

A study on bullying as an act of violence at a school level.

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## **BONAFIDE CERTIFICATE**

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This is to certify that the project titled A study on bullying as an act of violence  
at a school level.

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# CHAPTER 1

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

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### Introduction

The study of bullying has flourished in recent years, reflecting the growing recognition of the negative long-term effects this type of aggressive behaviour can have on victims and bullies. Research on school bullying has developed rapidly since the 1970s. Originating in social and psychological research in Norway, Sweden, and Finland, Global interest in this phenomenon subsequently spread and bullying research began in the United Kingdom, Australia, and the United States. Usually quantitative in nature, many studies examine bullying prevalence, risk and protective factors, and negative. Whilst quantitative research collates key demographic information to show variations in bullying behaviours and tendencies, this dominant bullying literature fails to explain why bullying happens. Nor does it attempt to understand the effects of this phenomenon. This research paper attempts to shed some light on what bullying is, its causes, effects and what an institution to reduce the extent of bullying, by analysing responses to a Questionnaire by parents. The piecemeal and theoretically unsystematic way in which much of this evidence has been produced, however, makes it difficult to reach a clear and coherent conclusion on why bullying happens and how it can be effectively prevented. Readers of this review should be aware of these research limitations, which, to some extent, reflect the complexity of the bullying phenomenon.

Bullying in school settings was once thought of as a normal, transient part of growing up. It was considered to have little lasting impact, and the best advice to the victim was to fight back or turn the other cheek. Beginning in the late 1970s and through the 1980s, pioneering research began to shed light on this behaviour and to dispel common myths. Expanded studies during the 1990s started to examine bullying as a serious form of aggression and considered the possible impacts of this experience on the bully, his or her victim, and even bystanders. The results of these investigations have shown that not only is bullying a common occurrence but also it has lasting effects on all involved.

## What is Bullying?

There is no legal definition of bullying but, the classical definition was first proposed by Olweus as **“Intentional and repeated acts that occur through physical, verbal and relational forms, in situations where a power difference is present.”** Olweus believed that, a student is being bullied when he or she is repeatedly exposed over time, to negative situations by one or more students. In general terms bullying can be defined as an act that is designed to hurt someone else, or make them do something that they do not want to do. Bullying has been defined by many scholars and organisations differently.

Bullying must meet certain requirements to be considered bullying and those are; malintent, imbalance of power, distress and provocation. Bullying in school may occur either on campus or outside campus, but it is primarily due to relationships created in school settings. Bullying is more likely to occur when there are differences in power between the bully and the victim, when the victim is unable to defend the bullying behaviour. Bullying behaviour can be direct, including face-to-face confrontation; such as hitting, damaging, kicking and other types of physical harm, and also indirect involvement of a third party, such as social exclusion, spreading rumours, and other types of psychological harms or even online (cyberbullying).

Bullying has been existing in all communities for a very long time. Bullying exists in both developed and developing societies. Bullying is considered a common form of violence in schools. Various studies indicate that bullying makes schools an unsafe place for students and it contributes to the belief that some schools are no longer safe anymore. Some studies on bullying report that bullying is deemed as a serious problem in academic settings in all parts of the world. It has been found that bullying has various negative impacts on academic performance. Most studies prove that females are more affected than males by bullying. Bullying plays an integral part in causing problems in the lives of children. It is a problem that affects all students, both the bullies and the victims.. It is well known that bullying is difficult to eliminate or to stop, in schools because it often occurs in subtle manners. A study in Germany, stated that bullying is considered as global problem that affects the emotional, social, and physical wellbeing of school-going children worldwide.

## **Types of Bullying**

There are many different types of bullying that can be experienced by children, some are obvious to spot while others can be more subtle. The different types of bullying that are listed below are some ways that bullying can be happening in school settings.

### **Direct and Indirect**

Direct and indirect bullying are the two broad categories of bullying. Direct bullying involves direct contact between the bully and the victim, whereas in indirect bullying, it doesn't involve any kind of contact. Examples of direct bullying are physical sexual bullying. Examples of indirect bullying are verbal and emotional bullying.

### **Physical**

Physical bullying always involves physical contact with the other person. This can mean hand-to-hand, but can also mean throwing items, tripping, or eliciting others to cause physical harm to a person. Physical bullying causes both short term and long term damage.

### **Emotional Bullying**

Emotional bullying involves using ways to cause emotional hurt to another person. This can include saying or writing hurtful things, causing others to gang up on an individual, purposeful ignoring, or spreading rumours.

### **Verbal Bullying**

Verbal bullying means using any form of language to cause the other person distress. It includes name calling, insults, teasing, intimidation, homophobic or racist remarks, verbal abuse or using derogatory terms. While verbal bullying can start off harmless, it can escalate to levels which start affecting the individual target psychologically.

### **Sexual**

Sexual bullying refers to any sort of bullying, done in any manner, that is related to a person's gender or sexuality. Examples include forcing someone to commit intimate acts, making sexual comments, or unwanted/unsafe touching .

## **Social**

Social bullying, is also referred to as covert bullying, it is often harder to recognise and can be carried out behind the bullied person's back. It is designed to harm someone's social reputation and cause them humiliation. Example, negative facial or physical gestures, menacing or contemptuous looks, playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate, mimicking unkindly or lying and spreading rumours.

## **Cyber bullying**

Cyberbullying is bullying with the use of digital technologies. It can take place on social media, messaging platforms, gaming platforms and mobile phones. It is repeated behaviour, aimed at scaring, angering, shaming those who are targeted or to extract personal information. Cyber bullying has become a major threat to children, during the ongoing pandemic.

## **How common is Bullying?**

Sadly, bullying is very common. At least one in three children is bullied at some point. Around one in ten experience bullying which is persistent, lasting six months or more. Boys tend to bully more than girls. In recent times, it has been observed that, most young people experience cyberbullying - as a bystander or as the person doing the bullying or as the victim. The incidence of bullying varies from country to country and school to school within countries. However, it is certain that bullying occurs at all comprehensive schools across all grade levels.

Students consistently report that most bullying incidents take place away from an adult presence at the school, including on school playgrounds, during or between class, and walking to and from school. In addition, bullying is often unreported by the parties involved, primarily because the bullies wish to avoid punishment and the victims wish to avoid further aggravating the bully or prompting retaliation—bullies intimidate their victims. Current research practices for collecting information utilize a combination of teacher and/or parent reports as well as student self-reports and student identification or nomination. Because researchers use various methods, a definitive estimate of the prevalence of bullying in schools is difficult to obtain. It is also probable that the available statistics underestimate the extent and scope of this problem.

A 1998 survey of 15,686 students in the United States conducted by the World Health Organization found that 16% of boys and 11% of girls felt bullied, with 23% of boys and 11% of girls admitting to bullying other students.

There are some developmental differences in bullying. A 1993 study by Whitney and Smith found that the occurrence of bullying decreases as students get older, with the highest rates occurring in the upper elementary and middle schools and the lowest rates in secondary schools. This is suspected to be due, in part, to increased social and physical maturity. By the time a child reaches secondary school, there is a decreased presence of older, more powerful peers who can single out and pick on smaller, weaker peers.

In addition to age differences, there are also gender differences in bullying trends. As mentioned previously, boys are more likely to report both bullying and victimization; however, girls are more likely than boys to experience indirect bullying as opposed to direct bullying. Although the consequences of social rejection and isolation associated with indirect bullying may not be immediately obvious, it may produce negative long-term effects on the victim's social development. Finally, female victims are more likely to tell a female peer about their experience, whereas males are more likely to turn to a trusted adult.

### **Cognitive View of Bullying**

It is very difficult to catch or reduce bullying behaviour among individuals, as cognition develops individuals gain skills of where, when and how to show aggression against others. Developmental changes bring about challenges of interaction and prevention can be explained with two examples; a) The individuals may become more confident about who they target, where to show aggression and in which way, b) Adults may be less aware of negative social interaction those individuals who are involved in indirect physical harm providing activities, instead of directly hitting others. The individuals may learn that in case of showing physical or verbal aggression he or she may be at increased risk for revenge from victim or defender, as a result of it adults may be punished. But if he spread rumours about others, then his purpose will be fulfilled with less or no risk of punishment or revenge.

