UNDERSTANDING THE DYNAMICS OF FEMALE BULLYING

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ABSTRACT

The research aimed to explain the dynamics of female bullying and its causes and characteristics. Bullying's influence on schools and society was becoming a growing problem; it affected the person being bullied and the bully, which might lead to anxiety, depression, sleep issues, decreased academic success, and school dropout and more likely to attempt suicide. With this, many types of research were conducted to identify factors surrounding bullying; however, it lacked research converging on female bullying. Female bullying might not exist for many, but it was considered more dangerous than male bullying because it attacked its victims in social and psychological aspects, causing them to seek vengeance or, worse, attempt suicide. The research applied a qualitative research method corresponding to a case study design. Qualitative data consisted of open-ended information gathered through interviews and observation. It is found that the causes of female bullying are identity crisis, family and social alienation, bullying experiences, overwhelming emotions, and a low tolerance for other people's physical appearance or characteristics. It further discloses that female bullying usually uses subtle attacks in verbal bullying, physical bullying, and social bullying, which characterizes it from any other form of bullying.

Keywords: *female bullying, bullying causes, bullying characterization, bullying impact*

INTRODUCTION

In the generation today, issues and concerns about the community are very rampant. Some of these problems can cause stress, depression, and even suicide, like bullying; some claim it to be a hideous crime. Many have encountered conventional bullying or cyberbullying, as either an offender or a victim, have more suicidal thoughts and are more likely to attempt suicide than those who have not. Moreover, offending is less significantly associated with suicidal thoughts and acts than victimization. It also indicates that peer antagonism should be taken seriously at school and home and that suicide prevention and intervention components should be included in comprehensive bullying response programs deployed in schools.

Bullying is the use of force, threat, or coercion to abuse, intimidate, or aggressively dominate others. This might be emotional (also known as relational), verbal, physical, or cyber (Liberty, 2021). It can also refer to being abandoned by other students or being hit. It often incorporates subtle means of compulsion, such as intimidation, and it spans from one-on-one, individual bullying to group bullying, known as mobbing, in which the bully may have one or more 'lieutenants' who appear to be eager to assist the principal bully in his/her bullying operations. Bullying encounters also play a significant influence in non-suicidal self-injury. Nevertheless, very little is known about how and under what circumstances distinct bullying encounters (i.e., instances of just being pure bullies, pure targets, and bully-victims) might affect (Wu et al., 2021). Moreover, the impacts are often not restricted to the bully-victim duo. If bullying occurs in a social circle and is very visible, third parties become observers and might respond either pro-socially by protecting the victim or displaying condemnation of the abuser or anti-socially by siding with the bully or even joining in the bullying. Furthermore, in the presence of bullying, inaction transmits the social indication of implicit agreement (Van der Ploeg, Steglich, & Veenstra, 2020).

Bullying is a worldwide issue; much research is conducted to seek answers to the questions of what it is and why. Thus, some people believe guys bully more often than girls, particularly in school and beyond. Boys are more prone to participate in physical or verbal bullying, while girls are more likely to engage in relational bullying. This impression of individuals is shown by the study of Iossi-Silva et al. (2013), which claims that bullying is prominent in the male gender, showing itself through physical attacks and insults. This may be related to the belief that girls are weaker than guys. Larger impact sizes for school bullying incidence events are connected with the existence of informal social participation and awareness for parents (Gaffney, Ttofi, Farrington, 2021). Also, in Salavera et al. (2021) research, experiences with classmates, anxiety, sincerity, and aggression are found to be predictors of bullying, while gender and aggression factors are found to be predictors among perpetrators, but to a lesser extent, implying that other factors must be present for bullying behavior to occur.

According to Piotrowski and King (2016), despite the extensive literature on adult bullying and its onerous impact on victims, there has been sparse research interest on the nature of adults who bully adults in college/university settings, there is strong empirical evidence that depicts the adult 'bully' as harboring pervasive psychopathological tendencies such as narcissism and Machiavellianism, with a propensity for exhibiting abusive, controlling, callous, manipulative, domineering, ruthless, and self-centered behaviors. Bullying is a frequent and changeable risk factor for mental health issues. While earlier research has demonstrated the efficiency of anti-bullying interventions, the demographic impact and the relationship of particular moderators with results remain unknown (Fraguas et al., 2021). Likewise, some phenomena causes significant damage to the individuals engaged (both bully and victim), along with harm to academic attainment (Gomes et al., 2020).

