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Extent of Bullying at Secondary-Level Educational Institutions in Bangladesh

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Abstract

Bullying at schools is considered the most contemptible anti-social behavior for students. In recent days, after COVID-19, the prevalence of this offense has been observed as very common among students at the secondary level. The present study aims to investigate the prevalence of bullying experienced by Bangladeshi school students and understand the relative consequences. The study follows a mixed research approach and collected both primary and secondary data. Some pseudo-case studies, semi-structured interviews, KIIs, and surveys were conducted. Implementing the Social Cognitive Theory (1986), Social Order Theory (1912), and Iacovou et al Model (1995) as the theoretical lens and bullying literature as a supportive theoretical background, a preliminary research model was formed. Utilizing a semi-structured interview schedule, the pseudo case study was conducted purposively as well as conveniently selected eight bullying victim students at secondary-level schools in Bangladesh. Based on the content analysis of case findings and KIIs, a structured questionnaire was formed for the survey. The survey was carried out on 320 students reading in classes nine and ten of secondary schools located in eight administrative divisions of Bangladesh. Using a stratified sampling technique, two schools were selected from each of the eight divisions, from which 20 students were chosen. Convenience and snowball sampling techniques were used to identify the sample respondents. Afterward, the survey data were analyzed using SPSS 20.0, and SmartPLS 3.3.3 software packages. The study reveals that about 67% of secondary school students were the victims of bullying over the last year. 'Verbal Bullying' dominates bullying functions calling with mean names such as "Mofiz, Motu, Bolda" and teasing with words in verbal bullying. Cyber Bullying stands as the second and Physical Bullying such as pushing or shoving stands as the third. Psychological Bullying and Sexual Harassment also were seen to some extent. Boys from public schools and living in urban areas had significantly higher bullying victimization experiences. The bullies' jealousy, the bullies' revenge-seeking, the bullies' aggressive attitude, the bullies' power exercise, and the victim's deviance

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acted as the causing factors of bullying. The aftermath of the Bullying was seen in the health hazards and the weak academic performance of the victims. The findings of this study would be helpful for the policymakers and other stakeholders to reform anti-bullying policies.

Keywords: *Bullying, Causes of Bullying, Consequences of Bullying, Health hazards, Academic performance.*

1.0 Introduction

Bullying has emerged as a significant concern in educational institutions throughout the world. Bullying is a word bearing the negative psychological situation of the human mind which expresses the irritating behavior done by someone with someone. Like many other stages of human life, in academic institutions, it has emerged as a serious issue that can have long-lasting effects on students. Bullying can be of many forms such as physical, verbal, sexual, and emotional abuse that can occur in a variety of settings, including the classrooms, the playgrounds and online. Some of the common types of bullying that occur in academic institutions include verbal bullying, physical bullying, emotional bullying, sexual and cyber bullying. Verbal bullying involves the use of words to intimidate, belittle, or insult another person. Examples include mean name-calling, teasing, and spreading rumors. Physical bullying involves using physical force to harm or intimidate another person. Examples include hitting, kicking and pushing. Emotional bullying encompasses manipulating or controlling another person's emotions to intimidate or control them. Examples include exclusion, social isolation, and blackmail. Sexual bullying means sexual harassment to the victim. Cyber bullying comprises bullying using digital technology, such as social media or texting, to harass or intimidate another person. There remain several factors that influence bullying. Lack of morality, lack of empathy, uneven power distribution, peer influence, and poor childhood development are significant among them. Bullying can have a wide range of negative effects on those who experience it. Victims of bullying may suffer from depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, and other mental health problems (Leymann, 1990)**.** They may also experience physical health hazards, such as headaches and stomachaches and may struggle academically. There remain lots of studies observed regarding the prevalence and bullying, causes, and consequences of Bullying at primary, secondary, and higher educational institutions around the globe. However, there remains a scarcity of research in quest of identifying bullying, the causes and effects of bullying among students exclusively secondary level education in Bangladesh. This study intended to fill the vacuum of literature.

1.1 Objectives of the study

The general objective of this study is to investigate the prevalence of bullying occurring at secondary-level academic institutions in Bangladesh. The specific objectives can be outlined as:

a. To identify the prevalence of bullying at secondary-level educational institutions in Bangladesh;
b. To find the causes for which bullying occurs among young learners at secondary-level educational institutions in Bangladesh;
c. To analyze the impacts of bullying on students of secondary-level educational institutions in Bangladesh

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 School Bullying in Bangladesh

Mahmood and Islam (2017) and Ahmed et al. (2021) portrayed school bullying in Bangladesh. Among primary and high school students, nearly half of the school students (44.4%) have experienced bullying victimization (Ahmed et al. 2021). This rate was 35%, three years ago, reported by UNICEF (bdnews24.com, 2018). These statistics inform the increasing bullying scenario in Bangladeshi schools.