## **Banter or Bullying?**

Banter is an exchange of light, playful, teasing remarks, it is good-natured raillery. For example, a group of friends may be quite happy exchanging jokes about each other. Provided that everyone in the group is coming in for equal attention, this is probably OK, if a bit juvenile. If, however, the same group is focusing on one person, and making jokes about that one person all evening, that would probably be a bit uncomfortable. The golden rule is that, if the person on the receiving end is not comfortable with the joking, it is no more banter, it is bullying. Although banter is meant to be friendly teasing and it does not constitute all the elements of bullying, it need not be always acceptable. It is important to know the difference between banter and bullying. It's often the case that the person on the receiving end of this 'banter' feels like they can't speak out about it because it may seem like they can't take a joke, although their feelings are hurt by the rude comments. "It's just banter." Banter is often made an excuse for bullying, it is used to excuse unacceptable behaviour and, because it uses social pressure to mark you out as an outsider, it is very effective in making one feel small and staid. It is important to draw the line between banter and bullying to ensure fun, respect and healthy relationships between friends.

## **What is Harassment?**

All members of the community have the basic right not to be harassed, hazed, or bullied. All these acts of bullying, hazing or harassing behaviour, must be prohibited, whether in the classroom, on the campus or outside campus. Demonstration of appropriate behaviour, the treatment of others with civility and respect, and the refusal to tolerate harassment, hazing, or bullying is expected of all students teachers and staff.

Harassment is the illegal behaviour towards a person that causes mental or emotional suffering, which includes repeated unwanted contacts without a reasonable purpose, insults, threats, touching, or offensive language: The company investigated claims of workplace harassment and racial discrimination. Harassment entails behaviour that is inappropriate and that should not take place through ignorance or thoughtlessness. Forms of harassment include,

but are not limited to, written and oral remarks, remarks posted online or to the campus computer network and messages left on voicemail systems. Telephones, email and other forms of electronic communication or media may not be used to harass, haze, or bully others such as anonymous calls or postings, repeated unwanted calls or messages, or obscene calls or postings.

## **What is Hazing?**

Hazing is any action taken or situation intentionally created that causes embarrassment or risks emotional and/or physical harm to members of a group regardless of a person's willingness to participate. The school recognizes and respects individual differences in background in regard to culture, race, ethnic origin, religion, gender, and sexual orientation. Inappropriate behaviour, verbal, written electronically, or physical, that demeans or offends others is unacceptable. This includes, but is not limited to, unwelcome physical advances, unwarranted verbal remarks, derogatory statements or discriminatory comments, and can occur between two individuals or groups of individuals.

Hazing includes the following wilful acts, with or without the consent of the individual involved: physical injury; assault or battery; kidnapping or imprisonment; physical activity that knowingly or recklessly subjects a person or persons to an unreasonable risk of physical harm or to severe mental or emotional harm; degradation, humiliation, or compromising of moral or religious values; forced consumption of any substance; placing an individual in physical danger, which includes abandonment; and undue interference with academic endeavours. Acts of hazing only include those acts which are done for the purpose of pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, participating in, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization. Acts of hazing include acts inflicted by an individual onto one or more people.

## **How can someone distinguish bullying from hazing or meanness?**

When the harassment, name calling, gossiping, outing, rumour spreading, threats, or other forms of intimidation expand from being done in person or by phone to the use of emails, chat rooms, blogs, or other social media over the Internet, it is referred to as

cyber bullying or online bullying. In contrast, hazing is part of initiation of the victim into a group, and meanness does not involve an imbalance of power. Further, meanness involves hurtful behaviours between people who are equals, in social standing and otherwise. People usually think of bullying as taking place between children at school. However, it can also occur at work and include aggressive behaviours like verbal abuse, sabotaging the victim's job or work relationship, or misusing authority. Adult bullies who engage in these behaviours are males 60% of the time. While men who bully tend to victimize both genders equally, women bullies target other women about 80% of the time.

## **Characteristics of Children and Adolescents Involved in Bullying**

### **The Bully:**

Initially, studies described children who bullied others as insecure, anxious individuals who have low self-esteem, are unpopular among their classmates, and use aggressive strategies to resolve conflicts. This stereotype was later contradicted by further research that suggested that bullies are socially competent and have superior theory of mind skills (i.e., awareness of others' mental functions and states) and good levels of social intelligence, knowing how to attain goals without damaging their reputation. Some research suggests that bullies understand the emotions of others but do not share them. Studies which have distinguished between "pure" bullies and victims have revealed that "pure" bullies have few conduct problems, perform well at school, are popular among their classmates, and do not suffer from physical and psychosomatic health problems.

### **The Victim:**

Research has identified that "pure" victims exhibit elevated levels of depression and anxiety, low self-esteem, and poor social skills. Hawker and Boulton's (2000) meta-analysis found that peer victimization is more strongly concurrently associated with depression than with anxiety, loneliness, or self-esteem. Another meta-analysis by Card (2003) found that the strongest correlates of the victimization experience are low self-concept, low physical strength,

low school enjoyment, poor social skills, and high internalizing and externalizing problems. Recent work suggests that bullying might arise out of early cognitive deficits, including language problems, imperfect causal understanding, and poor inhibitory control that lead to decreased competence with peers, which over time develops into bullying. Research does not support the assertion that physical appearance (e.g., wearing glasses) is a risk factor for being bullied at school. The only physical characteristic that has been associated with an increased risk of victimization is low physical size and strength. There is less evidence on how equality characteristics influence victimization. There is no consistently robust evidence to suggest that ethnic minority children are more at risk of being bullied at school.

### **The Bully-Victim:**

Olweus (1993) was the first researcher to identify a small proportion of victims of bullying that he called “provocative victims” or “bully-victims,” who bully other children as well as get bullied by them. Research has identified that bully-victims are the most troubled group among children and adolescents involved in bullying incidents. This group displays the highest levels of internalizing problems, including depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, and loneliness. At the same time, they score high on externalizing problems such as aggression, impulsivity, hyperactivity, and conduct problems. Other research has shown that bully-victims display higher levels of neuroticism and psychoticism than either bullies or victims. Bully-victims use aggressive strategies to cope with stressors at school that increase the risk of further victimization and rejection from peers.

### **The Peer Group:**

Besides the traditional roles of bully, victim, and bully-victim, research has identified that all students take on a role when bullying episodes emerge. In 1996 a research was conducted to distinguish between six different roles children can take in bullying situations: the bully (leader), the reinforcer (encourages and provides audience), the assistant (follower/helper), the defender (helps the victim and/or tells bullies to stop), the outsider (stays away from bullying situations), and the victim. Subsequent research established that the three roles of bully, reinforcer, and assistant are closely correlated with each other and, therefore, cannot usefully discriminate between children. In kindergarten, the three most commonly held

roles are those of the bully, the victim, and the defender. Fewer students are defenders by middle school, and the majority becomes witnesses or bystanders when bullying takes place. Such passive behaviour, although not directly encouraging of bullying, provides a permissive context for bullies that allows them to continue harassing their victims.

## The Bystanders

As peers are such an important part of the bullying process, By its nature, bullying is a social interaction that is embedded in a broader school context. The aggression that occurs between bullies and victims is rarely restricted in its impact to the bully–victim dyad. Rather, peers play an integral part in bullying and intervening. Olweus conceptualized student involvement in an acute bullying situation as being part of a bullying circle (or continuum). At one end of the continuum are students who take an active part in bullying, support the bully, or follow the bully. At the other end of the continuum are students who defend the victim and dislike the bully’s actions. Many students fit in roles that fall somewhere in between—supporting the bully but not taking an active part, supporting the victim but not helping in his or her defence, or as disengaged onlookers. Fig 1. Represents the continuum of student reactions in a situation involving acute bullying.

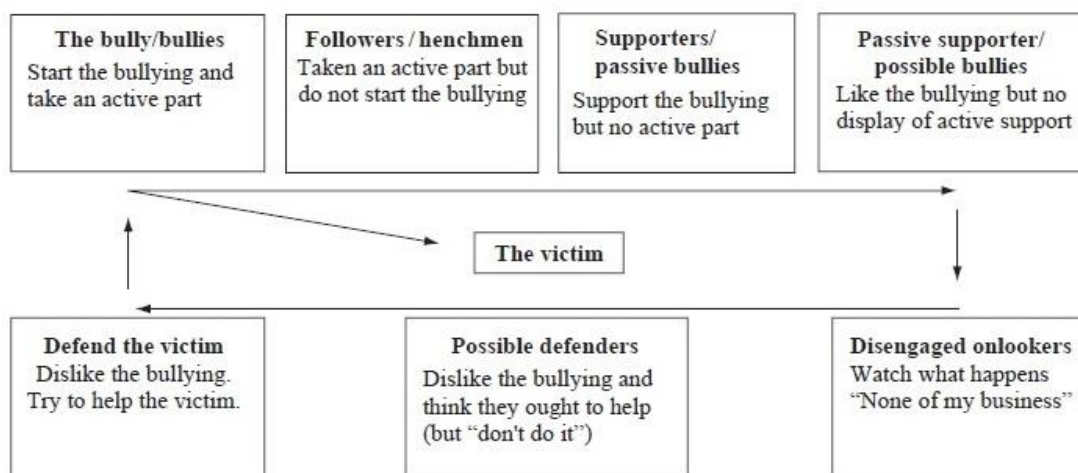


Figure 1. continuum of student reactions in a situation involving acute bullying.

