



Dealing with Aggression in Classrooms: Teachers' Beliefs about Bullying, Handling Strategies and Students Behaviours at Public School

¹Saliha Ahmad

²Hina Munir

¹MPhil Scholar, Department of Education, The Women University Multan, Pakistan.

²Assistant Professor, Department of Education, The Women University Multan, Pakistan.

¹Ibrahimomero09.g@gmail.com, ²hina.munir@wum.edu.pk

Article Details:

Received on 11 Feb, 2026

Revision Received on 26 Feb 2026

Accepted on 24 March, 2026

Published on 27 March, 2026

Corresponding Author*:

Hina Munir

Abstract

This study explores teachers' beliefs about bullying, their strategies for managing aggression, and their perception of students' behaviour in public high school classrooms. With increasing concerns about traditional and cyber bullying, the research aims to understand how teachers perceive and respond to various forms of students' aggression. A simple random technique was used. A structured questionnaire was employed as the primary data collecting tool, targeting a sample of 200 teachers across public high schools of Multan Sadder. The questionnaire consists of 30 items. The data reveal that traditional form of bullying such as physical aggression and direct teasing is prevalent and impactful form of bullying. In contrast, cyber bullying still exists in public high school. Overall, the study emphasizes the importance of equipping teachers with effective strategies to identify, prevent and respond to aggression in the classrooms.

Key Words: Teachers' belief, bullying, aggression, perception of students' behavior, public high school.



Introduction

Bullying is most common issue in schools. Bullying unnecessary, bothersome, relies on strength and can be harmful to students. Ways of bullying include name-calling, hitting and threatening with false stories. Many students are affected by bullying which impacts both the person being victimized and the bully (Hemphill et al., 2011; McVie, 2014). In their work, Cornell and Mehta (2011) mention that various students have trouble attending school, encounter academic struggles and frequently miss classes. The main cause affecting the school environment is bullying. Allen (2010) and Gu, Lai and Ye (2011) all discuss this topic. A number of students believe that school is where they have to deal with people being aggressive (Hubbard, & Lauren, 2014). A teacher should ensure and create the best conditions in the classroom for students to take part in co-operative learning.

Furthermore, attentiveness towards the conduct of bullying and its effects on the person who witnesses this act is as observers or spectators. The behaviour of the kid who is tormented and faces bully depends on various factors including the environment provided in school. As per Hoover and Olson (2000) besides everything, harassing and bullying negatively impact the environment of schools and networks. They proposed a few attributes of schools where bullying is prevailing. The students admitted in such schools may feel: a) insecure; b) public violent behaviour; c) distrusted; d) teaming-up. Such factors, when combined, can not only promote bullying but also protects the group that bully others. Often guardians and local area residents intervene and take action against such schools to improve the learning environment.

Although bullying is frequently overlooked as a normal part of childhood and teenage, despite the fact that perpetuating this myth risks grossly underestimating the widespread harm that such behaviour can cause. Students who are bullied on a regular basis are more likely to experience physical and mental health issues, as well as to consider suicide. According to Rigby (2001) bullying has in fact claimed the lives of many people. As discussed earlier, being the target of bullying at school increases the chances of continuing bullying during the school day (Carney & Merrell, 2001). Bullying can harm its victims for years to come.

Therefore, teachers understanding related to bullying issues are very important to avoid and slow down the process of bullying incidents (Grumm & Hein, 2012). According to Strohmeier and Noam (2012) teachers are mostly unaware of bullying incidents and bullying do not happens in front of them. Also in some cases teachers try to ignore the bullying incidents and do not support the victims of the incident that shows immature behaviour of them (Gardner & Waajid, 2013).



Elledge et al. (2013) discussed that if teachers take the classroom bullying for granted then it gives bullies enough strength to harm the victims again which is difficult for teachers to handle.