2.2 Causes of School Bullying in Bangladesh

Several studies identified several reasons for bullying. Mahmood (2016) found that rumor is the common forms of bullying in the case of females and physical assault was of a male. Mahmood & Islam (2017) **identified that a**ttention-seeking is the major cause of bullying in this study. **Also, this study found that macho male boys bully others.**

2.3 Consequences of School Bullying on Students

Many studies mentioned various aftermath of bullying. Al-Raqqad et al., (2017; Boulton & Underwood (992) and Oliveira et al., (2018).showed that victims are often unhappy and have fewer friends. Kumpulainen et al., (2001) identified that victims are more prone to develop psychiatric disorders, such as anxiety, and depression, and isolate themselves from others. Mahmood (2016) found that health hazards among bullied students. Mahmood & Islam (2017) found that bullied suffer from hopelessness, anger, anxiety, depression and even thinking of suicide. Weak academic performance among bullied students is another result of bullying. Ahmed et al. (2021) identified that health hazards and poor academic performance are two significant negative consequences of Bullying among school students in Bangladesh.

3.0 Conceptual Framework of the Study

To achieve the objectives of the study, this research has adopted two theories and one model. Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (1986), David Émile Durkheim's Social Order Theory (1912) and Iacovou et al. Model (1995) has been chosen as a relevant underpinning theory and model for the study. Based on the literature review and theories as well as the model, this study attempted to form a primary research model that is the following:

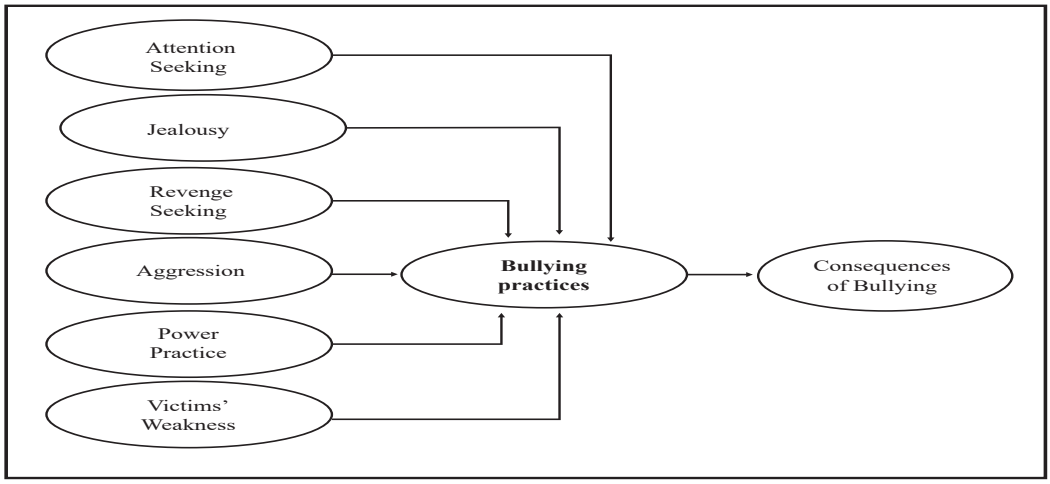


Figure 1: Primary Research Model

4.0 Research Methodology

4.1 Mixed Methodology adopted in the Study

The sequential mixed research method as per Creswell (2009), the combination of both qualitative and quantitative nature, was employed as the research method of the study.

4.2 Sample and Sampling plan

Using strata sampling, from eight administrative divisions of Bangladesh total 16 secondary schools were selected. Sampling has been formed as per the following schedule:

Table 1: Sample Determination

Types of Respondents	Number of Respondents (16 secondary level schools)
Students (20x16) (Case and survey)	320
Teachers (4x16) (FGD)	64
Chief of institution (KII)	16
Parents (5x16) (FGD)	80
Total =	**480**

Source: Created by the researchers

4.3 Sources of Data and Procedure of Data Collection

Both primary and secondary data have been gathered for analysis. The respondents were both of the students and teachers at secondary level schools. The secondary source of secondary information were the related Books, journal articles, published and unpublished documents, government publications, textbooks, curriculum reports. The primary data collection procedures in case study and survey have been presented below:

4.3.1 The Procedure of Data Collection for Interviews

Eight bullied students reading at class nine or ten in secondary schools located in eight administrative divisions of Bangladesh were chosen for pseudo case studies. Face to face conversation was held between the researcher and respondents.

4.3.2 Procedure of Data Collection for Survey

The survey questionnaires were distributed to 441 students by researcher and through researcher friends and active research assistants. Among them 320 responses were deemed to be valid for analysis of the study.