Bullying of this nature can occur at school, in the workplace, or a person's personal life. A female having a lower bullying score is connected with victim-oriented defending while being male and having a higher bullying score is associated with bully-oriented defending. Both forms of defending are more widespread in classes where bullies are more rejected, and the favorable connections of favorability and acceptability with victim-oriented defending are greater (Garandeau et al., 2019). According to Jewett et al. (2019), female bullying reduces the pleasure of sports, causes separation from their teams, reduces self-esteem, and causes unpleasant feelings such as sorrow, shame, fear, and detriments to sports and academic performance. Furthermore, men are much more usually targets of bullying, although with differences, while females seem to be more entangled as targets of online bullying than offline bullying (Smith et al., 2019).

Furthermore, it shows a distinction between bullying in guys and bullying in girls. In areas where guys utilize physical force over the victim to acquire status or control, girls often bully by attempting to tear down the looks of their victims in whatever manner they can. It also reveals that female bullies frequently utilize purposeful exclusion, gossip, and insults. Their strategies are more deliberate. Females are more prone than guys to engage in online talk about their victims. The purpose is to harm the victim's reputation and alienate him or her from others. Although some individuals point to important differences, it is known that the aims of the female bully may not be that different from those of the male bully. Bullies are typically highly insecure individuals who work out their issues by making the lives of others miserable. He/she may specifically attack persons perceived as either competitors or weak. Thus, the research confirms Iossi-Silva et al. (2013) research, which finds that boys are more likely to be both bullies and victims of bullying, particularly in its physical manifestation, whereas girls are more likely to engage in circumstances of indirect bullying, such as teasing or talking about classmates. The research aims to know the underlying causes of female bullying and the factors associated with its victimization. Specifically, it answers those questions: What are the primary, pre-disposing, precipitating, and reinforcing causes of female bullying? What characterizes female bullying? The results of the research will be used to formulate and increase awareness of female bullying and how it is acquired and controlled. The primary findings of Feijóo et al. (2021) research have revealed no variations in cyberbullying rates between males and girls. In the instance of bullying, there is a greater number of bully victims amongst some males, but no differences are detected between pure victims and perpetrators. Several distinctions are discovered when certain bullying behaviors are observed or performed.

Bullying fosters bullying, and the person who bullies others may experience the very same from somebody. Individuals may seek social admiration through aggressive behaviors, or the one that bullies may well be dissatisfied or resentful of the individual they are bullying. According to strain theories (Agnew, 1992), some pressures enhance the risk of offending. Agnew's extension of Merton's strain theory employs a social-psychological perspective to explain delinquent conduct (Nickerson, 2021). It posits that bullying victimization is positively related to delinquent outcomes, the effect of bullying victimization is attenuated for those with a positive family environment, and the effect of bullying victimization on late adolescent delinquency is dependent upon family process and gender.

Furthermore, the effect of human experiences, the acts of others, and environmental circumstances on individual health habits are described by Social Cognitive Theory (SCT). Observational learning is the process of looking at and observing how others are doing or modeling the desired behavior.

Many theories for bullying are based on the

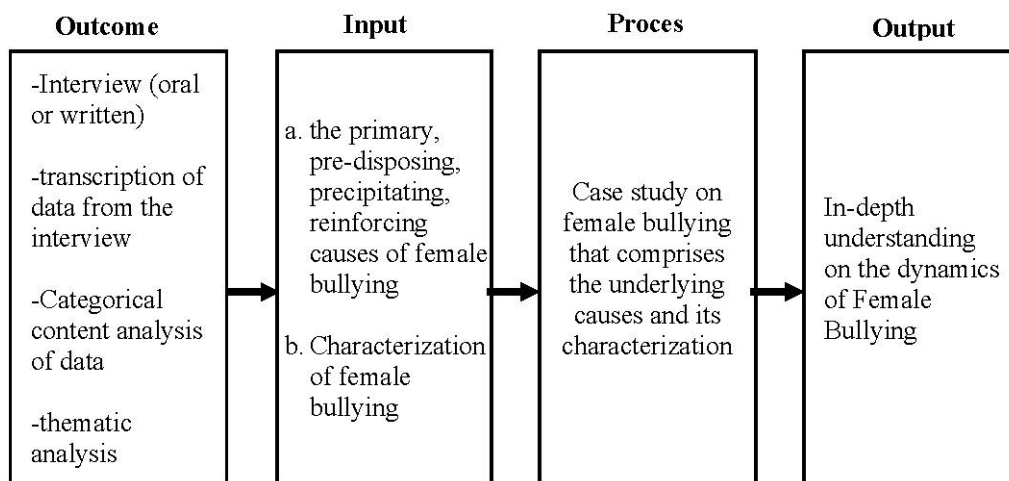| Outcome	Input	Proces	Output
-Interview (oral or written) -transcription of data from the interview -Categorical content analysis of data -thematic analysis	a. the primary, pre-disposing, precipitating, reinforcing causes of female bullying b. Characterization of female bullying	Case study on female bullying that comprises the underlying causes and its characterization	In-depth understanding on the dynamics of Female Bullying

