

**Awareness of Teachers and Students
About Anti Bullying Law and Its Psychological Effects**

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Abstract

The primary objective of the study was to determine the level of awareness of teachers and students about Anti - Bullying Law as well as its psychological effects to student victims of bullying. The subjects of the study are teachers and students of Bayambang National High School, one of the big schools in the Province of Pangasinan in terms of population and land area. Specifically, the study focused on the respondents' profile in terms of age and sex; their level of awareness about the Anti- Bullying law; the type of bullying they experienced; and the psychological effects of bullying in terms of their behavior, emotion, motivation and self-esteem.

The descriptive method of research was used in this study and questionnaire was the main tool in gathering the needed data. Frequency count and percentages were used to interpret the data gathered.

The study made evident that most of the student respondents belong to the age of 14 while majority of the teacher respondents were between the ages of 28-38, who are mostly females. Their level of awareness about moderate. Anti-bullying law came out to be of three type of school bullying, verbal bullying came out to be the most common type encountered. School bullying made a great impact to the victim's self-esteem.

Based on the above conclusions, the following recommendations are hereby presented: 1) There is a need to conduct a regular seminar pertaining to Anti- Bullying Law in schools to increase their level of awareness; 2) The guidance office should provide for an intensive counselling services for those who experienced bullying; 3) If needed, based on the assessment of the guidance counsellor, a referral service be provided.

Key words: anti-bullying law, bullying, awareness, psychological effects

INTRODUCTION

Bullying has plagued schools all over the world. Bullies and their victims are from all walks of life. People think bullying is a part of growing up and an opportunity to learn to stand up for themselves. Even in school yards, bullying occurs. Bond, et al. ⁽¹⁾ describe the teenage years as challenging for many adolescents and their parents. The school environment often contributes to the challenges through learners who negate some of their peer's basic human rights. This is commonly known as "school bullying".

Bullying has been recognized as a problem within the Philippine school systems. Records show that in every school year, the average incidents of bullying is 15-20 percent of school's population. Further, it is indicated that physical abuse is the most common reported type of bullying.

Bullying is a serious issue which affect the school experiences of students. It must be taken seriously. Effective measures to prevent it, and should be put in place. The

chronic nature of bullying show that the impact on children, both short and long-term can be considerable.

And such, the researchers are bent on finding out the psychological effects of bullying to its victims.

Statement of the Problem

This study attempted to determine the psychological effects of school bullying on students of Bayambang National High School.

Specifically, this study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of?
 - a. Age, and
 - b. Sex?
2. What acts of school bullying are commonly experienced by the respondents in terms of?
 - a. Physical Bullying;
 - b. Verbal Bullying; and
 - c. Cyber/Electronic Bullying?
3. What are the psychological effects of school bullying in terms of students?
 - a. Behavior;

- b. Emotion;
- c. Self-Esteem; and
- d. Motivation?

Methodology

This study used the descriptive method since it aimed to find out the psychological effects of school bullying to the students of Bayambang National High School during school year 2017-2018.

According to Locklear T.M. ⁽²⁾, descriptive method is concerned with the description of data and characteristics about a population. The goal is the acquisition of factual, accurate and systematic data that can be used in averages, frequencies and similar statistical calculations. Descriptive studies seldom involve experimentation, as they are more concerned with naturally occurring phenomena than with the observation of controlled situations.

Subjects of the Study

The purposive sampling was used in this study. Is designed according to the purposes of the researcher as his controls. An individual is chosen as part of the sample because of good evidence that he is a representative of the total population. The total population of the study comprised of 160 students, including 81 third year and 79 fourth year students. Through the use of purposive sampling, 127 respondents represent 54.3% of the third year and 45.7% of the fourth year student victims.

The subjects of the study were taken from a pre-survey. The students were asked to answer a short checklist on the types of bullying namely, physical, verbal, and cyber. They were asked to tick under the Yes Column if they had experienced it, and No if it was not experienced. After gathering most Yes as answers, the researchers got the number of respondents.

Data Gathering Instrument

A questionnaire was the main tool in gathering the needed data. It was constructed by the researchers based on the common observations on the psychological effects of school bullying to students. It was also based on the questionnaire made by Olweus and Solberg ^[4] as revised by Rigby, K. and Bauman, S. ^[5]

The questionnaire consists of three parts. Part I was about the respondent's profile which include their name, age and sex. Part II included 30 items, 10 indicators for each type of bullying namely: Physical, Verbal, and Electronic/Cyber Bullying. Part III was concerned with the Psychological Effects of School Bullying namely: Emotion, Behavior, Motivation, and Self-esteem.