4.4. Research Tools used in the Study

This study applied pseudo case study, semi structured interviews, KIIs and survey method in collecting data from the students, teachers, head teachers and parents of selected schools. For accomplishing this study, various research tools have been administered.

1. Semi Structured Questionnaires for Student (Pseudo Case with Victim student)
2. Semi Structured Questionnaires for Teachers as KII.
3. Semi Structured Questionnaires for Head masters' as KII.
4. Semi Structured Questionnaires for Parents KII
5. A structured questionnaire for survey among students.

4.5 Data Analysis

The qualitative data that were collected using interview were analyzed using content analysis. Then for hypothesis testing survey data have been analyzed using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) with the use of second-generation statistical software Smart PLS 3.3.3.

Qualitative Data Analysis

5.1 Presentation of Pseudo Case study and KIIs' Qualitative Data

The received data represent the responses of participants in the context of bullying occurrence (Table 2). When it was identified the respondents was bullied, then few another questions were asked about in-depth bullying practice. The responses were as follows:

Table 2: Extent of Bullying in Case Students

S.N	Questions	Respondents					
		01	02	03	04	05	06
01	Called mean names	√	√	√	√	√	√
02	Was teased	√	√	√	√	√	√
04	Made fun me	√	√	√	√	√	√
05	Spread rumors about me	√	√	√	√	√	√
07	My Objects damaged	√	√	√	X	√	X
08	Peers curse me	X	√	√	√	√	X

Source: Case Study 2023-2024

After scrutinizing and attaching constructs and items those were of analogous in nature, the final outcomes were acquired which are exhibited in Table 3.

Table 3: Case Students Opinion Analysis in form of Constructs

Constructs	Variables /Items	Respondents (Case Students)							
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Attention Seeking	Want to be a macho man among peers	√	√	X	X	X	√	√	√
	Want to draw attention of girls/boys	√	√	X	X	X	√	√	√
	Want to be prestigious to younger	√	X	X	X	X	√	√	√
Jealousy	Not tolerating others success	√	X	X	X	X	√	√	√
	Like to Ignore other students	√	√	X	X	X	√	√	√
	Like to spread rumor about others	√	√	X	X	X	√	√	√
Revenge Seeking	Fight back after being bullied	√	√	X	X	X	√	√	√
	Take revenge if one tease me	√	√	X	X	X	√	X	√
	Take revenge if one tease youngers	√	√	√	√	√	√	X	√
Aggression	Always Fight for right in school	√	X	X	X	X	X	√	X
	Aggression brings easier solution	√	√	X	X	X	X	√	X
	I enjoy others to make afraid	√	√	X	X	X	X	√	√
Power Practice	Like to rule others in school	√	√	X	X	X	X	X	√
	Enjoy snatching others money	√	X	X	X	X	X	X	√
	Encourage others to bullying	√	X	X	X	X	X	√	X
	Pleasure to tease Juniors or girls	√	√	X	X	X	X	√	X
Victims Weakness	Like to disturb physically weak students	√	√	X	X	X	X	√	√
	Like to disturb poor students	√	√	X	X	X	√	X	√
	Not like another student of race / disable	√	X	x	x	√	√	X	√
Bullying Practice	Being Irritated through words and shout	X	X	√	√	√	√	√	√
	Physically assaulted by someone	X	√	√	√	X	X	√	√
	Ignored by group of students	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
	Sexually harassed by bullies	X	X	X	√	√	X	√	√
	Irritated using online platform	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	X
Health Hazards	Feel headache after being irritated	X	√	√	X	√	√	√	√
	Feel feverish after being bullied	X	X	√	√	√	√	√	√
	Caught cold after being bullied	X	√	√	X	√	√	√	√
	Thought for suicide after being bullied	X	X	√	√	√	X	√	√
Academic Performance	Have no interest to go to class	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
	GPA is in downward trend after being irritated by someone at somewhere	X	√	√	√	√	X	√	√

Source: Compiled by the Researcher based on literatures and case study

5.2 Extent of Bullying along with its Causes

The information got from the interviews taken with students (pseudo case), teachers, Head Teacher and parents (KIIs), depict five major themes of Bullying which are called as the forms of bullying practiced at secondary schools of Bangladesh. In the interviews both bullies and bullied, bystanders, their teachers and parents were existed.

Their opinion states about the 'picture of bullying', location of bullying, number of students involved in bullying. Figure 2 shows these pictures.

