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Youth in Danger and Students at Risk of Dropping Out

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Preface

Bullying is any unwanted aggressive behavior(s) by another youth or group of youth that involves an observed or perceived power imbalance and is repeated multiple times or is highly likely to be repeated.

Bullying may inflict harm or distress on the targeted youth including physical, psychological, social, or educational harm. Bullying can lead to fear of school, absenteeism, and stunted academic progress, which in turn are precursors to dropping out of school.

- Effects of Bullying on Students Long lasting effects
- School Dropout.
- Lack of Concentration
- Reduced Motivation
- Less Class Participation
- Less Attendance Lower Academic Achievement

Maslow's hierarchy of needs

Student Dropouts

An estimated 160,000 U.S. children miss school every day due to fear of attack or intimidation by other students. Bullying affects student engagement, behavior, and academic outcomes. Student dropout has been linked to bullying and the disengagement

of students from school. Dropout rate was **29% above average** in schools with high levels of teasing and bullying. The dropout rate was **28% below average** in school with low levels of teasing and bullying.

- Unemployed
- In poor health
- Live in poverty. be on public assistance.
- Become single parents of children who also drop out of school.
- Be incarcerated.

How valuable is a high school diploma?

The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that dropouts bring in just $20,241 annually, which is $10,000 less than high school graduates and over $36,000 less than a person holding a bachelor's degree.

The poverty rate for dropouts is over twice as high as college grads, and the unemployment rate for dropouts is generally 4 percentage points higher than the national average.

In the end, the lifetime earnings of high school dropouts are $260,000 LESS than peers who earn a diploma.

THE LANDSCAPE OF BULLYING

Composition of peer groups, shifting demographics, changing societal norms, and modern technology are contextual factors that must be considered to understand and effectively react to bullying in the United States. Youth are embedded in multiple contexts, and each of these contexts interacts with individual characteristics of youth in ways that either exacerbate or attenuate the association between these individual characteristics and bullying perpetration or victimization.

Research indicates that attitudes and intentions that define roles in bullying situations vary depending on individual variables such as age, gender, personality, and social status, as well as contexts such as classroom norms favoring the bully or victim.

Bullying is conceptualized as a group phenomenon, with multiple peers taking on roles other than perpetrator and target. Peers are a critical social context that affect many aspects of bullying in large part because peers influence group norms, attitudes, and behavior.

Research on bullying is largely descriptive, which generally fails to fully address contextual factors that render individual characteristics more or less likely to be related to bullying experiences.

Contextual factors at the community level, such as community norms, neighborhood context, and acculturation context, serve as important moderators of bullying outcomes.

NATIONAL LAWS & POLICIES • STATE & LOCAL LAWS • SCHOOLS • COMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY • HEALTH SERVICES • RESEARCHERS • CHILDREN • PEERS • EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES • COMMUNITY • FAMILY • TRADITIONAL & SOCIAL MEDIA • SOCIETY/CULTURAL NORMS & BELIEFS
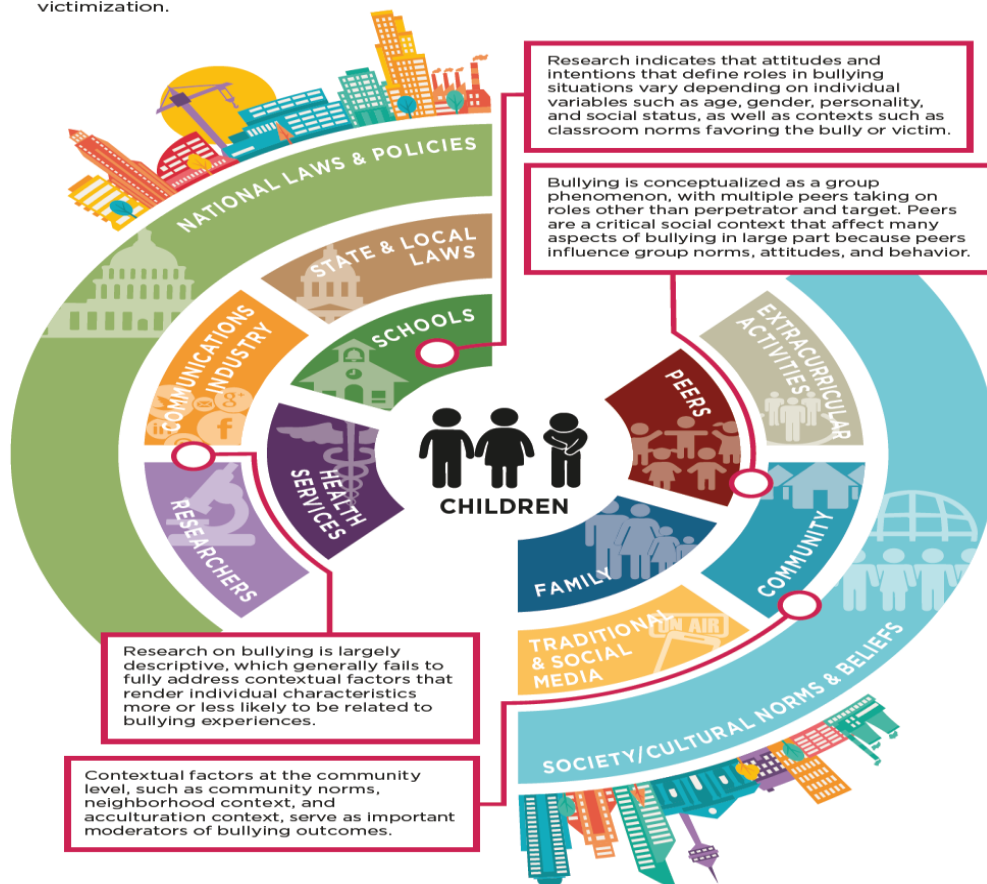
FIGURE 3-5 The landscape of bullying.

Youth are embedded in multiple contexts, and each of these contexts interacts with individual characteristics of youth.

The increase in dropout rates in higher education is a phenomenon that has generated a lot of interest because of the need to deal with its economic, personal, and social consequences, and because of its prevalence, estimated around 30% in America. There is a similar interest in violent behavior in university classrooms, which has also been seen to have increased in recent years. Given that, and the fact that Book has shown personal variables to be more influential in dropout from higher education, the aim of this study is to explore whether those students who are the victims of bullying (both traditional and cyberbullying) are closer to dropping out from their degree courses.

The results showed that students who were victims of bullying were more likely to consider dropping out than students who were not victims of bullying. In addition, variables related to social integration (support from friends and teachers) exhibited a moderating effect. These findings raise the urgent need to include intervention strategies in relation to bullying in university plans to prevent dropout.

Higher education as we know it has now and forever dramatically changed. Leaders must take a fresh look at how their institutions design, implement, and measure practices in strategic enrollment management and expand the model, as never before.

Higher Education on the Brink: Reimagining Strategic Enrollment Management in Colleges and Universities combines strategies for enrollment enhancement with significant support for development of alternative revenue streams for overall sustainability and growth. It introduces a new model for launching highly engaged strategic planning processes for colleges and universities.

With current, real-world examples, the book details how colleges can be guided by integrated strategic planning processes to recalibrate efforts that yield key results. The major difference in this work is an exacting focus on organizational culture and each facet that defines it. As colleges and universities place new focus on strategically re-imagining higher education and their role in it, Higher Education on the Brink will serve as a guide for determining what difficult questions need to be asked and how to answer those questions in a manner that will position the college for the future with support from the college community, generating increased opportunities for student and operational success.

Table of Content

Chapter 1

Effects of Bullying

Bullying can affect everyone those who are bullied, those who bully, and those who witness bullying. Bullying is linked to many negative outcomes including impacts on mental health, substance use, and suicide. It is important to talk to kids to determine whether bullying or something else is a concern.

Kids Who are Bullied

Kids who are bullied can experience negative physical, social, emotional, academic, and mental health issues. Kids who are bullied are more likely to experience:

- Depression and anxiety, increased feelings of sadness and loneliness, changes in sleep and eating patterns, and loss of interest in activities they used to enjoy. These issues may persist into adulthood.
- Health complaints
- Decreased academic achievement GPA and standardized test scores and school participation. They are more likely to miss, skip, or drop out of school.

A very small number of bullied children might retaliate through extremely violent measures. In 12 of 15 school shooting cases in the 1990s, the shooters had a history of being bullied.

Kids Who Bully Others

Kids who bully others can also engage in violent and other risky behaviors into adulthood. Kids who bully are more likely to:

- Abuse alcohol and other drugs in adolescence and as adults
- Get into fights, vandalize property, and drop out of school.
- Engage in early sexual activity.
- Have criminal convictions and traffic citations as adults.
- Be abusive toward their romantic partners, spouses, or children as adults.

Bystanders

Kids who witness bullying are more likely to:

- Have increased use of tobacco, alcohol, or other drugs.
- Have increased mental health problems, including depression and anxiety.
- Miss or skip school.

The Relationship between Bullying and Suicide

Media reports often link bullying with suicide. However, most youth who are bullied do not have thoughts of suicide or engage in suicidal behaviors.

Although kids who are bullied are at risk of suicide, bullying alone is not the cause. Many issues contribute to suicide risk, including depression, problems at home, and trauma history. Additionally, specific groups have an increased risk of suicide, including American Indian and Alaskan Native, Asian American, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youth. This risk can be increased further when these kids are not supported by parents, peers, and schools. Bullying can make an unsupportive situation worse.

Why Some Youth Bully

Children and teenagers who feel secure and supported by their family, school, and peers are less likely to bully. However, some youths do not have these types of support. Every individual is unique and there are many factors that can contribute to bullying behavior. A youth who bullies may experience one, several, or none of these contributing factors.

Peer factors

Some youth bully:

- To attain or maintain social power or to elevate their status in their peer group.
- To show their allegiance to and fit in with their peer group.
- To exclude others from their peer group, to show who is and is not part of the group.
- To control the behavior of their peers.

Family factors

Some youth who bully:

- come from families where there is bullying, aggression, or violence at home.
- may have parents and caregivers that do not provide emotional support or communication.
- may have parents or caregivers who respond in an authoritarian or reactive way.
- may come from families where the adults are overly lenient or where there is low parental involvement in their lives.

Emotional factors

Some youth who bully:

- may have been bullied in the past or currently.
- have feelings of insecurity and low self-esteem, so they bully to make themselves feel more powerful.
- do not understand other's emotions.
- don't know how to control their emotions, so they take out their feelings on other people.
- may not have skills for handling social situations in healthy, positive ways.

School factors

Some youth who bully:

- may be in schools where conduct problems and bullying are not properly addressed.
- may experience being excluded, not accepted, or stigmatized at school.

Every youth involved in bullying as a target, a bystander, or as one who does the bullying can benefit from adult, school, and community support. Youth who bully may also need support to help them address their behavior. Parents, school counselors, teachers, and mental health professionals can work with youth who bully to help them develop healthy school and peer connections and to learn new social and emotional skills. If you have bullied your peers, reach out to a trusted adult for help. Bullying is a behavior that can be changed.

More Students Drop Out Bullying Climates

"This study suggests that teasing and bullying at the high school level is a noteworthy problem that is associated with the most serious negative outcome failure to graduate," says Dewey Cornell, a professor at the University of Virginia's Curry School of Education.

For the Virginia High School Safety Study, Cornell and colleagues assessed the prevalence of teasing and bullying in high schools by surveying 7,082 ninth-grade students and 2,764 teachers in Virginia on their perceptions of school climate. The researchers measured the dropout rates of students who were high school freshmen in 2021over their four years of high school.

Previous bullying studies have focused on the effects of bullying on individual victims, but the new study shows a school-wide impact. "It adds new evidence to the importance of school climate for academic success in high school," Cornell says.

The survey found that the dropout rate was 29 percent above average in schools with high levels of teasing and bullying, but 28 percent below average in schools with comparatively low levels of teasing and bullying.

"The study demonstrated that the link between bullying and dropout rates was not due to differences in student demographics, such as the number of students from low-income families," Cornell says. "The study found that high levels of bullying in the school increased dropout counts from 18.6 students to 25.3 students in schools with high levels of low-income students and increased the dropout counts from 13.7 students to 18.6 students in schools with few low-income students."

TEEN MENTAL HEALTH

20% of adolescents live with a **MENTAL HEALTH CONDITION.**

50% of all **MENTAL ILLNESS** begins by **age 14** and **75%** begins by **age 24.**

The average delay between the onset of **SYMPTOMS** and intervention is between **8 and 10 years.**

Almost half of all students with a mental illness **DROP out of high school.**

70% OF TEENS who commit **CRIMES** have a **mental illness.**

90% OF TEENS who **KILL THEMSELVES** have an underlying **mental illness.**

Other analyses show that the effects of teasing and bullying are not due to the academic performance of the students.

"We found that student demographics and academic performance are indeed predictive of dropout rates, as is commonly known," Cornell says. "But we showed that bullying was predictive of dropout rates, independent of those other factors. Moreover, the effects associated with school climate were just as large as those associated with student demographics and academic performance."

While academic performance is clearly important, schools trying to reduce their dropout rates should pay more attention to the school climate and strive to create safer social environments for students, Cornell says. "This study adds to growing evidence of the effects of school climate on student learning."

The Virginia High School Safety Study has led to a new statewide effort to assess school climate systematically in all secondary schools, from seventh to 12th grades.

"Starting next spring," Cornell says, "we plan to provide schools with regular, standardized reports of school climate conditions to help them in making data-based decisions about the needs of their students.

Chapter 2

How Cyberbullying Affects Your Teen's Academic Performance

Three ways to help your teen cope with online hate to improve their grades.

- This chapter uncovered that most students who were bullied online were not equipped to cope with the negative effects emotionally.

- PEW Research reported that most teens have experienced some form of cyberbullying as well as been a target of online hate.

- Students who have experienced digital harassment are less active in class and more likely to fall back a grade.
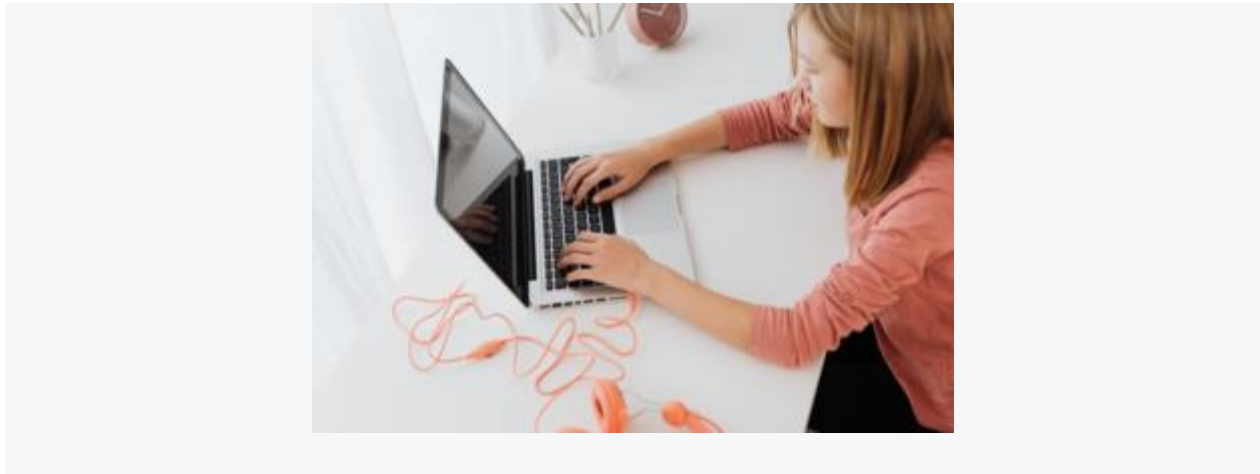
Although the pandemic might be mostly behind us, there are some lingering issues that have left parents with more concerns. Remote learning did not benefit every student, and we witnessed a surge in the need for adolescent mental health services.

Online learning was necessary and still holds value for many students. With the increased screen time, we also need to equip our students with both emotional and media literacy skills to handle cyberbullying.

Prevalence of Online Harassment of Teens

In 2018, PEW Research shared that the majority of teens have been the target of online harassment and believe it is a big problem. According to the Cyberbullying Research Center, student victimization has been increasing steadily over the past 5 years.

Another study said that students were negatively affected both emotionally and academically by cyberbullying to the extent that some thought of suicide. About 41 percent of the victims confirmed that they became less active in class, 24 percent confirmed that their school performance had dropped, and 35 percent had repeated a grade since becoming targets of online bullying.

Since 2020, some parents have witnessed their smart teenager going from being a straight-A student to barely passing. Cyberbullying causes psychological harm just like bullying if not worse in some situations since it is online, and your teen can revisit the ugliness constantly.

This emotional distress can cause depression, anger, anxiety, low self-worth, and school avoidance, and all this can lead to poor academic performance.

Three Ways to Help Your Teen Cope with Cyberbullying

Giving your teens the digital tools offline can help them cope with online bullying to improve their grades.

1. Acknowledge online hate and be prepared. Sadly, cyberbullying happens to people of all ages. It is likely your teens have already read a lot of disturbing and disheartening content on social media; however, when or if they become the target of a smear campaign is when they realize the emotional toll it takes on a person.

By having a better understanding of cyberbullying (online shaming) and how prevalent it is, your teen will be more resilient if they are attacked online. It doesn't mean it will hurt less, but they will be prepared knowing bad things do happen to good people.

2. Become knowledgeable about online tools. Teens today are on many social platforms. It is crucial that your teen knows how to report online abuse and harassment as well as how to block users on each platform they use. It is just as important that they read the "terms of service" as they pertain to harassment and abuse, so they understand what constitutes abuse on each platform.

3. Talk, talk, and talk more to help develop trust. Did you know that spending 15 minutes a day listening to and talking with your teen can help build the foundation for a strong relationship and provide support so that he/she can come to you with a problem?

Most parents have a difficult time getting their teenager to communicate however, short chats can lead to better relationships and your teen will feel more comfortable talking to you about embarrassing problems such as being humiliated online. One of the more troubling trends is sextortion, which can begin with sexting. If this happens with your teens, you want them to be able to come to you without hesitation.

With or without the pandemic, technology is only evolving and education will always be key to your child's future. Securing their mental health and well-being is a priority and if they are struggling with online abuse, it must be addressed immediately. With digital harm, it can be easy for your teenager to focus on the negative and become overwhelmed with sadness and hopelessness, leaving them abandoning not only their studies but also things they used to enjoy.