Source: iResearch.net

## **Bullying Prevalence and Continuity**

### **National Variation in Bullying:**

There are large variations across countries in the prevalence of bullying perpetration and victimization. In an international survey of health-related symptoms among school-aged children, the percentage of students who reported being frequently bullied during the current term ranged from a low of 5 % to 10 % in some countries to a high of 40 % in others (2015). An example of why valid comparisons between countries are not possible is Portugal where the bullying rate is high compared to other countries. Berger (2007) in her analysis found that one detail of educational policy in Portugal may account, among other things, for this higher rate of bullying. In Portuguese schools, children are asked to repeat sixth grade unless they pass a rigorous test. This practice results in at least 10 % of all sixth graders (more often boys) to be held back 2 years or more, and these older, bigger children are almost twice as likely to bully compared to the class average. This suggests that the difference in prevalence rates between countries may be, at least partly, accounted for by external factors including national differences in school policies and environments, students' differing levels of cognitive ability, cultural differences in reporting, and different meanings of the term "bullying" in different countries.

### **The Importance of Age in Bullying:**

Despite variations in prevalence, it is a universal finding that bullying and victimization are more frequent among younger children and steadily declines with age. A range of explanations have been put forward to explain these age differences (Smith et al. 1999). Compared to older children, younger children are less likely to have developed the appropriate skills and coping strategies to deal effectively with bullies and avert further victimization. Younger children are also less likely to refrain from bullying others due to socialization and peer pressure. For example, younger pupils might find it more difficult to distinguish between bullying and fighting, broadening the use of the term bullying to include aggressive behaviours that involve no imbalance of power. Within the general trend of decreasing bullying victimization over time, researchers have observed an abrupt increase in bullying during the

transition from primary to secondary school which may reflect some students' attempts to establish dominance hierarchies in the new school environment. Relational forms of bullying take precedence over physical modes of attack as children grow older and their social skills improve.

### **Stability of Bullying Roles:**

Some studies have reported that bullying victimization is relatively stable over a period of up to 4 years in primary school and often continues in secondary school. Other studies have found that only a relatively small proportion of children (around 4–5 %) are victimized repeatedly over time in primary school.

In secondary school, the stability of both bully and victim roles is considerably higher than in primary school according to teacher, peer, and self-reports. It is estimated that two out of three male bullies remain in their role over a 1-year period. Despite the moderate to high stability of the victim and bully roles in secondary school, prevalence rates are lower than in primary school. This suggests that a small number of victims are targeted consistently and systematically in secondary school.

Stability in bullying victimization has been explained in two ways. Firstly, it has been observed that victims select social environments that reinforce the risk of victimization, for example, they are more likely to have friends who are less accepted by the peer group and often victimized themselves. Secondly, victims often lack the social skills to break through in new environments, and this increases the risk that they are labelled as victims and locked in that role over a long period of time. It is important, therefore, to acknowledge that although for some children bullying victimization will be situational, for others it will develop into a trait.

### **Gender Differences in Bullying:**

The view that males are more likely to bully and be bullied than females has been dismissed in recent years following a better understanding about the different forms aggressive behaviour such as bullying can take. Although males are more likely to engage in physical forms of bullying such as pushing and hitting, females are, according to some studies, more

adept at employing relational forms of aggression (e.g., social exclusion, spreading of nasty rumours) against their victims especially during adolescence. No consistent gender differences have been identified in the use of verbal bullying (e.g., calling names, nasty teasing). This suggests that overall gender differences are not as pronounced as originally thought and that bullying is not a male problem.

## **Environmental Influences on Bullying**

### **Parenting and Home Environment**

There is clear evidence that parenting styles are related to bullying behaviour. Studies indicate that bullies are more likely to have parents who are authoritarian and punitive, disagree more often, and are less supportive. The parents of bullies are more likely to have been bullies themselves when they were young. Victims, on the other hand, are more likely to have been reared in an overprotective family environment. Bully-victims tend to come from family backgrounds that are exposed to abuse and violence and favour the use of harsh, punitive, and restrictive discipline practices. This group reports little positive warmth in their families and more difficulties in communicating with parents. Family characteristics are related to bullying victimization in different ways for boys and girls. Boys are more prone to victimization when the father is highly critical or absent in his relationship with his son, thus failing to provide a satisfactory role model. Victimization in boys is also associated with maternal overprotectiveness which may hinder boys' search for autonomy and independence, whereas victimization in girls is more strongly related to maternal hostility which may lead to anxiety and decreased sense of connectedness in relationships.

Very little research has examined longitudinal associations between early home environment and subsequent bullying behaviour. The few studies that exist suggest a link between low emotional support and subsequent bullying behaviour at school. Parents who are disagreeable, hostile, cold, or rejecting tend to have children who are at risk of becoming aggressive in the future. In a small longitudinal study, Schwartz et al. (1997) found that bully-

victims at 10 years were significantly more likely than the other groups to have had experiences with harsh, disorganized, and potentially abusive home environments 5 years earlier. Mother-child interactions at 5 years were characterized by hostile, restrictive, or overly punitive parenting. They were significantly exposed to higher levels of marital conflicts and more likely to come from marginally lower socioeconomic backgrounds. Bullies were found to be exposed to adult aggression and conflicts, but not victimization by adults, and were from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. These findings need to be replicated in larger samples before any safe conclusions can be drawn.

### **Sibling Relationships**

More recently, there has been interest in how sibling relationships affect the development of bullying behaviour. There is international evidence that children who are victimized at school are more likely, compared to other groups, to be victimized by their siblings at home. Wolke and Samara (2004) found that more than half of victims of bullying by siblings were also involved in bullying behaviour at school compared to only 12.4 % of those not victimized by siblings, indicating a strong link between intrafamilial and extrafamilial peer relationships. Those who were both victimized at home and at school had the highest behaviour problems and were the least prosocial. Similar evidence exists in relation to bullying perpetration, suggesting that those who bully at school tend to exhibit similar behaviours towards their siblings at home.

### **School Factors**

A number of school factors have also been implicated as correlates of bullying behaviour. One of the most consistent findings in the international literature is that the number and quality of friends at school is one of the strongest, if not the strongest, protective factor against bullying victimization. Having friends is not sufficient in itself to protect against victimization. For instance, when at-risk children have friends with internalizing problems, who are physically weak or who themselves are victimized, the relation of children's behavioural risk to victimization is exacerbated.

More recent work on the role of class structure and climate on bullying has shown that variations in peer structure and dominance hierarchies influence the stability of bullying victimization. For example, victims in primary school classes with a more pronounced hierarchical structure are less likely to escape their victim role compared to those in classes with less clearly marked hierarchies.

## **Causes of Bullying**

Risk factors for being the victim of bullying include having low understanding of emotional or social interactions, a tendency to become upset easily, or already suffering from anxiety or depression. Actual or perceived obesity of the victim is also a risk factor. Being underweight is slightly associated with being bullied. Gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender youth are more often victims of bullying compared to their heterosexual counterparts. Children who have disabilities or are immigrants or highly achieving minorities are more vulnerable to being bullied, as well. There are various causes of bullying. Any student in school can become a target of bullying irrespective of their gender, religion, race, or socioeconomic status. Once teachers understand why students bully each other in school, they are able to combat it in a better way. Various factors can lead to bullying and they include differences in sexual orientation, religion, appearance, race, and social status. Some students having a higher self-confidence bully other students because they lack empathy and compassion towards other people and can respond in an aggressive manner whenever they feel they are being threatened.

On the other hand, some students also bully others because they want to be perceived as confident and brave enough to cause harm. Students who have experienced abuse and neglect at home can bully others at school due to anger and despair within them. Those students whose parents abuse them at home and ignore them end up feeling depressed and lonely. To express their resentment, they bully vulnerable and innocent students at school. If teachers come across seeing these signs in students, they can easily identify that it's bullying. Once teachers recognize the bullying signs, they can take important steps to combat bullying in schools.

Causes of bullying differ. It only means that anyone can become a target, regardless of gender, race, religion, or socioeconomic status. Understanding why people bully others can help teachers and parents become aware and find the best ways to combat it. Factors that can lead to bullying may include differences in appearance, social status, race, and sexual orientation. But these are not an excuse to bully someone.