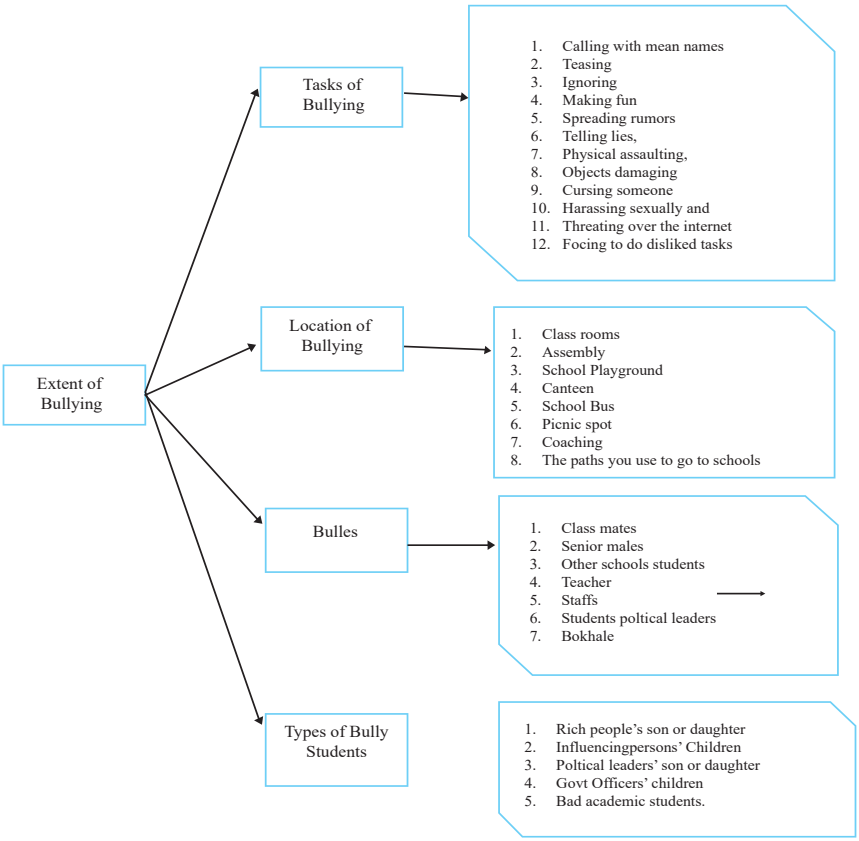


Figure 2: Extent of Bullying

Source: Compiled by the Researcher based on case study

5.3 Formation of the Final Research Model

At the final stage, the ultimate decisive research model was constructed adjoining the constructs originated in qualitative studies. The formation of the decisive research model was indeed the depuration or purge of the primary model after occurrence of case study. In this utmost model, nine number of constructs having 30 numbers of items were considered.

The accepted links among those constructs have been are presented below in Figure 3.

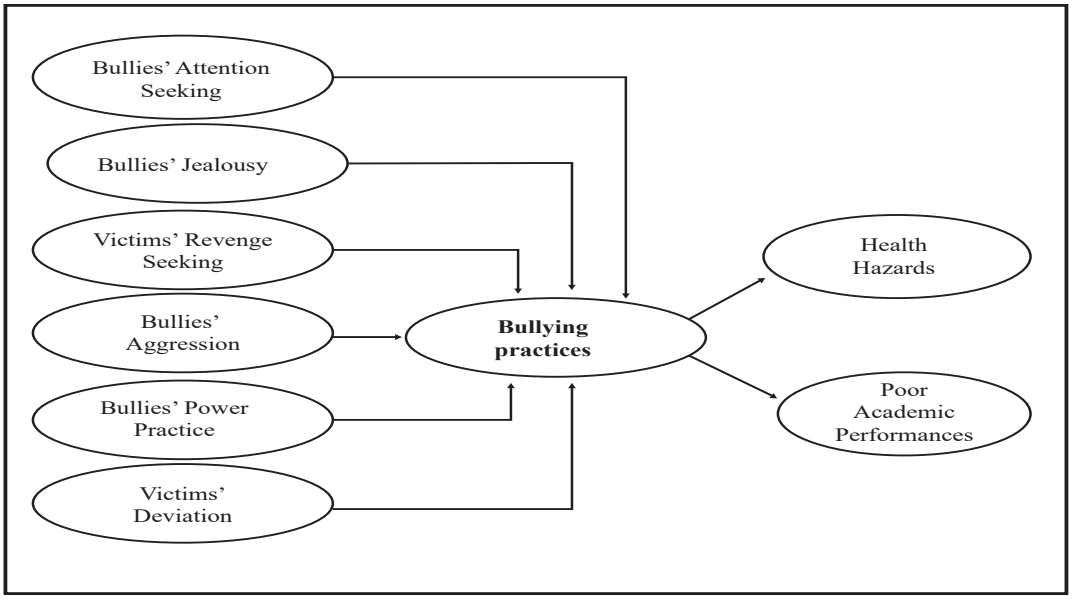


Figure 3: Bullying's Cause-Effect Model (Final Research Model)