Using these three ways will help your teenager be prepared if they face a time of despair online. Never doubt the impact you have on your child's life you are their greatest influence.

Chapter 3

## Reducing bullying and preventing dropout through student engagement

Bullying and student dropout are prominent social issues in the United States, where the disengagement of students from school has been linked to both. Examining bullying prevention through the lens of student engagement can be validated as a prevention focused strategy that creates an anti-bullying culture and a school climate that protects students from bullying and dropout. The findings from this study indicate three prevalent themes that provide a framework for promising practices that contribute towards an anti-bullying culture in schools: positive school climate, school organization and infrastructure, and student interactions. This study aims to bridge a gap in research on bullying, dropout prevention, and student engagement; and to contribute towards the development of promising practices that have an overall effect on the climate of a school in preventing bullying and student dropout by increasing student engagement. This chapter provides an application of the findings in this study to the school-Based Family Counseling (SBFC) model and framework. In addition, implications are provided for SBFC professionals.

Bullying and student dropout

Bullying and student dropout have both emerged as prominent social issues affecting the nation and have been of particular interest in the media and in the political, economic, and educational arenas because of their high cost to society. Despite media attention to the dropout crisis and new priorities given to education reform, approximately one-third of all public high school students and one-half of all minority students fail to graduate with their class every year; the United States ranks 18th in high school graduation rates. Dropouts are more likely than high school graduates to be unemployed and in poor health, to live in poverty, be on public assistance, and become single parents of children who also drop out of school. Dropouts are more than eight times more likely to be in jail or in prison than are high school graduates, four times less likely to volunteer in their communities, half as likely to vote, and represent only three percent of actively engaged citizens in the United States. While these statistics describe the negative consequences of students that drop out of school, it also includes students involved in bullying, either as victims or perpetrators, who are likely to drop out as bullying has been found to be a contributor to student dropout. Victims of bullying are associated with an increased risk of dropping out of school, and the link between bullying and dropping out requires serious attention. Bullying has intensified in the past 12 years, and a national study among 16,000 American school children found that nearly 30% of students reported moderate or frequent involvement in bullying. Eleven years later, a national study was conducted and found that 28% of students reported being bullied at school. Bullying behavior has been studied for over 30 years, and significant numbers of students continue to report being involved in bullying. Despite the passage of time, both bullying and student dropout continue to be prevalent problems. Bullying has also been linked to school violence. It has gained increased awareness due to media attention on homicide and suicide cases, where bullying has been found to be a precipitating factor.

Percentage of students ages 12–18 who reported being bullied at school during the school year, by gender: Selected years, 2005 through 2013
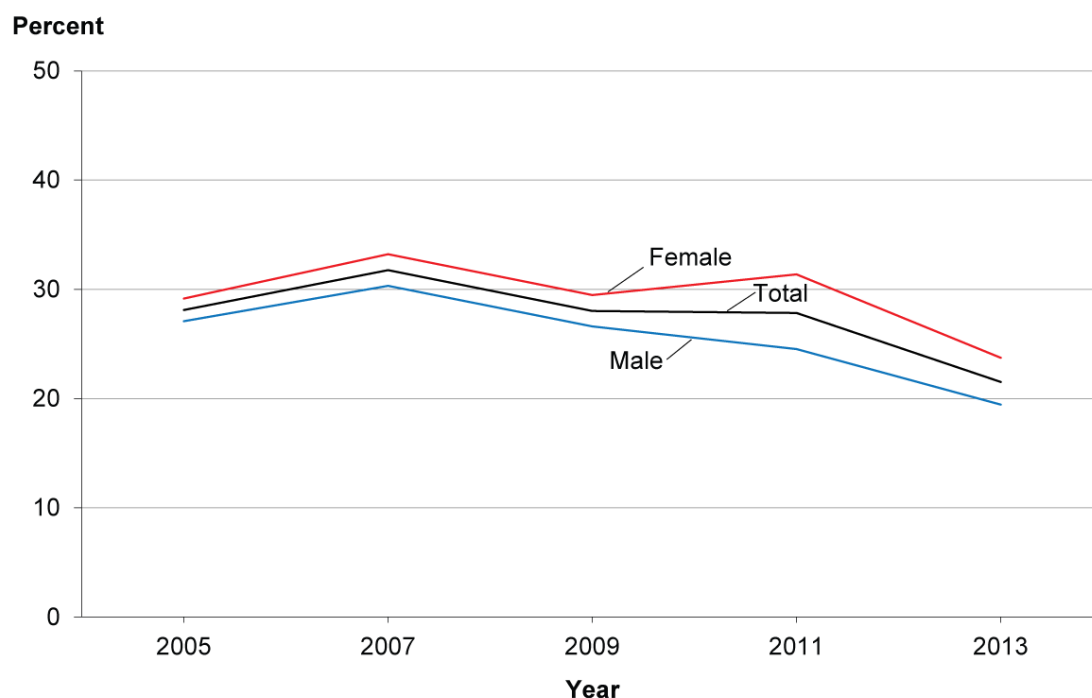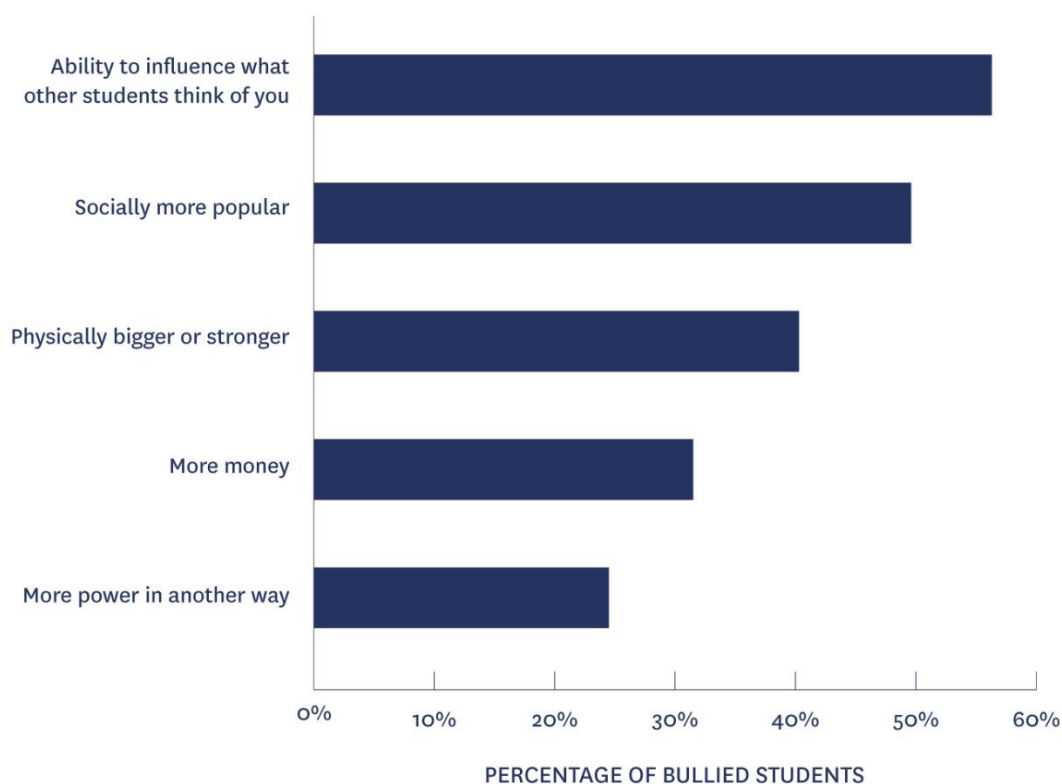

While the Columbine High School shootings in 1999 were the first of many high-profile incidents of school violence that implicated bullying as a possible cause, since then a number of highly visible suicides among school age children and adolescents have been linked to chronic bullying and brought further national attention to the issue.

In a report of school shootings, two-thirds of attackers felt "persecuted, bullied, threatened, attacked, or injured by others" prior to the incident. Victims of bullying are at higher risk of engaging in violent behaviors because of their victimization. Chronic victims of bullying often admit to both bullying and being bullied. Victims of bullying can also become perpetrators, perpetuating the cycle of aggression and violence against others. Students who are bullied also exhibit signs of disengagement, which increases their risk of victimization and dropping out of school.

Perceptions of Power Imbalances for Students Who Are Bullied

Students 12 to 18 who reported being bullied in 2017 identified the following power imbalance in favor of the student who bullied them.

Ability to influence what other students think of you	
Socially more popular	
Physically bigger or stronger	
More money	
More power in another way	

0%   10%   20%   30%   40%   50%   60%

PERCENTAGE OF BULLIED STUDENTS

Source: "Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2018," Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics. https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/iscs18.pdf

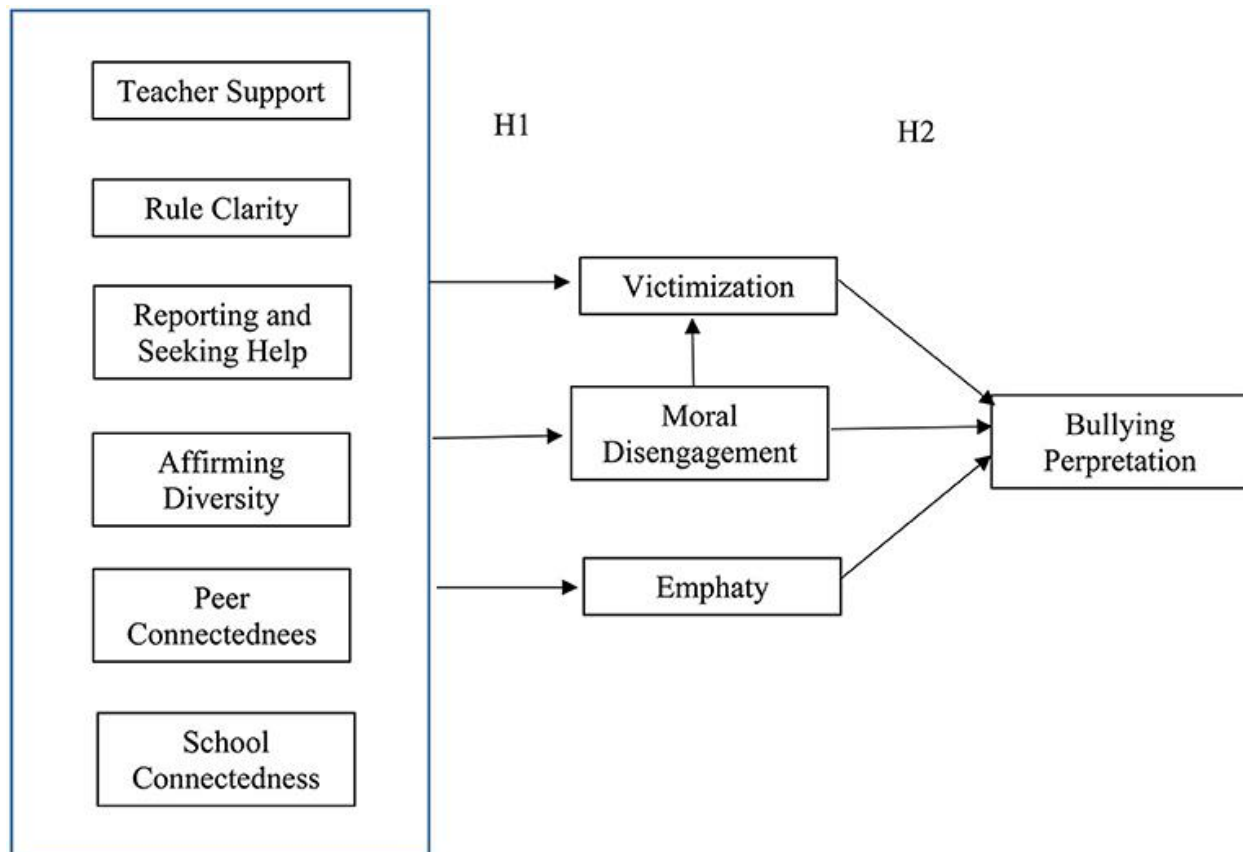*Created by the USC Rossier School of Education*

Bullying and student engagement

Victims of bullying report experiencing a range of negative and long-term effects. Bullying victimization has been associated with poor psychosocial adjustment, difficulty making and maintaining friendships, poor relationships with peers, and a sense of loneliness. Students who are bullied experience a range of psychological, psychosomatic,

and behavioral symptoms such as increased anxiety levels, insecurity, low self-esteem, and self-worth, eating disorders, and aggressive-impulsive behaviors

Bullying victims have high levels of affective symptoms including stress, anxiety, depression, illness, and suicidal tendencies. Both bully victims and perpetrators are at greater risk of developing depression, suicidal ideation, and suicidal attempts.

All three groups, victims, perpetrators, and perpetrator/victims are more likely to be depressed than children who are not involved in bullying. Depression is one of the major risk factors for suicide, the third leading cause of death for young people ages 12 to 18 (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2020). Involvement in bullying can have long-lasting effects on students that contribute to their level of engagement in school. Dropping out consists of a slow process of disengagement from school, and student engagement has been found to be a central component in this process. Student dropout has been linked to bullying and the disengagement of students from school.

Constructs		
Teacher Support	H1	H2
Rule Clarity		
Reporting and Seeking Help	Victimization	
Affirming Diversity	Moral Disengagement	Bullying Perpretation
Peer Connectednees	Emphaty	
School Connectedness		

 The negative effects resulting from a student involved in bullying may look like that of a student at risk of dropping out of school. Both may be disengaging from the school environment for different reasons, but the behavior may look the same. The effects of bullying and the early warning signs of student dropout are similar: academic failure, disciplinary problems, at risk behaviors, social and psychological issues, poor attendance,

and disengagement. Student engagement is perceived to be a potential protective factor for students who may be involved in bullying and at risk of dropping out of school. Examining bullying prevention through the lens of student engagement can be validated as a focused strategy in cultivating an anti-bullying culture, as well as a school climate that protects students from the process of dropout.

Bullying and school leadership

In 2016, 43% of middle school administrators and 21% of elementary administrators reported dealing with daily or weekly incidents of bullying in their schools.

The federal government recognized that there were plenty of bullying and intervention programs, but missing was leadership in raising awareness and describing what to do about bullying. Becoming aware and understanding the phenomenon of bullying is crucial for school leaders and counselors to effectively foster an anti-bullying culture. Failure to do so perpetuates the problem and infringes on a student's basic rights to a free and public education that is safe.

Study purpose

The purpose of this study is to investigate the systems and structures in place in K-12 schools that foster an anti-bullying culture, while utilizing practices that increase student engagement. The disengagement of students from school is common for both students involved in bullying as well as students on the path to dropout, and involvement in bullying places a student at higher risk of dropping out of school due to decreased levels of engagement. Bully victimization begins to manifest itself in the negative behaviors of failing in school, disengagement, and behavior problems; frequently, schools respond with punitive measures such as detention, suspensions, and school transfers.

School responses such as these contribute to the disengagement of students in school. Students who are in the process of dropping out of school may have a history of

involvement in bullying of some form, and they deserve some level of intervention and support. In effect, student engagement can be understood as a protective factor for both students involved in bullying as well as students at risk of dropping out, due to the high potential for overlap in this population.

Chapter 4

How to prevent Bullying

Theoretical framework

An ecological framework to study and understand the Columbine High School shootings and concluded that assessments examining the nature and influences of the various ecological systems, such as family, peer group, school, and community, must be used to understand and help school leaders and counselors prevent school violence. Utilizing this model in understanding bullying is important for the implementation of structures and systems that are created by schools. School leaders and counselors will understand bullying to be much more than one isolated behavioral incident, as well as the larger impact and effect of bullying on their campus. Interventions applied, structures utilized, and systems developed using the ecological framework will affect multiple systems. This study uses the ecological systems theory to provide a framework for understanding the promising practices in preventing bullying.

Study methodology

Bullying affects student engagement, behavior, and academic outcomes. It is also linked to student dropouts. This study aims to examine a school that utilized student engagement as a strategy to foster an anti-bullying culture. School outcomes were taken into consideration and the identified school had demonstrated high achievement and a low dropout rate. The site had a strong reputation for having a recent school transformation with increased educational outcomes, a positive school climate, an anti-bullying culture, positive behavior support for students, a reduction in suspensions, and strong interventions and support programs. The positive school climate and changes were the outcome of a long process of important historical events, which served as an impetus for major change within the school and community.

 In 2010, the school underwent a district reconstitution because of its chronic limited academic progress and overall problems with negative school culture including a history of violence, gang involvement, fear among students and teachers, bullying, dropout, and discord among stakeholders including parents and community members. As a result, new leadership was put in place and all teachers and staff were required to reapply for their positions to remain at the school. Approximately 50% of the school staff and teachers were retained as a part of the reconstitution. This rich historical school/community context and positive school transformation were the basis for the site's selection for this study.

The present study involves a qualitative case study of one high achieving, secondary public school in an urban region of Southern California. Three types of methods for data collection were utilized:

1. semi-structured interviews,

2.observations and

3.document analysis.

 A total of seven semi structured interviews were conducted with administrators, teachers, counselors, and community and parent representatives. An interview protocol was

utilized with a total of 12 questions asked of each interview participant. For the purposes of this study, students were not interviewed. A total of four different classroom, school and community observation days were undertaken. Observations were conducted using an observation protocol. Data was also collected through the examination of school documents to get an overall portrait of the school.

To gain insight into school practices that have been successful in preventing bullying and increasing student engagement, this study sought to obtain responses to the following research questions:

1. What are the perceived systems and structures that contribute to student engagement and an anti-bullying culture in the school?