Figure 1 The Research's Conceptual Framework

notion of social order theory. Individuals have various positions and levels of influence throughout society. This strength manifests itself as hostility. There are identified two types of persons based on aggressiveness: (a) physically violent and (b) vocally aggressive. Persons who bully are primarily concerned with achieving and maintaining a high social standing. In turn, victims are socially constructed as 'different' and 'wrong' and are associated with a low-status position. Aggressive conduct is rewarded, and group dominance is prized in several qualitative investigations, identified bullying as a socialization process and gender policing. According to these researchers, power is prized in the socialization process; therefore, victims are seen to demonstrate deviance both in conduct and appearance (Jan & Husain, 2015).

With increasing reports of bullying victimization ranging from 8% to 46% in several nations, bullying victimization has been labeled an international concern, frequently impacting kids in or around one's school with inadequate parental supervision. While there is increasing research on bullying victimization, few studies have addressed the collateral implications of bullying victimization and the mediating role of family processes using the theoretical lens of general strain theory.

The research encompasses the dynamics of bullying that is delimited to the causes such female as primary, predisposing, precipitating, reinforcing, and what characterizes female bullying. The research's conceptual framework is composed of four blocks: input, process, output, and outcome. Figure 1 is used to guide the researcher throughout the research.

The research paradigm is composed of four blocks: input, process, output, and outcome. Figure 1 is used to guide the researcher throughout the research. The first block (input) comprises the specific questions the research aims to answer. These are the causes of female bullying, such as the primary, pre-disposing, precipitating, reinforcing, and characterization of female bullying. The input includes the survey tool and interview guide that serves as the dependent variable,

which helps the researcher collect essential data.

The second block (process) comprises the collection and analysis of data from the female respondents who are identified as bullies through their responses from the survey tool. Interviews (oral or written), transcription of data, categorical content analysis of data, and thematic analysis are used to analyze their responses. The third block (output), a case study on female bullying that comprises the underlying causes and its characterization, is analyzed in order to illustrate what female bullying is all about. Lastly, the fourth block (outcome), the desired outcome, is established by means of analyzing the dynamics of female bullying from the interviews of respondents that will be conducted. The interpreted and analyzed data is used in cultivating in-depth knowledge of the dynamics of female bullying.

METHODS

The research applies a qualitative research method corresponding to a case study of research design. Qualitative data consist of open-ended information gathered through interviews and observation. The researcher examines the data gathered from the seven respondents who are identified as bullies from their responses to the survey tool. The respondents are college students from a certain University in the Philippines. The data are categorized into common themes – topics, ideas, and patterns of meaning that come up repeatedly.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Female bullying is a very complex issue; it is not just a concern of a person but the whole world. Bullying, in all of its manifestations, such as hazing and sexual harassment, is a worldwide issue. It is undeniable that every problem has its own cause; these causes may be simple or complex, and there

are different types of causes that can lead to a better understanding of a certain issue or concern: primary, pre-disposing, precipitating, and reinforcing causes.

The term 'primary cause' refers to the state that would not have happened if the disease had not occurred. It is regarded as the primary cause of the disorder's existence. Based on the responses, they are enumerated as the primary cause of female bullying: (1) identity crisis, and (2) family and social alienation.