5.4 Formulation of Hypotheses

Concentrating the conclusive research model exhibited in Figure 3, the hypotheses were formulated. Here, the relationships were verified with the findings of prevailed literature with high confirmation. From the research model, it is observed that, there remains two type of relationship among the constructs: direct relationship and indirect relationship. The direct relationships, implying the relationships between the causes of bullying and bullying practices which is further progressed to the bullying consequences (viz., health hazards, and poor academic performances) formulates some direct hypotheses. Moreover, the observed relationships between the bullying causes and bullying consequences mediated through the bullying practice explaining some sort of indirect relationships which are by turn, formulate a number of indirect hypotheses.

6.0 Survey Conducting and Quantitative Data Analysis

Survey was conducted in 320 students. The descriptive results are the followings:

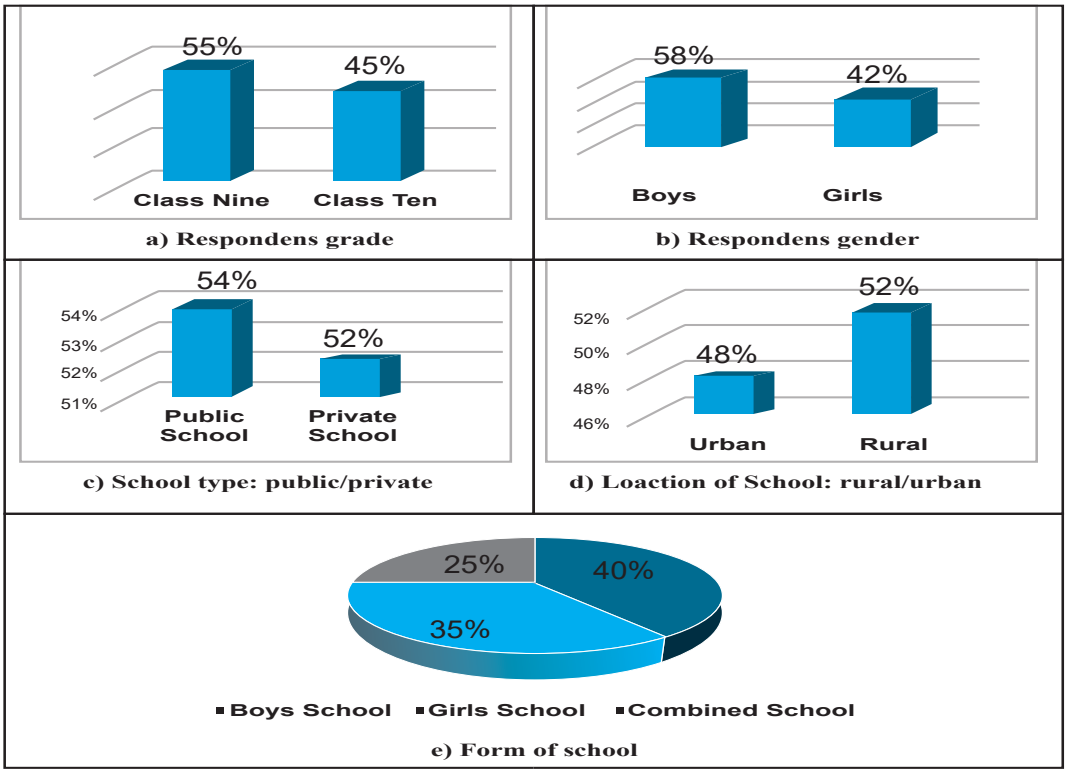


Figure 4: Picturesque Exploration of Sample

Source: Survey 2023-2024

Figure 4 depicts the profile of sample respondents. It is evident that sample respondents are mostly the students reading in class nine (55%) and boys (58%). Majority of sample schools are boys school (40%), located in rural areas (52%), and public (government) schools (54%).

6.1 Extent of Bullying

The survey data presents that 67% of participants were bullied. Among them, boys were 61.86% and females were 37.67%. In all categories, male students are being bullied more than females. The results also shows that students of public (Govt) high school students were bullied more (53.02%) than that of private high school students (46.97%). The statistics also informs that students of urban-located schools were bullied more (58.14%) than those of rurally located high Schools (41.85%).