Literature review

Bullying has been great issue that our schools and society are facing for a long time. Bullying has become widely recognized as a problem in schools (Dake, Price, 2003; Beran & Tutty, 2002; Truman, & Snyder, 2011; Nansel et al., 2001; Bradshaw, Sawyer, & O'Brennan, 2007). Recently the word "Bullying" has created hype through media. Teachers are putting their best to help students to avoid bullying but they are failed to help them. High school students are suffering more from being bullied.

Multiple reasons exist behind multiple genres of bullying. According to students report they were bullied because of certain aspects related "to how they acted, what they said, who their friends were and their size" (Thornberg, 2010, p. 312). Thornberg (2010) revealed that there exist another aspect which plays a main role to increase bullying behaviour and it is called teacher favoritism related too academic and social success. Some of the bullies have aggressive and spontaneous nature, some of them want to dominant others, and some of the bullies arose due to family aggression and neglectful parenting (Liepe-Levinson & Levinson, 2005; Olweus, 1993; Thornberg, 2010).

Overt aggression includes two characteristics verbally and physically aggressive behaviours in which students harm and threatened other students whereas, relational form of aggression is one in which students harm each other's relationship (Nishioka et al., 2011). Other than two forms physical and verbal bullying, aggressive behaviour can be described by electric context that is called cyber bullying (Diamanduros, Downs, & Jenkins, 2008). Cyber bullying is another type of bullying that is more common and increasing day by day and it is difficult to access because it has different meaning to viewers time to time. (Department for Children, School and Families, 2009). Cyber bullying occur through social media and it hurt students not only in schools but also their homes.

Bullying is both encouraged and discouraged by the atmosphere within the school. On the other hand, when students receive respect, are part of an inclusive group and get support for their well-being, instances of bullying tend to fall as well (Thapa et al., 2013). In Wang, Berry and Swearer's view, a better school climate is linked to fewer reports of bullying involvement, as students in more supportive settings are involved in bullying less. Furthermore, strong participation by teachers and continuous following of anti-bullying rules helps to protect students. The results suggest that teaching should focus on personal actions as well as improving the overall



social and emotional environment in the learning community. A school is where students find safety to learn and meet with others where various activities happen in the community (Smith, 2016).

Objectives of study

Bullying is common issue that occurs in almost every school. There were several problems related to bullying. Therefore, main objectives of this study about bullying were listed below.

1. To identify the bullying incidents that happens in school premises.
2. To find out teacher's beliefs about bullying in the school environment.
3. To determine the coping strategies that help in dealing with the aggression and to control the bullying.

Methodology

The research study was descriptive in nature. The study's population include the all public high schools teachers in Multan District. The sample was selected through simple random sampling. Government high schools of Multan Sadder were selected to select the sample. Total 20 public high schools were selected to collect data for this study. In these 20 public high schools 15 schools were public boys' high school and 5 were girl's public high school. 10 teachers were selected from each school to collect data for this study. In the present study simple random sampling technique was used. So questionnaire was used as a tool Questionnaire was selected after reviewing the literature related to my study. The questionnaire was adapted from (Ken Rigby & Kathleen Hoppa (2008), Roland and idsøe 2003) and Fandrem, et al. 2009) Questionnaire contains total 30 items. 12 items were about teacher perception about bulling in schools and 18 items were about handling strategies for bullying .Likert five-point scale was used for scoring through a scale divided into five 5 levels. Data was collected using a survey. Questionnaire were distributed to collect the data .SPSS (Version 21) was used to examine the data once it was entered into a spreadsheet. Descriptive statistics like percentage and frequencies were used to analyze the data.