2. How are these systems and structures implemented and sustained to support student engagement and an anti-bullying culture in the school
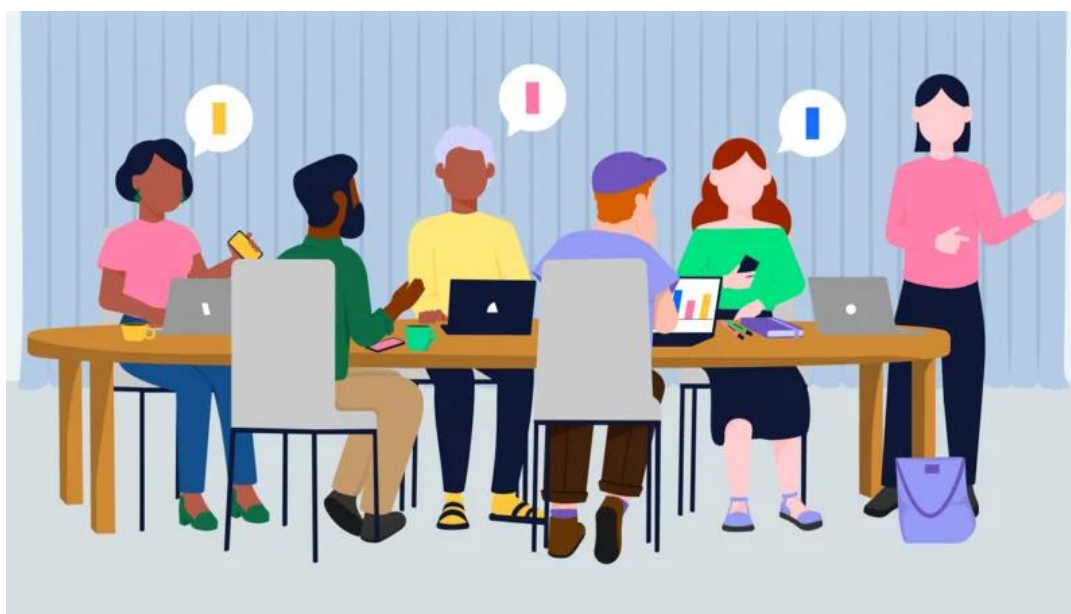
Findings

While many effective strategies have been researched and linked to the prevention of bullying, this study focuses specifically on student engagement as a key contributor to student dropout, and as a promising practice in assisting school leaders to prevent bullying in K-12 schools and fostering an anti-bullying culture. Three prevalent themes emerged from the data and clear, observable, concrete strategies were found to be associated with each theme (see Table 1):

Theme	Supporting strategies		
Positive school climate	Leadership	Whole-school approach involving all stakeholders	
School organization and infrastructure	Student safety and learning	Campus supervision	Student groupings/ cohort model
Student interactions	Cooperative learning mode	Character building and social skills	

**Table 1 Emerging themes and supporting strategies.**

The first theme is positive school climate. There are two main findings related to this theme: leadership which involves collective team building and use of a whole-school approach involving all stakeholders. The leaders built a school team around shared educational values and belief systems - the shared belief that all students can learn if they feel safe and cared about. This shared belief system fostered a sense of cohesion among educators, staff, and the community.

A well - staffed parent center and volunteer program supported teachers and student programs. Stakeholders (students, parents, teachers, staff, and community members) were treated as partners, welcomed, respected, and given the message that they are a necessary component to the school family. Clear visual images and displays around the school further communicated a welcoming message to all stakeholders and set a positive tone with high expectations for all.

Teachers at this school were highly regarded, celebrated, respected, and seen as the major change agents by administration, parents, and the community. The second theme was school organization and infrastructure. There were three findings related to this theme: student safety and learning involving the physical organization and layout of the school, a campus supervision plan, and use of student groupings or a cohort model. A detailed plan for the physical organization and layout of the school was implemented including strategic, but simple, logical solutions to address common problems in the school that affected student safety and learning.

These common problems included traffic in hallways, stairwells, lunch areas, entry and exit areas, and the routine trash and cleanliness problems that made the school feel "chaotic". They created school norms to address these problems and implemented a stairwell system to control flow during transition times, separate entry and exit doors, painted line dividers and 7 walking paths to control lunch lines, and simple lunch tray norms teaching and reinforcing students to keep their food on their trays while they eat to improve cleanliness of the school. The school was physically renovated, and beautification efforts included gathering areas for students, and a large community garden in a historically problematic area of the school.
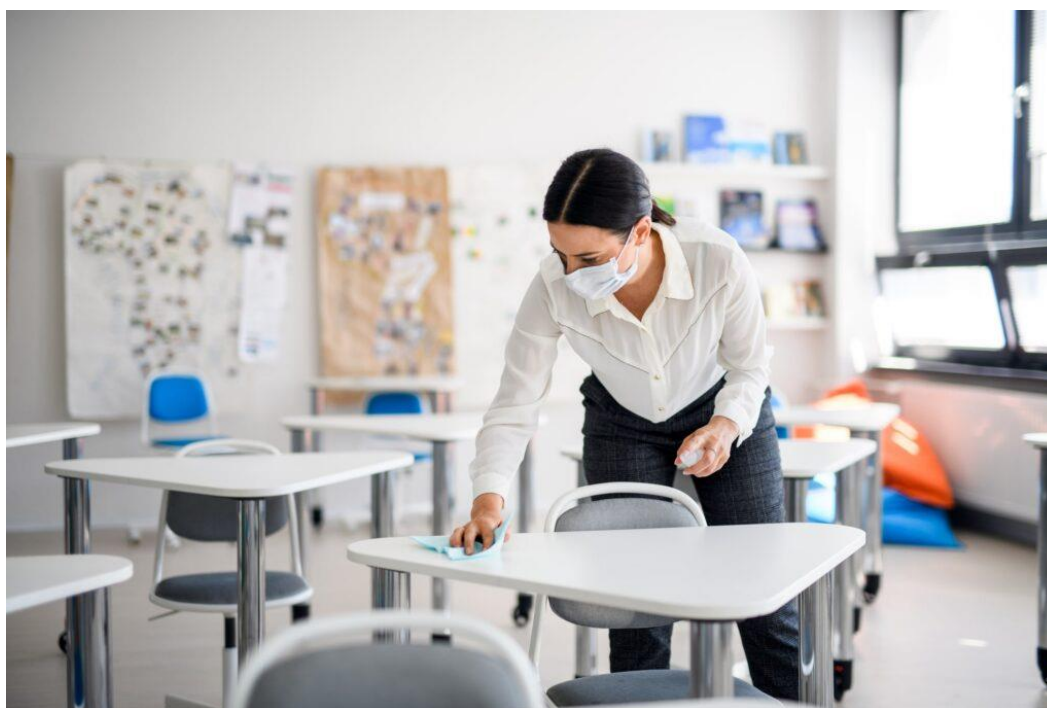
They instituted an organized, structured, goal-directed "active" form of campus supervision that required staff to be visible and regularly provide consistency and opportunities for positive interaction with students. Teachers voluntarily supervised their hallways during transition periods without being asked because they "wanted to do their part" and ensure that the supervision element worked to improve the climate. Lastly, they implemented a system for grouping students utilizing a cohort model. The grouping system kept students and teachers together in contiguous space areas.

This included teacher and counselor teams that followed the same students from year to year. This grouping system of students and teachers created a sense of "smallness" and increased opportunities for the development of relationships with teachers, and

friendships which increased cohesion. It addressed safety in that students travelled together from class to class and did not travel very far as their classes were right next to each other in the same hallway.

They also instituted an advisory period that served as a "school family". This advisory period allowed time for students and teachers to develop relationships together and focus on non-academic content such as life skills, character development and growing together as a class community. Students remained with their advisory teachers and cohort from year to year allowing for strengthened relationships. The grouping system at this school created a sense of safety, community, equity, and access for all students. The last theme was student interactions.

There are two findings related to this theme: use of a cooperative learning model, and teaching character building and social skills. The view taken by the school was that increasing positive interactions and communication among students would increase engagement with the school. They utilized a cooperative learning model in every classroom that allowed for consistent integration of student inquiry, dialogue, and interaction.

Classrooms were set up with desks in pods to allow for cooperative learning. The very act of students talking together, discussing, questioning, working out a problem, was the essence of student interaction. Within this, relationships between students were developed that might normally have never flourished had they not been in an organized structure and made to work together. The development and fostering of character-building and social skills were focused on daily through second step curriculum, advisory periods, and daily intercom announcements from the principal and student leaders.

These emerging themes provide the systems and structures within the school that were implemented and sustained to foster an anti-bullying culture:

1. A positive school climate was fostered through leadership that involved collective teambuilding and the use of a whole-school approach.

2. The school organization and infrastructure were strengthened by a focus on student safety and learning, an effective campus supervision protocol, and a system for the grouping of students/cohort model.

3. Student interactions were increased through the implementation of a school-wide cooperative learning model with a focus on student relationships, character building, and social skills.

Based on these findings, this model demonstrates that not one single solution alone can determine the academic culture of a school. An infrastructure designed around a collective vision by all stakeholders is the foundation. The principal stated, "it's all in the

details" of what is done daily, consistently, in communicating the message that the most important thing is the safety of students and learning, "in that order." A concerted, deliberate focus on relationships, and student engagement, is the vehicle to realizing an anti-bullying culture and protecting against the slow process of student dropout, which begins with students not feeling connected to school.

The findings support the guiding theoretical framework used for this study. Social ecological theory has been widely researched and is the best framework for understanding bullying and school violence.

The negative historical context of the school had permeated all levels of the system. It is unlikely that any approach, other than a system-level one, would have transformed this school environment and community. The three emerging themes and respective findings of positive school climate, school organization and infrastructure, and student interactions, support a social ecological framework. School-based family counselors can apply these findings within their practice to better serve their students and schools.

A prevention focuses and its relationship with the school-Based Family Counseling model.

These study findings have multiple implications for SBFC professionals. The model studied highlights the six areas of strengths of SBFC. In addition, the main findings can be viewed through an SBFC model and framework. These findings coincide within the school and family prevention quadrants of the SBFC model and can provide strategies for the SBFC professional to work within a system that is heavily prevention focused.
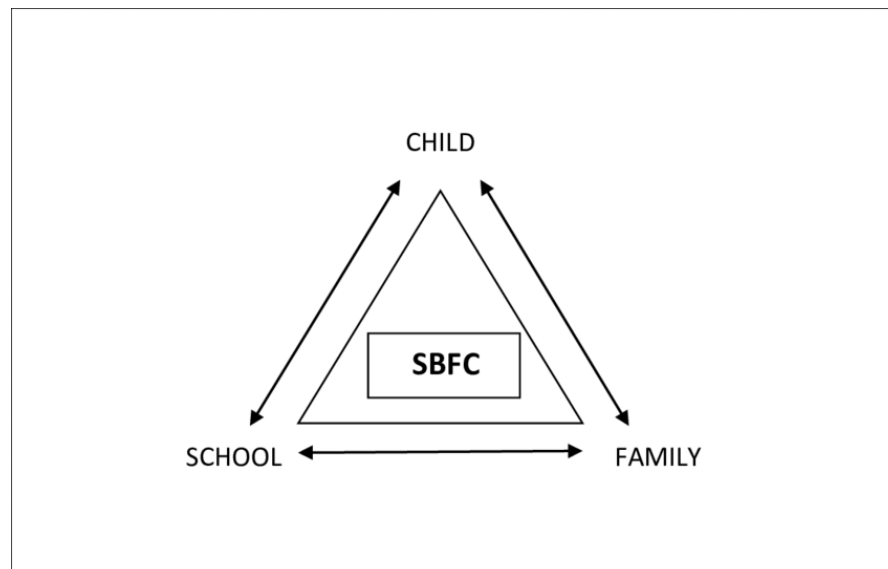
There are six main areas of strengths in the SBFC model. These include maintaining systems focus, being strength-based, having partnerships with parents, being multi-culturally sensitive, being advocates for children and families, and actively promoting the transformation of schools.

The present study highlights the importance of a systems focused transformation of a school by way of utilization of its strongest assets, its stakeholders' students, families, school staff, and community. A concerted focus on relationships between all stakeholders within the school, and a restructuring of the school organization and infrastructure to focus on relationships and partnerships provided a way for a positive transformation for a school with a historically negative and violent history.

Focusing on the strength areas of the SBFC model provides a way for a collaborative and systems-oriented approach to prevention and intervention. The findings of this study can also be aligned with the SBFC model in conceptualizing interventions. The SBFC model illustrates the primary focus of SBFC to be on the school and the family around prevention and intervention.

The model consists of four quadrants: school prevention, school intervention, family prevention, and family intervention. It provides a framework to help SBFC professionals stay focused on working systemically within a school structure which is at the heart of the SBFC approach; an integration of the use of interventions that connect students, families, and school together (see Figure 1). The three emerging themes found in this study along with their supporting strategies largely occupy the Prevention Focus quadrants of the SBFC model. The research findings suggest that the school model developed is highly focused on prevention according to the SBFC model. The specific focus on prevention within a systems perspective reduces the need for intervention-related services. The focus on prevention shifts the balance from a reactive model to a more proactive one. The need for school and family interventions will always exist and is a definite need within school systems. The development of a school system that is heavily prevention focused will allow for more time and use of deliberate and intentional interventions for youth and families by SBFC professionals (see Figure 2)

School-Prevention	School-Intervention
Guidance groups	Teacher consultation
Classroom management	Group counseling
Classroom meetings	Crisis intervention
Stress management	Student support groups
Family-Prevention	Family-Intervention
Parent education	Family counseling
Parent support groups	Parent consultation
	Couples counseling

Family focus

Figure 1
The SBFC model

School-Prevention Positive school climate: Leadership and whole-school approach School organization & infrastructure: Student safety and learning, campus supervision, student groupings/cohorts Student interactions: cooperative learning model , focus on character building and social skills	School-Intervention
Family-Prevention Positive school climate: Leadership and whole-school approach, including all stakeholders Family-Intervention	Family-Intervention

School Focus

Figure 2

Findings aligned with the SBFC model Prevention Focus quadrants

Chapter 5

Bullying and cyberbullying: Variables that influence university dropout.

With the increased utilization of the internet and social media platforms, it is not surprising that youth are using these tools to inflict harm upon each other. Previous studies have outlined the negative impacts of cyberbullying, yet few research studies have been conducted in Arab communities examining its different forms and characteristics. Reporting incidents of cyberbullying is also a big problem, considering the social and cultural constraints of these societies. The purpose of this paper is to explore the pervasiveness of cyberbullying among university students in an Arab community, its nature and venues, and their attitudes towards reporting cyberbullying in contrast to remaining silent. Data was collected from 200 students in the UAE. 91% of the study sample confirmed the existence of acts of cyberbullying on social media with Instagram (55.5%) and Facebook (38%) in the lead. Calls for smartphone applications, stricter legal actions and proactive measures are discussed.

- Cyberbullying
- Youth
- Social media
- Spiral of silence

Modern communication now almost exclusively relies on online technology, which can foster destructive or harmful behaviors. A significant example of such destructive or harmful behaviors is cyberbullying. Research suggests that cyberbullying is characterized by a transformation from the traditional bullying forms to online forms through social media platforms.

Constant exposure to and interaction with online technologies, regardless of the convenience they provide, also expose its users to certain online connections that may at some point put their safety and emotional and psychological well-being at risk. Cyberbullying is considered one of the potential risks of relying on online technologies.

Recent research studies have revealed that cyberbullying and online harassment are considerable problems for users of social media platforms, especially young people.

A 2019 report of the Cyberbullying Research Centre indicates that 33.8% of middle-and high-school students aged between 13 and 17 are at some point subject to being victims of cyberbullying.

Across most of the recent studies conducted in this sphere in the last decade, the prevalence rates of cyberbullying range from 10% to 40%. For both individuals and organizations, the experience of cyberbullying has also been linked with significant negative outcomes such as anxiety, depression, substance abuse, sleeping and eating disorders, and decreased academic performance.

Moreover, Bullycide has been an emergent phenomenon in many societies. It is a hybrid term that refers to the phenomenon of young people who experience different forms of bullying and its consequences taking their own lives. Tragic suicides resulting from bullying were recently reported in Canada, the United States of America (US), and the United Kingdom (UK). Such incidents also indicate the gravity of different forms of bullying (online and offline), especially through social media platforms where the victim has nowhere to hide and is constantly exposed to aggression.
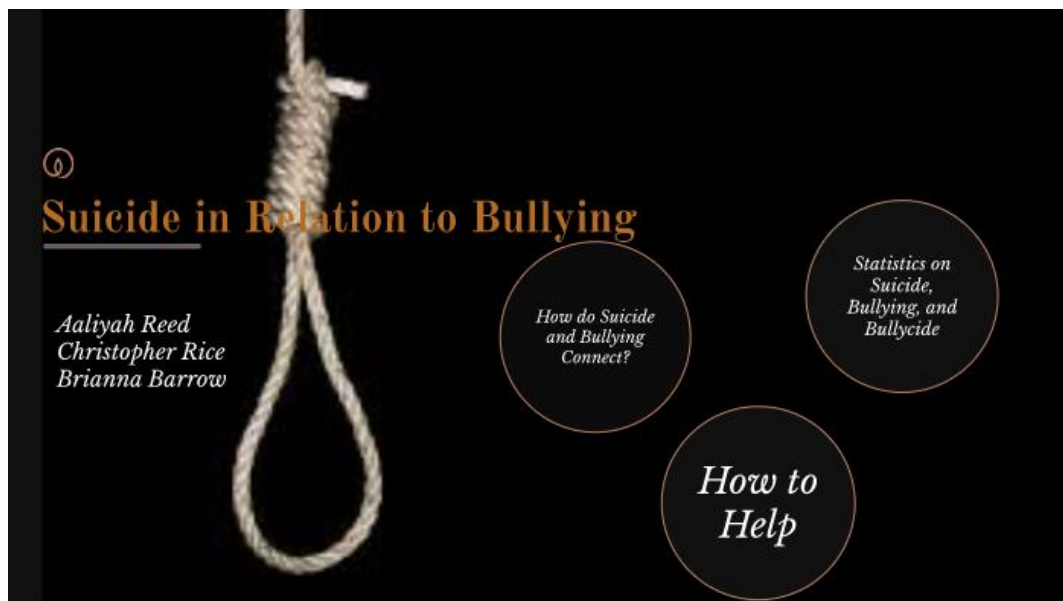
Previous research has found different correlates and consequences associated with specific forms of cyberbullying. Physical and psychological health-related and academic performance-related impacts have been cited as major correlations in both traditional and cyberbullying.

Significantly, a need exists for additional research to examine the characteristics of cyberbullying in Arab communities due to its profound effects. The youth in the Arab world mostly suffers from different forms of bullying in silence due to social and cultural constraints.

Therefore, the current study aims to examine the pervasiveness of cyberbullying among university students in an Arab community by answering the following research questions:

RQ 1: What are the prevalence rates of cyberbullying among university students in Arab communities?

RQ 2: What are the different forms of cyberbullying on social media platforms among youth in Arab communities?

RQ 3: What are the youth's views on cyberbullying in the United Arab Emirates (UAE)?

RQ 4: Do students prefer to remain silent after being cyberbullied, or do they report such incidents?