Table 4: Severity of Occurrence of Bullying by Gender

(More than two times a month)

Tasks of Bullying		Male	Female	Total
I was called mean names (Mofiz, Motu, Bolda)	Count	93	62	155
	% of total	43.25%	28.84%	72.09%
I was teased (bumped into me, yelled at me pronouncing 'vua', 'vua')	Count	**112**	**81**	193
	% of total	**62.32%**	**37.67%**	**90%**
Other students ignore me (excluded me from their group)	Count	81	101	182
	% of total	41.63%	53.02%	84.65%
Other students make fun of me (about my size, weight, height)	Count	109	54	163
	% of total	51%	25%	76%
Other students spread rumors about me (tell lies)	Count	92	52	144
	% of total	42.80%	24.18%	66.69%
I was physically assaulted by schoolmates (Hitting, pushing)	Count	124	24	148
	% of total	57.67%	11.16%	68.83%
My objects (pen, khata) were damaged by someone	Count	91	24	115
	% of total	42.23%	11.16%	53.39%
My classmates curse me (telling words)	Count	85	15	100
	% of total	39.53%	6.90%	46.43%
I was harassed sexually (sexually irritating gestures and posture)	Count	41	25	66
	% of total	19.69%	11.62%	31.31%
I was threatened by the smartphone or virtual world.	Count	93	61	154
	% of total	**43.25%**	**28.37%**	**71.62%**

Source: Survey 2023-2024

The results in table 4 show that the teasing bullying remains at the apex. About 90% of students become under this disease. The second one is social ignoring, avoidance by which nearly 85% of students are the victim. The 3rd is spreading rumors that 76% of students were the victims of it. Cyber threatening and calling with means names remain at the fourth-ranking. Physically assault was 68% of students. Sexual harassment was the lowest among all types of bullying. 54% of bullied students lose their objects students by bully.

6.2 Determination of Causes and Consequence of Bullying through SEM

The PLS-SEM redacts the assessing functions in the following two consecutive parts, such as: (a) Measurement Model Assessment (b) Structural Model Assessment

Table 5: Measurement of Construct Validity

Name of Constructs	Items	Loadings	Cronbach's Alpha	CR	AVE
Bullies Jealousy	BJ1	0.878	0.704	0.864	0.761
	BJ2	0.775			
Bullies Attention Seeking	BAS1	0.712	0.899	0.930	0.816
	BAS2	0.711			
	BAS3	0.889			
Bullies Aggressive Attitude	BAA1	0.878	0.841	0.903	0.757
	BAA2	0.906			
	BAA3	0.806			
Bullies Power Practice	BPP1	0.867	0.769	0.863	0.678
	BPP2	0.813			
	BPP3	0.777			
Bullies Revenge Seeking	BRS1	0.878	0.843	0.927	0.864
	BRS2	0.767			
Victims Deviance	VD1	0.867	0.702	0.830	0.620
	VD2	0.840			
	VD3	0.740			
Bullying Practice	BP1	0.811	0.905	0.928	0.721
	BP2	0.852			
	BP3	0.782			
	BP4	0.891			
	BP5	0.85			
Health Hazards	HH1	0.865	0.833	0.888	0.667
	HH3	0.940			
	HH4	0.904			
	HH5	0.767			
Poor Academic Performance	PAP1	0.732	0.855	0.932	0.872
	PAP2	0.791			

Source: Analysis of Survey Data using Smart PLS.

6.3. Structural Model Assessment

Table 6: Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

	R Square
Bullying Practice (BP)	0.839
Health Hazards (HH)	0.259
Poor Academic Performance (PAP)	0.405

Source: Analysis of Survey Data using Smart PLS

Table 7: Effect Size (f^2)

	Bullying Practice	Health Hazards	Poor Academic Performance
Bully's Aggressive Attitude	0.145		
Bully's Attention Seeking	0.049		
Bully's Jealousy	0.075		
Bully's Power Practice	0.068		
Bullying Practice		0.350	0.680
Health Hazards			
Poor Academic Performance			
Victims Revenge Seeking	0.155		
Victims' Deviation	0.046		

Source: Analysis of Survey Data using Smart PLS

Table 8: Results of the Direct Hypotheses Testing

S.N	Direct Hypotheses	Beta	SD	t values	P Values	Comment
Ha.1	Bully's Jealousy -> Bullying Practice	0.267	0.088	3.042	0.001	Supported
Ha.2	Bully's Attention Seeking -> Bullying Practice	-0.282	0.063	4.491	0.000	Not Supported
Ha.3	Bully's Aggressive Attitude -> Bullying Practice	0.312	0.030	10.393	0.000	Supported
Ha.4	Bully's Power Practice -> Bullying Practice	0.412	0.115	3.569	0.000	Supported
Ha.5	Bullies' Revenge Seeking -> Bullying Practice	0.292	0.024	12.302	0.000	Supported
Ha.6	Victims' Deviation -> Bullying Practice	0.123	0.037	3.293	0.001	Supported
Ha.7	Bullying Practice -> Health Hazards	0.509	0.051	10.015	0.000	Supported
Ha.8	Bullying Practice -> Poor Academic Performance	0.636	0.040	15.964	0.000	Supported