Identity crisis is a psychosocial development that individuals must deal with physical development, sexual maturation, and integrating beliefs about themselves and how others perceive them, lack of significant meaning for self. As a result, adolescents build their identities and struggle to resolve the crises of their core ego identity. These are attention-seeking and self-insecurity, which the respondents have identified as the primary cause of bullying. As mentioned by Respondent 1, "In my own perspective, the primary reason why people tend to bully is they want attention." It is also narrated by Respondent 2, "For me, insecurities, for example, for there are things that they do not have wherein they seek it to other people."

Attention seeking is the desire to seek pleasure; people are always seeking things that are pleasurable to them. Some may choose valuable things like expensive handbags or pieces of jewelry, and some also find watching funny and pleasurable, but few find bullying funny, enjoyable, and pleasurable.

Family and social alienation occurs when a person withdraws or isolates themselves from their surroundings or other individuals. People who display indications of alienation frequently reject loved ones and society. They may also experience sensations of detachment and isolation, especially out of their own emotions. These are traumatic experiences, group belongingness, family problems, and societal issues. The respondents have narrated that their family and social estrangement lead them to become bullies. As stated by Respondent 1, "The primary reason why people tend to bully is they do not have proper parental guidance. They want attention and maybe for fun only." Moreover, they claim that they are affected by their experiences at home and their environment, a lack of acceptance and unfair treatment by family and society. As mentioned by Respondent 7, "Insecurity, traumatic experiences from home (sexual, verbal abuse) peer pressure, bullying environment, insecurity, traumatic experiences from home (sexual, verbal abuse) peer pressure, environment (bully grown-up)- bullying is already a trend for them as if bullying is a normal setting."

A predisposing cause is a situation that occurs prior to and paves the way for the onset of a disorder in specific circumstances. Once bullied is a situation where a certain individual becomes a bully because of their past experiences, which include shaming, entertainment, group exclusion, physical attack, and teasing as part of the so-called bullying. Shaming is when they shame the person because of their body figure or some part of the body that is not good for their eyes, like scars. Entertainment is an experience of an individual that is made fun of and teased off, which makes them feel like the center of entertainment. Group exclusion is isolating an individual from a certain group because of its uniqueness from the other group members or is left behind, for example, "You do not belong to a group if you do not do this". Physical attack is one of the most known forms of bullying, especially for males and even for females, which has the characteristics of subtle manipulation, and this is experienced. They are teasing as bullying, like name-calling, which is known as calling someone that is not his/her name or calling a name in a bad way like 'pig'. As narrated by Respondent 4, "During high school, when I go to school, they call me culture- headhunters, '*Mangkukulam*', '*Itneg*', dialect, and even pig."

A precipitating cause is a circumstance that is too much for the individual and develops the disorder. Overwhelming emotions and low tolerance for other people's physical appearance or characteristics are the identified precipitating causes. Overwhelming emotions such as too much anger or fear are known to push people from things, they think they cannot do, for example, bullying. Whenever the respondents feel angry, they tend to look for someone to whom they can release their anger, or whenever they feel fear, they tend to preempt the incoming situation they think will hurt them. As mentioned by Respondent 1, "As long as I feel angry and if I can see someone to make fun of, it seems like I am always looking for the feeling of bullying."

Low tolerance to other people's physical appearance or characteristics is a kind of impression that forms in a person's thinking and perception about others because they influence what they focus on and how they think about them. As stated by Respondent 3, "It is as if you noticed something funny about that person while driving by." A reinforcing cause is a circumstance that serves to reinforce existing maladaptive behavior.

Anger venting is a way to express anger toward somebody or something else, but most bullies today see it as a way to express too much impulsion or emotion to someone else in order to release frustration over something else, which makes them bullies. As mentioned by Respondent 2, "My bullying is to release my anger, so when I get angry, I look for someone to bully."

A pleasure trip is more about making fun of somebody else, which is pleasurable to their senses, like teasing, shaming, and so forth. As mentioned by Respondent 3, "When I bully, I felt happy, but I also felt pity afterward." Teasing as a form of bullying makes the respondents crave more victims. They say that whenever they bully, they feel happiness, enjoyment, and entertainment.

Security mantle is a way for an individual to prevent or protect themselves from the same experience she/he has before. As narrated by Respondent 4, "I am not happy. I was forced because I was hurt and saw

myself so badly. I feel guilty and sorry." Bullying is a big issue in today's schools. They enjoy controlling other youngsters since it may be the only thing they have any power. Many bullies vent their anxieties on others. This makes the youngsters they harass feel uneasy. It is terrible that young children are indeed being bullied nowadays, and greater emphasis is placed on the matter.