Data Gathering Procedure

The researchers asked permission from the Principal of Bayambang National High School to administer the questionnaire. When permission was granted, the researchers asked the cooperation of selected teachers to administer questionnaire to the two (2) sections of third year and fourth year as per advice from the guidance counselor of the school.

The researchers explained the objective of the study and guided the students on answering the questionnaire. Afterwards, the researchers started to collect the questionnaire and the top 127 students who frequently answered Yes on the part two of the questionnaire. After all the questionnaire had been classified, the response of 127 chosen students were tallied.

Statistical Treatment of the Data

The data obtained were carefully studied and analyzed by using percentage, and frequency counts.

To answer problems one, two and three, frequency and percentage were used to determine the types of bullying and its psychological effects. The formula is as follows:

$$\text{Percentage} = fd / N$$

Where:

% = percentage

fd = the frequency of an option

N = total number of respondents

Ranking of results was used in presenting problems two and three.

Presentation of Data

Profile of Third Year and Fourth Year Students

The following table presents the profiles of third year and fourth year in terms of age and sex.

Table 1

Profile of Third Year and Fourth Year Students

Age	<i>f</i>	%
13	2	1.6
14	56	44.1
15	48	37.8
16	16	12.6
17	4	3.1
18	1	0.8
Total	127	100
SEX	<i>f</i>	%
Male	61	48
Female	66	52
Total	127	100

The table 1 presents that fifty-six (56) of the respondents or forty four percent (44.1%) are aged fourteen (14); forty-eight (48) from the respondents or thirty-eight percent (37.8%) are aged fifteen (15); sixteen (16)

respondents or thirteen percent (12.6%) are aged sixteen (16); four (4) respondents or three percent (3.1%) are aged seventeen (17); two (2) respondents or two percent (1.7%) are aged thirteen (13); and only one (1) or one percent (0.8%) fall on the eldest category, eighteen (18).

As shown in table 1, students aged fourteen (14) represent the highest bulk of percentage as victims of school bullying.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics ^[6], nearly a third of all students aged 12-18 reported having been bullied at school in 2007, some almost daily.

On the other hand, Table 2 also shows that 66 amongst respondents (52%) are predominantly females while male constitutes the remaining 61 or 48%. This illustrates that females are the mostly the target of school bullying. Girls targeted by bullies at school are two and a half times more likely to remain victims than boys, according to research from the University of Warwick and University of Hertfordshire ^[7].

SCHOOL BULLYING TYPES ENCOUNTERED

The following table presents the types of school bullying experienced by the third year and fourth year respondents such as physical, verbal and cyber/electronic bullying in descending order of percentage.

Table 2. Types of School Bullying

TYPES OF BULLYING		
PHYSICAL BULLYING	f	%
I received several "faces" and dirty gestures.	62	48.8
They kicked, pushed and punched me.	45	35.4
I was hit by my classmates and other students.	17	13.4
They throw things on me.	16	12.6
They destroy my belongings.	13	10.2
They used objects as weapons to hurt me.	9	7.1
I had money taken away from me.	9	7.1
I was forced take off my stuff.	8	6.3
A chewing gum was put on my hair.	8	6.3
I was spitted at my face and any other parts of my body.	7	5.5
VERBAL BULLYING	f	%
They use bad language to hurt me.	81	63.8
I was bullied by making racist comments or constant teasing.	75	59.1
I was called mean names.	40	31.5
Other students underestimated me.	38	29.9
They tell lies or spread false rumors about me.	37	29.1
I was threatened or forced to do things I didn't want to.	29	22.8

They uttered malicious words against me.	28	22
They insult my race or color.	23	18.1
They ridiculed my physical appearance.	23	18.1
I experienced cruel criticism by other students.	14	11
ELECTRONIC/CYBER BULLYING	f	%
They hacked my account on social networking sites.	24	18.9
They send insulting or threatening text messages or emails.	23	18.1
They edit my pictures sarcastically and share it to others.	16	12.6
I experienced being black mailed by other students.	15	11.8
They fake their identity and making damages to my reputation.	12	9.5
They post malicious comments against me.	10	7.9
They create and spread rumors online.	10	7.9
I received threatening phone calls.	7	5.5
They share my private pictures without my permission.	5	3.9
They make video-recording of my embarrassment.	2	1.6