Source: Analysis of Survey Data using Smart PLS

The above table presents' that "t" values of all relationships of the path mode are within expected direction, which were statistically significant (at $p<0.01$). But in hypothesis 02, 'Bully's Attention Seeking (BAS)' presents the beta co-efficient in negative values and so hypothesis 02 has been rejected. The study used Preacher & Hayes (2008) bootstrapping method for testing the indirect relationship. The indirect relationships have been portrayed in Table 09:

Table 9: Results of Indirect Hypotheses Testing

Indirect Hypotheses	Beta	SD	t vales	P Values	Comment
Bully's Jealousy -> Bullying Practice -> Health Hazards	0.136	0.048	2.805	0.003	Supported
Bully's Jealousy -> Bullying Practice -> Poor Academic Performance	0.170	0.061	2.774	0.003	Supported
Bully's Attention Seeking -> Bullying Practice -> Health Hazards	-0.144	0.030	4.785	0.000	Not Supported
Bully's Attention Seeking -> Bullying Practice -> Poor Academic Performance	-0.179	0.033	5.394	0.000	Not Supported
Bully's Aggressive Attitude -> Bullying Practice -> Poor Academic Performance	0.199	0.018	10.758	0.000	Supported
Bully's Aggressive Attitude -> Bullying Practice -> Health Hazards	0.159	0.015	10.921	0.000	Supported
Bully's Power Practice -> Bullying Practice -> Health Hazards	0.210	0.059	3.538	0.000	Supported
Bully's Power Practice -> Bullying Practice -> Poor Academic Performance	0.262	0.066	3.970	0.000	Supported
Victims Revenge Seeking -> Bullying Practice -> Health Hazards	0.149	0.020	7.374	0.000	Supported
Victims Revenge Seeking -> Bullying Practice -> Poor Academic Performance	0.186	0.021	8.850	0.000	Supported
Victims' Deviation -> Bullying Practice -> Health Hazards	0.062	0.019	3.319	0.000	Supported
Victims' Deviation -> Bullying Practice -> Poor Academic Performance	0.078	0.023	3.468	0.000	Supported

Source: Analysis of Survey Data using Smart PLS

The above table expresses that all beta path coefficients except the Bully's Attention Seeking (BAS) were in the expected direction, which were statistically significant (at $p<0.01$). It means that 'Bullies Jealousy (BJ)', Bullies Aggressive Attitude (BAA), Bully's Power Practice (BPP), Bully's Revenge Seeking (BRS) and Victims' Deviance (VD) have positive relationships with Health hazards and Poor academic Performance mediated by Bullying Practice. It also indicates that if 'Bullies Jealousy (BJ)', Bullies Aggressive Attitude (BAA), Bully's Power Practice (BPP), Bully's Revenge Seeking (BRS) and Victims' Deviance (VD) increase, the school students Health Hazards and Poor Academic Performance will be increased.

Discussion of Findings

7.1 Discussion on the Prevalence of Bullying Occurrence

a. The scenario of being bullied: Through the survey, it was found that 67% of students face the bullying experience. The severe attack of bullying touches 3% of students i.e. every week several times. 30% of students face bullying experience twice or more in one month,

i. **Male students faces more Bullying:** Male 35.01% and females 31.25%.

ii. **Urban Schools Bullying is high:** Urban 39.02% and rural 28.12%.

iii. **Govt. School bullying rate is high:** Govt School 53.02% and Private High School 46.97%.

iv. **Grade Nine reading students are more bullied:** The students reading in class nine become more victims (37.50%) than those of class ten (29.70%).

v. **Combined School Bullying rate is higher:** In combined schools, students face more bullying (31.87%) than boys' (19.06%) and girls school (16.25%).

b. The scenario of Bully: 67% of students are being bullied by 21% bully students.

c. The extent of Bullying: Among the 10 natures of bullying functions the scenario of bullying is as follows:

i. Calling with mean names nearly 93%

ii. Teasing (bump into, yell at me pronouncing 'vua', 'vua' 73%)

iii. Ignoring 90%.

iv. Making fun 85%

v. Spread rumors are 67%

vi. Physically assault 69%

vii. Damage objects 54%

viii. Cursing Others is 47%

ix. Sexually harassed 32%'

x. Threatened over the smartphone rate is 72%

d. The picture of bullying practices are as follows:

i. Males facing and doing all types of bullying is higher than that of females.

ii. All types of bullying are rate is higher in urban schools than in rural schools.

iii. The prevalence of verbal, physical psychological bullying was higher among students from public schools and in private schools sexual and cyber bullying rates are higher than that of public schools.

iv. All forms of bullying practice are higher in combined Schools than in boys' and girls' schools.

