



## Prevalence Of Bullying Among School Children In Selected Schools, Siliguri With A View To Conduct Bullying Prevention Programme

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**Abstract:** Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationship through repeated verbal, physical and social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social, and psychological harm which can be seen usually between school-aged children or teens. A cross-sectional study was conducted to assess the prevalence of bullying among school children and to find out the association with selected demographic variables with a view to develop Bullying Prevention Programme among children. Data was collected from 213 school children through systematic random sampling technique by using Olweus Bullying Questionnaire at Dr. B.R Ambedkar Primary School and Bani Mandir Railway Higher Secondary School, Siliguri. Analysis was done by using descriptive and inferential statistics. Findings revealed that 64.31% of school children were sometimes bullied, 24.41% were never bullied and 11.26% were always bullied and 48.35% of school children sometimes bullied others, 30% never bullied others and 21.59% always bullied others. The mean, median and standard deviation of victim of bullying score of the respondents were 12.23, 1302 and 16 respectively and the mean, median and standard deviation of about bullying other students score of the respondents were 5.24, 558 and 9.54 respectively. Statistically significant association were found between level of bullying with demographic variables like gender, education of child and residence at  $p \leq 0.50$  level of significance. Statistically significant association were found between bullying other student with demographic variables like relationship with neighbours at  $p \leq 0.50$  level of significance. The study concluded that there was prevalence of bullying among school children and researchers developed and conducted a Bullying Prevention Programme.

**Index Terms-** Prevalence of Bullying, Bullying Prevention Programme, School Children.

## INTRODUCTION

Bullying is any unwanted, aggressive behavior, usually between school-aged children or teens. There are various types of bullying- verbal bullying: name calling, inappropriate sexual comments, taunting, threatening to cause harm; Social bullying: leaving someone out on purpose, telling other children not to be friends with someone, spreading rumors about someone, embarrassing someone in public; Physical bullying: hitting /kicking / pinching, spitting, pushing, taking, or breaking someone's things, making mean or rude hand gestures. The first and one of the major negative effects of bullying in school is to destroy child's health and wellbeing. In India there are many bullying cases which has happened.

On 9<sup>th</sup> August 2023, a first year student of Jadavpur University in Kolkata died after allegedly falling from the second floor balcony of the main hostel, according to report, Swapnadip kundu (18years), a resident of Bagula in Nadia district, was an undergraduate student of Bengali honors. He allegedly fell from a building around 11.45 pm on Wednesday. Swapnadip was facing ragging by few seniors, and he received multiple injuries and died at 4.30 am at KPC Medical College and Hospital.

On 16<sup>th</sup> July 2023 three boys residing in Kolkata who were all under 18 years were apprehended on Monday for allegedly assaulting a 22 year old man with autism. They allegedly forced him to dance in public near the crossing of Pratapaditya Road and Rashbehari Avenue. The victim Amitrajit suffered from 70% autism. His parents had lodged a complaint on Tollygunge police station. Based on their complaint the Tollygunge police initiated a probe to identify the accused, CCTV footage and the statement of victim, the police were able to rule out the three boys. On 17<sup>th</sup> July 2023 they were taken to custody. They were found guilty and taken to Juvenile home.

On 5<sup>th</sup> November 2022, an incident of bullying has emerged from Andhra Pradesh where a man was brutally beaten with sticks and pipes by other fellow students. The incidence is reported to be of Sagi Rama Krishnam Raju Engineering College students, which is in Andhra Pradesh's Bhimavaram area. The video of bullying and beating was recorded on camera and went viral. In the video, a man, who can be seen standing in one corner of a room, was beaten by other students as they brutally assaulted the man with sticks. The people who were assaulted include 3 students who can be seen unleashing their brutal assault on the man. According to reports, after the video went viral, the police took cognizance of the case and registered a case. The reports say that Andhra Pradesh's Bhimavaram town police have arrested the 4 accused in the case.

On 7<sup>th</sup> July 2022 Arvey Malhotra, a student class10 of the Delhi Public School (DPS), jumped from the building where he stayed with his mom. Arvey had left a suicide note for his mother, in which he wrote, "This school has killed me. Especially higher authorities". Everything was fine until class 5. Class 6 onwards his friends started bullying him, says the mother. "They made fun of his sexuality and they also used to call him gay, chhakka, ladkiyon jaisa and teased him mercilessly". His mother had informed the police that her son was bullied by nine students in the school washroom.

## NEED OF THE STUDY

A focus on preventing bullying is important, as it promotes positive actions such as kindness, acceptance, and inclusion. Especially students can be affecting in bullying. It is important to encourage children to be supportive of anyone experiencing bullying and to educate them on how to advocate for themselves and for others. Silence is not acceptable response to bullying. Ignoring it won't work. Everyone needs to be empowered with options for responding to bullying situations.