Theoretical framework

The spiral of silence theory helps to explain why individuals sometimes feel unable to speak up when bullied. The theory indicates that bullying victims tend to become further isolated, as they have nowhere to escape. Some scholars believe that the spiral of silence effect does not exist or is very weak in online communication contexts.
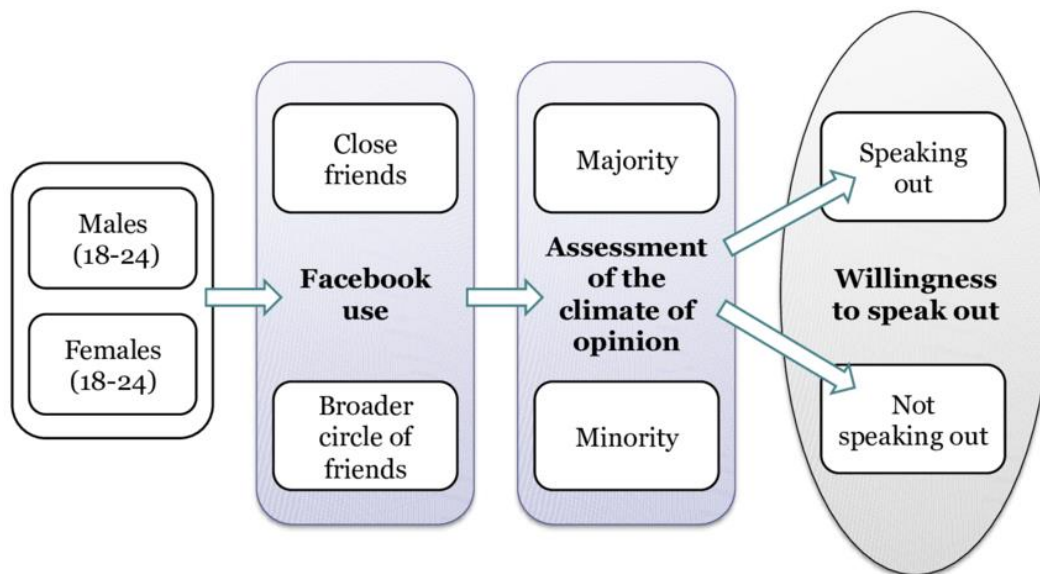
The 'spiral of silence' in its original form may have little predictive power in the new media environment. Further, Schulz and Roessler theorize that as individuals can select the information they receive online, they believe they are surrounded by more like-

minded people online than in real-world contexts. Thus, the projection effect will decrease the fear of isolation, and individuals will be more likely to express their opinions online, minimizing the spiral of silence effect on the internet. Other early critics draw attention to two more aspects of the internet that can reduce the spiral of silence effect: anonymity and lack of interpersonal presence. However, empirical studies have since found support for the spiral of silence effect in online social environments, even those with anonymity.

The spiral of silence theory was primarily applied to political science and public opinion studies. It states that people tend to remain silent when they fear that their views don't lie with the majority opinion. The reason for such silence is the fear that they will be rejected and the fear of isolation. The longer people remain silent, the more likely they are to spiral into a state of total silence where they are reluctant to voice their opinions.

The spiral of silence theory posits that the fear of social isolation is a fundamental part of the public opinion process. In this theory, public opinion is defined as controversial viewpoints that people can publicly express without becoming isolated. The definition of public opinion applies to both malleable subjects (influx opinions) and fixed customs.

However, during the first decade of the 21st century, the use of information and communication technologies was an activity that progressively and massively involved young people. During this time, the international community concerned about bullying began to show interest in a new phenomenon that later came to be known as cyberbullying.

The spiral of silence remains one of the theories aiming to rationalize the effects of socialization as well as individuals' behaviors. It helps to explain why students feel unable to speak up when bullied. As bullying has become an online phenomenon, bullies can now remain anonymous and harass their victims every day at any given hour. This forces the bullied into a perpetual state of silence because it is increasingly hard for them to fight back. So even if alone, victims still must withstand the pressure of online bullies.

This results in the bullied becoming further isolated because they have nowhere to turn to or seek help from, especially in Arab societies, considering the cultural and social norms. Therefore, a need exists to identify more proactive measures to help cyberbullying victims.

Cyberbullying and technology

Regardless of the convenience offered, the constant exposure to and interaction with online technologies make users susceptible to certain online interactions that may, at some point, put their safety and emotional and psychological well-being at risk. Cyberbullying is considered one of the potential risks of relying on online technologies. It is considered one of the major examples of technology abuse in the past decade due to its negative and sometimes deadly impacts.

For both individuals and organizations, the experience of cyberbullying has also been linked to a host of negative outcomes such as anxiety, depression, substance abuse, sleeping and eating disorders, and decreased academic performance.

The first studies on cyberbullying reproduced the schema followed by that on traditional bullying, considering cyberbullying a concrete form of indirect bullying, and its study was very focused on the impact of technological devices. However, cyberbullying is a social problem involving harassment, intimidation, bullying, and unjustified aggressiveness undertaken using digital devices by a person or group upon another person (the victim), but whose harassment effects remain and are diffused exponentially. Internet and social media networks such as Facebook and Twitter have recently made policy and privacy changes to ensure safe user experience. However, the effectiveness of

these tools and efforts in curbing abuse and cyberbullying needs constant monitoring and research.

Definition of cyberbullying

A logical question to ask when investigating cyberbullying is the degree to which our knowledge of traditional bullying carries over to this newer mode of bullying.

Photo credit: Freepik

Cyberbullying shares three primary features with traditional bullying: It is an act of aggression; it occurs among individuals between whom a power imbalance exists; the behavior is often repeated. The aggressive nature of cyberbullying has been questioned by many, as the act itself takes place on virtual platforms. As with traditional bullying, the power imbalance with cyberbullying can take place in several forms: physical, social, relational, or psychological cyberbullying can take different forms, ranging from flaming to harassment to cyberstalking. The following list defines different forms of cyberbullying:

- **Flaming**

    sending angry, rude, vulgar messages directed at a person or persons privately or to an online group.

- **Harassment**

    repeatedly sending a person offensive message.

- **Cyberstalking**

  harassment that includes threats of harm or is highly intimidating.

- **Denigration(put-downs)**

  sending or posting harmful, untrue, or cruel statements about a person to other people.

- **Masquerade**

  pretending to be someone else and sending or posting material that makes a person look bad or places the person in potential danger.

- **Outing and trickery**

  sending or posting material about a person that contains sensitive, private, or embarrassing information, including forwarding private messages or images, engaging in tricks to solicit embarrassing information to be made public.

- **Exclusion**

  actions that specifically and intentionally exclude a person from an online group.

- **Impersonation**

  posing as the victim and electronically communicating negative or inappropriate information with others as if it were coming from the victim.

- **Sexting**

  distributing nude pictures of another individual without the person's consent.

Cyberbullying can occur at different age levels, with any gender, and can relate to physical, cultural, racial, and even religious biases. The psychological harm inflicted by cyberbullying is considered more damaging than traditional bullying, as harmful material can be preserved and quickly circulated. We conducted an online survey involving 384 respondents under the age of 18. Their results indicate that various forms of bullying occur online, including being ignored (60.4%), being disrespected (50%), being called names (29.9%), being threatened (21.4%), being picked on (19.8%), being made fun of (19.3%), and having rumors spread (18.8%). Some scholars have cautioned against the findings of the study, citing it to possess a convenient sample.

When gender is considered in bullying-related behaviors, empirical research findings show that males and females show different patterns of bullying. In addition, it has been suggested that females prefer to use electronic devices such as chat rooms and emails to bully others.

Another relatively important finding is that anonymity is inherent in many cyberbullying situations, which may create a sense of powerlessness on the part of the victim. Anonymity seems to be a unique characteristic of technology that works well for bullies but against victims.

Another manuscript entitled 'Investigating legal aspects of cyberbullying' explored the cyberbullying in British secondary-level schools from the students' perspective using a qualitative method of enquiry. The level of awareness and understanding of the legal aspects of cyberbullying were investigated; consideration was also given to views expressed by young people on children's rights, school sanctions, and safeguarding responsibilities.

The results indicate that students do not really accept the sanctions in place to prevent cyberbullying. However, when asked to consider alternatives, they provided similar suggestions to the already existing ones. Students are aware of their rights, yet they take responsibility for the occurrence of cyberbullying considering their role in prevention to be more prominent than that of adults.

Given that cyberbullying can now occur within any demographic and the use of smartphone applications and social media platforms is on the rise, youth is a sample that warrants our attention. Several studies on cyberbullying have focused on adolescent young people in middle and high schools excluding another important segment, youth and university students. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to explore the pervasiveness of cyberbullying among the university students in the UAE, which is a diverse, multicultural society that encompasses over 200 different nationalities.

Research methodology

As cyberbullying is a relatively new phenomenon, few studies are available on the topic, and very few measures have been developed to assess cyberbullying and its related factors. Some studies have examined cyberbullying as bullying shifting to a new medium. Therefore, it is necessary to explore some of the contributing factors to traditional bullying.

This study collected data using quantitative methodologies to gain a clearer insight into the incidents of cyberbullying. A questionnaire was designed and used to explore students' experiences and understanding of cyberbullying. It consisted of limited choice, scaled responses and open-ended questions. A pilot test was conducted to verify the reliability of the questionnaire for the actual survey. In addition, the theoretical framework and the existing literature guided the development of this study.

Sampling

For this study, random sampling was adopted because the objective was to get a sample representative of the youth in this context. A random sample of university students studying in the UAE aged between 18 and 25 was drawn from two major universities, one located in the emirate of Sharjah and the other in Dubai. The students of these two universities come from different nationalities and socio-cultural backgrounds.

The survey consisted of four parts. The first part collected the sample's demographic data (gender, ethnic background, and age category). A significant question that was considered was their membership in any student club or the student union at their university, as an attempt to identify their level of social engagement with university activities and peer groups.

Sample demographics

The participants were predominantly Arabs. 88.5% of the sample constituted youth aged between 18 and 25. Only 6.5% of the sample was above 25 years and was mainly postgraduate and MBA students.

Figure 1. Sample distribution according to gender

Gender	N	%
Male	93	46.5%
Female	107	53.5%
Total	200	100%

Figure 2. Sample distribution according to origin

| Ethnic Background	N	%
Arab	149	74.5%
Non-Arab	51	25.5%
Total	200	100%

Figure 3. Sample distribution according to age

Age	N	%
Under 18	10	5%
Between 18 and 21	119	59.5%
Between 21 and 25	58	29%
Above 25	13	6.5%
Total	200	100%

Social engagement and involvement with university activities were also essential aspects of detecting the level of active participation and interpersonal relations within peer

groups. Some of the students mentioned being members of more than one club, whereas 66.5% of the sample stated that they were not members of any club inside the university campus.
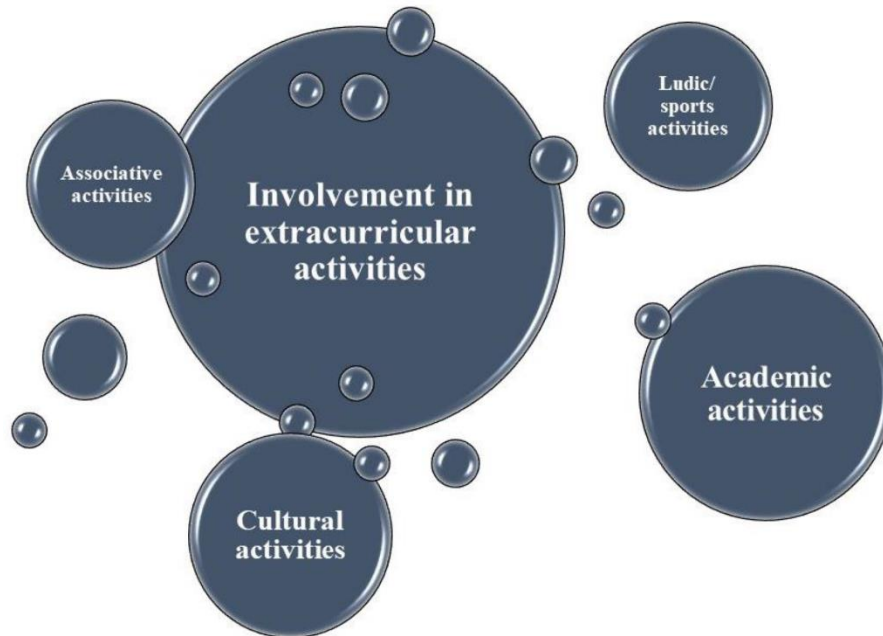
The results of questions relevant to social and extracurricular activities indicated that 11% of the sample were active members of the sports club. 7% of the sample were members of the student union. 6.5% of the sample were members of the music club. Another 7% stated they were members of clubs located outside the campus (dance or art clubs), and only 5% of the sample were members of the robotics club as they were engineering students. Students who chose not to join any of the university clubs cited 'not really interested' and 'having no time' as their main reasons.

The second part of the survey explored students' involvement with social media platforms and their online behaviors and views regarding cyberbullying in general.

The third part of the survey examined their personal experience with cyberbullying on social media platforms and the possibility of reporting such incidents.

The fourth part of the survey included students' usage of social media platforms as well as their personal opinions and experiences related to both traditional and cyberbullying. The responses for each item in this section ranged from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree' on a 5-point Likert scale.

The survey concluded with three open-ended questions to which individuals self-reported personal incidents and their views on curbing cyberbullying.

Considerations Ethical

Ethical transparency and commitment should be observed throughout all stages of research. Therefore, I obtained the consent of participants, assuring them that their participation was voluntary and free from pressure. Prior to conducting the research, an ethics review was sought from the Research Ethics Committee at the Canadian University, Dubai.

Results

The following section presents the findings from the quantitative analysis of the data secured in response to the questionnaires.

Figure 4. Cyberbullying on social media platforms among university students

Do you think that cyberbullying exists on social media platforms?	N	%
Yes	182	91%
No	18	9%
Total	200	100%

RQ1: Prevalence of cyberbullying among university students in Arab communities

The majority (91%) of participants surveyed in this study agreed with the existence of online harassment in the form of cyberbullying on social media platforms. 72% of the respondents strongly believed that adolescents aged between 14 and 18 were the most susceptible to being cyberbullied. 12% believed that children under the age of 14 were the main targets of cyberbullying, although previous literature tended to weigh the option of traditional bullying during that stage. Due to the cognitive and emotional nature of the adolescent stage, negative behavioral and psychological experiences may impact adolescents' personalities and future lives, and most of the sample was aware of this concept. In the survey, many participants recalled incidents of various forms of traditional bullying from middle and high school that they still clearly remembered and left scars to date. Respondents acknowledged that at that point they had an insufficient

level of understanding on how to act appropriately and that they were not well-oriented of their response options.

Concerning the gender specifics of cyberbullying, 62.1% of the participants indicated that both genders could be subject to cyberbullying, whereas 34.1% of the sample believed that women are more likely to be a victimized in comparison to men (3.8%).

On the other hand, 18 out of 200 respondents believed that cyberbullying was absent among university students in the UAE. Therefore, for research integrity and credibility, their responses are excluded from the latter sections of the discussion of results.

RQ 2: Cyberbullying on social media platforms in Arab communities

The participants were overall technologically savvy and reflected long-term familiarity with social media in general. They indicated Instagram (55.5%), Facebook (38%), and Twitter (35.5%) as the top three platforms where they perceived the occurrence of cyberbullying. YouTube and Snapchat were viewed as having fewer incidents of cyberbullying. These results are consistent with that of a study conducted by ditch the label in 2014 that found 37% of young adults aged between 13 and 22 experienced cyberbullying frequently.

From 75% of the participants who used Facebook, 54% reported experiencing cyberbullying. Over the past few years, other social media platforms such as Snapchat, Twitter, and Instagram have emerged and have overtaken the popularity of Facebook. Therefore, it is understandable why Facebook came in the second place. These new platforms are now being more frequently used for social interactivity amongst teenagers and youth.

Figure 5. Social media platforms where cyberbullying occurs.

Which of the following social media platforms have more cyberbullying?	N	%
1- Facebook	76	38%
2- Twitter	71	35.5%
3- Snapchat	31	15.5%
4- YouTube	50	25%
5- Instagram	111	55.5%
6- Blogs	4	2%

Although cyberbullying has increased with the rising popularity of social media platforms, social networking cannot be blamed for the actions of cyberbullies. While social networking sites may provide a medium for cyberbullies to attack others, the sites themselves neither create bullies nor encourage bullying behaviors.

The results indicate that verbal perpetration is the primary form of cyberbullying among university students. The most prevalent forms are offensive comments (63.5%) and hate speech (40.5%)

Figure 6. Forms of cyberbullying on social media platforms

If you have come across cyberbullying on social media platforms, what was its form?	N	%
1- Offensive comments	127	63.5%
2- Hate speech	81	40.5%
3- Pictorial shaming	51	25.5%
4- Posting or sharing embarrassing photos and /or videos	66	33%
5- Spreading rumours	65	32.5%
6- Other forms (stalking, using emojis as a form of ridicule)	4	2.0%

Concerning peer groups and intimate friends who had experienced any forms of bullying, 33% of the respondents' related incidents of real-life bullying, and 31.5% reported to have experienced both forms of bullying, online and offline. Surprisingly, 11.5% of students claimed to associate themselves with peers or friends who were perceived by them and by others to be bullies. From their perspective, the bully was considered to have a bigger social circle, more popular or physically stronger. 28.5% of the sample considered themselves to be socially selective; therefore, they neither associated themselves with bullies nor had friends who were connected to bullying activities.

Figure 7. Students' viewpoints and attitudes towards cyberbullying

If you ever witnessed cyberbullying across social media platforms, how did you respond?	N	%
1-Express my opinion actively	32	16%
2-Join in verbally	8	4%
3-Do nothing	54	27%
4-Leave the platform (log out)	27	13.5%
5-Object to the act of cyberbullying	21	10.5%
6- Reach out to the victim	23	11.5%
7- Report the incident	74	37%
8- I have never witnessed	19	9.5%

RQ 3: Remaining silent versus reporting cyberbullying.

One of the primary research questions pertained to how students responded to cyberbullying. The results significantly showed that over a third of the sample 37% would report the incident to someone and 27% would prefer to simply do nothing and just log out or escape from the platform in order not to exacerbate the problem. When students witnessed cyberbullying, a small proportion of the sample (4%) got involved and joined in verbally with no feelings of remorse or pity for the victim. This result warrants our attention, as a third of the study sample have reported that they prefer to simply turn into passive audiences, bystanders, or even bullies themselves.

