

EFFECT OF BULLYING BEHAVIOR AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN FAISALABAD

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ABSTRACT

Bullying has been defined as purposeful and repetitive abuse of another individual. It could be social, psychological, physical, or verbal. It could take place online or in person. It may be evident to others or concealed. The study intended to explore the impact of bullying behavior on academic achievement among university students in Faisalabad. Students who are bullied struggle to follow or focus on their studies for a variety of reasons. These students may also pass up opportunities to communicate with peers or participate in university activities. When harassed students are in class, they often become distracted. For gathering data, a multistage sampling technique was used. In the first phase, two universities were randomly picked from Faisalabad. Using purposive sampling approaches, 50 respondents from each university were selected in the second round. The data was collected using a carefully planned interview schedule. The data showed that bullying has a considerable negative impact on pupils' academic achievement. Bullying and university students' academic progress were linked. Bullying has detrimental psychological, emotional, mental, and physical consequences for students, which can lead to confidence and health difficulties. To eliminate bullying behavior in institutions, administrators and teachers must develop bullying prevention programs.

INTRODUCTION

Bullying in educational institutions is a rising phenomenon worldwide (Fatima et al., 2021). Bullying has historically been an issue in all cultures, whether developed or developing. (Germain & Knight, 2021). Traditional bullying is typically classified into three types: physical (beating and kicking), social (ignoring or isolating), and verbal (naming and mocking). Bullying among university students has become a major issue in both academic and social settings. It is defined by repeated violent activities intended to cause injury or discomfort to others, which can take many forms, including physical, verbal, social, and bullying. Despite continued efforts to address it, bullying is a widespread problem in educational institutions, affecting not only victims but also the entire university community. (Solberg and Olweus, 2003).

Bullying is a well-known global phenomenon with immediate and long-term consequences for both bullies and victims. At originally, the term "bully" came to mean "harasser of the weak." Bullying behaviors, such as name-calling and teasing, can have a significant influence on children's well-being and school experiences. Peers have a huge impact on students' life, exerting both positive and negative effects. During adolescence, teenagers seek independence from their parents and rely on peers for support. However, peer pressure and the pursuit of social status can contribute to bullying behaviors (Salmivalli, Hilmola, 2006). According to research, peers have an important role in the continuation of bullying. Bullying has been identified as a major concern in educational settings around the world, hurting students' psychological health and academic

achievement. According to research, bullying has a bigger impact on female students' academic performance. Several factors contribute to bullying behavior among students, both individually and collectively (Mustapa et al., 2015). Bullying may be less overt in university settings than in previous educational stages, yet it still has a substantial influence on students. Bullying at the university level frequently manifests itself as social exclusion, rumor spreading, cyber bullying, and harassment, which can occur both on and off campus (Chapell et al., 2004).

Review of Literature

Olweus et al. (2019) stated that bullying is the term used to refer to the repetitive acts of abuse between individuals in the same age group when there is an inadequate power dynamic that makes it difficult for the victims to stand up to themselves. Thornberg et al. (2012) define bullying as the persistent use of aggression and violence against weaker targets throughout interactions with the bully or bullies. Similarly, Copeland et al. (2013) argue that bullying is a type of interpersonal aggression that can result in victims experiencing both short- and long-term emotional, mental, and social issues.

Forms of bullying

Coloroso (2003) divided the Bullying in different forms, all of which are harmful to the growth and well-being of the victims. While verbal bullying includes name-calling, mocking, and threats that can seriously impair a person's self-esteem, physical bullying entails actual harm to a person's body or belongings. Through exclusion and spreading rumors, social bullying, likewise referred to as relational bullying, seeks to damage a person's reputation and relationships. Cyber bullying extends the reach and durability of acts of assault by using digital channels for harassment or humiliation. Prejudicial bullying takes advantage of prejudices based on a person's race, religion, ethnicity, or sexual orientation. Sexual bullying also targets individuals with inappropriate sexual remarks or behaviors. All forms of bullying cause severe emotional, psychological, and occasionally bodily injury, which emphasizes the need for all-encompassing anti-bullying programs to promote inclusive and safe spaces. Additionally, bullying can be divided into two other types. The first type of bullying is overt, which includes stealing, beating, punching, and

mocking. Put another way, it's referred to as physical activity, and boys typically engage in it. Indirect bullying is the second type, and it's typically committed by girls. It involves gossiping about someone or keeping them out of social settings (Rowan, (2007).