**Hakan K & Mats H (2021)** conducted a cross sectional study to examine recent trends in bullying and mental health problems among adolescents and to find out the association between them by using questionnaire. Study was conducted on all secondary school students aged 9 years & 11 years in Stockholm. The result shows the prevalence of bullying remained stable and was highest among girls in 9 year; range = 4.9% to 16.9% Mental health problems increased; range = +1.32 % (9 years boys) to +4.6% (11 years girls) and were consistently higher among boys who had been bullied compared to those who were not bullied, the corresponding figure for girls was 2.4 times higher.

**Remy M (2020)** conducted a mixed explanatory research approach to explore school going amongst high school students, their perspectives and their effects on academic performance by using qualitative (interview) and quantitative (question) approach. Data was collected from over 30 participants of whom 24 were students of upper six classes and six were teachers in the northwest and southwest regions of Cameroon in secondary schools. The study explored the impact of bullying in public and private schools in Cameroon with a focus on academic performance of students the study indicated that verbal bullying, physical bullying and social bullying are common in schools with negative effects. The findings showed that school bullying still exist in most schools and influences students' academic performance and school attendance. It was acknowledged that most students experienced bullying in their classes and some students reported cases of bullying to their teachers.

**Viral P et al (2016)** conducted a cross-sectional study in January 2016 at 12 Gujarati-medium schools from the rural areas of Anand district, Gujarat state, in Western India. Data was collected from 2552 participants by using questionnaire. Prevalence of bullying involvement was 70% (n = 1529; 9.1% bullies, 18.6% victims and 42.3% bully-victims). The prevalence of bullies was higher in boys (77.5%) compared with girls (58.3%). In addition, the prevalence of victims was higher in boys (67.2%) compared with girls (51%). There is a high prevalence of bullying – related involvement compared with earlier studies and a complete lack of bullying prevention policies at the school levels.

Bullying is a growing and increasingly worrying phenomenon. In recent years, a number of different bullying prevention programs have been implemented to create a more positive school environment. These bullying prevention programs help to raise awareness of this problem within the entire school community, improving the school environment and reducing conflict and instances of bullying.

## OPERATIONAL DEFINITION

**Assess:** In this study assess means gathering information regarding bullying among children.

**Prevalence:** In this study prevalence refers to the occurrence of bullying cases among children which is assessed by Olweus Bullying Questionnaire.

**Bullying:** In the study bullying refers to form of harassment, verbal and physical as measured by Olweus Bullying Questionnaire.

**Bullying Prevention Programme:** In this study Bullying prevention programme is a multilevel, multicomponent, school-based programme designed to prevent or reduce bullying in primary and secondary schools.

**School Children:** In this study school children refers to a child who belongs to the age group of 6–16 years.

## METHODOLOGY

A cross-sectional research design was adopted for this study. The sample of this research study was 213 school children of Dr. B.R Ambedkar Primary School and Bani Mandir Railway Higher Secondary School, Siliguri through systematic random sampling technique. Non-probability convenient sampling technique was used to select the setting. The instrument used to assess level of bullying among school children was Olweus Bullying Questionnaire. After assessing the prevalence of bullying among school children A Bullying Prevention Programme was developed and conducted.

## DATA ANALYSIS

Data was organized, tabulated, and interpreted using descriptive and inferential statistics. Correlation-coefficient and chi-square test examined the relationship and association between selected demographic variables.

## RESULT

### Description of sample characteristics

The data presented in table 1 shows that most of the respondents were between the ages 6-9 years (7.98%), 10-12 years (37.09%), 13-16 years (54.93%). Girl respondents were 51.17% and boy respondents were 48.83%. Majority of the respondents that is 94.37% were Hindu and 5.63% of respondent were Muslim. Most of the respondents (55.87%) were in 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> standard, 35.68% were in 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> standard, 8.45% were in 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> standard. Maximum respondents (50.70%) belonged to nuclear family and 41.31% belonged to joint family. Majority of the fathers that is 26.76% had primary and secondary education, 16.90% fathers had higher secondary education, 16.43% fathers were graduated and above and 13.15% fathers had no formal educations. Maximum number of mothers that is 30.05% had primary education, 34.27% had secondary education, 26% had no formal education, 15.96% had higher secondary education, 7.5% were graduated and above. Most of fathers (51.64%) were self-employed, 31.92% were private employees, 12.1% were government employees and 4.23% were unemployed whereas 75.53% mothers were homemaker, 14.08% were self-employed, 5.63% were

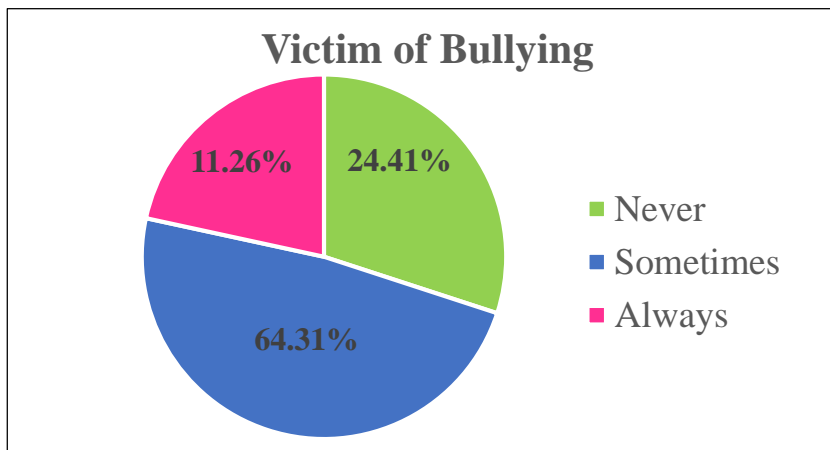
private employees and 3.76% were government employees. Most of the respondents (93%) had good relationship with neighbours, 7% had bad relationship with neighbours.

