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A cross sectional study to assess the prevalence of bullying among the high school students in schools of Bangalore urban district.

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ABSTRACT

Context: Bullying is a multifaceted form of mistreatment mostly seen in schools. According to world health organization it is a major public health problem that leads to behavioral and emotional issues in victims. Hence creating awareness about the ill effects of bullying and promoting strategies such as enacting strict legislation against it is of major public health importance. **Aim:** To assess the prevalence of bullying among high school students of Bangalore urban district. **Materials and Methods:** A cross sectional study was conducted among 340 high school students selected by simple random sampling method from schools of Bangalore urban district. Data collection was done by using structured and pretested questionnaire of Anti bullying Alliance. Results were presented in frequencies and percentages. **Results:** The mean age of study participants was 14.5 years. Majority (62.35%) were females. Study revealed that 63.52% of the students have faced bullying. Classroom was the most common place of bullying accounting for about 24.11%. Hence the results of the study compelled to know about bullying and enforcement of stringent anti-bullying policy in schools to have student friendly atmosphere.

Key Words: Bullying, Anti-bullying policy, Multifaceted, Behavioral and Emotional issues.

INTRODUCTION

Bullying is considered as a common form of violence in our society. It is a major public health problem that demands the concerted and coordinated time and attention of health-care providers, policy-makers and families. It is a multifaceted form of mistreatment, mostly seen in schools and the workplace.¹

Bullying is defined as an occurring when a student is exposed to negative actions repeatedly and over time by one or more students.² It involves direct actions such as “teasing and taunting, racial, ethnic, and sexual slurs or harassment, threatening, hitting, and stealing”³ and indirect behaviors such as spreading rumors, socially excluding students, and dirty looks in passing which usually go unnoticed.

Bullying exists in all communities and in both developed and developing societies since a long time. It is considered a significant problem in school kids lives especially in adolescent age group which is a difficult time in child’s maturation. Presence of bullying in schools hampers the development of young people into well adjusted adults.⁴

Bullying in schools can occur in any place either in school building or around school building and may occur in

bathrooms, school buses and during waiting for school buses, and in classes which may require group work or after school activities.⁵ It may affect students physically, psychologically, educationally and professionally.

Bullying can have both short-term and long-term undesirable psychosocial consequences. Both the victims and those who bully tend to have many physical and psychological symptoms, such as symptoms of depression, sleeping difficulty, severe suicidal ideation.⁶ Therefore this study was conducted as a small attempt to know the prevalence of bullying, which is of major social concern particularly among adolescents in schools of Bangalore urban district. Objective of this study is to assess the prevalence of bullying among high school students in schools of Bangalore urban district.

METHODOLOGY

A cross sectional study was conducted from August to September 2015 among high school students. As per the study done by Srisiva R,⁷ the prevalence of bullying among school children is 30%. Based on P as 30% and 5% as absolute precision the sample size was estimated to be 340. Ethical clearance was obtained by the institution.

Study subjects were selected from schools that comes under the urban field practice area of BMCRI. Out of the total 11 schools in the study area, 3 were selected randomly and equal number of high school students in the age group of 13-16 years, were recruited for the study by simple random sampling technique till the estimated study sample of 340 is reached. After obtaining the consent of school authorities, data collection was done by using a structured questionnaire of Anti Bullying alliance. Data was entered in excel sheet. Descriptive statistics. Tables and graphs were used to present the results.

RESULTS

A total of 340 students were involved in the study, the mean age of study subjects was 14.5 years. Majority of them were female students constituting 62.35% followed by males, 37.64%. Most of the students, around 63.52% in the study have faced bullying whereas only 2.35% of the students have bullied. 'Called by nick names' was found to be the most common type of bullying as shown in table -1.