### **Environmental factors**

Physical violence in media may contribute to bullying. Some children can watch a lot of violence in the media and not be affected while others can display higher levels of aggression from watching materials deemed to be violent. Thus, it also can depend on how environmental factors are perceived and applied. Proper guidance is also imperative so as not to be influenced with such.

### **Low self-esteem**

Some students who bully others actually have low self-esteem. They try to compensate this feeling by picking on others and feel a sense of accomplishment by doing so. It may give them a good feeling, but it is only temporary, so, they tend to do it habitually, not knowing that this feeling of elation greatly affects their victims.

### **Lack of compassion and empathy**

Although there are others that have much higher self-confidence, they usually lack compassion and empathy and can respond aggressively whenever they feel threatened. Children who bully others have been reported as being low in empathy and therefore not being sensitive to the plight of others. This explains why some of the reasons they say they bully others are: "The other child annoyed me," "To get even," "For fun," "To show how tough I am." Whatever their reason may be, bullying will never be an action to be condoned.

**Societal factors**

A typical example is bullying based on sexual orientation. This has increased as the conversations surrounding LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) have increased in recent years. Regardless of sexual orientation, everyone has the right to go to school and live peacefully, without fear of getting taunted or much worse, bullied. People around the world face violence and inequality and sometimes torture, much worse, execution because of who they love, how they look or who they are. Sexual orientation and gender identity are vital aspects of one's self and should never lead to discrimination or abuse. Society has been slowly accepting the LGBTs with an aim to provide every individual equal rights as any other human being. No person has the right to condemn, discriminate or, much worse, harm them based on their sexual preferences.

**Peer groups**

The influence of peer groups can also contribute a lot in bullying. Peer pressure occurs when a young person is influenced or pressured by those around them into participating in risky behaviour or acting in a way that they normally wouldn't. This is usually through friends at school, sporting groups, relatives, neighbour's etc. School aged children are under great pressure to appear desirable to their peers and, if they do not, they risk becoming targets of bullying.

**Craving attention**

In some cases, there are some who crave for attention and the desire to be perceived as brave and confident. These can cause them to bully to get more attention. Though there are a lot of ways to get attention and be at the limelight, bullying seems to be the easiest and "coolest" way to do so.

## **What are symptoms and warning signs of children who are bullied?**

Signs that may indicate that a child may be being bullied include missing belongings, unexplained injuries, and a limited number of friends. Symptoms experienced by victims of bullying may be physical, emotional, and behavioural. Examples of physical symptoms include those often associated with stress, like headache, stomach ache, changes in appetite, bedwetting, dizziness, and general aches and pains. Psychological symptoms often include irritability, anxiety, sadness, trouble sleeping, frequent nightmares, tiredness in the mornings, loneliness, helplessness, and feeling isolated. Victims of bullying may exhibit behavioural symptoms as well, like avoiding social situations, getting to school or work late, taking off more days, skipping school without telling parents, or even trying to retaliate against their tormentors. Their grades may decline and they may become self-destructive (for example, run away from home, hurting themselves or contemplating suicide).

## **Consequences of Bullying**

There has been a growing interest in recent years to investigate the long-term effects of bullying involvement on children's and adolescents' social, emotional, behavioural, and academic development using longitudinal samples. The results of these studies suggest that victims and bully-victims manifest more adjustment problems than bullies. Victims and, especially, bully-victims are more likely to show elevated levels of depression, anxiety, and loneliness; perform less well academically; and display conduct problems. The only negative long-term outcome that has consistently been reported in the literature for bullies is their involvement in later offending. There is also some initial evidence that bullying perpetration is a significant risk factor of poor academic performance.

Students who are bullied may have poor academic performance as their interest and participation in school decreases, and unexplained injuries and self-destructive behaviour can occur. Emotional effects include struggles with low self-esteem, insomnia, depression, and suicidal thoughts and actions. In addition, students who are bullied are twice as likely to suffer from health problems, such as stomach issues or headaches. Bullying does not only impact the students, but also their family and classmates. Feeling powerless and confused, parents and other member of bullying targets may experience depression, anxiety,

and stress-related illnesses. Some parents become overprotective of their children if they feel they "failed" to protect them.

### **Internalizing Problems**

Several cross-sectional studies have demonstrated negative associations between peer victimization and a range of internalizing problems, including loneliness and low self-esteem. Over the last decade, research on bullying is increasingly reliant on longitudinal methodologies to disentangle whether victimization contributes to internalizing problems or vice versa. It has been argued, for example, that children who display internalizing behaviours (e.g., anxiety or shyness) are more at risk of being targeted by peers due to their inability to cope effectively with provocation. The majority of longitudinal studies investigating associations between peer victimization and psychological maladjustment have found evidence for both directions.

### **Academic Performance**

There is some longitudinal evidence that bullying involvement has a negative impact on academic performance, although more studies are needed to reach a definitive conclusion. A US longitudinal study that began in 2002 with a sample of about 1,700 adolescents found that being a bully had a stronger negative effect on self-perceived academic competence over time than being a victim after controlling for demographic background variables and baseline academic competence (Ma et al. 2009). Furthermore, only bully status predicted lower self-reported grades.

### **Delinquency and Criminality**

Despite showing fewer adjustment problems than victims and bully-victims, bullies are at an increased risk of later delinquency and criminal offending. A recent meta-analysis of studies measuring school bullying and later offending found that school bullies were 2.5 times more likely than non-involved students to engage in offending over an 11-year follow-up period (2011). The risk was lower when major childhood risk factors were controlled for, but remained statistically significant. The effect of bullying on later offending was especially pronounced when bullying was assessed in older children. The longitudinal association

between bullying perpetration and later offending has been replicated in many countries, including Australia, Canada, and Europe.

### **Impact Beyond Victims**

Finally, there is evidence that bullying and victimization have a negative impact not only on the individual children involved but also on bystanders. Children who witness bullying incidents report increased anxiety, less satisfaction with school, and lower academic achievement. There is also evidence that in school classes where a lot of victimization is taking place, school satisfaction among students is low.

### **Bullying Interventions**

Bully intervention programs implemented at schools seek to eliminate existing bully problems, prevent the development of new bully problems, and achieve better peer relations at school. Other goals of bully intervention programs are to create a positive school climate and increase caring behaviours toward bully victims. These goals are accomplished at the school wide level, the classroom level, and the individual level.

Following the development of the first anti-bullying program by Dan Olweus in Norway in the 1980s, a considerable number of anti-bullying interventions have flourished around the world to reduce bullying behaviours and protect victims. The review concluded that only a small number of anti-bullying programs have been evaluated rigorously enough to permit strong conclusions about their effectiveness.

Whole-school interventions were found to be more effective in reducing victimization and bullying than interventions that focused only on curriculum changes or social and behavioural skills training. Targeting the whole school involves actions to improve the supervision of the playground, having regular meetings between parents and teachers, setting clear guidelines for dealing with bullying, and using role-playing and other techniques to teach students about bullying. The success of whole-school interventions, relative to other stand-alone approaches, supports the view that bullying is a systemic, sociocultural phenomenon derived from factors operating at the individual, class, school, family, and community level. Hence, interventions that target only one level are unlikely to have a significant impact.

More recently, there has been a growing interest in the use of virtual learning environments to reduce bullying at schools. The basic feature of these programs is a computer-based environment that creates a highly believable learning experience for children who find themselves “present” in the situation that causes emotional distress and, as a result, learn experientially how to deal with school problems. These results suggest that the use of virtual environments might be an engaging and useful component of whole-school anti-bullying policies that merits further testing. A key finding that emerged from this research is that interventions are more likely to be successful if they have the support of teachers and other school personnel and there is a strong commitment to reduce bullying in the school community. This is considered to be one of the reasons behind the huge success of the Olweus’ prevention program that has not been replicated to date.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

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#### **Introduction**

Research Methodology can be known as the systematic, theoretical analysis of the methods applies to a field of study. It is a way to systematically and logically solve a problem, help us understand the process and not just the product of research, and analytical methods in addition to the information obtained by them. It describes the specific procedures or techniques used to identify, select, process, and analyze information about a topic and hence includes research type, design, sampling techniques, and tools of data collection.