Results

Inferential statistics is used to compare the variations in replies provided by to investigate how classroom management techniques affect students learning and performance, and impacts



influencing their grasp of self-control, whereas descriptive statistics is used to summarize respondents' responses to statements. Descriptive and inferential statistics which included:

- Percentage
- Frequency
- Mean
- Standard deviation
- One-way ANOVA
- T-test

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

Table 4.1. Identify the Bullying Incidents that Happen in School

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
A student is making fun of and teasing another student who is obviously weaker.	200	1.23	0.419
Student telling lie or making fun of others using the internet or cell phone.	200	3.23	1.358
A student or group of student is trying to pick a fight with a weaker student.	200	1.55	0.762
A student or group of student is pushing and shoving a weaker student.	200	1.61	0.868
Student trying to bully other students to adjust in a new environment.	200	2.61	1.424
Students comment on other students.	200	2.03	0.995
Students bully other students by sending notes, threatening letters and e-mails	200	1.56	1.404
Students teasing and saying mean things to other students.	200	3.15	1.376
Student telling lie or making fun of others using the internet or cell phone.	200	3.16	1.491
Students destroy other student's belongings.	200	3.00	1.480
Sometimes students annoy fellow students to distract them from their work.	200	1.92	1.016
Students spreading rumour or lies about students they are mad at or do not like.	200	2.58	1.412



This table (4.1) results express that identify the bullying incidents that happen in school. The table presents descriptive statistics for various forms of bullying behaviours observed in a school setting, based on a Likert scale where lower mean values (closer to 1) indicate stronger agreement (i.e., higher frequency or recognition of the behaviour), and higher mean values (closer to 5) indicate stronger disagreement (i.e., lower recognition or perceived occurrence).

From the data, the most recognized or frequently observed form of bullying is making fun of and teasing a weaker student, with a very low mean of 1.23 and a small standard deviation (0.419), suggesting strong consensus among respondents. Similarly, physical aggression like trying to pick a fight (mean = 1.55) and pushing or shoving (mean = 1.61) are also recognized as common bullying behaviours.

On the other hand, cyber bullying, such as lying or making fun of others using the internet or cell phone, has a significantly higher mean (3.23), indicating that it is less frequently acknowledged or observed by respondents. Likewise, destruction of property (mean = 3.00) and teasing with mean intentions (mean = 3.15) are perceived to be less frequent. These higher means could reflect either underreporting or less visibility of such incidents.

Moderate mean values are observed for behaviours like students trying to bully others to adjust to a new environment (mean = 2.61) and spreading rumours (mean = 2.58), indicating that these behaviours are somewhat prevalent but not universally acknowledged. Overall, the research conclude that direct and visible forms of bullying, especially physical and verbal abuse against weaker students, are more readily identified by respondents, whereas indirect or covert forms like cyber bullying, rumour spreading, and property damage are less consistently recognized, possibly due to their lack of awareness among observers. This indicates a need for greater attention and training on identifying less visible forms of bullying, particularly digital and emotional harassment.

Table 4.2 Strategies for Handling Bullying

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I would insist that the bully "cut it out."	200	1.94	1.073
I would treat the matter lightly.	199	2.06	1.043
I would make sure the bully was suitably punished	200	1.56	0.655



I would discuss the matter with my colleagues at school.	200	1.66	0.638
I would held a meeting of bullies, to suggest ways that could improve the situation.	200	2.03	1.041
I would tell the victim to face the bully.	200	2.52	1.326
I make it clear to the bully that his or her behaviour would not be tolerated.	200	1.82	0.849
I would leave it for someone else to sort out.	200	3.81	1.123
I would let the students sort it out themselves.	199	3.80	1.345
I would discuss with the bully options from which he or she could make a choice in order to improve the situation.	200	3.34	1.405
I would ask the school counsellor to intervene.	200	2.32	1.536
I would refer the matter to an administrator (e.g., principal, vice principal, dean).	198	2.01	1.088
I would contact the victim's parents or guardians to express my concern about their child's well-being.	200	1.71	0.847
I would ignore it.	200	3.11	1.599
I would help the bully achieve greater self-esteem so that he or she would no longer want to bully anyone.	200	2.28	1.102
I would insist to the parents(s) or guardian(s) of the bully that the behaviour must stop.	200	1.87	0.852
I would find the bully something more interesting to do.	200	1.67	0.833
I would advise the victim to tell the bully to "back off."	200	2.11	1.209