Figure 8. Reasons for cyberbullying from respondents' viewpoints

In your opinion, why do people cyberbully others?		N	%
1-	Out of boredom	34	17%
2-	To become popular	45	22.5%
3-	A defence mechanism for their own insecurities	80	40%
4-	They have personal issues and frustrations	88	44%
5-	Other reasons	15	7.5%

To the question 'why do people cyberbully?', the respondents cited 'personal frustrations', 'insecurities', and 'as a defense mechanism' as the most prominent reasons. Becoming popular and notorious was also relatable to the respondents who mentioned later that some bullies perceived their behavior to be 'fun' and 'cool' without acknowledging it to be harmful. The respondents, who hailed from an array of Arab cultures, viewed this as a common and normal behavior during different transitional periods.

RQ 4: Do students prefer to remain silent after being cyberbullied or do they report such incidents?

The majority (47.6%) found reporting cyberbullying to be very upsetting and reported that action needed to be taken. 33% felt that what happened online needed to remain online and not taken further. 19.5% felt that they should just cope with the situation and not make "a big deal "out of it.

Thus, concerning deactivating social media accounts because of cyberbullying, 84.6% said 'no' and refused to limit their use of social media platforms or deactivate any of their accounts. Results indicated that 39.1% would act and report the account of a bully and 29.9% would do the exact opposite; remain passive and totally ignore the situation. 18.3% would actively engage in a verbal confrontation with the bully, partially due to cultural and environmental factors surrounding both the bully and the victim.

Figure 9. Respondents' reaction to cyberbullying.

Describe your response to cyberbullying:	N	%
1- I ignore the situation	59	29.9%
2- I change the social media platform	9	4.6%
3- I respond to the bully	36	18.3%
4- I confide in a friend	16	8.1%
5- I report the account of the bully	77	39.1%
Missing	18	

A significant finding concerns the confidence of bullying victims. Two-thirds of the sample (60.5%) would prefer to confide in a friend about cyberbullying incidents rather than telling a family member. This result is extremely crucial as friends and peers have a strong influence on youth's emotional, behavioral, and affective development and can help reduce the anxiety levels associated with cyberbullying. Friends can also help cyberbullying victims by providing protection and coping advice. This result is consistent with that of previous studies conducted on bullying emphasizing the role of friends and peer groups in overcoming the negative impact of real-life bullying. Despite the consistency of results, the issue of cyberbullying remains and troubles the teens and youth in different societies. A real concern pertains to the mental health and psychological welfare of 14% of the respondents who chose to remain passive and fall into a spiral of silence rather than taking positive actions.

An important issue worth noting is the reluctance of students (14%) to report cyberbullying incidents to adult figures or academic counsellors. Most of them stated that they feared getting into trouble. Others felt that if they escalated the problem, the bully (if identified) would probably retaliate later. Perceiving their professors and counsellors as a part of the educational system, they feared blame and claimed no one could do anything to stop it from happening. Such tendencies and beliefs underly a sense of low self-esteem and disbelief in themselves and others. Furthermore, concerning reporting cyberbullying to the police or the authorities, only 8.2% were active and reported incidents of cyberbullying. A clear majority of 91.8% chose never to report or speak up about cyberbullying. This finding explains why respondents are apprehensive and what makes cyberbullying harder to combat.

Figure 10. Confiding in someone about cyberbullying

If you have told someone about cyberbullying, that person will be	N	%
1- A Friend	121	60.5%
2- A Professor	3	1.5%
3- An academic counsellor	3	1.5%
4- Your Parent	34	17 %
5- Your sibling	38	19 %
6- Nobody	28	14%

As results indicate below in Figure 11, a general perception exists amongst the study sample (92.3%) that social media needs to witness more kindness and tolerance instead of turning into bullying platforms where harassment occurs at different levels. Freedom of speech doesn't entitle one to have the right to violate other people's lives.

Figure 11. Respondent's viewpoints regarding cyberbullying

Statement	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Cyberbullying is normal in the world of social media.	16	8.8%	19	10.4%	23	12,6%	73	40.1%	51	28.0%
People who are bullied should respond instead of not doing anything.	10	5.5%	14	7.7%	39	21.4%	54	29.7%	65	35.7%
If someone is being cyberbullied, it is important to inform an adult.	3	1.6%	7	3.8%	25	13.7%	67	36.8%	80	44.0%
I would like to witness more kindness and respect on social media.	3	1.6%	0	0%	11	6.0%	51	28.0%	117	64.3%
I would report being cyberbullied.	12	6.6%	13	7.1%	45	24.7%	66	36.3%	46	25.3%
I consider myself to be a very social person, with many friends.	8	4.4%	19	10.4%	54	29.7%	64	35.2%	37	20.3%
There are effective ways to stop cyberbullying.	1	0.5%	17	9.3%	24	13.2%	81	44.5%	59	32.4%
I would like to see more strict laws dealing with cyberbullies.	2	1.1%	4	2.2%	18	9.9%	57	31.3%	101	55.5%
Cyberbullying online is the same as offline (real world).	9	4.9%	27	14.8%	29	15.9%	46	25.3%	71	39.0%
Cyberbullying is a crime like any other crime.	3	1.6%	8	4.4%	23	12.6%	61	33.5%	87	47.8%
Cyberbullies should be punished.	2	1.1%	10	5.5%	12	6.6%	60	33.0%	98	53.8%

Moreover, anonymity is a unique characteristic of technology that works well for bullies but against victims. It enables the protection of bullies by concealing their identity and leaving the victims vulnerable. The results also indicate that one in four (25.4%) would report being cyberbullied, which raises much concern. People don't report cyberbullying or consider it 'normal', as they don't believe anyone can do anything about it. Such tendencies could arise from the fear of infringement of privacy with regards to electronic device use or concerns that the device could be confiscated by an adult.

Another significant result is that cyberbullying should not be normalized as human behavior. On the contrary, it should be criminalized and considered as any other harmful/illegal human behavior. 47.8% of the sample strongly believe that cyberbullying is just like any other crime and should be subject to stricter legal sanctions. Reporting incidents to the police and legal authorities can help prevent cyberbullying. Creating online reporting systems (in addition to offline channels) can also assist in handling the existing cyberbullying cases effectively by identifying the perpetrators and helping the victims. Cyberbullying has been identified to be a closely related factor leading to low self-esteem, suicidal ideation, anger, frustration, and a variety of other emotional and psychological problems. In congruence with the finding concerning the impact of cyberbullying on the perpetrator, this paper agrees that bullies cause self-harm and inflict it upon others. Therefore, counselling and seeking mental help should be considered as a possible remedial intervention for both bullies and victims.

Conclusion

Research has demonstrated that the youth today have changed radically due to the rapid transformation and diffusion of technology. As technology is an integral part of their lives, restricting access to such platforms will profoundly affect them. These effects need to be taken into consideration when formulating strategies for the prevention and intervention of cyberbullying.

An important aspect for consideration is that the degree of severity of cyberbullying, like traditional bullying, can have short, medium, and long-term effects on victims. To help victims of cyberbullying, they should be able to reach out for help without feeling scared or intimidated by any consequences. Faculty and staff of educational institutions can hold seminars or sessions to educate children and youth on the negative impacts of cyberbullying. These should not be one-time awareness sessions, rather comprehensive, detailed programs to help combat cyberbullying. Counselling is also a remedial approach to help victims of cyberbullying.

Confidentiality is also an important element likely to decrease the silence taboo. Establishing a hotline or a mobile application can provide alternatives to victims to voice themselves and report any incidents of online bullying.

Bystanders also have the potential to make a positive difference in bullying situations. They are essential for the prevention, intervention, and reduction of online bullying situations. Their role can be shifted to becoming upstanders and taking positive actions in bullying situations. They can address the situation by defending the target victim of bullying, objecting to the bullying behavior, validating the victim's views, or intervening in the situation as an online group. This study supports the role bystanders can play in reducing incidents of cyberbullying.

STAND UP
STAY STRONG
SPEAK UP
STOP BULLYING

Aggressors should also be targets of educational and professional attention to rectify their toxic behaviors. Victims of bullying and cyberbullying should receive emotional and psychological help. The need for such interventions was evident in the responses to the open-ended questions where a considerable percentage of the sample (23%) expressed willingness to undergo in-depth interviews relating to their personal experiences with

verbal, physical, and online bullying. Thus, further investigation is needed in this area based on the results of this study.

Additionally, technologies need to be monitored and modified to manage cyberbullying and enable the direct reporting of any bullying incidents; therefore, more attention needs to be given towards promoting the responsible use of technology. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter should adopt control measures to ensure safe user experience of social media and filter offensive comments or hate speech.

The efforts to combat cyberbullying should include prevention and intervention programs at the community, school, and family levels. Professional counselling and mental help should be considered as proactive measures that need to be more culturally and socially accepted in Arab societies. Government authorities should also pay more attention to problems that youth encounter when using social media networks, with stricter measures on those who violate internet policies.

This chapter supports the importance of conducting more research to investigate further the different types of bullying that are unexplored due to the cultural and social factors in many Arab countries. Despite the UAE's having a transparent policy in place and being one of the first countries to establish a unit in its police departments for cybercrimes, victims need to be further encouraged to report any acts of bullying that can affect their psychological or mental health. As proposed by this study, further qualitative research is required to assess the socio-psychological impacts of cyberbullying on victims in conservative societies.

Chapter 6

Relationship between Cyberbullying, Motivation and Learning Strategies, Academic Performance, and the Ability to Adapt to University

Cyberbullying has become a frequent relational problem among young people, which has made it necessary to evaluate and prevent it in the university setting. The aim of this chapter is to examine the relationship between cyberbullying, motivation and learning strategies, the ability to adapt to university, and academic performance. A sample of 1368 American university students (64% female) was administered a battery consisting of the American Bullying Intervention Project Questionnaire, the Learning and Study Strategies Inventory Short version, and the Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire, with their academic performance also being studied.
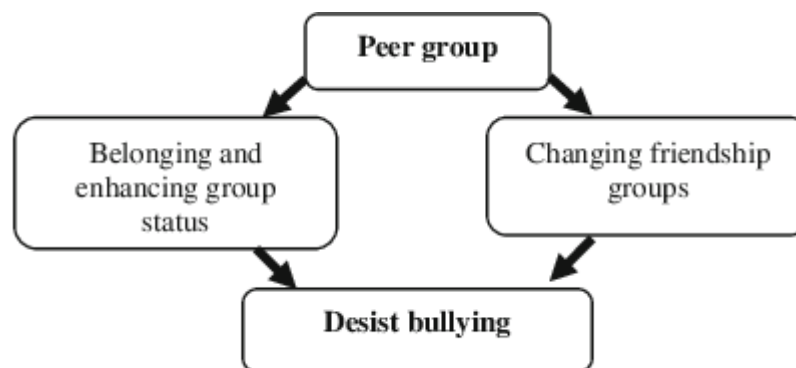
The results found that the victimized bullies have greater difficulties in their organization and planning for study and exams, have fewer control and consolidation strategies, and are less able to adapt to university. Logistic regression analyses show that the greater the difficulties in organization and planning, and the greater the difficulties experienced in

exams, the greater the probability of a person being a victim and a victimized bully. In addition, students are less likely to be victims, bullies, and victimized bullies as their ability to adapt to university increases. The findings have been discussed and it has been noted that there is a need to address academic adjustment and the ability to adapt to the university environment as a preventive measure for cyberbullying in university students.

In recent decades, we have witnessed an unprecedented technological revolution that has allowed us to become more connected and expand our social networks worldwide. However, these technological and digital advances have not come without their risks, which include cyberbullying.

Cyberbullying is defined as the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) by an individual or group that has the intention of harming others who cannot defend themselves. This is done deliberately, and in a repetitive and hostile manner. Cyberbullying can be carried out using email, blogs, chats, messages, web pages, online games, and social networks, among other methods. Regarding the participative roles, while there are different classifications, we highlight that the classification composing of bullies, victims, victimized bullies, and uninvolved people or observers is the most sparing.

The number of cyberbullying incidences is alarming among young people. Prevalence data in Spanish adolescents indicate that 8.8% are cybervictims, 3.1% are cyberbullies, and 4.9% are high frequency cybervictim bullies.

In addition, cyberbullying can occur at different ages and in any gender. However, it usually starts during adolescence and there are usually more female victims and more male bullies, and cyberbullying can be related to physical, cultural, racial, and even religious prejudices. At university, this problem becomes chronic since, as certain studies highlight, when individuals in high school have been bullies or cybervictims, they tend to develop these same roles at university.

The consequences of cyberbullying are very serious for the victim at multiple levels. In this sense, victims show higher rates of anxiety, depression, permanent behavioral changes, such as resignation and social isolation, a predominance of obsessive traits with hostile attitude and hypersensitivity, and feelings of learned helplessness and low self-esteem.

At the academic level, they are likely to present more attention and concentration problems, have poor success in tasks, low academic performance, as well as seem to be unmotivated or disinterested students who refuse to go to school. Thus, some studies have assessed the importance of cognitive-motivational and academic adjustment in the development of the problem of cyberbullying and cybervictimization in adolescents and youth. These studies are detailed below.

1.Academic Motivation, and Learning Cyberbullying Strategies

Most students are usually involved in their studies for different reasons, such as the desire to learn more and improve their skills, to demonstrate their ability, or to protect their self-image by seeking positive appraisals from others. In this sense, research notes that there is a relationship between motivation, positive self-concept, and better academic performance. Regarding the relationship between academic motivation and cyberbullying, a study examined the relationship between self-concept and academic

goals with being a victim, bully, or being uninvolved in 548 Spanish students between 10–12 years old .Logistic regression analyses showed that social self-concept and learning goals were protective factors for all three roles, with academic self-concept and achievement goals being protective variables for cybervictimization, and motivational orientation toward social reinforcement being a risk factor for perpetrating cyberbullying behaviors. Another cross-cultural study conducted with a sample of 3830 Spanish and Colombian adolescents found a negative relationship between normative adjustment and cyberbullying and a direct relationship between social motivation with cyberaggression. Cybervictimization was explained by prosocial behaviors and avoidance goals, and there was an inverse relationship with perceived social self-efficacy, developmental goals, and social and normative adjustment.

Regarding university populations, a research project conducted with 864 American students, which intended to analyze the perception and experience of cyberbullying in a group of young university students in their secondary education stage, concluded that most of the young people who had suffered cyberbullying recognized that they did not feel motivated enough to attend classes at the time, nor properly develop their studies. Motivation has been widely related to learning strategies as they refer to all cognitions, behaviors, beliefs, and emotions that facilitate the acquisition, understanding, and subsequent transfer of new knowledge or a new skill. The relationship between cyberbullying and learning strategies has been scarcely analyzed by the scientific community.

In this sense, there are studies that relate collaborative and cooperative learning strategies to cyberbullying. An investigation conducted with 360 Chinese and Pakistani students found cyberbullying to be a moderator that decreases the positive relationship between collaborative learning and student achievement.

In this regard, previous research findings indicate that students who experience cyberbullying feel less focused on their studies. Another investigation conducted with 1052 Israeli higher education students showed, through logistic regression analysis, a positive relationship between learning difficulties and cybervictimization.

Moreover, the study conducted a sample of 538 Malaysian university students demonstrated the negative relationship between cyberbullying, academic performance, and collaborative learning strategies. These study results underscore the implication of cyberbullying on the maladaptive use of strategies in studying, with there being lower collaborative strategies and concentration among students who have been cyberbullied.

However, it remains to be clarified whether study and learning strategies, such as planning and organization, control and the prioritization of knowledge, and difficulties during test-taking may lead to there being an increased risk of cyberbullying in all three roles.

2. Cyberbullying and the Ability to Adapt to University

When starting university, students may face situations that impact their performance. Effects on performance may be due to several psychological and social causes that influence academic success. As such, one of the main problems affecting higher education internationally is the increased drop-out rate from university studies. Regarding the relationship between cyberbullying and a student's ability to adapt to university, reviews on the subject systematically note that cyberbullying increases during secondary education but decreases in later teenage years.

However, the increase in cyberbullying cases in recent years has meant more interest in the problem in the university setting. There are very few studies that analyze the specific relationship between cyberbullying and a student's ability to adapt to university. Most studies have focused on analyzing the effects of cyberbullying on the university population. A recent investigation, using a sample consisting of 1653 Spanish first-year university students, analyzed whether those university students who were victims of bullying (traditional bullying and cyberbullying) had a higher drop-out rate. The results showed that those students who were victims, compared to those who were not, considered, to a greater extent, leaving their studies, with variables being related to social integration, such as receiving support from friends and professors also having a moderating effect.

The study by analyzed the predictive capacity of certain emotional problems (anxiety, depression, and stress) and the ability to adapt to university with respect to cyberbullying in 1282 Spanish university students. The results showed that high levels of depression and stress increased the probability of being a victim of cyberbullying, while high levels of depression increased the probability of being a cyberbully. Similarly, the students' personal, emotional, and social adaptation decreased the likelihood of being a victim of cyberbullying. Taking this evidence into account, it should be clarified whether there is a relationship between the ability to adapt to university and all roles involved in cyberbullying, including bullies or victimized bullies.

3. Cyberbullying and Academic Performance

According to, academic performance is a construct that can take on quantitative and qualitative values, through which it has a closeness to the evidence and dimension of the profile of skills, knowledge, attitudes, and values that the student develops in the teaching-learning process. The main indicator to measure academic performance is the average of the grades obtained by the student in each school period. Regarding the relationship between cyberbullying and academic performance, the literature review shows inconclusive results.
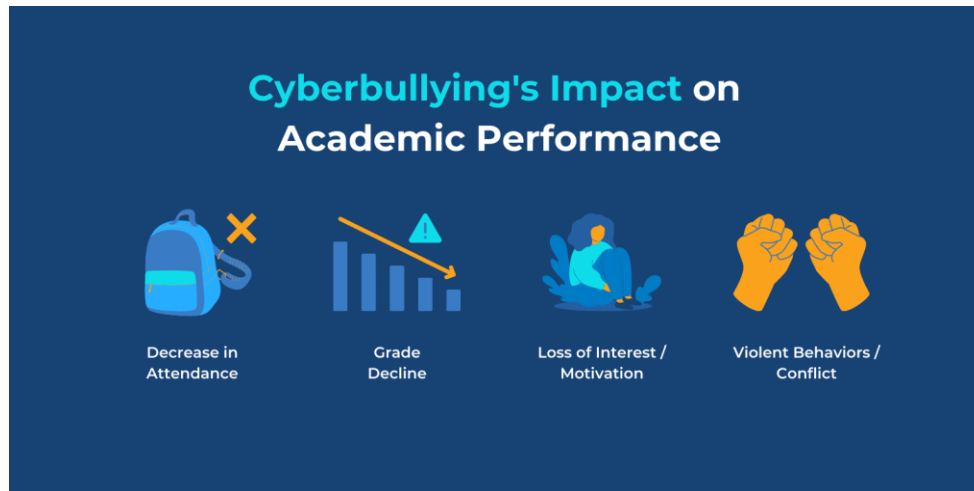
While most studies have concluded that there is a negative association between cyberbullying and academic performance, others note that the relationship is not significant and that the impact of traditional social type bullying on academic performance is greater.