**Table 1** Frequency and percentage distribution of sample characteristics.

		n=213	
Sample	Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Age (in year)	6-9 years	17	7.98
	10-12 years	79	37.09
	13-16 years	117	54.93
Gender	Male	104	48.83
	Female	109	51.17
Religion	Hinduism	201	94.37
	Islam	12	5.63
	Christian	0	0
	Others	0	0
Education of child	1 <sup>st</sup> – 3 <sup>rd</sup> standard	18	8.45
	4 <sup>th</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup> standard	76	35.68
	7 <sup>th</sup> – 9 <sup>th</sup> standard	119	55.87
Types of family	Nuclear family	108	50.70
	Joint family	88	41.31
	Extended family	6	2.81
	Single parent family	11	5.16
Education of father	No formal education	28	13.15
	Primary education	57	26.76
	Secondary education	57	26.76
	Higher secondary education	36	16.90
	Graduated and above	35	16.43
Education of mother	No formal education	26	12.21
	Primary education	64	30.05
	Secondary education	34	15.96
	Higher secondary education	73	34.27
Residence	Urban	16	7.5
	Rural	29	13.62
Occupation of father	Government employee	184	86.38
	Private employee	26	12.21
	Self employed	68	31.92
	Unemployed	110	51.64
Occupation of mother	Government employee	9	4.23
	Private employee	8	3.75
	Self employed	12	5.63
	homemaker	30	14.08
Relationship with neighbours	Good	163	75.53
	Bad	198	93
		15	7

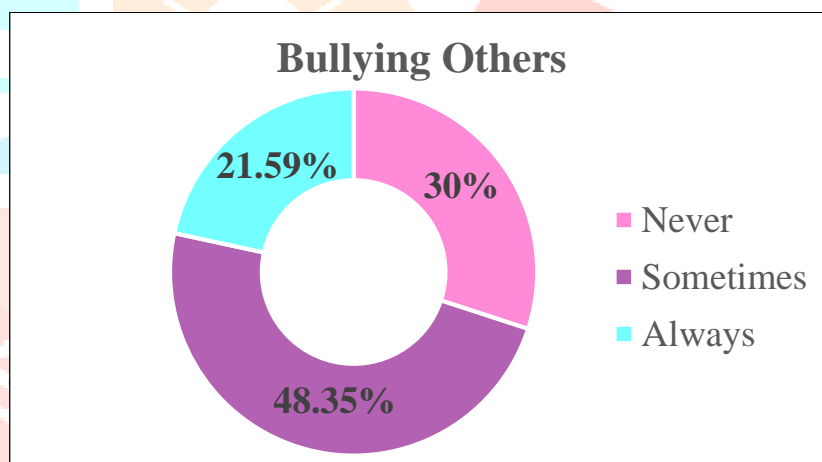
**Findings related to prevalence of bullying among school children**

**Figure 1** shows that 64.31% of school children were sometimes bullied, 24.41% were never bullied and 11.26% were always bullied.



**Figure 1** Pie diagram showing percentage distribution of victim of bullying score.

**Figure 2** shows that 48.35% of school children sometimes bullied others, 30% never bullied others and 21.59% always bullied others.



**Figure 2** Donut diagram showing percentage distribution of about bullying other students score.

The data presented in table 2 shows that the mean, median and standard deviation of victim of bullying score of the respondents were 12.25, 1305 and 16.35 respectively and the mean, median and standard deviation of about bullying other students score of the respondents were 5.26, 260 and 9.44.

**Table 2** Mean, median and standard deviation score of the victim of bullying score and about bullying other students score.

Group	Mean	Median	Standard deviation
Victim of bullying	12.23	1302	16
About bullying other students	5.24	558	9.54

n=213



## Association between victims of bullying among school children and demographic variables and bullying others with demographic variables

Statistically significant association were found between level of bullying with demographic variables like gender, education of child and residence at  $p \leq 0.50$  level of significance. Statistically significant association were found between bullying other student with demographic variables like relationship with neighbours at  $p \leq 0.50$  level of significance.

## DISCUSSION

The present study shows that bullying is seen among children, some were victims of bullying and some were involved in bullying others. The findings are consistent with the previous studies that found prevalence of bullying among children. [14,15,16]

## CONCLUSION

The study concluded that prevalence of bullying is seen among school children and Bullying Prevention Programme can create awareness among children and prevent incidence of bullying in future. Bullying Prevention Programme can be implemented by the health care providers in different health care settings. The study can be replicated with a larger sample so that the findings can be generalized to a larger population. The study can be replicated in other states of India.

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