

Bullying Incidence among Intermediate School Students in Mosul City

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ABSTRACT

Background: Bullying is serious risks for children's and adolescents' health. Bullying is defined worldwide as a purposeful, aggressive behavior which includes a real or perceived social power imbalance among individuals, especially among children and adolescents.

Objectives: The aim of the study was to investigate the incidence of bullying among intermediate school students in Mosul city.

Methods and materials: A quantitative (non-experimental), descriptive, cross-sectional study design. The total sample included 542 adolescents that included 8 intermediate schools aged between 12-15 years from the period of 10th November 2023 to 10th January 2024. Data collected by using a questionnaire Part I: consist of socio-demographical data, Part II: consist questionnaire of bullying scale for Olweus (2003) with some modifications on the questions.

Results: The majority of the study sample aged was 15 years (31.4%), and (11.8%) of the study sample was aged 12 years, Mean age was (13.86) and SD was (1.050). The incidence being victims of bullying was (15%). High incidence of them (4.6%) being victims of verbal bullying and (2.8%) being victims of physical bullying. Additionally, the study revealed that there are a significant association between types of bullying and demographical characteristics of the study sample.

Conclusions: This study found a significant frequency of bullying among intermediate school students, with verbal bullying being more incidences among them. and there is a significant correlation between bullying and gender, grade level. Students who have experienced bullying are more likely to experience psychological disorders and criminal conduct in the future, hence it is imperative to implement a comprehensive school-based anti-bullying program.

Keywords: Bullying, Incidence, Intermediate School Students.

INTRODUCTION

Bullying is serious risks for children's and adolescents' health. Bullying is defined worldwide as a purposeful, aggressive behavior which includes a real or perceived social power imbalance among individuals, especially among children and adolescents ⁽¹⁾. Bullying is not confined to a particular region or demographic, it occurs in various forms across the globe and affects people of all ages, according to UNICEF, approximately 130 million students worldwide are victims of bullying each year ⁽²⁾. Most common type of bullying is Physical bullying. This type of bullying involves physical aggression, such as hitting, kicking, or pushing someone. Physical bullying can cause short and long-term harm to the victims, such as physical injuries, emotional trauma, and reduced self-esteem ⁽³⁾. Verbal bullying, which is another common type of bullying, this type of bullying involves using words to hurt, intimidate, or belittle others such examples of verbal bullying which include name-calling, teasing, taunting, or spreading rumors about someone, Verbal bullying can have profound psychological effects on victims, leading to feelings of humiliation, anxiety, and depression ⁽⁴⁾. Moreover, social bullying, also known as relational bullying, involves manipulating social relationships to harm others, social bullying occurs through exclusion, spreading rumors, manipulation of friendships or social status, or even setting up individuals for public humiliation. Social bullying can be particularly challenging, as it targets an individual's sense of belonging, leading to feelings of isolation, loneliness, and diminished social support ⁽⁵⁾. Lastly, bullying over property it is taking the things of others and disposing of them or not returning them or

destroying them. Here it must be said that these previous forms may be linked together, the verbal form may be linked to the physical, to the social, or other things ⁽⁶⁾.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

Before starting to collect data, letters of approval were obtained from the Deanship of the College of Nursing, University of Mosul, to obtain a facilitated approval letter. After that, approval letters were obtained from the College Committee for Medical Research Ethics, in addition to obtaining approval from the Directorate of Education of the Nineveh Government.

Study Design: A quantitative (non-experimental), descriptive, cross-sectional study design was used to accomplish aim of the present study from the period of 10th November 2023 to 10th January 2024.

The Study Setting: The study was conducted in eight Intermediate schools in the city of Mosul. Mosul, an important city in Iraq, served as the study site. Mosul, the capital of Nineveh Governorate.

Sample and sampling: The simple random sampling technique was applied in several middle schools affiliated with the Nineveh school's department, within the right and left intermediate schools in the city of Mosul, to achieve the objectives of the study. The total sample included 542 samples that included 8 intermediate schools ranging aged between 12-15 years.

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Tool of the study:

Part I:

This part of the questionnaire contains the socio-demographic data, which includes the student age, gender, class, height, weight, address, Mother's educational level, and father's educational level.