As shown in table 2 the acts of school bullying mostly experienced by the respondents in terms of physical, verbal, and electronic/ cyber bullying are "I received several "faces" and dirty gestures", "They use bad language to hurt me", and "They hacked my account on social networking sites" with eighty-one (81) or sixty-four percent (48.8%), sixty-two (62) or forty-nine percent (63.8%), and twenty-four (24) or nineteen percent (18.9%), respectively

This result was supported by the recent SAFE ^[8] survey conducted in United States. It has found out that verbal bullying is the most common type with about 77 percent of all students being bullied verbally in some way or another including mental bullying or even verbal abuse.

Physical Bullying

As presented in table 3, the act of physical bullying that most of the respondents had experience is, "I received several "faces" and dirty gestures" with a highest frequency of 62 or forty-nine percent (48.8%). It is followed by the indicators, "They kicked, pushed and punched me", "I was hit by my other students", and "They throw things on me" with frequency of forty-five (45) or thirty-five percent (35. %), seventeen (17), or thirteen percent (13.4), and sixteen (16) or thirteen percent (12.6), respectively.

This data show that when students experienced physical attacks from bullies they could easily define it as

bullying because it is most likely what they think about bullying (Gordon, 2009).

A similar findings was reported by *The Jerusalem Post* [9], after Professor Amos Rolider of EmekYizre'el College surveyed 2,972 pupils in 21 schools where he found that "the highest number of pupils with percentage of 65 complained of being smacked, kicked, pushed or molested by fellow pupils".

Verbal Bullying

As illustrated in the table, the indicator of Verbal Bullying, "They use bad language to hurt me" is the most frequent verbal attack experienced by the respondents with frequency of eighty-one (81) or sixty-four (63.8%).

The respondents also experienced other acts of verbal bullying such as "I was bullied by making racist comments or constant teasing", "I was called mean names" and "Other students underestimated me" with frequency of seventy-five (75) or fifty-nine percent (59.1%), forty (40) or thirty-one percent (31.%) and thirty-eight (38) or thirty percent (29.9%) respectively.

In accordance with the result, the study of Teicher M. [10] as posted in Harvard Gazette, finds out that verbal assaults such as use of offensive language, swear words, threats, critical comments with harsh tone, shouting, yelling and screaming and passing nasty remarks were repeatedly experienced by the victims.

The result was similar with the study of Dr. P. Sujatha [11] where it found out that majority of the respondents (59%) have reported that they had been subjected to more than three forms of verbal bullying namely: teasing, intimidating, excluding from group & rumors and lies against them by others.

Electronic/Cyber Bullying

Table 3 also revealed that respondents experienced the indicator, "They hacked my account on social networking sites" with the highest frequency of twenty-four (24) or nineteen percent (18.9%). "They send insulting or threatening text messages or emails", "They edit my pictures sarcastically and share it to others" and "I experienced being black mailed by other students" were the next highest indicators experienced by the victims with frequency of twenty-three (23) or eighteen percent (18.1%), sixteen (16) or thirteen percent (12.6%) and fifteen (15) or twelve percent (11.8%), correspondingly.

This result is identical to the 2007 study of the US-based Pew Internet & American Life Project [12] which found out that one-third of American teen internet users have been target of cyber-bullies. This online bullying includes sending threatening messages, displaying private messages and posting embarrassing video footage and photos on the internet.

PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF SCHOOL BULLYING

The following table presents the psychological effects of school bullying experienced by the third year and fourth year respondents in terms of behavior, emotion, motivation and self-esteem, which are arranged from highest to lowest percentage for the convenience of the reader.