This table (4.2) results express the strategies for handling bullying. The table presents data on teachers' responses to bullying incidents, based on a Likert scale where a lower mean indicates stronger agreement (1 = Strongly Agree, 5 = Strongly Disagree). The interpretation shows that most teachers adopt these strategies when addressing bullying. The most strongly agreed-upon response was ensuring the bully is suitably punished (mean = 1.56), followed closely by discussing the matter with colleagues (mean = 1.66), and making it clear that the bully's behaviour would not be tolerated (mean = 1.82). Teachers also showed strong support for involving parents, both of the bully and the victim, and contacting school administrators, that reflects a preference for collaborative and authoritative interventions



Conversely, the least favored responses included leaving the issue for someone else to handle (mean = 3.81), letting students sort it out themselves (mean = 3.80), and ignoring the issue altogether (mean = 3.11). These higher mean values indicate strong disagreement with passive or neglectful approaches, emphasizing that teachers generally do not support non-interventionist strategies. Moderate agreement was shown for strategies such as referring the case to a school counsellor (mean = 2.32), helping the bully improve their self-esteem (mean = 2.28), or advising the victim to confront the bully (mean = 2.11). This conclude that while teachers are open to supportive and psychological strategies, they prioritize immediate actions action. In summary, the data reveals that teachers recognize bullying as a serious issue and are more inclined toward firm, direct interventions, disciplinary measures, and communication with relevant stakeholders, rather than passive or dismissive responses.

4.3 Inferential Statistics

4.3.1 T-test Analysis

Table 4.3 T-test about based on Gender of Teachers

Factors	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	Sig2-tailed
IBI*	Male	156	28.179	5.922	0.474	-	0.128
	Female	44	29.773	6.758	1.019	1.527	0.161
						-1.418	
SHB**	Male	156	41.160	6.610	0.529	-	0.006
	Female	44	44.318	6.788	1.023	2.782	0.008
						-2.741	

* Identify the Bulling Incidents

** Strategies for Handling Bulling

The table (4.3) showed the results of T-test based on gender of teachers that identifies the bullying incidents and strategies for handling bullying in school. The impact of identify the bullying incident variable regarding the respective gender group, on the average mean score of females (29.77) was more than the average mean scores of males (28.18). Moreover, the values ($t = -1.527$, $P = 0.128$) showed statistically insignificant difference had found between these gender groups variables at the (0.05) significant level. This conclude that gender doesn't have a significant impact on identify the bullying incidents variables. Consequently, the strategies for handling bullying regarding the respective gender group, on the average mean score of females (44.16) was more than the



average mean scores of males (41.16). Moreover, the values ($t = -2.78$, $P = 0.006$) showed statistically significant difference had found between these gender groups variables at the (0.05) significant level. This conclude that gender have a statistically significant impact on strategies for handling bullying variable.

Conclusion

Overall, the research conclude that direct and visible forms of bullying, especially physical and verbal abuse against weaker students, are more readily identified by respondents, whereas indirect or covert forms like cyber bullying, rumour spreading, and property damage are less consistently recognized, possibly due to their lack of awareness among observers. This indicates a need for greater attention and training on identifying less visible forms of bullying, particularly digital and emotional harassment. The results express the strategies for handling bullying. The table presents data on teachers' responses to bullying incidents, based on a Likert scale where a lower mean indicates stronger agreement (1 = Strongly Agree, 5 = Strongly Disagree). The interpretation shows that most teachers adopt these strategies when addressing bullying. The most strongly agreed-upon response was ensuring the bully is suitably punished (mean = 1.56), followed closely by discussing the matter with colleagues (mean = 1.66), and making it clear that the bully's behaviour would not be tolerated (mean = 1.82). Teachers also showed strong support for involving parents, both of the bully and the victim, and contacting school administrators, that reflects a preference for collaborative and authoritative interventions