Thus, the chapter developed by, with 3451 American students aged 12 to 19 years, concluded that young people with lower emotional intelligence were more likely to suffer cyberbullying and could experience negative repercussions on their school success with poor academic performance.

U.S. university students concluded that cyberbullying is associated with poor academic performance. Similar results were found by, who, through a study with 413 American students aged 17 to 19 years, found that young people who had been cyberbullied showed greater academic difficulties and poorer academic performance, although this negative effect was buffered by perceived parental social support. Therefore, this relationship should be analyzed with a view to clarifying the need to develop actions in academic matters with students involved (victims, bullies, victimized bullies) in cases of cyberbullying.

4. The Present Study

Although previous empirical evidence has highlighted the relationship between cyberbullying and several educational variables such as academic motivation and learning strategies, the ability to adapt to university, and academic performance, there is a lack of studies that specifically examine the relationship between cyberbullying and such educational variables in university students. Therefore, the aim of this research is twofold:

(1) To study the differences between the different roles involved in cyberbullying (victims, bullies, victimized bullies) and those uninvolved in it with respect to motivation and learning strategies, the ability to adapt to university, and academic performance; and

(2) To analyze the predictive capacity of academic motivation and learning strategies, the ability to adapt to university, and academic performance on cyberbullying in its three main roles in a sample of Spanish university students.

From the review of the previous research, it was expected to find differences in the roles involved in cyberbullying attending to different educational variables. More specifically, it was expected that uninvolved students present higher scores in motivation and learning strategies than students involved in cyberbullying cases.

(**Hypothesis 1**)

Regarding the ability to adapt to university, it was expected that victims, bullies, and victimized bullies present lower levels compared to those not involved.

(**Hypothesis 2**)

Regarding the role of the victim, these students are expected to present lower scores in academic performance, as well as low grades, explaining their involvement in cyberbullying.

(**Hypothesis 3**)

 Finally, motivation and learning strategies, the ability to adapt to university, and academic performance are expected to be significant predictors of the different roles involved in cyberbullying.

2. Materials and Methods

1. Participants

The reference population was university Students were randomly selected from two public universities in Texas and Florida. Once the universities were selected, fourteen classes were randomly selected from each center. Due to the random sampling method, the socioeconomic status and ethnic compositions of the overall sample are assumed to be representative of the community. Of the 1404 students recruited (740 from the University of Texas and 664 from the University of Florida), 36 were eliminated due to omissions or errors in the tests. Therefore, a total of 1368 university students (494 male; 36% and 874 females; 64%) participated in the research in the following academic years: 1st year (45%), 2nd year (21.9%), 3rd year (12.1%), and 4th year (20.9%). The mean age of the participants was between 18 and 49 years ($M = 21.34$; $SD = 4.45$). By means of the Chi-square test, used to analyze the homogeneity of the frequency distribution, it was found that there were no statistically significant differences between the sex of the participant and the course groups ($\chi^2 = 18.44$; $p > 0.05$).

2.European Bullying Intervention Project Questionnaire (EBIPQ)

The EBIPQ is a measure widely used in European research projects to assess the frequency and intensity of cyberbullying in adolescents and young people. It is a scale consisting of 22 Likert-type items with five response options, with a scoring system between 0 (never) and 4 (always). It consists of two dimensions: cybervictimization ("someone has threatened me through internet messages") and cyberaggression ("I have

spread rumors about someone on the internet"). For both dimensions, the items refer to actions such as swearing, excluding the victim, spreading rumors, impersonating, and so forth, with all actions happening through electronic media and within a time interval of the previous two months. The scale has evidence of being reliable in the scores of its subscales. In the present study, adequate reliability indices were obtained for the subscale of cybervictimization ($\alpha = 0.80$) and cyberaggression ($\alpha = 0.88$).

3. Learning and Study Strategies Inventory Short Version (LASSI-S)

The LASSI-S is a questionnaire that evaluates a student's motivation and the use of different learning strategies during study. The short version includes a total of 21 items, using a Likert scale with values ranging from 1 to 5, from "Does not describe me at all" to "Describes me a lot". The questionnaire is composed of six subscales: Organization and planning ("I find it difficult to organize and plan how I study and stick to it"), Test performance skills ("I have difficulty understanding test questions"), Skills for prioritizing information ("I have poor ability to summarize what I read or hear"), Learning resources ("I make diagrams or graphs to summarize the contents of a subject"), Control and consolidation strategies ("after class, I reread my notes to better understand the information"), and Motivation ("even when what I have to study is boring, I manage to keep working until I finish"). The reliability and validity indicators obtained by the original authors were satisfactory. The range of reliability indicators (Cronbach's alpha) of the subscale scores ranged from 0.70 (Examination Difficulties) to 0.83 (Learning Resources).

4. Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire (SACQ)

The SACQ is a 50-item self-report designed to measure the students' ability to adapt to the university environment. This questionnaire presents full-scale test scores and four subscales: Social, Academic, Emotional, and Personal Adjustment. Participants who take this questionnaire are evaluated on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 ("Does not fit me at all") to 5 ("Fits me perfectly"). The test measures a student's success in coping with various educational demands in terms of their university experience, efficacy in coping with interpersonal social demands at university, feelings about their physical and

psychological state, and an assessment of the overall university experience ("I am satisfied with my decision to attend college").

In this investigation, an overall score drawn from the questionnaire items was used, using an adequate scale reliability indicator ($\alpha = 0.82$).

5. Academic Performance

For the evaluation of academic performance, the number of failed subjects, and the average grades obtained across the subjects of an academic year were considered, following the numerical weighting of 1 (Fail = scores between 0–4.99), 2 (Pass = scores between 5–6.99), 3 (Merit scores between 7–8.99), and 4 (Outstanding = scores between 9–10).

Procedure

First, once the centers had been selected, a meeting was held with the management teams of the faculties to explain the objectives of the research work and the evaluation instruments to be used, to request their permission, and encourage their collaboration in the research.

The questionnaires were completed voluntarily and were done collectively during a class session, ensuring the anonymity of the participants by means of identification numbers on the answer sheets. The researchers were present during the completion of the tests to clarify possible doubts and verify that the correct administration had been done. Emphasis was placed on the total completion of the tests, with an average time of approximately 35 minutes being used to do them.

Statistical Analyses

Firstly, the sample was classified into bullies, victims, victimized bullies, and those uninvolved. Considering the scores on the ECIP-Q questionnaire, students were classified as follows:

Cybervictims were those students who obtained scores equal to or higher than 1 (Yes, once or twice) in any of the items on cybervictimization, and whose scores were equal to 0 (Never) in all the items on cyberaggression; cyberbullies were those with scores equal to or higher than 1 (Yes, once or twice) in any of the items on cyberaggression and whose scores were equal to or lower than 0 (Never) in all the items on cybervictimization; and victimized cyberbullies were those with scores in any of the items on cyberaggression and cybervictimization being equal to or higher than 1 (Yes, once or twice). Secondly, the difference of means was calculated for the variables of motivation, learning strategies, ability to adapt to university, and academic performance, and statistically significant differences were analyzed using a Bonferroni post hoc test. In addition, to identify the magnitude of the differences found between the groups, the d index proposed by Cohen was calculated. Its interpretation is as follows: a small effect size is found at values of $0.20 \leq d \leq 0.49$, moderate between $0.50 \leq d \leq 0.79$, and large at values $d \geq 0.80$. Finally, to evaluate the predictive capacity of the different educational variables on cyberbullying (bully, victim, and victimized bully), a logistic regression analysis was carried out through the forward stepwise procedure based on the Wald statistic.

The quantification of the probability of occurrence of an event (e.g., being a victim of cyberbullying) was performed through the Odds Ratio (OR), whose interpretation is as follows: if the OR is greater than one, for example three, for each occurrence of the event in the presence of the independent variable, it will occur three times if this variable is present. On the other hand, if the OR is less than one, for example 0.5, the probability of the event occurring in the absence of the independent variable will be greater than in its presence.

Results

Differences in Motivation and Learning Strategies, the Ability to Adapt to University, and Academic Performance in Victims, Bullies, Victimized Bullies, and Those Uninvolved in Cyberbullying

In the study, 15.5% of respondents met the criteria for being pure Cybervictims, 7.5% were pure cyberbullies, 60.7% were identified as victimized bullies, and 16.2% were categorized as uninvolved. The results of the ANOVA test (see Table 1) indicated the existence of statistically significant differences in three learning strategies (difficulties in organization and planning, in taking exams, and in performing control and consolidation strategies) and in the ability to adapt to university ($p < 0.001$).

Table 1

Differences in means and standard deviations of personality traits and aggressiveness between victims and pure bullies, victimized bullies, and uninvolved students.

	Victim	Bully	Victimized Bully	Uninvolved	Statistical Significance	
	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)	F	P
Difficulty in organization and planning	17.91 (4.82)	18.28 (5.33)	19.52 (4.73)	17.24 (5.08)	16.40	0.001
Difficulty in exams	3.08 (0.43)	3.56 (0.70)	4.02 (1.30)	3.01 (0.58)	93.24	0.001
Difficulty in prioritizing information	6.67 (2.28)	6.37 (2.48)	6.79 (2.26)	6.43 (2.07)	2.18	n.s
Motivation	11.20 (2.43)	11.08 (2.53)	10.89 (2.59)	11.36 (2.58)	2.33	n.s
Learning resources	6.98 (2.31)	6.38 (2.65)	6.61 (2.42)	6.75 (2.66)	1.84	n.s
Control and consolidation	7.70 (2.72)	7.13 (2.49)	7.32 (2.57)	7.78 (2.67)	3.02	0.02

	Victim	Bully	Victimized Bully	Uninvolved	Statistical Significance	
	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)	F	P
Ability to adapt to university	23.75 (3.91)	23.75 (3.87)	22.96 (4.21)	23.84 (4.10)	4.40	0.001
Academic performance	3.84 (0.52)	3.77 (0.59)	3.81 (0.56)	3.77 (0.49)	0.87	n.s
Number of subjects failed	1.35 (0.81)	1.31 (0.67)	1.32 (0.66)	1.26 (0.59)	0.67	n.s

Note. n.s = not significative.

Regarding learning strategies, the post hoc contrasts indicated that the victimized bully students scored significantly higher in terms of the difficulties in organization and planning in the study with respect to the uninvolved students ($d = 0.47$) and pure victim students ($d = 0.34$). In addition, victimized bully students presented greater difficulties during exams than the victims ($d = 0.80$), the pure bullies ($d = 0.37$), and the uninvolved ($d = 0.85$) students. On the other hand, pure bullies presented greater difficulties in exams than victims and uninvolved students, with the size of these differences being large ($d = 0.88$ and $d = 0.90$, respectively). Furthermore, victimized bullies and pure bullies obtained significantly lower scores in control and consolidation strategies than the victims and uninvolved students, with the effect size of these differences being low ($d < 0.28$). With respect to the dimension of the ability to adapt to university, victimized bully students scored significantly lower than uninvolved students, with the effect size of these differences being low ($d = 0.21$). As for the differences in academic performance, lower scores in academic performance and more cases of students failing were found in those involved in cyberbullying compared to those not involved, although no significant differences were found for these differences ($p > 0.05$).

Prediction of the Role of the Victim through Academic Variables

From the logistic regression analysis, it was possible to create two predictive models for being a victim of cyberbullying from learning strategies and the ability to adapt to

university (Table 2), each correctly classifying 76.2% of the cases ($\chi^2 = 150.69$; $p = 0.001$) and 76.3% ($\chi^2 = 7.09$; $p = 0.001$), respectively. The fit value (Nagelkerke's R^2) was 0.16 for the first model and 0.01 for the second model.

The Odds Ratios (OR) indicated that students are 6% more likely to be victims of cyberbullying, with respect to the uninvolved group, as their score on planning and organization difficulties scale increases by one unit and are 219% more likely to be victims as their score on exam difficulties scale increases by one unit. With respect to the ability to adapt to university, the OR indicates that students are 4% less likely to be victims of cyberbullying as their score regarding their ability to adapt to university increases by one unit. These results indicate that adaptation to university and educational counseling are important factors to consider in the prevention of cyberbullying.

Table 2

Results derived from binary logistic regression for the probability of being a victim of cyberbullying.

Predictive Variable	B	S.E.	Wald	P	OR	C.I. 95%
Difficulties in Exams	1.16	0.14	72.28	0.00	3.19	2.44–4.17
Difficulty in Organization and Planning	0.06	0.01	18.66	0.00	1.06	1.03–1.09
Constant	−3.87	0.51	58.03	0.00	0.02	
Ability to adapt to university	−0.04	0.02	6.92	0.00	0.96	0.93–0.99
Constant	2.15	0.38	31.72	0.00	8.55	

Note. B = coefficient; S.E. = standard error; *p* = probability; *OR* = odds ratio; C.I. = confidence interval at 95%.

 Prediction of the Role of the Bully through Academic Variables

From the logistic regression analysis, it was possible to create a predictive model of being a cyberbully from the ability to adapt to university (Table 3), correctly classifying 68.2% of the cases ($\chi^2 = 9.83$; $p = 0.00$). The fit value (Nagelkerke's R^2) was 0.1.

The OR indicates that students are 5% less likely to be cyberbullies (relative to the uninvolved group) as their ability to adapt to university score increases by one unit. In this sense, the feeling of relevance and well-being in the university can prevent the appearance of cyberbullying.

Table 3

Results derived from binary logistic regression for the probability of being a cyberbully.

Predictive Variable	B	S.E.	Wald	p	OR	C.I. 95%
Ability to adapt to university	−0.04	0.01	9.60	0.00	0.95	0.93–0.98
Constant	1.81	0.35	27.59	0.00	6.15	

Note. B = coefficient; S.E. = standard error; p = probability; OR = odds ratio; C.I. = confidence interval at 95%.

Prediction of the Role of the Victimized Bully through Academic Variables

From the logistic regression analysis, two predictive models of being a cyberbully were created from learning strategies and the ability to adapt to university (Table 4), correctly classifying 72.2% of the cases ($\chi^2 = 422.09$; $p = 0.00$) and 60.8% of the cases ($\chi^2 = 13.22$; $p = 0.00$), respectively. The fit values (Nagelkerke's R^2) for the models were 0.36 and 0.01, respectively. The Odds Ratios (OR) indicate that students are 8% more likely to be victimized bullies, with respect to the group of those not involved, as their score regarding difficulties in planning and organization of studies increases by one unit and are 693% more likely as their score regarding difficulties in exams increases by one unit. In addition, students are 5% less likely to be victimized bullies as their score regarding their ability to adapt to university increases by one unit. In this sense, we can observe how educational variables that represent a difficulty for students can contribute to their becoming victimized bullies.

Table 4

Results derived from binary logistic regression for the probability of being a
Cybervictimized bully.

Predictive Variable	B	S.E.	Wald	*P*	*OR*	C.I. 95%
Difficulty in Organization and Planning	0.08	0.01	31.70	0.00	1.08	1.05–1.11
Difficulties in Exams	2.07	0.15	190.56	0.00	7.93	5.90–10.63
Constant	−7.95	0.56	201.95	0.00	0.00	
Ability to adapt to university	−0.05	0.01	12.93	0.00	0.95	0.92–0.97
Constant	1.59	0.33	23.65	0.00		

Note. B = coefficient; S.E. = standard error; *p* = probability; *OR* = odds ratio; C.I. =
confidence interval at 95%.

Discussion

The aim of this study was to analyze the relationship between cyberbullying, academic
motivation, learning strategies, the ability to adapt to university, and academic
performance in a sample of Spanish university students.

Unlike previous research, this study analyzes the importance of the ability to adapt to
university based on the evaluation of the different roles of cyberbullying. In addition, and
unlike previous studies, this research has contemplated such a relationship considering
the analysis of effect sizes to determine the magnitude of the differences found, which
was recommended by different authors. In addition, this study establishes the predictive
analysis of cyberbullying in its main roles, relying on an instrument that has been
validated in a large European sample and which collects the defining characteristics of
cyberbullying.

Considering the results obtained, in the case of victimized bullies and bullies, it was possible to confirm the first hypothesis since they presented greater difficulties in organizing and planning their studies, as well as in adequately performing in exams, and developed less control and consolidation strategies than uninvolved students. Such results are congruent with previous research that found lower uses of collaborative learning strategies and lower concentration in students involved in cyberbullying.

This evidence underlines the importance that cyberbullying has on the use of study strategies and their efficacy in academics, especially among students who are simultaneously victims and bullies and among those who are pure cyberbullies. In this sense, the learning process in these students may be affected by maladjusted strategies when planning for study and in test performance.

It may also be affected by lower review and comprehension strategies and more concentration problems. These difficulties in studying can lead students to give low value to their studies and have greater rejection towards school.

Regarding the ability to adapt to university, it was expected that victims, bullies, and victimized bullies would present lower levels compared to those not involved in cyberbullying (Hypothesis 2). The results partially confirmed the second hypothesis as victimized bullies scored significantly lower than uninvolved students in their ability to adapt to university.

This result suggests that being simultaneously a victim and a bully is related to lower coping skills in the face of novel situations such as starting university and in the quality of established social relationships. Victimized bullied students feel less attached and satisfied with university, which may lead them to consider early drop-out. This imbalance may be due to the social interaction difficulties they develop, as well as their lower ability to adequately manage stress, manage conflict, solve problems in the face of novel situations, and their low self-control.

 Although the results are consistent with previous studies that point to a lower ability to adapt to university, these findings should be viewed with caution because of the low magnitude in the effect size of the differences. It is important to consider that, although there is a lower ability to adapt to university in victimized bully students, such difference is small and, therefore, its theoretical-practical relevance should continue to be examined in future studies.