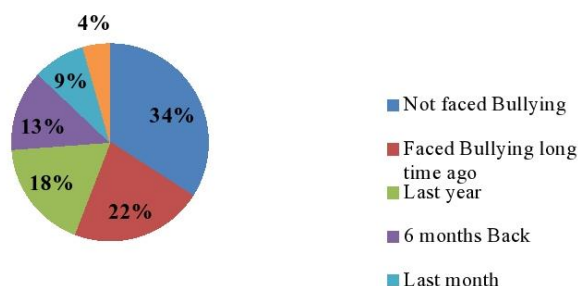
Table 1: Types of Bullying

Type of Bullying	Number of respondents (340)	(%)
Not faced Bullying	116	34.1
Called by Nick names	102	30
Punched or pushed	54	15.8
Expelled by group	32	9.4
Telling nasty stories	18	5.2
Taking away money and belongings	14	4.1
Forced to do something	2	0.5
Caste and appearance	2	0.5

Table 2 : Place of Bullying

Place of Bullying	Number of Respondents (340)	(%)
Not faced Bullying	116	34.1
In the Class room	82	24.1
On the way from or to school	70	20.5
Play ground	40	11.7
During Lunch	32	9.4

Figure - 1: Time Of Bullying



About 24.11% of students were bullied within the premises of the class room. 27.05% of the students in the study who underwent bullying have complained to the teachers as shown in figure-2. Most of the study participants, accounting for 69.41% are aware of the Anti-bullying policy in schools as depicted in figure-3.

Figure - 2 : Percentage of to whom they complained of Bullying

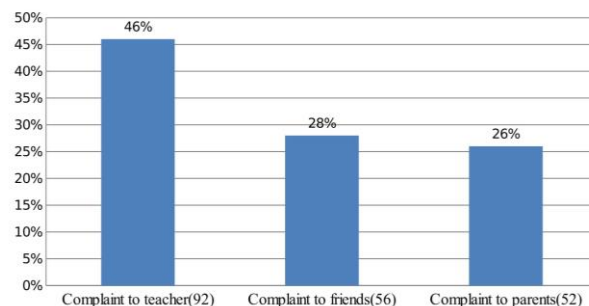
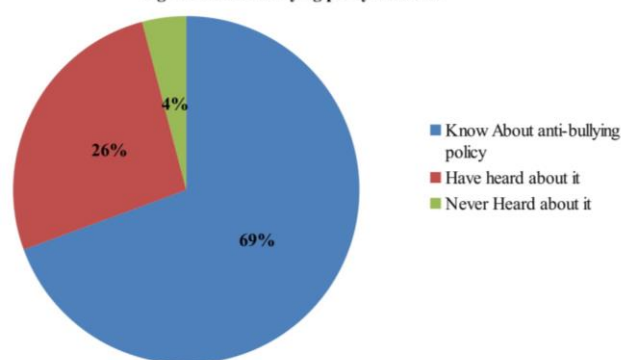


Figure -3: Anti- Bullying policy in school



DISCUSSION

In the present study, the prevalence of bullying was found to be 63.52% which is found to be high as compared to the prevalence of 30% in a study done by Srisiva R et al.⁷ whereas a study done by Mishra D K et al.⁸ among school students in Nepal had a similar finding of high prevalence of bullying of 69.14%. In our study calling of nick names was found to be the most common type of bullying accounting for 30%. A similar finding was found in a study done by Srisiva R et al.⁷ where verbal abuse such as teasing by nick names and intimidating accounted for 37%. In this study majority of victims faced bullying within the class room followed by on the way from or to school. A similar finding was seen in a study done by Shaiju B et al. among school students in Kashmir.⁹ Regarding timing of bullying, most of the students in this study (22%) felt they were bullied long time ago, whereas in a study done by Shaiju B et al 42% of the students felt that they were bullied very frequently i.e. one or more times a day followed by 31% one or more times a week.⁹ Regarding Anti-Bullying policy in schools, in the present study 69.4% of the students were aware of it. A similar finding was seen in a study done by Menesini E et al where raising awareness among students enhancing anti-bullying norms and responses in classrooms is crucial in preventing bullying.¹⁰

Conclusion:

In this study, majority of the students have faced bullying. Most of them were called by their Nick names. The most common place of bullying is within the premises of the class room. Hence there is a need to create awareness about bullying among school students and teachers. Stringent laws should be in place and executed in an appropriate manner in all educational institutions to prevent bullying and to make the atmosphere, student friendly.

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