Bullying and Academic performance

Sium et al. (2016) examined bullying has a detrimental effect on academic performance because it creates a climate in which students find it difficult to concentrate on their studies and participate in class activities. Bullying victims frequently suffer from elevated stress, anxiety, and depression levels, which can impede cognitive processes like focus and memory. Reduced participation in class, poorer marks, and an overall downturn in academic performance are all caused by this emotional anguish. Apart from that, students who are afraid of bullies may be more likely to neglect class to avoid being harassed, which makes their academic difficulties worse. Bullying-related unpleasant experiences have the potential to gradually undermine students' motivation and self-worth, reducing their likelihood of taking on challenging coursework and participating completely in the educational process.

Effects on Academic Performance

The consequences of bullying behavior extend beyond immediate emotional and physical harm. For university students, being a victim of bullying can severely impact their academic performance. Research indicates that bullying can lead to:

Decreased Concentration and Academic Engagement: Juvonen & Gross (2008) stated that Students who are bullied often experience heightened levels of stress and anxiety, which can reduce their ability to concentrate and engage in academic activities.

Absenteeism and Dropout Rates: Vaillancourt et al. (2013) argue that Victims of bullying may avoid attending classes or even drop out of university altogether to escape their tormentors. This avoidance behavior can lead to significant gaps in learning and negatively affect academic progression

Lower Academic Achievement: Nakamoto & Schwartz (2010) stated that the chronic stress and anxiety associated with being bullied can impair cognitive functions such as memory and executive functioning, which are crucial for learning and

academic success. Studies have shown a correlation between bullying victimization and lower grades and academic performance

Mental Health Issues: Long-term exposure to bullying can lead to mental health issues such as depression and low self-esteem. These psychological effects can further hinder academic performance by diminishing motivation and the ability to perform well in academic tasks (Rigby, 2003).

Gender Disparities in the Effects of Bullying:

Research demonstrates that bullying has different effects on academic achievement depending on the gender of the victim. Bullying has a detrimental effect especially for girls. Nonetheless, pupils who had female teachers experienced less of the negative effects of bullying (Ponzo, 2013).

Statement of the Problem

Research on bullying behavior and its impact on university students' academic performance is crucial for raising awareness about its prevalence and severity in higher education, where it often goes unnoticed. By highlighting this issue, the research informs university policies, supports student mental health, and promotes a safer campus environment, ultimately enhancing academic outcomes. Additionally, it contributes to academic discourse by filling gaps in the literature and empowers students by validating their experiences, leading to long-term societal benefits such as the development of resilient, empathetic individuals. This holistic approach ensures that universities can address bullying effectively, fostering a positive and inclusive academic culture.

Research Objectives

- To examine the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents
- To investigate the causes of bullying behavior among university students
- The study aims to investigate how bullying affects academic achievement among university students.
- Suggest some measures for policy makers to improve the condition of bullying behavior in educational institutions.

Hypotheses

- There is an association between bullying behavior and university students' academic performance.

Research Methodology

The purpose of this research was to examine the effects of bullying behavior on university student's academic performance. A multistage sampling technique was used for data collection. At the first stage two university were selected randomly from Faisalabad. At the second stage 100 respondents were selected by using purposive sampling techniques (50 from each university). Data were gathered by using a well-designed interview schedule. Collected data were statistically examined by using SPSS version 21.0 to find trends and correlations among the variables. Through the methodical analysis of the data made possible to fully understand the dynamics of bullying behavior among students.

RESULT AND DISSCUSSION

Descriptive Analysis of Participants

Before delving into the results of bullying behavior and its effects, it is essential to provide a brief description of the research participants. The sample comprised 50 university students, with equal representation from both genders. The majority of participants were undergraduates, with varying academic years and fields of study. This diverse sample allowed for a comprehensive examination of bullying experiences across different demographic groups within the university community.

Analysis of Bullying Behavior

The study investigated the frequency and forms of bullying experienced by university students. Results indicated that a significant proportion of participants reported experiencing bullying behavior during their time at university, with various forms such as verbal insults, social exclusion, physical aggression, and bullying is prevalent. Physical bullying, in particular, was reported by a considerable number of students, highlighting the seriousness of the issue within educational institutions.