Table 3. Psychological Effects of School Bullying

PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS		
BEHAVIOR	f	%
I'm usually on my own, I generally work by myself.	43	33.9
I cried a lot.	37	29.1
I find it hard to think properly or concentrate.	35	27.6
I get on better with adults than people my own age.	28	22
I have nightmares.	21	16.5
I'm not doing my school works.	21	16.5
I don't pay attention in my class.	19	15
I don't want to go out with my friends.	13	10.2
I lose appetites.	10	7.9
I attempt suicide.	7	5.5
EMOTION	f	%
I feel lonely.	52	40.9
I don't trust other people.	45	35.4
I am insecure with other students.	26	20.5
I'm always out of my mind.	23	18.1
I feel no one understands me.	23	18.1
I get on better with adults than people my own age.	22	17.3
I get on better with adults than people my own age.	18	14.2
I get really frightened for no reason at all.	17	13.4
I'm usually on my own, I generally work by myself.	16	12.6
I am scared to go to school.	6	4.7
MOTIVATION	f	%
I was easily discouraged by others' negative remarks.	49	38.6
I felt so tired I just sat around and did nothing.	23	18.1
I don't enjoy anything at all.	11	8.7
I can't cope with my teacher's expectations.	8	6.3
I hate doing school works.	7	5.5
I don't like school.	5	3.9
I don't care if I get bad grades.	5	3.9
I'm not interested in school activities.	5	3.9
I don't have goals in life.	4	3.1
I'm bored in doing homework.	4	3.1
SELF-ESTEEM	f	%
I am shy.	72	56.7

I think I could never be as good as other student	35	27.6
I'm no good at all.	15	11.8
I feel cut-off from the world.	14	11
I don't have much to be proud of.	11	8.7
I can't do things right.	8	6.3
I feel miserable or unhappy.	7	5.5
I'm a failure.	6	4.7
I am a bad person.	3	2.4
I don't respect myself.	3	2.4

It can be gleaned from the table that the most common psychological effects of school bullying experienced by the respondents in terms of behavior, emotion, motivation, and self-esteem are "I'm usually on my own, I generally work by myself", "I feel lonely", "I was easily discouraged by others' negative remarks", and "I am shy" with forty-three (43) or fifty-seven percent (33.9%), fifty-two (52) or forty-one percent (40.9%), forty-nine (49) or thirty-nine percent (38.6%), seventy-two (72) or thirty-four percent (56.7%), correspondingly.

This result is supported by the study of Coloroso^[13] which revealed that victims of bullying developed low self-esteem and they eventually experience isolation and depression as well.

Behavior

Table 3 shows the effects of bullying on behavior of the respondents. The highest indicator on behavior is "I usually on their own and generally work alone" with a frequency of forty-three (43) or percentage of thirty-three (33%). The next highest indicators on behavior are "I cried a lot", "I find hard to think properly or concentrate", and "I get on better with adults than people their own age" having the frequency of thirty-seven (37) or percentage of twenty-nine (29%), thirty-five (35) or percentage of twenty-eight (28%), twenty-eight (28) or a percentage of twenty-two (22%), respectively. The result implies that most of the victims chose to be alone.

Correspondingly, the study of Ellen^[14] reveals that bullied children show changes in behaviors such as difficult to focus in studying and absorbing information, lack of interest in doing school activities, and absences in the class.

In addition, similar findings were reported by DeVoe and Kaffenberger^[15] in their survey they conducted in 2001 where victims were fearful of attending school and sometimes they skipped school to avoid being bullied.

Emotion

Table 3 also presents the effects of bullying on the emotion of the respondents. The highest indicator on emotion having a frequency of fifty-two (52) or a percentage of forty-one (41%) is "I feel lonely". The next highest indicators on emotion are "I don't trust others" and "I am

insecure with others" with the frequency of forty-five (45) or a percentage of thirty-five (35%) and twenty-six (26) or a percentage of twenty-one (21%), respectively. The respondents also answered, "I'm always out of mind" and "I feel no one understands me" with the same frequency of twenty-three (23) or a percentage of eighteen (18.1%). This result signifies that bullying can lead to emotional disturbance of the victims which make them feel sad and unwanted.

These findings were supported by NCES report, which reveals that victims of bullying display a range of responses, even many years later, such as: loneliness, difficulty in trusting others, lack of assertiveness, isolation and insecurities^[16]. Additionally, according to Nansel and colleagues^[17] "youth who are bullied generally show higher levels of insecurity, anxiety, depression, loneliness, unhappiness, and other physical and mental symptoms".

Dr. Ed Adlaf,^[18] a research scientist and professor of public health sciences at the University of Toronto, where equipped in his study that "those who are involved in bullying are much more likely to experience emotional difficulties now and in the future."