Regarding academic performance, the third hypothesis could not be confirmed since there were no statistically significant differences between the different groups involved (victims, bullies, and victimized bullies) and those not involved in cyberbullying. This result differs from what has been found in previous research referring to a relationship between low academic performance and being a victim of cyberbullying.

However, this coincides with what was found that the explanatory weight of cyberbullying for academic performance was not significant when assessing other types of bullying such as social bullying. Furthermore, this finding could account for the importance of other personal and social variables that explain the phenomenon of cyberbullying, such as emotional intelligence, self-concept, and perceived stress, as well as problematic internet use or attitudes towards bullying behaviors and perceived social support.

Finally, from the results obtained in the logistic regression analyses, it was possible to partially confirm the fourth hypothesis, as students were more likely to be victims and victimized bullies of cyberbullying as their scores on the scales of difficulties in exams (OR = 3.19–7.93) and in organization and planning of studies (OR = 1.06–1.08) increased and were less likely as their scores regarding their ability to adapt to university increased (OR= 0.95–0.96). On the other hand, students presented less likelihood of being cyberbullies as their score regarding their ability to adapt to university was higher (OR = 0.95).

These findings are consistent with previous studies analyzing the academic and study profile of cyberbullying victims. These findings suggest that difficulties in the use of

study and learning strategies are also able to be extrapolated, with this being the case, to a greater degree, in students who are simultaneously victims and bullies. Therefore, correct preparation before evaluations and an improvement in concentration, as well as in organization and planning in studies, can be actions to reduce the risk of cyberbullying among university students. Furthermore, adjustment within the university environment is especially relevant for the explanation of this problem, as previous studies have highlighted since it is an explanatory variable of the three roles involved in cyberbullying.

Young people who feel more comfortable, safe, and satisfied at university show less risk of developing online bullying problems. Therefore, it would be advisable for higher education institutions to prioritize the establishment of programs for the improvement of the ability to adapt and the transition to university with actions using the Tutorial Action Plan, especially among dissatisfied young people, with greater difficulties in adaptation or who receive less social support from their environment.

This research has some limitations. First, although the sampling method used guarantees the representativeness of the sample recruited, the results found in this study cannot be generalized to students at other educational levels. Future research should confirm whether the results found in university students hold true at other educational levels. Furthermore, it would be advisable for future works to use longitudinal designs to provide more conclusive data regarding the causal relationships between these variables. We should also consider the modulating effect of other educational (academic self-concept), personal (self-esteem, emotional intelligence), social, and family variables that may mediate the relationship between cyberbullying and the study variables.
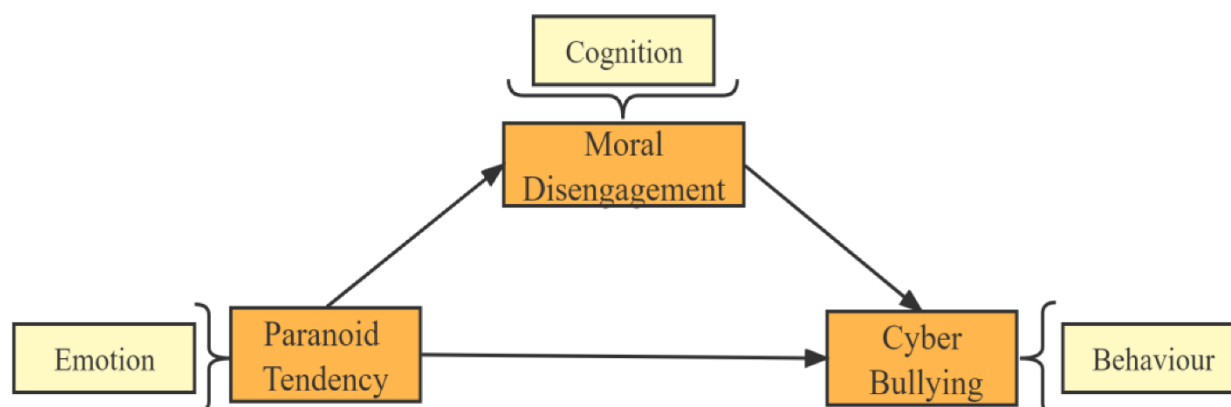
Finally, this research aims to understand the predictive capacity of motivation, learning strategies, the ability to adapt to university, and academic performance on the different roles of cyberbullying and not the other way around (the predictive capacity of the different roles of cyberbullying on motivation, learning strategies, the ability to adapt to university, and academic performance).

Although it is logical to think that there is a reciprocal effect, future research could analyze this question by developing structural equation models to test which hypothesis is the most tenable.

On a practical level, the results of this research, firstly, support the effectiveness of programs aimed at enhancing students' ability to adapt to university, as it has been found to prevent the risk of cyberbullying in the context of higher education. Secondly, the research has focused on the protective and vulnerability factors of victims, bullies, and victimized bullies.

 In this regard, one of the variables that is negatively associated with cybervictimization is an incorrect use of certain learning strategies in the process of organization and planning studies, as well as during the process of taking exams. Therefore, it is essential to establish and improve these strategies in university students to develop more effective preventive programs.

Finally, social support from family, teachers, and friends could reduce negative psychosocial symptoms while increasing the well-being of students involved in cyberbullying. Therefore, it would be beneficial for future lines of analysis to include school and family factors as moderating variables in this analysis with a firm purpose of preventive action for the future.

Conclusions

In conclusion, this research confirms the existence of statistically significant differences in learning strategies and the ability to adapt to university, according to the role involved in cyberbullying. In the case of academic performance, the differences were not statistically significant for the roles analyzed.

Regression analyses showed that learning strategies and the ability to adapt to university were statistically significant predictors of the different roles of cyberbullying, since students with high scores for difficulties in exams and for planning and organizing their studies were more likely to be victims and victimized bullies; and students with high scores for the ability to adapt to university were less likely to be victims, bullies, and victimized bullies.

How To Deal with Bullying in College

College Bullying is a real issue and needs to be identified and addressed on campuses. A great way to deal with bullying on college campuses is with victim support and training on anti-bullying. Reports indicate that victims and bullies have a higher risk of suicidal thoughts and behaviors than those who haven't been involved with bullying.

Here Are 5 Ways to Stop Bullying on College Campus:

1. Clearly Communicate Campus Policy on College Bullying

   Create a campus policy and clearly communicate it to faculty, staff, and students. If bullying behavior is detected, you should determine if the behavior violates campus policies or laws. Review student codes of conduct, state criminal laws and civil rights laws.

2. Encourage Students to Seek Help

   Encourage students who are getting bullied in college to talk to someone they trust if they face bullying situations. Although they do recognize it as a serious issue for their age group, young adults may be reluctant to seek help for bullying in college.

3. Report Criminal Acts to Campus or Community Law Enforcement

   Students, faculty, and staff need to be trained on what acts of college bullying should be reported to campus or community law enforcement. Prompt enforcement will help ensure the safety and health of the bullying victim and campus community.

4. Integrate a Title IX Coordinator into College Bullying Prevention

   Consult the college's Title IX coordinator to help determine if the college bullying is possibly discriminatory or categorized as sexual harassment. Also, an ombudsperson can help direct students to appropriate campus resources to report bullying.

5. Prevent Bullying in College with Impactful Training

   Conduct anti-bullying online training that teaches faculty, staff, and students about the different types of bullies, the methods they use, the causes and effects of bullying and safe ways to intervene. Online training helps with the prevention of bullying on college campuses by sending a strong message that bullying is unacceptable.

Need Help Preventing College Bullying on Your Campus?

Vector Solutions provides training for students and administrators that includes college bullying, discrimination, and sexual harassment prevention. We are dedicated to helping higher education institutions provide impactful training and meet key compliance requirements. Our curriculum covers 10 key topics that maximize student safety and create a positive academic workspace for staff. Read more about our courses and learn why over 1,500+ higher education institutions nationwide trust us to provide critical skills curriculum to their campus.

Chapter 7

Factors Affecting Academic Performance Among Higher Secondary School Students

Education is an important part of human life as well as human resource development.

The dictionary meaning of the word "Education" is 'the process of facilitating learning and acquiring knowledge, skills, development, morals, and beliefs".

It is an all-encompassing term that includes the development of various kinds of skill sets, be it academic, professional, physical, or creative.

Although "being educated" carries the deep meaning of acquiring these skill sets, according to individual will and talent, it is often mistaken to be purely academic.

Understanding this, Abu Dhabi schools ensure that a balanced education curriculum is provided to the students.

The school focuses on an all-rounded higher secondary school education, complete with hobbies, leisure activities, and academics.

Importance Of Academics

That said, academic education plays a very important role in a child's mental and moral development.

It is meant to catapult the child towards intellect, mental maturity, and high order thinking.

Academic education also helps children develop deeper interests in various subjects that play a part in deciding the professional trajectory of an individual.

Every student is taught the significance of a good academic record, to become a stable, successful individual and to help pick out a fruitful career.

It is important for a student to perform well in academics, especially during higher secondary school, to secure university scholarships, have a choice of subjects to study in college, and to ensure the stability of career and enjoy economic freedom during adulthood.

However, every student faces a phase in their student lives, when their academic performance is deeply affected due to outside factors that may be disturbing for them.

We are here to help you determine the 10 most common factors affecting academic performance among higher secondary school students.

Read ahead to find out.

Factors Affecting a Higher Secondary School Student's Academic Performance

Before discussing the various factors affecting the academic performance of students, it is necessary to understand that these situations must be handled carefully and with sensitivity.

Albeit the unpopular belief of some families, a student's academic record can fall due to many factors.

During these times, it is important for parents and teachers to be understanding, and help them overcome their problems, and return to their ultimate goals.

Abu Dhabi schools provide an in-house counselor to equip students at higher secondary schools and help their parents deal with such problems.
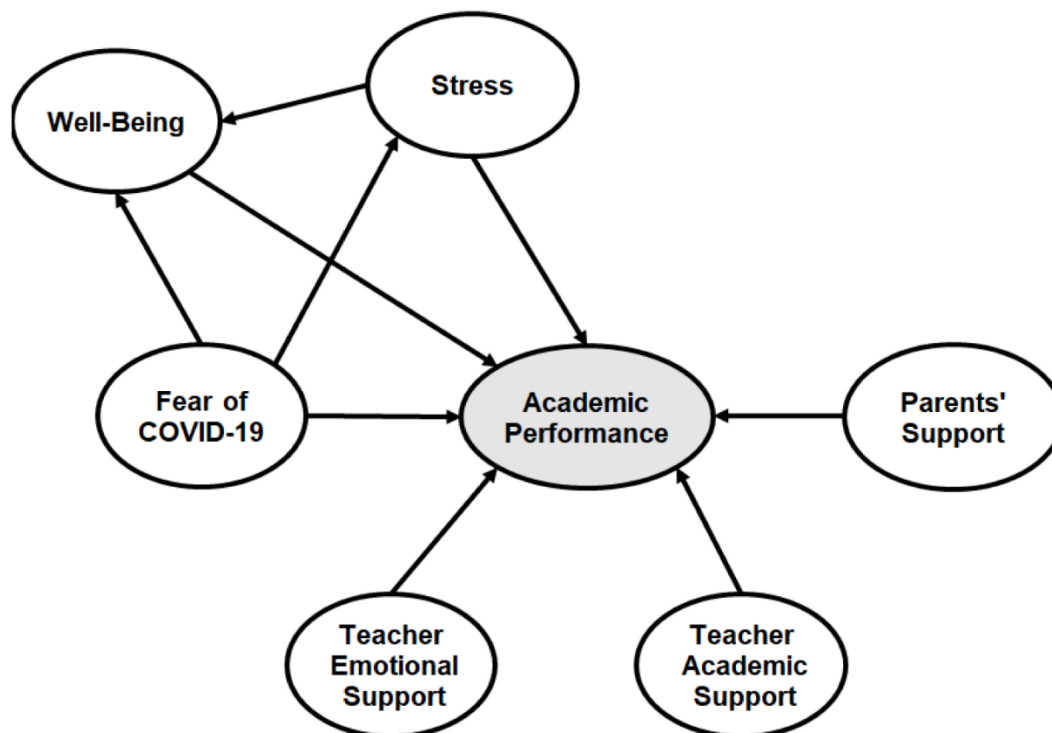
1. An Uncomfortable Learning Environment

The type of surroundings and people a child interacts with during the higher secondary school phase is partially responsible for the overall performance, including the academic score.

If a child is bullied by his peers, does not have a particular liking towards his teachers, or has difficulty in making friends, it may affect the focus he must have during classes.

Additionally, if the student is not enthusiastic about going to school, it might cause a shortage of attendance, which makes the child miss important lectures on topics that he will probably have difficulty in preparing for on his own.

Interacting in class, talking to fellow students, and taking small steps towards getting involved in the school activities can help the student take a liking for his surroundings, and eventually perform better.

Abu Dhabi schools take strict action against bullying, so the student can always go to the authorities of the higher secondary school for the same.

2. Family Background

Internal family conflicts often affect the academic performance of a student in higher secondary school.

Oftentimes, returning home to a negative atmosphere affects the will to study, and work towards academics.

Students coming from troubled households mostly have issues concentrating in classroom discussions and lessons and are unable to catch up while studying at home.

As parents, we request you to maintain a healthy and happy household, and not involve your children in dark matters, especially during important examinations.

For such situations where students are unable to perform academically, due to family matters, Abu Dhabi schools offer parental counseling sessions for families to help their children prepare for exams.

3. Learning Infrastructure

The Coronavirus pandemic affected the set teaching and learning pattern of most schools.

Most students were not equipped to study online, due to the lack of resources and appropriate infrastructure.

While some students faced issues in concentrating and participating in online classes due to lack of subdued learning environment, unnecessary disturbances, and noise, a few higher secondary school students did not possess mobiles or laptops to facilitate their online education.

Besides, schools with a shortage of teaching equipment, seating area, cramped classrooms, and outdated technology also affect the child's will to learn and basic understanding of the subjects, and thus the academic performance.

Most Abu Dhabi schools are fully equipped with the best teaching aid, and technology to provide a quality learning experience to their students.

4. Difficulty in Understanding

Many concepts and topics of the Higher secondary school curriculum can be difficult to understand and prepare for without expert supervision.

Missing classes when such topics are taught may be unfortunate for the child, thus affecting the overall academic score.

Abu Dhabi schools often provide subject-wise doubt classes and extra lessons to students who have difficulty understanding the syllabus.
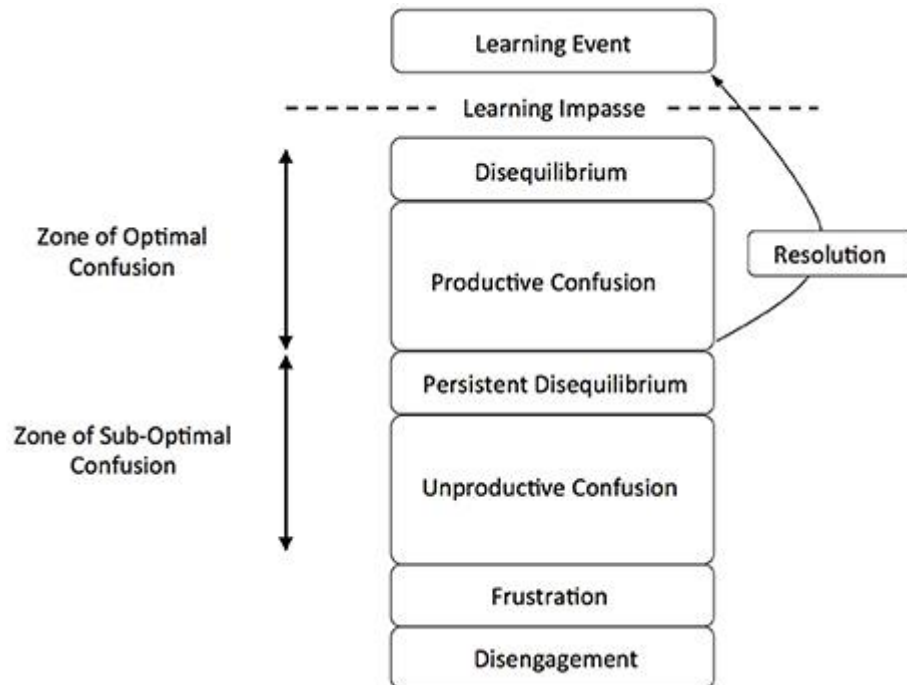
5. Teacher-Student Ratio

A teacher's undivided attention, appreciation, and understanding play a huge role in developing the student's interest in the subject.

If teachers are burdened with immense side responsibilities, and an abnormal number of students to teach, it may affect the teaching style and the quality of education imparted to the students.

Student-teacher ratio refers to the number of students in a classroom, per teacher.

It is an important concept adhered to by many primary schools as well as higher secondary schools in Abu Dhabi.

An imbalance in the ratio has been proven to affect the academic performance of the students.

Abu Dhabi schools give a lot of thought to assigning roles to teachers and work towards maintaining a healthy student-teacher ratio, to ensure quality education for their young learners.
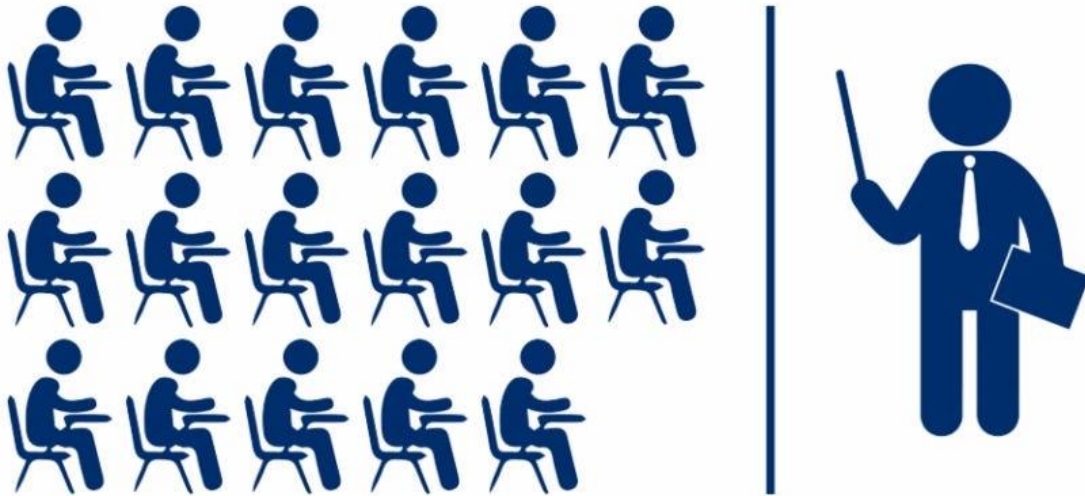
6. Information Overload

The saying "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy" is true. Students tend to overwork and study with no breaks.