The Impact of Bullying on Academic Performance and Mental Health

The effects of bullying on academic achievement and mental health were a key focus of the study. Participants reported a decline in academic performance and negative effects on mental health, including increased anxiety, depression, and stress, attributed to bullying experiences. Furthermore, a

substantial number of students admitted to skipping classes or avoiding certain areas of campus due to bullying, underscoring the detrimental consequences of such behavior on students' overall well-being and educational experiences.

Perception and Attitudes towards Bullying

The study also explored students' perceptions and attitudes towards bullying behavior and the

effectiveness of university interventions. While some participants expressed confidence in the university's efforts to address bullying, others remained skeptical or unsure. Additionally, a significant proportion of students reported witnessing bullying behavior towards others, but intervention or reporting of such incidents was relatively low.

Table. Socio-economic characteristics of the respondents

Socio-economic characteristics		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	34	34.0
	Female	76	76.0%
Subject	Social science	67	67.0
	Natural sciences	33	33.0
Age	17 to 19 years	70	70.0
	Above 19 years	30	30.0
Family structure	Joint	30	30.0
	Nuclear	70	70.0
Household income	Up to 25,000	43	43.0
	Above 25,000	57	57.0

The research respondents' socioeconomic characteristics are balanced across several categories. 34% of the responders were men and 76% were women, indicating equal gender representation. 67% of the respondents come from the social sciences, and 33% were from the natural sciences, in academic fields. Seventy per cent of the total population is under the age of eighteen, and thirty per cent is older than 19 years. According to data on family structures, 70% of respondents were from nuclear families, while 30% of respondents were from joint families. According to the household income distribution, 43% of respondents make a maximum of 25,000 monthly, while 57% make more than 25,000. This broad demographic profile that takes several variables including gender, age, household income, family structure, and academic field offers a comprehensive understanding of the socioeconomic traits of the group under consideration.

Table. Distribution of respondents regarding bullying behavior

Have you ever experienced any form of bullying in your university?	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	57	57.0
No	14	14.0
Maybe	29	29
What was the form of bullying?	Frequency	Percentage
Physical bullying	18	18.0
Verbal bullying	22	22.0
Physical and verbal bullying	32	32.0
Verbal and social bullying	18	18.0
Other	6	6.0
Never experienced bullying	4	4.0
Who are most affected by bullying?	Frequency	Percentage
Males	43	43.0
Females	25	25.0
Both	32	32.0
How often do you experience bullying?	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	22	22.0

Weekly	56	56.0
Monthly	22	22.0
When you were bullied, did it affect your academic performance?	Frequency	Percentage
To some extent	29	29.0
To great extent	69	69.0
Not at all	2	2.0
Does bullying behavior have effect on your mental health?	Frequency	Percentage
To some extent	34	30.0
To great extent	61	70.0
Not at all	5	5.0
Total	100	100

The findings from the survey show that bullying is a serious problem at the university, affecting the majority of students in a variety of ways. Majority (57%) of respondents reported being bullied, while 32% suffering both physical and verbal abuse and another 18% facing with both verbal and social bullying. Males are perceived to be the most affected (43%), followed by females (25%), and 32% believe both genders are equally afflicted. Bullying is common, with 56% of students encountering it weekly, 22% daily, and an additional 22% monthly. The effect on academic performance is strong, with 69% expressing a significant negative influence and 29% recognizing some degree of impact. Only 2% believed their academic performance was unaffected. Furthermore, bullying has serious mental health consequences, with 70% reporting a significant impact, 30% some impact, and only 5% reporting no mental health effects. This research highlights the crucial need for comprehensive anti-bullying initiatives and support for affected pupils.

Table. Distribution of respondents regarding bullying behavior and its effects on their academic performance

Effects on academic performance?	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Decreased Concentration	3	17	39	22	19
%	3.0%	17.0%	39.0%	22.0%	19.0%
Absenteeism and Dropout	23	19	16	18	24
%	23.0%	19.0%	16.0%	18.0%	24.0%
Lower academic achievement	7	8	12	39	34
%	7.0%	8.0%	12.0%	39.0%	34.0%
Mental health	10	19	26	17	28
%	10.0%	19.0%	26.0%	17.0%	28.0%
Self esteem	17	16	12	38	17
%	17.0%	16.0%	12.0%	38.0%	17.0%
Loss of confidence	16	14	33	18	19
%	16.0%	14.0%	33.0%	18.0%	19.0%
Total	100				