Part II:

This part of the questionnaire consisted of the Olweus Bullying Scale (2003) with a slight modification to questions related to the types of bullying students face. Students were asked to answer questions based on having been a victim of bullying in the past three months.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

"Using the Statistical Package for Social Science" (SPSS) Version (27) for Windows 10, Both data entry and analysis were completed. Descriptive statistics were applied in the analysis as frequency, percentage, mean, and SD.

RESULTS

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of the study participants

| Demographic characteristics | Categories | F | % |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|-----|-------|
| Age | 12 years | 64 | 11.8 |
| | 13 years | 136 | 25.1 |
| | 14 years | 170 | 31.4 |
| | 15 years | 172 | 31.7 |
| (S.D (±1.05513.86 Mean age)) | | | |
| Demographic characteristics | Categories | F | % |
| Gender | Male | 269 | 55.4 |
| | Female | 273 | 45.52 |
| place of residence | The right side | 268 | 49.4 |
| | The left side | 247 | 50.6 |
| Class | First grade | 180 | 33.2 |
| | Second grade | 183 | 33.8 |
| | Third grade | 179 | 33 |
| Mother education level | Does not read or write | 36 | 6.6 |
| | Primary | 127 | 23.4 |
| | Intermediate | 134 | 24.7 |
| | Secondary | 96 | 17.7 |
| | Bachelor's | 103 | 19 |
| Father education level | Does not read or write | 23 | 4.2 |
| | Primary | 102 | 18.8 |
| | Intermediate | 79 | 14.6 |
| | Secondary | 138 | 25.5 |
| | Bachelor's | 143 | 26.4 |
| | Postgraduate | 57 | 10.5 |

Note: F: Frequency; %: Percent, SD= standard deviation.

Table (1) show that the highest percentage of participants are aged 15 year (31.4%), and the lowest percentage were aged 12 years (11.8%), Mean age was (13.86) and S.D (1.050).This table show more than half of the study participants was male (55.4%), while the female percentage was (45.52%). Regarding mothers' educational level, the table show the highest percentage of them were intermediate school graduates (24.7%) and the lowest percentage doesn't read and write (6.6%), regarding fathers' educational level the highest percentage of them are bachelor's degree graduates (26.4%) and the lowest percentage were doesn't read and write (4.2%).

Table 2. Frequency and percentage of the study sample according to their being victims of bullying

| Type of bullying | Sample size | Bullying victims | |
|------------------------|-------------|------------------|-----|
| | | F | % |
| Verbal bullying | 542 | 85 | 4.6 |
| Bullying over property | | 80 | 3.9 |
| Social bullying | | 79 | 3.7 |
| Physical bullying | | 70 | 2.8 |
| Total | 542 | 79 | 15 |

Table (2): show that the total number of the study sample was 542, and the incidence of bullying among the study participants was (15%), and the table also show the heights percentage of participants falling victims of verbal bullying (4.6%) and the lower percentage of them falling victims of physical bullying (2.8%).

Table 3. Association between types of bullying incidence and gender

| P-value | Mean rank | Gender | Test | Types of bullying |
|---------|-----------|--------|------------------------|-------------------|
| 0.000 | 294.6 | Male | Mann-Whitney U Test | Verbal bullying |
| | 254.88 | Female | | |
| 0.000 | 298.44 | Male | | Social bullying |
| | 248.56 | Female | | |
| 0.000 | 324.5 | Male | Physical bullying | |
| | 223.92 | Female | | |
| 0.000 | 305.57 | Male | Bullying over property | |
| | 241.67 | Female | | |

Table (3) show that there is a high significant difference between males and females in terms of verbal bullying, social bullying, Physical Bullying, and Bullying over property P-value (0.000), (0.000), (0.000), (0.000) respectively.