#### **Statement of Problem**

Bullying in schools is a major problem. By sending one's child to school, one lays the foundation for their life. Bullying is a harmful external factor that sets the stage for permanent damage, which will ultimately have a long-lasting, negative effect on the child's life, reaching beyond puberty, to adulthood. Bullying may be physical or psychological, which in turn means that it is much more complex than mere playground pushing and shoving. In most countries, no successful measures have been taken yet, to eradicate bullying, whether legislative or through policies, awareness, or any other means by which bullying can be eradicated. Bullying has always been an omnipresent phenomenon. However, the general attitude of people towards bullying in the past caused bullying to be glanced over as a "right of passage" Only in recent years have professionals such as lawyers and educators realized that bullying is in fact a form of abuse. The fact that bullying has only been labeled a problem in the last 30 to 40 years, makes it difficult to trace its roots.

## **Scope of Study**

This paper aims to understand, a child's perspective on the causes and effects of bullying at a school level, so that we can devise strategies in which we can eradicate bullying and protect children from this heinous act. This will ensure that every school-going child has a memorable and joyful childhood and not one where their physical or mental health suffers.

## **General Objective**

A study on bullying as an act of violence at schools.

## **Specific Objectives**

1. To analyses the causes and extent of bullying among children.
2. To understand the effects of bullying.

## **Research Method**

Research methods is an extremely broad term. It depends on the type of research according to the purpose of the study. It would contain and dictate the type of techniques and tools that the researcher might employ in the proceedings of the research. For this study, the researcher has chosen to use Quantitative research. The researcher has used this method to provide a deeper picture using numbers and figures for a clearer understanding of the magnitude of the problem.

## **Research design**

The research design is used to structure the research. It is a general plan about what will be done to answer the research question. Important elements of research design include research

strategies and methods related to data collection and analysis. The research design used by the researcher is a Cross-sectional study, to analyze the research question using the responses from a specific sample size.

## **Universe**

The population or universe represents the entire group of units which is the focus of the study. Depending on the purpose and coverage of the study, the population could consist of all the people in the country, or those in a particular geographical location, or a special ethnic or economic group. For this study, the universe would consist of all those children, above the age of 13 years, who have been to school, and who have experienced or witnessed bullying at some point of their school life.

## **Area of study**

The area of study is a specific area within which the researcher will be conducting their research. The area of this research will be focusing on students living in the states of Andhra Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu, India.

## **Sample size**

It would normally be impractical to study a whole population, for example when doing a questionnaire survey. Sampling is a method that allows researchers to infer information about a population based on results from a subset of the population, without having to investigate every individual. It is an important feature of any study which aims to make inferences about a population by collecting information from a specific sample. The researcher collected 100 samples.

## **Sampling technique**

The researcher has used the purposive random sampling technique for this research. The only criteria for this would be teenagers above the age of 13 years, who have been to school, and who have experienced or witnessed bullying at some point of their school life.

## **Sources of data**

### **Primary data**

This is the data collected directly from responses of respondents to an online Questionnaire.

### **Secondary data**

These are the data that are collected from some secondary source, that is, the source of where the data is collected by one person and used by other agencies. The researcher has collected secondary data from websites, blogs, and journals.

## **Tool for data collection**

The researcher has used questionnaires as a means of collecting data for quantitative analysis.

## **Duration of data collection**

The data for this research was collected over a period of 33 days, between the 1<sup>st</sup> of August and 6<sup>th</sup> October.

## **Data Analysis**

Data analysis is the process of evaluating data using analytical and logical reasoning to examine each component of data provided. Data from various sources is gathered, reviewed, and then analyzed to form a conclusion. The researcher used the Google Forms software to analyze and compile the data collected from the respondents.

## **Definition of terms**

### **Conceptual Definition**

#### **Bullying**

Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening. – NCAB

#### **Violence**

The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that results in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation. – Smith SG

#### **School**

Schools are social institutions, which can and should serve to provoke and create a better society. – John Dewey

### **Operational Definition**

#### **Bullying**

Bullying involves an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening.

#### **Violence**

The intentional use of physical force or power, against, another person, or against a group, on school property, on the way to or from school or school-sponsored events, or during a school event that results in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation.

**School**

School is an institution where many children come together to interact and be educated.

**Conclusion**

The research methodology has provided the researcher a clear understanding of the research, which will help in the collection and processing of the data. This gives a basic idea and lays the groundwork on which the researcher can build their analysis.

## CHAPTER 3

### ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

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#### Introduction

Analysis can be defined as the detailed examination of the data collected for the research.

All the information given by the respondents has been compiled, interpreted and presented in this chapter. This part of the project aims to represent all the information and data collected from the interviews, and organise it in a tabular and graphical format. The data presented in these tables and graphs will be analysed and interpreted leading to conclusions.

#### Age of Respondents

Table 3.1

Range of Age	Percent	Frequency	Cumulative Frequency
Below 13 years	3.3	3	3
13 – 15 years	16.7	15	18
15 – 18 years	73.3	66	84
18+ years	6.7	6	90

More than two thirds the respondents were of the age group 15-18 years and less than one fourth were 13-15 years old. A considerable proportion was above the age of 18 years.

## Gender of Respondents

Table 3.2

Gender	Percent	Frequency	Cumulative Frequency
Male	52.2	47	47
Female	45.6	41	88
Other	1.1	1	89
Prefer not to say	1.1	1	90

More than half the respondents were male and more than one fourth were female, a small proportion did not wish to reveal their gender.

## Existence of bullying at School

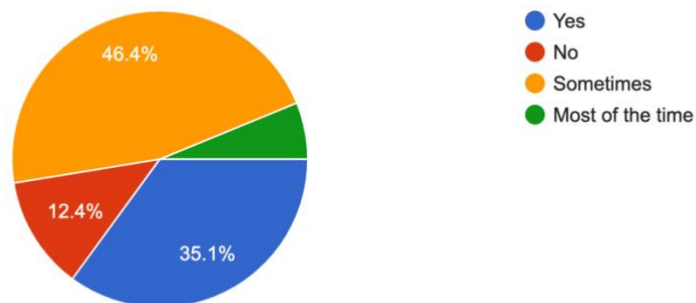
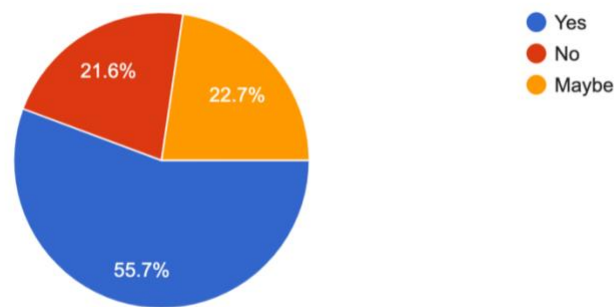


Fig 3.1

A little less than one third of the respondents disagree with the statement “*Bullying is an existing problem at school*”, while one third of the respondents agree that bullying is an existing problem at schools. Most of the respondents believe that bullying occurs not most of the time but often in schools.

### Experience of being Bullied



**Fig 3.2**

More than 50 percent of the respondents have been bullied, less than one third of them have not been bullied.

### Types of Bullying experienced

**Table 3.3**

Type of Bullying	Percent	Frequency
Physical	21.1	20
Verbal	10.5	10
Cyber	6.3	6
Racial	11.6	11
Gender	65.3	62
Physical Appearance	24.2	24
Body build or body mass	33.7	32

Majority have been bullied or discriminated based on their Gender and Body Build or Body Mass. Racial and Physical bullying are also prominent. Verbal and Cyber bullying are found the least.

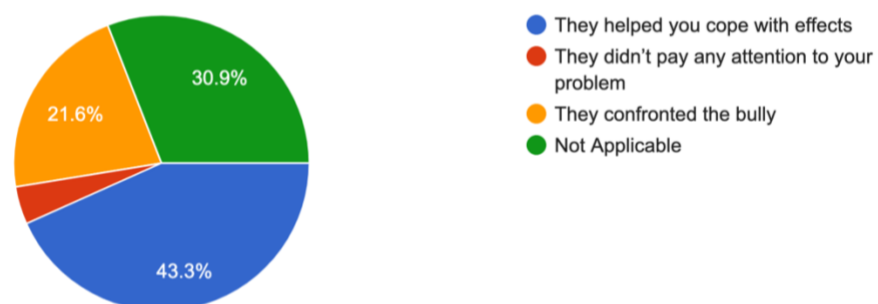
### Different people one would approach when one has certain problems

**Table 3.5**

Who ?	Percent	Frequency
School Teacher	32	31
Therapist	6.2	6
Parents	41.2	40
Siblings	14.4	14
Peers	46.4	45
Nobody	23.7	23

Majority of individuals approach their parents or teachers, when they are facing any problems. At the same time 23% of the respondents also do not approach anyone, and keep their issues to themselves, which could lead to mental instability.

