, 16, 18, 19, 21, 24, 25, 26, and 27.

Devaluation Dimension: This dimension includes statements 5, 6, 10, 11, 13, 14, 17, 20, 22, 23, 28, and 29.

The "Marginalization Dimension" is ranked first and consists of 15 statements. The percentage of agreement with these statements ranges from 80% for statement 1 to 31.66% for statement 25. On the other hand, the "Devaluation Dimension" is ranked second with 12 statements, and the agreement percentages range from 76.66% for statement 1 to 28.33% for statement 27.

Most of the social perceptions regarding the forms of symbolic violence against elderly parents are concentrated on the marginalization dimension. This suggests that these forms may result from several factors, including:

Health Deterioration and Cognitive Decline: When elderly individuals experience health problems that affect their ability to live independently or lead to a decline in their cognitive abilities, they may feel frustration and pressure. This can lead to increased tensions in relationships and violence.

Physical, Psychological, and Economic Dependence: If elderly individuals are dependent on their family members for care and financial support, it can lead to family tensions and conflicts. The stress associated with caregiving responsibilities and financial dependence can contribute to escalating violence.

Socioeconomic and Social Factors: Socioeconomic, cultural, and religious factors can play a role in shaping the context of violence against elderly parents. For example, financial constraints or lack of social support can be contributing factors to family tensions.

Family Strains and Deteriorating Relationships: Family tensions and personal conflicts can be a cause of violence against elderly parents. Lack of understanding, poor communication, and unresolved disputes may increase the likelihood of violent acts.

It is important to understand and effectively address these factors. Increasing awareness of the rights of elderly individuals and the need to treat them with dignity and respect is crucial. Providing social and economic support, encouraging communication and good relationships within families, and offering appropriate healthcare services can contribute to reducing violence against elderly parents.

6.2. Presentation and discussion of the results of the children towards sample response about the Second Question:

What, in your opinion, are the reasons for this symbolic violence?

Num	Persons' content	Repetitions	%
1	Erosion of Social Values and Prioritizing Utility over Humanity	58	96,66
2	Conflictual Family Relationships Among Caregivers of Elderly Parents:.	57	95
3	Inability to Provide Healthcare for Elderly Parents:.	57	95
4	Overcrowded Family Living Conditions:.	48	80
5	Impact on the Wife of the Son.	48	80
6	Negative Influence of Peers on the Son's Behavior	40	66,66
7	Diminished Social Role of Elderly Parents.	39	65
8	Deteriorating Health of the Elderly:	39	65
9	Elderly Parents Favoring Financial Support to One Child	38	63,33
10	Financial Inability of the Son to Support Elderly Parents	38	63,33
11	Negative Impact of Media, Especially Visual Media, on Parent-Child Relationships	27	45
12	Elderly Parents' Influence on Shaping Family Life According to Past Eras	25	41,66
13	Differential Treatment of Elderly Parents Leading to Material or Emotional Violence	21	35
14	Death of an Influential Parent and the Emotional and Social Vulnerability of the Surviving Parent:	10	16,66

Table 02: Frequencies and Percentage Distribution of Statements Extracted from the Sample's Response to the Second Question

From Table 02, it can be observed that the study participants perceive the reasons for violence against elderly parents to be distributed across four main dimensions:

Social-Relational Change Dimension: This dimension includes statements 1, 2, 6, 7, 11, and 14.

Burden of Responsibility Dimension: This dimension includes statements 3, 5, and 8.

Reaction Dimension: This dimension includes statements 9, 12, and 13.

Economic Family Dimension: This dimension includes statements 4 and 10.

The "Social-Relational Change Dimension" is ranked first and consists of 6 statements. The agreement percentages range from 96.66% for statement 1 to 16.66% for statement 14. The "Burden of Responsibility Dimension" is ranked second with 3 statements, and the agreement percentages range from 95% for statement 3 to 65% for statement 8. The "Reaction Dimension" is ranked third with 3 statements, and the agreement percentages range from 63.33% for statement 9 to 35% for statement 13. The "Economic Family Dimension" is ranked fourth with 2 statements, and the agreement percentages range from 80% for statement 4 to 63.33% for statement 10.

Most of the social perceptions regarding the reasons for violence against elderly parents are concentrated on the social-relational change dimension, which resulted from social change. This dimension includes a total of 6 statements.

These reasons can be explained as follows:

The psychological well-being of the elderly has a significant impact on social performance. When the elderly fail to adapt to the demands of their environment, the failure lies within the same social environment. Factors such as social status, health, financial resources, and marital status can affect the elderly's ability to enjoy a satisfying life more than the aging process itself (Developmental Theory).

The amount of power resources that the elderly possess compared to other age groups is inversely related to the degree of modernization in society. This power resource diminishes significantly in advanced age (Exchange Theory).

There is an inverse relationship between the elderly's inability and performance resistance, which explains the elderly's deviation from the circle of social action and the emergence of dependence on others due to a lack of strength (Defense Theory) (3,47-54).

Violence against elderly parents is a serious problem that affects the health and safety of the elderly, leading to a deterioration in their quality of life. Here are some possible reasons for violence against elderly parents:

Family Tensions and Conflicts: Family relationship tensions and personal conflicts can lead to the use of violence as a means to express anger or even resolve disputes.

Financial and Economic Challenges: Difficult financial situations can negatively impact the family, leading to increased tensions and acts of violence.

Caregiver Stress and Depression: Caregivers may experience stress and depression due to the pressures and significant responsibilities associated with caring for the elderly. This can lead to increased tension and the likelihood of violence.

Lack of Communication and Understanding: Inability to communicate effectively and understand the needs of the elderly can exacerbate tensions and increase the likelihood of violence.

Health Problems of the Elderly: Chronic health conditions or the need for continuous medical care can increase dependence on the family and lead to tensions that may result in violence.

Cultural and Social Challenges: Some cultures may have traditional notions of respect and care for the elderly, but in some cases, these values can lead to increased tension and oppression.

Lack of Awareness and Education: Lack of awareness of the rights of the elderly and the need to treat them with dignity may contribute to violence.

Conclusion

Violence is a phenomenon that has taken a large part in our daily lives. This phenomenon has begun to invade our sphere of thought, and we have begun to hear about violence against assets, but the imbalance in the value system, and Review the moral and spiritual motives, which constitute one of the most important main factors in the spread and exacerbation of the phenomenon. Our society has become, due to the dominance of individualistic values Brutality, and the predominance of personal interest, leads to a kind of imbalance and conflict of values within the individual, society, and communication between the components of the family. Which leads to psychological and emotional instability within the individual and the family alike, which produces psychological and social diseases.

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