Table 4. Association between types of bullying incidence and the grade level among the study sample

| P-value | Mean rank | Class | Test | Bullying types |
|---------|-----------|--------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| 0.004 | 275.96 | First grade | Kruskal-Wallis Test | Verbal Bullying |
| | 238.82 | Second grade | | |
| | 296.18 | Third grade | | |
| 0.022 | 279.07 | First grade | | Social bullying |
| | 244.93 | Second grade | | |
| | 285.99 | Third grade | | |
| 0.005 | 308.06 | First grade | Physical bullying | |
| | 219.33 | Second grade | | |
| | 295.93 | Third grade | | |
| 0.000 | 89.10 | First grade | Bullying over property | |
| | 58.99 | Second grade | | |
| | 78.70 | Third grade | | |

Table (4) show that there were significant differences between students in grades first, second and third in the obese group in terms of verbal bullying, P-value (0.004), This table show there are significant differences between each of the first, second, and third grade students in terms of social bullying, P-value (0.022), also there were significant differences between students in the first, second, and third grades in terms of physical bullying P-value (0.005). Table also show There are a high significant difference between each of the first, second, and third grade students in terms of Bullying over property, P-value (0.000).

DISCUSSION

The study surveyed 542 students, revealing a mean age was 13.86, and SD 1.050, with more than half of the study sample was male. The finding of the present study agreement with study done in Ankara, Turkey by ⁽⁷⁾ includes 683 students from secondary schools. enrolled in the study, 52% of the sample were female and 48% were male. Regarding to the grade level, the present study revealed that the highest percentage of the study sample were second intermediate grade (33.8%), while the percentage of the third grade was (33%). Regarding for age the study reveals that 31.7% of participants aged was 15 years and 11.8% was aged 12 years. The result of the current study was agreement with the study conducted by (5,6). which found that 30% aged 16-year-old, 23% aged 15-year-olds and 19% of them were aged 17-year-old. The incidence of Bullying victims among of the study sample. One of the most popular subjects in classrooms all throughout the world these days is bullying. Bullying is a kind of aggressive conduct that mostly affects children and adolescents These days, bullying has become one the most discussed topics in classrooms throughout the world. bullying is a kind of aggressive conduct that mostly affects children and adolescents in schools ⁽⁸⁾. In the current study the incidence of being bullying victims among participants was (15%).According to the researcher opinion psychological stress and tension, the stress that adolescents faced at school, such as study pressure or emotional stress, can increase the likelihood of bullying. The present study's finding is similar to the study conducted in Serbia by ⁽⁹⁾reported that they were exposed to bullying the incidence of victimization was 8.6%. As regard the association between the bullying's type and gender of the study participants, present study revealed that there was a highly significant correlation between bullying's type and the participants' gender, at P-value (0.000). according to the researcher opinion, peer interactions and social hierarchies can play an important role in bullying behavior. It is possible that there are differences between males and females in the mechanism of expressing and dealing with emotions. The finding of the present study was agreement with the study conduct by ^(8,9) found that there was a significant difference between students 'aggression and both their gender p-value =0.00. Regarding the association between the bullying's type and grade level of the study participants, the present study showed that there are significant differences between bullying's type and the grade level in in terms of verbal bullying, social bullying, physical bullying, bullying over property, p-value (0.004), (0.022), (0.005),(0.000) respectively. According to the researchers' opinion, this can be explained by insufficient knowledge and improper response of the teaching staff in schools, which leads to the deterioration of the school atmosphere and allows students to solve problems on their own or use defense mechanisms to get out of the crisis ^(10,11).The current study has a similarity to one conducted by ⁽¹²⁾, which evaluated the correlation between the grade level and gender of bullying victims. The study found that although 15% of male victims of bullying were in grade 8, (31%) of female victims were in the same grade. The second-highest percentage of victims all girls(23%) were in Grade 9. In grade 10, there were (15%)more female victims than male victims (8%).

CONCLUSION

According to consequences of present study, the researchers typically concludes that 15% of the study participants being victims of bullying, and the verbal bullying was the most common form followed by property bullying and social bullying then the physical bullying the lowest percentage, and the study found significant association between bullying's type and demographical characteristics.

Authorship Contribution: All authors share equal effort contribution towards (1) substantial contributions to conception and design, acquisition, analysis and interpretation of data; (2) drafting the article and revising it critically for important intellectual content; and (3) final approval of the manuscript version to be published. Yes

Potential Conflicts of Interest: None

Competing Interest: None

Acceptance Date: 02-07-2024

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