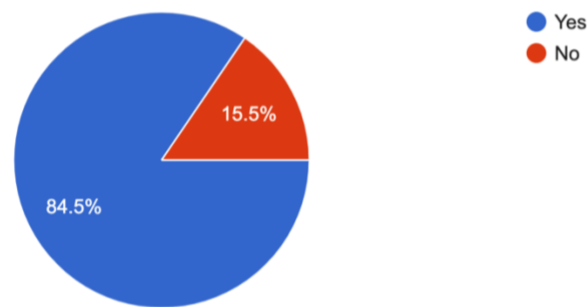
### Response to an Individuals issues and concerns.



**Fig 3.3**

Almost 75% of the respondents are given aide when they are bullied, but there is a small fraction ( 4.1%) of individuals whose concerns are ignored. These people may face more sever effects of bullying.

### Witnesses of Bullying



**Fig 3.4**

Fig 3.4 is proof that bullying is an existing problem at schools. 85% of the respondents have witnessed the act of bullying act school and only a little more than 15% have not.

### Types of Bullying witnessed

**Table 3.4**

Type of Bullying	Percent	Frequency
Physical	44.3	42
Verbal	72	75.8
Cyber	14.7	14
Racial	18.9	18
Gender	22	23.3
Body build or body mass	41.1	36

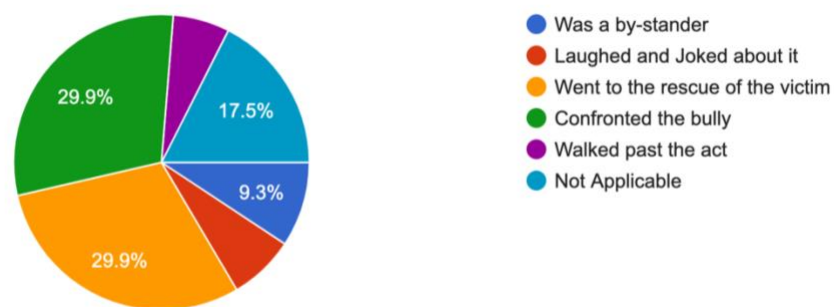
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<b>Differently Abled</b>	1.1	1
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Table 3.4 is proof that physical and verbal bullying are the most common modes of bullying followed by bullying based on body mass and gender

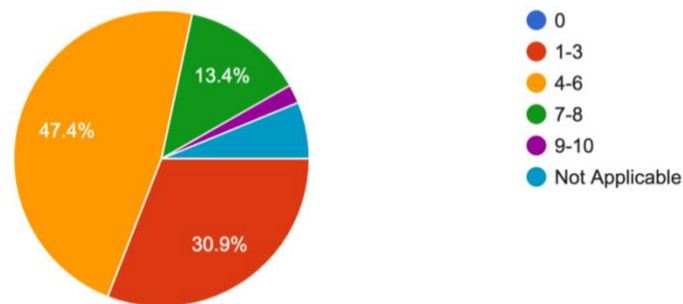
### Response when bullying is witnessed.



**Fig 3.5**

Fig 3.5 shows the response of individuals to bullying. More than one fourth of the total number of participants show a positive sign of going to the aid of the victim and less than one third confront the bully. A considerable portion of the total watch the violent and a fraction of them either walk past the act or laugh and joke about the situation.

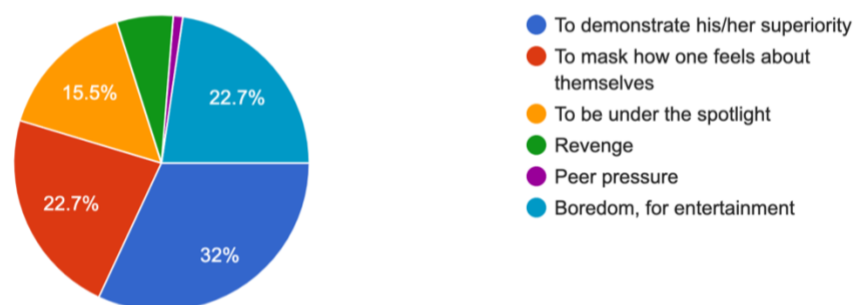
### Severity of Bullying attacks.



**Fig 3.6**

From Fig 3.6 we understand that, most bullying attacks have a moderate level of severity. However, a considerable portion have experienced/witnessed very severe cases of bullying. (this measure although, is subjective from person to person).

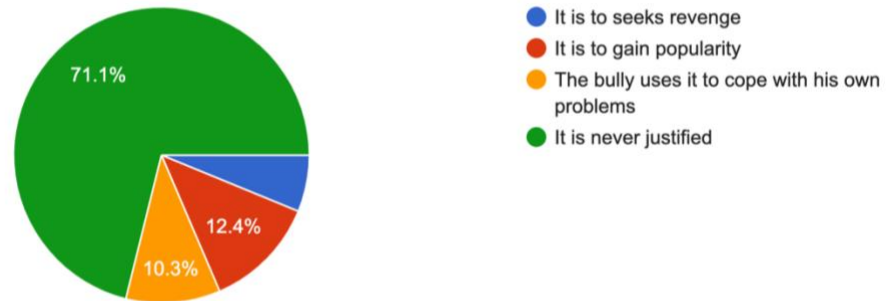
### Reason behind bullying



**Fig 3.7**

From Fig 3.7 we understand that, a one third of the sample believes that people bully others to demonstrate their superiority, a considerable proportion believe bullying is done to seek revenge, and more than one fourth feel that bullying is a result of idleness or to mask how one feels about himself.

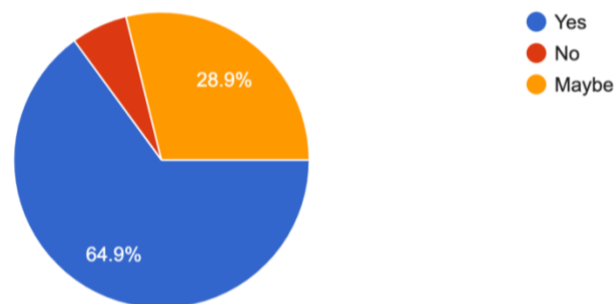
### When is bullying justified



**Fig 3.8**

Fig 3.8 shows that two thirds of the population, believes that bullying is never justified and a considerable proportion believe that it is justified when it is to cope with one's own problems.

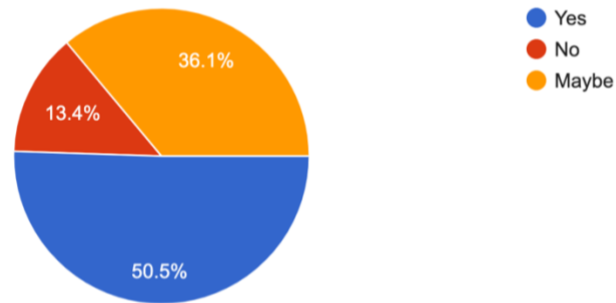
### Influence of peer pressure on bullying



**Fig 3.9**

Fig 3.9 A vast majority show that peer pressure plays a key role in the act of bullying.

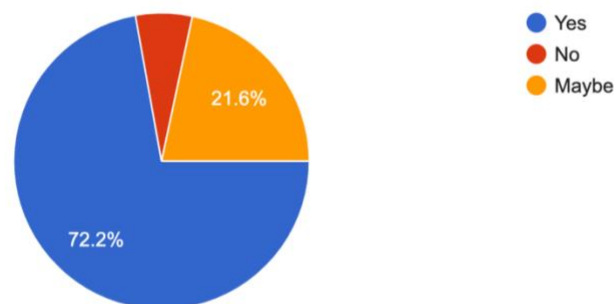
### Specially abled kids prone to bullying



**Fig 3.10**

Fig 3.10 Half the population believe that specially abled individuals are prone to bullying. Whereas a considerable proportion believe that all students are equally prone to bullying.

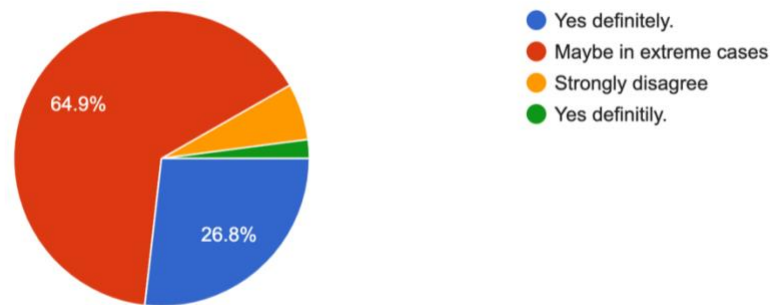
### Effect of nature and nurture on bullying.