The survey data on the distribution of respondents' bullying behavior and its implications on their academic achievement shows a wide range of consequences. When asked about decreased concentration on studies, 19% strongly agreed and 22% agreed, with 39% indifferent, 17% disagreeing, and 3% strongly disagreeing. Dropout rates due to bullying were 24% very agreeing and 18% agreeing, with 16% neutral, 19% disagreeing, and 23% strongly disapproving. Lower academic attainment was a major concern, with 34% strongly agreeing and 39% agreeing, 12% neutral, 8% disagreeing, and 7% strongly disagreeing. Regarding effect of bullying on mental health, 28% highly agreed and 17% agreed on the mental health effects, while 26% were indifferent, 19% disagreed, and 10% strongly disagreed. In terms of self-esteem, 17% highly agreed and 38% agreed that bullying had an impact on it, with 12% neutral, 16% disagreeing, and 17% strongly disagreeing. The study results suggest that 33% of respondents were neutral regarding bullying causing a loss of confidence, 37% agreed or strongly

agreed, and 30% disagreed or strongly disagreed. Overall, the statistics show that bullying has numerous and significant detrimental effects on students' academic performance and well-being.

Hypothesis Testing

The hypothesis presented below summarizes the results and their implications for understanding the relationship between bullying behavior and academic achievement among university students
Hypothesis: There is an association between bullying behavior and students' academic performance. The consequences support hypothesis, indicating a significant effect of bullying behavior on academic achievement among university scholars. This finding underscores the need for targeted interventions and support programs to address bullying and mitigate its negative impact on students' educational outcomes.

Reliability Statistics

Reliability Statistics for Effects of bullying behavior on students' academic achievements.

Scale	Cranach's Alpha	N of Items
	.759	24

Interpretation:

The following table shows the reliability of the "Effects of Bullying Behavior on Students' Academic Achievements" questionnaire, which had 24 questions. The table above displays an exact alpha value (a=.759) for the effect of bullying on children's academic performance.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
	.295 ^a	.087	.078	.56709

a. Predictors: (Constant), BB



Table: Coefficients

Standardized Unstandardized Coefficients

Model	B	Std. Error	T	Sig.
(Constant)	2.539	.293	8.672	.000
BB	.311	.102	3.054	.003

B Std. Error

Beta

The model summary describes the cause-and-effect relationship between variables. The findings show that the predictor produces a 9% change in the dependent variable, implying that bullying behavior has an impact on student performance. As a result, we may say that bullying has a negative impact on student achievement. The table of analysis of variance shows that this model has a significance level of 0.03.

So, this paradigm has a cause-and-effect link. The value of beta represents the unit change in the criterion variables. So, at both levels, the level of significance is less than 05.

Table: Correlation

		BB	ACDAC
BB	Pearson Correlation	1	.295**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.003
	N	100	100
ACDAC	Pearson Correlation	.295**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	
	N	100	100

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

The predictive link is weak but substantial. The correlation and connection between the predictor and criteria are 0.295. Bullying behavior is the predictor in this study, and academic achievement serves as the criteria.

Conclusion

The results of this study indicate that bullying has a negative impact on students' academic and performance outcomes. There is an impact on one's physical, mental, emotional, and psychological well-being, which can result in health issues including anxiety and depression as well as low self-esteem. Some young people kill themselves as a result of mistreatment. It is crucial to disseminate information and assistance from various sources because of this. Strong anti-bullying regulations should be implemented in schools, educators should be trained to identify and stop bullying, and curricula should contain teachings on anti-bullying.

Major Findings

- 51% of respondents are from rural areas.
- 38% of students said they have experienced bullying.
- 34% of the respondents accept that the institution's environment affects academic performance.
- 30 per cent agree that prejudice undermines trust.
- 34% agreed that verbal abuse starts with bullying.
- One-third of respondents agree that peers influence class decisions. Of these, 51% are nuclear families.
- 34% said they experienced bullying in class.
- The independent variable caused 38% of the variance in the dependent variable.

Suggestion:

- Teachers should be trained to recognize and avoid bullying.
- The curriculum should include anti-bullying lessons.
- Schools must have an anti-bullying policy.

Suggestion for further research

Subsequent investigations ought to concentrate on additional behavioral engagement factors impacted by bullying, like disengagement and tardiness, and should enlarge sample sizes to formulate efficacious tactics for countering bullying and fostering productive academic outcomes.

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