Discussions

Bulling incidents are common in public high school. They spoil other students confident and progress. Teachers face different types of bullying incidents in schools and they try to minimize bullying by helping students to change their behaviour and avoid bullying activities. According to this research students still face bullying behaviour in schools like pushing, shoving and teasing other students. The results of the study Free Yourself from an Abusive Relationship conducted by Nansel et al. (2001) also supports the research findings of the researcher that verbal and physical abuse is like a thief in the darkness that devastates, intimidates and plunders the victim. It results in the destruction of emotion and physical ailment. Its consequences are very severe, as it destroys shape of the victim and leaves lasting effects. Verbal bullying is slow poison; it destroys love and trust.



Suggestions

Behaviours like sending threats, rumour-spreading, and destroying property are rated highly, indicating that students frequently experience indirect and psychological harm. Schools should offer confidential reporting systems and reinforce emotional intelligence through social-emotional learning (SEL). The relatively high means for physical bullying suggest it may be easier to spot and control. However, teachers need to expand their classroom management practices to detect subtle bullying forms—like teasing, exclusion, or digital harassment—especially since teachers' qualifications might not yet include specialized training in these areas

References

- Hemphill, S. A., Kotevski, A., Tollit, M., Smith, R., Herrenkohl, T. I., Toumbourou, J. W., & Catalano, R. F. (2011). Longitudinal predictors of cyber and traditional bullying perpetration in Australian secondary school students. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 51(1), 59–65. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2011.01.011>
- Cornell, D., & Mehta, S. B. (2011). Counselor confirmation of middle school student self-reports of bullying victimization. *Professional School Counseling*, 14(4), 261–270. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2156759X1101400404>
- Allen, K. P. (2010). Classroom management, bullying, and teacher practices. *The Professional Educator*, 34(1), 1–15. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ988197.pdf>
- Hubbard, L., & Lauren, M. (2014). Student perceptions of safety and bullying at school. *Journal of School Violence*, 13(2), 167–186. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15388220.2013.846860>
- Hoover, J. H., & Olson, G. (2000). *Bullying and peer harassment: A handbook for parents and educators*. Indiana Resource Center for Families with Special Needs.
- Rigby, K. (2001). Health consequences of bullying and its prevention in schools. *International Journal of Psychophysiology*, 40(1), 1–9. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0167-8760\(00\)00155-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0167-8760(00)00155-0)
- Carney, A. G., & Merrell, K. W. (2001). Bullying in schools: Perspectives on understanding and preventing an international problem. *School Psychology International*, 22(3), 364–382. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0143034301223011>
- Grumm, M., & Hein, S. (2012). Correlates of teachers' responses to bullying: A cross-cultural comparison. *International Journal of Developmental Science*, 6(1–2), 3–12. <https://doi.org/10.3233/DEV-2012-12101>
- Gardner, R., & Waajid, B. (2013). The role of empathy in preparing teachers to work with children from diverse backgrounds. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 64(4), 394–408. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487113487753>



- Strohmeier, D., & Noam, G. G. (2012). Bullying in schools: What is the problem, and how can educators solve it? *New Directions for Youth Development*, 2012(133), 7–13. <https://doi.org/10.1002/yd.20004>
- Dake, J. A., Price, J. H., & Telljohann, S. K. (2003). The nature and extent of bullying at school. *Journal of School Health*, 73(5), 173–180. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1746-1561.2003.tb03599.x>
- Bradshaw, C. P., Sawyer, A. L., & O'Brennan, L. M. (2007). Bullying and peer victimization at school: Perceptual differences between students and school staff. *School Psychology Review*, 36(3), 361–382. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02796015.2007.12087934>
- Liepe-Levinson, K., & Levinson, D. J. (2005). A general semantics approach to preventing bullying in schools. *ETC: A Review of General Semantics*, 62(1), 28–44.
- Wang, C., Berry, B., & Swearer, S. M. (2013). *The critical role of school climate in effective bullying prevention.* Theory Into Practice, 52(4), 296–302. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00405841.2013.829735>