Motivation

As regards on the motivation of the respondents." I was easily discouraged by others' negative remarks" came out to be the highest indicator with the greatest frequency of forty-nine (49) or the percentage of thirty-nine (38.6 %.). The next highest indicators which followed, "I felt so tired I just sat around and did nothing", "I don't enjoy anything at all", and "I can't cope with my teacher's expectations", with frequency of twenty-three (23) or eighteen percent (18.1%), eleven (11) or nine percent (8.7%) and eight (8) or six percent (6.3%) correspondingly. This result signifies that the victims gradually lost confidence because of negative remarks from others.

Similarly, the report from the National Association of School Psychologists in the United States^[19], says that children who are victims may become moody, irritable, frustrated, or act tired and withdrawn

This is also supported by a survey conducted by Sir Wilfrid Laurier^[20] who found out, that victims of school bullying show an abrupt disinterest in school or refuse to go to school, suffer a drop in grades and concentration and they withdraw from school and family activities.

Self-Esteem

The effects of bullying on self-esteem of the respondents earned the frequency of seventy-two (72) or fifty-seven percent (56.7%) from the respondents answers in the indicator "I am shy". The indicators which followed are, "I think I could never be as good as other students", "I'm no good at all", and "I feel cut-off from the world" with thirty-five (35) or twenty-seven percent (27.6%), fifteen (15) or twelve percent (11.8%) and fourteen (14) or eleven

percent (11%). This result tells that victims feel ashamed and isolated because they became socially inactive.

These findings were also supported by a case study conducted by Thirumoorthi et al.,^[21] which found out that a vast majority of the respondents (68%) have acknowledged that any action which hurt their feelings have lowered their morale and their self-esteem.

Findings

The salient findings of this study include the following:

1. The profile of third year and fourth year students of Bayambang National High School during the school year 2013-2014 in terms of age reveals that most of them were aged 14 which comprise 56 respondents or 44.1%. The study also showed that majority of the respondents were female represented by 52%.
2. On the acts of school bullying mostly experienced by the respondents in terms of physical, verbal, and electronic/cyber bullying, topping the list are "I received several "faces" and dirty gestures", "They use bad language to hurt me", and "They hacked my account on social networking sites" with 81 or 63.8%, 62 or 48.8%, and 24 or 18.9%, respectively.

The act of physical bullying most of the respondents experience is about being insulted through making faces and dirty gestures with the greatest percentage of 48.8. Using bad words against the victim is the most frequent verbal bullying act experienced by the students with the highest percentage of 63.8. Also, most of the respondents admitted that bullies hacked their account on social networking sites. Thus, it is the most frequent electronic/cyber bullying attack they had experience congruent to 18.9 percent.

3. On the psychological effects of school bullying in terms of students' behavior, emotion, motivation and self-esteem, it was found out that the respondents most answered "I'm usually on my own, I generally work by myself", "I feel lonely", "I was easily discouraged by others' negative remarks", and "I am shy", with 72 or 56.7%, 52 or 40.9%, 49 or 38.6%, 43 or percent 33.9%, correspondingly. The students who were bullied, admitted that they were usually on their own and they generally work alone with highest frequency of 43 or 33.9%. The feeling of loneliness with a frequency of 52 or 40.9% is the most frequent effect of school bullying on the emotion of the respondents. Meanwhile, students were easily discouraged by others' negative remarks with the greatest frequency of 49 or 38.6%. Shyness came next with a frequency of 72 or 56.7% is the most frequent consequence on the affected self-esteem to the bullied students.

Conclusions:

In the light of the findings gathered from the study, the researchers arrived at the following conclusions:

1. A female, fourteen-year old, student most likely experienced bullying at school.
2. Verbal bullying is the commonly experienced type of school bullying. It is manifested by the use of bad language to hurt other people.
3. In terms of the respondents behavior, emotion, motivation and self-esteem- the psychological effects of school bullying results to their being lonely and discouraged. Generally, they prefer to work alone and they became shy.

Recommendations:

Based on the conclusions drawn from the results of study, the following recommendations are presented:

1. Seminars about bullying and Anti-Bullying Law should be conducted regularly in schools to include level of awareness.
2. Guidance offices in schools should double their efforts to help bullying victims bounce back.
3. Students clubs which reinforce guidance offices efforts should be established for an even stronger support system.

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