**Fig 3.11**

Fig 3.11 A vast majority of individuals are of the opinion that how a person is brought up and the environment around them affects the nature of a individual and thus affects bullying. They also believe that one's heredity also influences how an individual is nurtured and thus affects bullying.

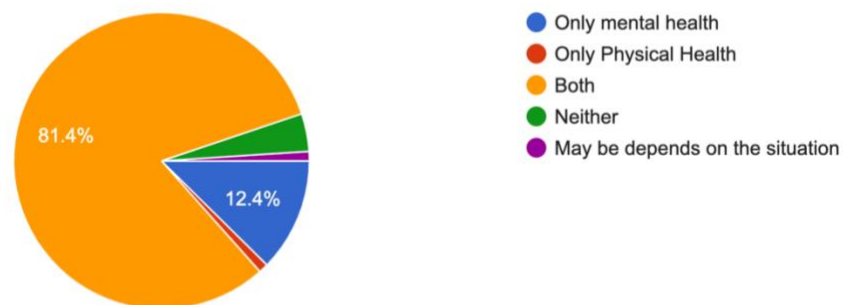
### Bully as a punishable offence



**Fig 3.12**

Fig 3.12 More than half the population have the opinion that bullying should be a punishable offence only in extreme cases whereas one third are of the view that bullying in all cases should be punished.

### Effect of bullying on Mental and Physical health



**Fig 3.13**

Fig 3.13 shows that a vast majority of individuals believe that bullying affects one's mental and physical health adversely. Whereas a fraction of individuals have the perception that bullying mostly affects one's mental health

### Effects of Bullying

**Table 3.6**

Effects of bullying	Percent	Frequency
<b>Depression and Anxiety</b>	79.4	77
<b>Health complaints</b>	38.1	37
<b>Decrease in academic performance</b>	59.8	58
<b>Affects activities outside school</b>	52.6	51
<b>Decrease in the number of friends</b>	52.6	51
<b>Decrease in self-esteem and self-confidence</b>	80.4	78
<b>Risk of self-harm or suicide</b>	61.9	60
<b>Difficulty to trust others</b>	66	64
<b>A feeling of loneliness</b>	70.1	68
<b>Medical ailments</b>	15.5	15

Majority of the participants believe that depression, anxiety, reduce in self-esteem and self-confidence are the major effects of bullying. Other common effects are found to be “feeling lonely” and difficulty to trust others.

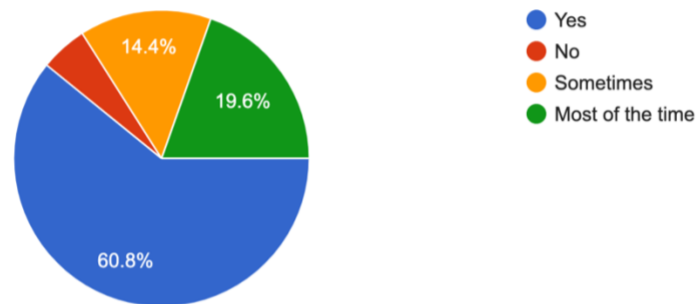
## **Effects of bullying?**

A high majority of participants are of the opinion that decrease in self-esteem, anxiety and loneliness are the main effects of bullying. However the effects vary from person to person. In most cases the physical and mental health of individuals are affected. Other common effects

### **Summary of all answers**

Bullying has many negative consequences, including mental health effects, substance use, and suicide. Bullying can affect self-esteem, physical health, academic performance, behaviour, and suicide. Many young children have unstable mental health due to bullying, which can cause depression and shyness. Bullying affects both the bully and the victim, but the victim shows more severe effects than the bully, they begin to form a kind of social barrier or shell and tend to lose part of their social relations. Bullying can damage the victim's self-esteem and cause mental and physical ailments. It lowers their self-esteem and makes them feel bad when they shouldn't. It mainly affects a person's mental health and changes their perception of themselves in such a way that they are intimidated, which makes them feel insecure. It differs from person to person, some people may have an unsupportive environment and won't be able to talk to anyone about their worries, leading to depression and self-harm. Bullying tends to have long-term consequences for the victim, and most bullying is traumatic and difficult to forget. Bullying is something that has a strong psychological impact on both the perpetrator and the victim. This makes a person feel depressed, lonely, and anxious.

### Effect of bullying on Mental and Physical health



**Fig 3.14**

Fig 3.14 shows that more than two thirds of the population feel safe and comfortable in their school environment whereas a considerable proportion often feel out of place and vulnerable to violent acts.

### Common areas in school premises where bullying occurs

**Table 3.7**

Common areas where bullying occurs	Percent	Frequency
Playgrounds and during recess	54.6	53
Classrooms	47.4	46
School bus and van transport system	32	31
Cafeteria or canteen	15.5	15
Hallways and Restrooms	47.4	46

Majority of the participants believe that bullying occurs in playgrounds and specially during recess (snack and lunch break) and sometimes in the bathrooms and classrooms.

**Strategies implemented to prevent bullying at school.**

**Table 3.8**

<b>Strategies implemented to prevent bullying.</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
<b>Lessons using resources specifically addressing bullying Example: videos, workshops and role plays</b>	37.1	36
<b>Teacher training on how to address bullying.</b>	20.6	20
<b>Conflict resolution training for pupils</b>	10.3	10
<b>School counselling sessions for pupils</b>	42.3	41
<b>Emphasis on social and emotional learning</b>	29.9	29
<b>Increased school supervision</b>	40.2	39
<b>No strategies implemented to prevent bullying</b>	23.7	23

One fourth of the students say that no strategies are implemented at their school, but more than one third confirm that often teachers talk to students regarding bullying and students are often monitored at school.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **MAIN FINDINGS**

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#### **Introduction**

This chapter of the research aims at gathering the fully analysed and interpreted data from the previous chapter and drawing certain conclusions and findings from it. Here, the responses will be thoroughly evaluated and the observations made from it will be related to the objectives of the research.

#### **Overview of the study**

This study is intended to review the act of Bullying in Chettinad Harishree Vidyalayam. The research constituted of 90 respondents, which the researcher collected using random sampling. The researcher passed out an online questionnaire to the respondents.

#### **Personal Demographics**

This study covered a wide range of grades, varying from 6<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>. Regarding gender, the split up was almost equal, with a majority of male respondents. Most of the respondents belonged to the age group of 15-18 years.

#### **To analyse the causes and extent of bullying among children.**

According to my research Bullying is an existing problem at Harishree Vidyalayam. Most students of the school have been bullied or have witnessed the act in, one way or the other. The most common ways of bullying are, discrimination based on Gender and Body Build. Students often tend to verbally abuse people based on their physical appearance and body shape, there are also distinguished based on their gender. We understand that most people who have any problems approach their parents and peers, who often help the victim cope with his/her problems, by confronting the bully or help manage the effects. The severity of most bullying cases at school are moderate, although there are some cases that maybe extreme.

Students usually engage in bullying primarily to demonstrate their superiority, to mask their sorrows or how they feel about themselves. They also bully other for their own entertainment. Most children also bully as they are of the opinion that it makes them look cool. Bullying should never be justified and accepted, in fact, it should be made a punishable offence in severe cases and have consequences in other cases. Peer pressure plays a crucial role, as it is one of the major causes of bullying, apart from an individual's heredity and environment around.

### **To understand the effects of bullying**

Bullying is very obviously a negative and often violent act, thus it has its effects on the bully and the victim. The bully, although in most cases is affected more severely. It affects a person mental and physical health. The extent of influence of bullying on an individual's mental or physical health, depends on the severity of the case.

Some very prominent effects of bullying are Decrease in self-esteem and self-confidence, Depression and Anxiety, a feeling of loneliness and difficulty in trusting others and making friends, and decrease in academic performance, focus and concentration and very rarely medical ailments. The effects although are subjective and differ from person to person.

Most individuals feel safe and comfortable at Harishree Vidyalayam, but there are certain areas where bullying most commonly occurs. Such as, the auditorium or playground, inside class rooms and in school buses and van transport. Another are where bullying is witnessed is inside washrooms. It is understood that these incidents occur in areas where there is minimal supervision by teachers.

## **Suggestions to teachers in a school, to alleviate bullying, from the resercher**

- **Have a clear definition of bullying.**

Students and teachers should have a clear definition of bullying they should be able to distinguish between teasing and bullying. Students also should draw the line between fun with others and hurting others, intentionally or unintentionally.