Bullying is described as the abuse, intimidation, or hostile dominance of others by using force, threat, or compulsion. Bullying is classified into four categories of abuse: emotional (also known as relational), verbal, physical, and cyber.

Female bullying refers to intimidating, damaging, or obstructive conduct by women or girls. Women and girls are prone to be bullies, despite the stereotype of the insensitive male bully, albeit female bullying typically differs from male bullying. Bullying of this nature can occur at school, in the workplace, or a person's personal life.

These are identified as some of the characteristics of female bullying. First is the subtle attack that refers to how the female bullies are to their victims. Most respondents have mentioned that female bullies are more prone to lighter attacks. As narrated by Respondent 4, "When a female bullies more words, hurtful words, I bully out of revenge. Male bullying is physical." This suggests that there is a distinct attack that certainly characterizes female bullies compared to male bullies. Female bullying cannot be easily perceived, for female bullies are not into punching and kicking but more on laughing, tripping, and other subtle attacks.

Furthermore, even if no blows are thrown, bullying may leave a terrible impact on its target, causing long-term anguish and distress. Victims may experience depression, anxiety, insecurity, and a sense that they are at fault. In contrast, several bullied females grow alienated, reclusive, and even leave school. In rare cases, sufferers may become so despondent and despairing that suicide remains their sole alternative. Thus, female bullying is known for its subtle attacks and manipulation techniques, including snide remarks, guilt-tripping, avoidance, abruptly canceled friendships and nasty tactics. Female bullies are indeed known for their deliberate social exclusion and outright denial of their victims.

The second is physical bullying, including pushing and shoving, striking, screaming, tripping, taking and/or smashing personal goods, spitting, nasty gestures, and fights. As narrated by Respondent 1, "When it comes to females, they hide a bag, tie the bags. Female bullying is lighter, and they do not choose who they want to make fun of". One respondent has said that female bullying is more about keeping or hiding personal things, which they think is fun. The idea is that physical bullying is typically the first kind of bullying that a victim would encounter. Bullying frequently begins in various forms and progresses to physical assault. The bully's primary weapon in physical bullying is their physicality.

The third is verbal bullying, which is synonymous with verbal abuse, including name-calling, derogatory remarks, laughing, mocking, and threatening. As revealed by Respondent 5, "If a woman bullies, it feels like it is wrongful like it hurts so much, they bully through teasing physical appearance, manner of talking (accent), actions that are funny." Most of them have said that female bullying is more about shaming their victims by telling them hurtful words to attack their victims.

This is supported by Shannon (2021), who says that name-calling may have been a centuries-old tactic to harm and disgrace somebody, and it has not been any less unpleasant over time. Many of these offenders would choose people who seem to be inferior or disabled and would insult them in order to degrade them. The majority of verbal attacks occur in private when grownups are not present.

The fourth is social bullying, which involves purposefully excluding anybody from events, disseminating stories, and purposefully shaming or lying about others. As narrated by Respondent 7, "Spreading rumors that they almost sympathize with my parents, they do everything to shame me or by teasing them about their physical appearance."

Bullying is more than a single event of meanness or rudeness. It is more often than not continual and sustained. This could also include removing somebody from events, publishing hurtful stuff on social media, making up stories, as well as other subtle forms of emotional bullying. Female bullies' assaults are often subtle as well as aimed at socially isolating a victim through purposeful exclusion.

CONCLUSIONS

It is widely acknowledged worldwide as a difficult and massive issue, with the results implying that the dynamics of female bullying are of a wide range of causes and characterizations. Bullying includes the form of subtle attacks, verbal, social, and physical bullying. The most common cause of female bullying is that bullies have been bullied before. It is also characterized as simple pushing and shoving, striking, screaming, tripping, taking and/or smashing personal goods, spitting, nasty gestures, and fights are all examples of physical abuse.

This research implies that female bullying does not choose its victims. They can bully anyone else as long as they can see numerous minimal reasons to tease or shame them, such as ugly faces, uncommon body parts, shyness, low IQ, and even low life. Female bullying is a lighter attack than male bullying.

The results do not represent all bullying cases in all schools or females, but this research provides awareness of the underlying primary, predisposing, precipitating, and reinforcing causes of female bullying and the characterization of female bullying. Further studies are suggested to seek the entirety of the dynamics of female bullying.

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