7.2 Causes for Bullying in Secondary School of Bangladesh

By using PLS 3.3.3, all causes such as Bully's Jealousy, Bully's Aggressive Attitude, Bully's Power Practice, Bully's Revenge Seeking, and Victims Deviance were proved statistically significant except the Bully's Attention Seeking. The direct hypotheses and indirect hypotheses both of these relationships were proved as statistically significant.

Among the causes power practice remains the high and victim's deviance is the lowest.

7.3 Consequences of Bullying

Hopelessness, fear, anger, anxiety, depression even thinking for suicide among bullied are the main consequences of bullying. Bullying victims catch a cold, feel a strong fever, strong headache and even think of doing suicide sometimes. It is a very alarming sign. Another bad consequence is poor academic performance. After being bullied, many students' class absenteeism becomes higher, accordingly, poor GPAs are being observed. Ultimately many lives are demolished for the causes of bullying at school. This finding is consistent with Ahmed et al (2021) and Kamplainen & Rusanen (2000) studies.

7.4 Implications of the Study

Lots of studies are being observed regarding school bulling, but still, no specific model was provided by research. This research has provided a model of bullying along with its causes and effects (Figure 2). Additionally, this study's findings provide guidelines to the policyholder of the country to form policy for the future nation in case of building a sound society in physical body, mind, and soul.

8.0 Limitations of the study

There were several relevant limitations to this study. The following are limitations relevant to the interpretation of the findings from this study:

i. The data were collected from only sixteen schools via the strata and then convenience sampling technique. The results from these sampling cannot be regarded as representative of the views of the wider population and therefore the findings of the current study cannot be generalized. In line with this, it is recommended that future studies use a more representative of the school to better understand the wider range of approaches to school bullying

ii. Only students' engagement as another limitation, but in bullying, there remain many stakeholders such as schools, society and govt, which were not addressed.

iii. The small number of interviews makes the results of this study difficult to generalize.

iv. Other data collection methods like in-depth interviews and FGD were not used.

9.0 Recommendations of the Study

Based on the findings and considering the reality of the context of Bangladesh, followings may be recommended to address the existing situation.

9.1 In case of future study

it may be recommended to develop a bully identification scale. For further study sample should be selected from a wider range of the population to cover more diversity which is needed to ensure representation and for generalization.

9.2 In case of initiating anti-bullying functions

i. A country-wide sensitive campaign program may be recommended for all high schools and communities showing the importance of friendly relationships with peers for the success of a child's life.

ii. This study recommends appointing school psychologists who would be able to ensure positive behavior to safeguard victims and disunite the repeated perpetration. Besides, schools should arrange effective psycho-education programs and training.

iii. Different types of bullying intervention programs are needed to be developed all over the country of Bangladesh.

iv. NGO can run a nationwide series of awareness workshops to build a strong healthy physical and mental life for students of Bangladesh.

v. To prevent bullying, peaceful interventions combining guardians should be implemented. From the legal and policy perspective, school psychologists could develop a comprehensive model to amplify the interventions. Mass campaigns and social skill development could help students combat bullying. School psychologists also could conduct a socio-emotional assessment for both the victims and perpetrators through an elimination module. Moreover, all schools must set up anti-bullying policies merged with the statutory laws and evidence bases to create more bias-free judgment.

vi. Under DSHE (Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education) of Ministry of Education, a framework for anti-bullying policy should be installed for schools of Bangladesh. Under the framework, the district education officer can visit secondary schools exclusively for observing the bullying scenario and anti-bullying functions done by the schools. The inspection should be done quarterly a year. A formal report should be recorded. Accordingly annual and semiannual plans for anti-bullying activities should be prescribed by the DSHE to the schools. All bulling and anti-bullying scenarios should be monitored the DSHE. Accordingly the schools should be ranked yearly.

If these recommendations are implemented, secondary level educational institutions would be bullying fee arena and a psychologically healthy environment would be ensued and hence a bright and sound future would be possible in Bangladesh.

10.0 Conclusion

The study was aimed to investigate the prevalence of bullying with identifying the causes and consequences. The study followed a mixed research approach and collected both primary and secondary data of qualitative and quantitative nature. The analysis of case and survey data reveals that about 67% of secondary school students were the victims of bullying. 'Verbal Bullying' dominates bullying functions. Cyber Bullying stands as the second and Physical Bullying stands as the third. The bullies' jealousy, the bullies' revenge-seeking, the bullies' aggressive attitude, the bullies' power exercise, and the victim's deviance acted as the causing factors of bullying. The aftermath of the Bullying was seen in the health hazards and the weak academic performance of the victims.

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