- **Remove labels; address the behaviour.**

When teachers call a child “a bully” or “victim” they place a judgement on that child, instead of first analysis the cause of the problem, this could affect the bully or the victim in the future.

- **Set a clear set of rules, with stern consequences when the rules are not followed.**

Students should be aware of expected mode of behaviour and the consequences of their action. A small set of age-appropriate simple rules and regulations, should help students distinguish between right and wrong behaviour.

- **Sanctions on positive and negative behaviour.**

Reward positive behaviour and punish inappropriate behaviour. It is although easy to point out other’s mistake, but it is not often pointed out when an individual carries himself/herself in a socially acceptable manner. Children should be appreciated more often for their actions.

- **Open and supportive communication**

Students need to feel free to report violent behaviour without retaliation against themselves, the victim, or any witnesses. The counsellors can hold sessions where bullies and

victims talk freely to resolve violent matters. Thereby, it's easy to identify the reasons for aggressive behaviour and find appropriate means to improve it.

- **Look for signs**

For example, unexplainable injuries, difficulty in sleeping, change in routine, change in diet and eating habits, loss of friends, keeping to oneself, declining grades, etc. These are some signs an individual's shows, if he/she is unable to express his problems to people, teachers and peers must look out for these signs to help them.

- **Monitor all parts of the school**

Installing cameras in various parts of the school, essentially areas that students are exposed too, this method will help easier monitoring of students.

- **Create opportunities for connection.**

Fostering a sense of community in your classroom can lower bullying incidents and facilitate healing for targeted students.

- **Identify 'gateway behaviours'.**

Researchers have found that small behaviours can often signal the beginning patterns of bullying. Like eye-rolling, name calling, excluding, stalking, spying, physical harm, etc.

- **Creating a positive school environment**

A school's success is highly dependent on the positive energy that the teachers and students adopt. Some indicators of a positive school climate include when students; can freely interact

with the teachers and their peers. Feel content, wanted, and valued. Are aware of the expectations for behaviour and consequences of disobedience.

- **Include Mental Health Subjects in the School Curriculum**

Young students should know what bullying can look like and comprehend what it feels like. Students should understand the consequences of bullying on their psychological well-being. Especially how it may affect their judgment of themselves.

- **Teach Social Skills**

Social skills significantly impact communication and interpersonal relationships among human beings. Research shows that children with behavioural and social skills positively engage in classroom activities. They easily make friends and are, therefore, less likely to bully their peers.

- **Engage Parents**

Sadly, parents are often the last to discover when their child is bullied or has enacted bullying against a peer. However, you can break this cycle — by educating yourself on promoting an effective family unit and being a supportive parent.

- **Organise workshops and lectures**

Lessons using resources specifically addressing bullying, example: videos, workshops and role plays. Teacher training on how to address bullying. Conflict resolution training for pupils.

### **Limitations of the research**

The researcher did not face too many limitations whilst conducting the research. The only limitation that slightly affected the research was the fact that the accuracy of the responses

collected from the sample. The interpretation of the questions and the level of honesty of answers may not be absolute.

## **Conclusion**

This research aimed to provide an introduction to bullying and its history and also to make the school aware of the causes, extent, effects of bullying of its students and provide solutions for the same.

Bullying among school children is a very old phenomenon though many are acquainted with the problem, it was not until fairly recently that the phenomenon was made the object of more systematic research. Most children that bully others do it because their victim is scared. The bullies usually pick out the children that are weaker than them. Bullying causes children to have self-esteem issues and this can lead to depression. Some children do not like to come to school because of the bullying. Most children that bully others are dealing with problems at home. They pick on others to make themselves feel good. If bullying does not decrease, more children will have suicide thoughts, because they will not be able to handle the pressure and anxiety. Bullying is most frequently the cause of a lot of problems in school. Bullying is a serious problem that can dramatically affect the ability of students to progress academically and socially. A comprehensive intervention plan that involves all students, parents, and school staff is required to ensure that all students can learn in a safe and fear-free environment. Bullying topic is very complicated to solve. It must be treated with a firm and pedagogical discipline, with some rules that everybody must follow. If these rules aren't followed, the bully will be penalized. It is necessary for the bully, because he must understand that violence isn't a solution, the objective is that he is sorry for his actions and doesn't have it happen/ do it again.

Victims should also understand that they are not weaker or less but, some people won't be happy until they've pushed you to the ground. What you have to do is have the courage to stand your ground and not give them the time of day. Hold on to your power and never give it away. And Each of us deserves the freedom to pursue our own version of happiness. No one deserves to be bullied.

# APPENDIX - I

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## APPENDIX – II

### Questionnaire

#### Personal Demographics

1. Gender:

Male.

Female.

Other.

Prefer not to say.

2. Age:

Below 13 years.

13-15 years.

15-18 years.

18+ years.

#### Specific Objective 1

3. Is Bullying an existing problem in your community?

Yes.

No.

Most of the time.

Sometimes

4. Have you ever been bullied?

Yes.

No.

Maybe

5. If yes, how were you bullied? Choose all relevant answers.

Physically.

Verbally.

Cyber.

Racially.

Gender.

Physical Appearance.

Body build.

Not applicable

6. Who would you approach when you have a problem at school? Choose all relevant answers.

School Teacher.

Therapist.

Parents.

Siblings.

Peers.

None.

7. Who would you approach when you have a problem at school? Choose all relevant answers.

They helped you cope with effects.

They didn't pay any attention to your problem.

They confronted the bully.

Not Applicable.

8. Have you ever witnessed bullying?

Yes.

No.

9. If you have, what kind of bullying was it? Choose the most relevant answers.

Physically.

Verbally.

Cyber.

Racially.

Gender.

Physical Appearance.

Body build.

Not applicable

10. If you have witnessed bullying, what have you done about it?<sup>[L]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub>

Was a by-stander.

Laughed and Joked about it.

Went to the rescue of the victim.

Confronted the bully.

Walked past the act.

Not applicable.

11. What was the extent of the bullying attacks, you have experienced or witnessed? 1 being the least and 10 being the severe.

0

1-3

4-6

7-8

9-10

Not applicable.

12. Why do you think people are bullied?<sup>[1]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub>

To demonstrate his/her superiority.

To mask how one feels about themselves.

To be under the spotlight.

Revenge.

Peer pressure.

13. Bullying is justified when.....

It is to seek revenge.

It is to gain popularity.

The bully uses it to cope with his own problems.

It is never justified.

14. Do you think peer pressure influences the act of bullying?

Yes.

No.

Maybe.

15. Do you think specially abled kids are more prone to bullying?

Yes.

No.

Maybe.

16. According to you, does the environment at home and heredity influence an individual's behaviour at school?

Yes.

No.

Maybe.

17. Would you classify bullying as a crime or a formally punishable offence?

Yes definitely.

Maybe in extreme cases.

Strongly disagree.

### **Specific Objective 2**

18. Does bullying influence a person's mental or physical health to an alarming extent?

Only mental health.

Only physical health.

Both.

Neither.

19. What do you think are the most prominent effects of bullying?

Depression and Anxiety.

Health complaints.

Decrease academic achievements.

Affects activities one does after school.  
Decrease in number of friends.  
Self-confidence and Self-esteem becomes low.  
Risk of self-harm/suicide.  
Difficult to trust others.  
Feel lonely.

20. What do you think are the effects of bullying? Give your answer in not more than 70 words.

21. Do you generally feel safe and comfortable in your school environment?

Yes.

No.

Sometimes.

Most of the time.

22. you believe bullying is a problem at your school, where does it most often occur?  
Choose all relevant answers.

Hallways and Restrooms

Playground and during Recess (lunch and snack break)

Classrooms or Locker rooms

School Bus or other in other modes of transport

Cafeteria or Canteen

23. In your school, which of the following strategies are used to prevent and/or address bullying? Choose all the relevant answers.

Lessons using resources specifically addressing bullying.

Teacher training on how to address bullying.

Conflict resolution training for pupils.

School counsellor sessions with pupils.

Emphasis on social and emotional learning.

Increased school supervision.

## APPENDIX – III

### Consent Form

Dear Respondent,

Namaste! I invite you to participate in a Study of bullying in a school environment. The purpose of this research project is to understand the effect, cause and extent of bullying at a school level. This is a research project being conducted by Uttara of Grade XI, Chettinad Harishree Vidyalayam. The data collected will be reported in my Grade XI ISC Sociology Research Paper. I would really appreciate it if you could take some time out, and participate in this survey.

Your responses will be confidential and information such as your name, email address, etc. will not be asked, your response will be completely anonymous.

Your participation in this research study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate.

I am willing to participate

I am not willing to participate