Significantly during exam season when they are worried about their academic performance.

Albeit the infamous belief that taking breaks disrupts the learning process, and decreases the students' performance, a vacation or a weekly break of 1-2 days is needed by every student to refresh and gain a better understanding of what was taught in the last 5 days.

Information overload tires out the mind and reduces its ability to think, thus reducing the academic performance of the child.

Indulging in a hobby, or leisure activity such as Art, Dance, Sports for one hour a day helps students de-stress and learn better.

Abu Dhabi schools provide a lot of hobby classes for their students, that are strategically placed in between their classes, to ensure a study-life balance, and prevent burn-out.

7. Performance Pressure

Abu Dhabi schools understand the effect of pressure on a child.

Performance pressure can be caused due to unrealistic expectations from family, set assigned goals, or other outside factors.

Whatever is the cause, performance pressure has always proven to be harmful to the mental health of the child and thus causing a serious reduction in academic performance.

Fear and stress are never good for grades, and thus teachers and parents need to ensure that the students are not stressed about their performance.

Foreseeing this, Abu Dhabi higher secondary schools provide full-time counseling to students so that they can unburden and seek professional help whenever required.
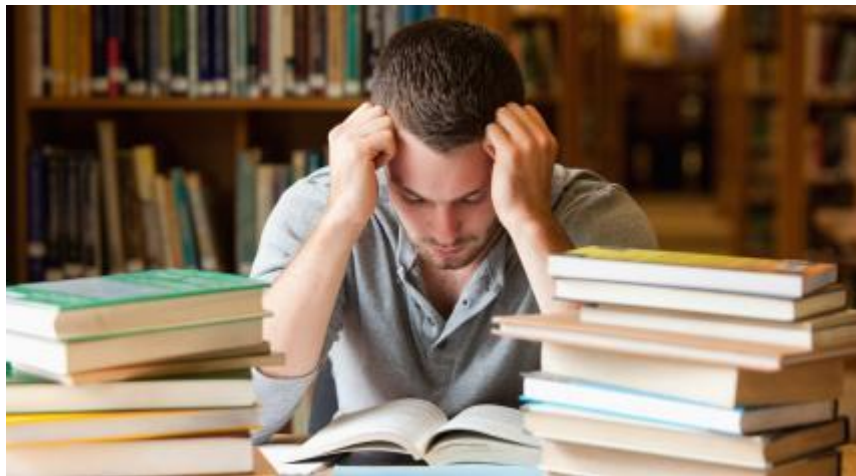
8. Unhealthy Lifestyle

An unhealthy lifestyle can play havoc with the most well-planned plans, so how can it not affect a student in higher secondary school?

Students believe that studying till late at night, sleeping less, reducing their appetite can bring them good academic results.

This is not at all true. In fact, surviving on caffeine, or getting inadequate hours of sleep affects the ability to learn, retain and think.

A healthy lifestyle is crucial to performing well in academics or any other field.

Maintaining a balanced diet, along with adequate hours of sleep and study breaks is very important to sustain or improve an academic record.

9. Distracted Mind

Distractions are taken for granted during higher secondary school years.

Students are easily distracted by new gadgets, new habits, excess television, past problems, friendships, etc. which affects their academic performance drastically.

Meditation, leisure reading, counseling sessions, and hobby classes are recommended to the students at Abu Dhabi schools, to avoid unnecessary distractions and work better towards their goals.

10. Loss of Interest

Not all subjects can be a student's favorite. It is not reasonable to expect every child to like all topics, and perform exceptionally well in every subject, all the time.

There are instances when children lose interest in a few topics in the curriculum and do not have the will to study and prepare them for exams.

It is understandable but detrimental to the academic score of the student.

During these situations, it is highly recommended by Abu Dhabi schools for students to share such problems with their teachers so that they can help them overcome such obstacles.

What to Do When You Feel A Loss of Interest

Conclusion

There are instances when a child falls into a cycle of facing these challenges alone, and as a result, performing poorly in school.

It not only affects their academic reports but also their confidence.

We understand that students at higher secondary schools are expected to be treated as adults. But even adults need help sometimes.

So, if your child is facing a problem in performing in his academics, we suggest you help and guide them, and try to understand their side of the story.

Are You a Bully?

If you are, welcome and thanks for visiting us!

Have you ever bullied someone else? Think about why you did it and how you were feeling at the time. Did you want to make yourself feel better? Did you feel the need to be better than anyone else? Did hurting others really make you feel better? If so, WHY?

You might think that others will like you better for acting badly and hurting them. But most bullies aren't liked, even if they start out that way.

You think bullying is funny and it's no big deal? You're wrong. **Bullying hurts!**

Did you know that bullies are more likely to:

- Get into frequent fights.
- Steal and vandalize property.
- Drink alcohol and smoke
- Report poor grades which could result in not getting into college.
- When cyberbullying and getting caught could face arrest depending on the degree of the incident
- Perceive a negative climate at school.
- Carry a weapon.

That's NOT cool!!!

In fact, there is not any form of bullying that is totally COOL!

Not sure if you're a bully?

Take this quiz and find out if you're cool or NOT!!!
Check these boxes if you've done any or all these things and answer honestly.

☐ You've teased kids, been mean to them, made fun of the way they look or speak.
☐ You've spread nasty rumors about a kid at school.
☐ You've called kids names and have publicly humiliated them.
☐ You've repeatedly kicked, shoved, punched, or physically pushed another kid at school just because!

☐   You and your friends have kept another kid or kids from sitting at your lunch table at the school cafeteria.

☐   You and your friends have kept another kid or kids from playing with you, or from joining you at any group activity.

☐   You've posted negative photos about someone by email, IM, texting, or have created a web site with negative posts about them.

☐   You've humiliated another kid.

☐   Do you feel the need to be in control, or to manipulate others?

☐   Do you feel the need to win at everything, and hate to lose at anything?

☐   Do you like it when other people experience fear, discomfort, or pain?

☐   Are you suspicious of others being mean to you?

☐   Do you have very little concern for other's feelings?

☐   Do you lie to cover being a bully?

☐   Are your problems always someone else's fault?

☐   Are you willing to use other people to get what you want?

[Submit]

Tough to answer these questions?

What should you do if others say you are mean or a bully?

- Put yourself in other people's shoes. How would you feel if you were treated the way you treat others?
- Be a positive leader, real leaders treat others with kindness and respect.
- Be open to apologies to people you have hurt.

Remember that although you may not like everyone, you should still treat others with respect!

Bullying is a serious problem. In fact, it's become a crisis!! Instead of being part of the problem, you can be part of the solution.

If you were honest and you realize you truly are a bully, we send you a high-five! You have taken the first step by being truthful.

The next step gets a little harder – but it's not impossible!

Learning kindness, compassion and respect will come easily once you've mastered it. It's not difficult at all. Once you learn it, you can treat people nicely and you'll see the rewards that treatment will bring.

Think about how your behavior affects other people. We're all hurt at some point in our lives. Maybe not repeatedly like the way bullying hurts, but we have been hurt.

Close your eyes and think back to when someone hurt you.

Did anyone ever call you names? Has anyone ever pushed, hit you or stolen from you? Did anyone ever tease you, keep you out of a group or publicly humiliate you?

Has anyone ever written things about you and posted it and/or posted negative pictures of you over the Internet, through email, texting, or instant messaging?

 Has anyone ever threatened you?

It didn't feel very good – did it?

Think about:

- What you did.
- Why it was a bad thing.
- Who you hurt.
- What you were trying to accomplish.
- How you will accomplish the same thing without hurting anyone.

So, what can you do not to be a bully anymore?

Think about how it must make another feel.

BE COOL and take that second step!

TALK TO A TRUSTED ADULT. You may think you'll get into trouble or that an adult won't understand, but they can help you! If you can't talk to your parents, try a teacher, guidance counselor or a school psychologist.

Visit the rest of our site and learn how you can STOMP Out Bullying™!

Feel free to **contact us** if you need help.

If you are between the ages of 13 - 24 and are being or have been bullied or cyberbullied and are going through a rough time because of it you can visit **The STOMP Out Bullying Help Chat line**

Anti-bullying programs

What is it?

Anti-bullying programs aim to reduce bullying in schools. They typically involve both the children involved in bullying, as well as other students, school staff, parents, and the wider community. Programs tend to include one or more of the following activities.
Understanding the causes of bullying. Teachers might work to develop positive relationships with their students, get to know them better, and understand the causes of their behavior.
A whole-school approach. Many programs will aim to develop whole-school policies and ensure these are implemented consistently.
Training for staff. Programs often include training for staff on identifying and responding appropriately to bullying. This might include techniques for managing the classroom and supporting positive learning behaviors. For example, some programs train teachers to identify and focus on bullying 'hot spots' areas in the school where bullying is more likely to occur.
Activities with children. These could include activities which support positive mental health and social relationships, encourage students to report bullying, or provide targeted support to children involved in bullying.

Children who have bullied others are more likely to become involved in crime and violence. By reducing bullying in school, anti-bullying programs might also prevent children and young people from becoming involved in serious offences later in their life.

Is it effective?

There is a lack of research which directly measures the impact of anti-bullying programs on crime and violence. However, there is strong evidence that anti-bullying programs can be effective at reducing bullying in school and that bullying at school is associated with later involvement in violence. Given what we know about the relationship between bullying and later involvement in violence, our best estimate is that anti-bullying programs could lead to a small reduction in the number of children involved in violent crime.

Anti-bullying programs have had a greater impact when they are delivered in the same country in which they were designed. Importing a program from abroad may be less successful than using a program developed in America.

Anti-bullying programs could lead to a small reduction in the number of children involved in violent crime.

How secure is the evidence?

Our confidence in the headline crime reduction estimate is low.

The available studies have not directly measured the impact of programs on crime or violence. The research focuses on the impact of programs on bullying perpetration, a known risk factor for later involvement in crime and violence. Our estimate relies on modelling of the relationship between bullying perpetration and later involvement in crime and violence.

Our confidence in the estimate of impact on bullying perpetration is medium. There is extensive evidence based on the impact of programs on bullying perpetration. Many of the original studies are randomized control trials with a strong design for understanding the impact of an intervention.

There have been several evaluations of anti-bullying programs in America. On average, evaluations in America have suggested a smaller but still desirable impact on preventing bullying.
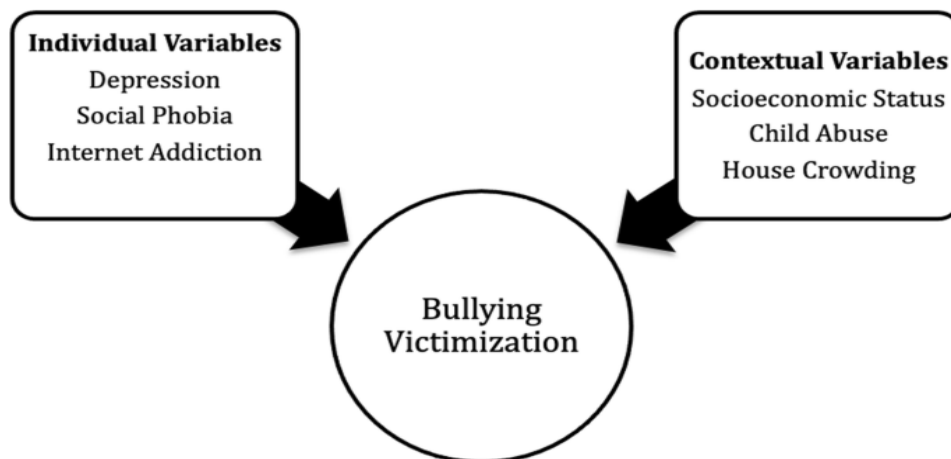
How can you implement it well?
Understand the causes of bullying.

Challenging or traumatizing experiences for pupils at home or in the community may negatively affect their ability to cope with school and lead to bullying. If teachers develop positive relationships with their students and get to know them better, they can better understand the causes of students' behavior. Understanding why a student is bullying others will lead to a more effective response.

Engage the whole school.

The most successful programs have tended to engage the whole school, including class groups, teachers, parents, governors, peer groups and individual pupils. This often involves establishing clear and consistent policies and ensuring these are understood by all members of the community.

Consider some key activities.

Effective programs have tended to involve the following activities.
Activities which focus on students' mental health. This might include cognitive-behavioral techniques or lessons which raise awareness about mental health.
Group discussions, role-play exercises, and anti-bullying lessons that follow a specific curriculum.
Targeted support for children involved in bullying. This support should aim to understand the causes of bullying and provide a response that is tailored to the child's needs.
Identifying bullying 'hot spots' and thinking of strategies to prevent bullying from happening there. For example, positioning a teacher in a hot spot in the playground during break time.

Deliver the program well.

Research on how schools deliver programs suggests some considerations.
Ensure delivery is led from the top. School staff report finding programs easier to implement when the senior leadership are engaged in the program, and it is clear how the program aligned with the school's priorities.
Build the right team. In one study, the personality of the staff involved was considered by teachers to be important. Can staff build trusting relationships with children, stay calm, and dedicate time to dealing with complex situations?
Provide training for teachers. For example, providing them with lesson plans or training them to identify bullying and support positive relationships and behavior.
Make careful adaptations. Teachers appreciated it when 'off-the-shelf' programs could be adapted to their context, rather than a one-size-fits-all approach. Teachers may not adopt parts of the program that they feel are inappropriate or difficult to implement. However,

any adaptations should be considered carefully as they may reduce the impact of a program.

What programs are available?

Below is a list of programs found in the Early Intervention Foundation's (EIF) Guidebook. The Guidebook summarizes the research on programs that aim to improve outcomes for children and young people.

Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP)

A whole-school approach to bullying prevention, for both primary and secondary schools. The program addresses the problem of bullying at four levels: school-wide, classroom, individual, and community.

Learning Together

A school-based social and emotional learning program using restorative practices. It is a universal program for children between the ages of 11 and 16. It is delivered in schools and aims to improve student's commitment to school, promote student's mental wellbeing and health, and reduce involvement in risky behaviors such as violence, antisocial behavior, and bullying.

How much does it cost?

On average, the cost of anti-bullying programs is likely to be low.
Costs could include training for teachers and students, bringing in external anti-bullying practitioners to train staff or facilitate group discussions, and information packs and online resources for parents and students. Evaluations of two anti-bullying programs in America suggested $4,534 in additional supplies and software, $3,958 in professional development, and $25,211 in additional personnel costs, according to the survey. Schools also spent, on average, $3,431 for bullying-prevention programs and initiatives.

Topic summary

There is a lack of research which directly measures the impact of anti-bullying programs on crime and violence.
However, there is strong evidence that anti-bullying programs can be effective at reducing bullying in school and that bullying at school is associated with later involvement in violence. Given what we know about the relationship between bullying

and later involvement in violence, our best estimate is that anti-bullying programs could lead to a small reduction in the number of children involved in violent crime. However, our confidence in this estimate is low.

A large amount of research has tried to understand how to maximize the impact of anti-bullying programs. This research suggests that some key activities are associated with larger impacts.

External links

- Improving Behavior in Schools (EEF)
  An evidence-based guidance report for schools with practical tips on improving behavior and reducing bullying.
- Anti-bullying interventions in schools – what works?
  An accessible and detailed review of the research from the New South Wales Government.
- Tools & Information from the Anti-Bullying Alliance
  A collection of practical anti-bullying resources and training.
- How can schools use data to prevent and tackle bullying?
  Guidance from the Equalities and Human Rights Commission on collecting data to develop effective anti-bullying policies.

Successful anti-bullying program identified by UCLA.
FacebookTwitterLinkedInReddit
February 3, 2020
Stuart Wolpert, UCLA

KiVa includes role-playing exercises to increase the empathy of bystanders.
Many programs to reduce bullying in primary and secondary schools have proven ineffective, but a new UCLA-led study finds one that works very well.

The study of more than 7,000 students in 77 elementary schools in Finland found that one program greatly benefited the mental health of sixth graders who experienced the most bullying. It significantly improved their self-esteem and reduced their depression.

The research-based anti-bullying program, called KiVa, includes role-playing exercises to increase the empathy of bystanders and computer simulations that encourage students to think about how they would intervene to reduce bullying. ("Kiusaamista vastaan" means "against bullying," in Finnish, while the word "kiva" means "nice.")

KiVa is one of the world's most effective anti-bullying programs.

The first program found to help repeatedly bullied children.

Thirty-nine of the schools in the study used KiVa; in the other 38 schools, students were given some information about combating bullying, but these efforts were much less comprehensive.

Anti-bullying programs are typically evaluated based on whether they decrease the average rates of bullying. Until this study, no school-wide programs have been found to help those who most need help children who are bullied repeatedly.

KiVa significantly reduced the depression of the 4 percent of sixth graders who were bullied most frequently on at least a weekly basis. The researchers also found improved self-esteem among the approximately 15 percent of sixth graders who had been bullied at least a few times per month.

A recent meta-analysis of 53 anti-bullying programs worldwide found the KiVa program to be one of the most effective. The odds that a given student experienced bullying were 1.5 to nearly 2 times higher in control schools than in KiVa schools nine months after KiVa's implementation.

"Our analysis shows that KiVa improves students' perceptions of the school environment, especially among those who are bullied. For sixth graders, it also improves their mental health, which is a big issue," said Juvonen, who has conducted research on bullying for more than 20 years. "Typically, we think individuals with mental health needs must be addressed individually. The beauty here is that this school-wide program is very effective for the children who most need support."

Teaching students' kindness

Students in all grade levels studied, fourth through sixth, benefited in terms of having significantly more favorable perceptions of the school environment. This was especially true for the students who were most frequently bullied before the intervention.

The study is published online in the Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology.

Juvonen does not advocate zero-tolerance school policies, which she said punish students but do not teach them about bullying. Kiva is much more effective in leading students to be kinder to one another, she said.

KiVa is now Finland's national anti-bullying program. It is being tested and used in several other European countries, and it is being evaluated in the United States. It is based on scholarly research about bullying.

The study's co-authors are Hannah Schacter, a UCLA graduate student in developmental psychology; Miia Sainio, a senior researcher at the University of Turku, in Finland; and Christina Salmivalli, a professor of psychology at the University of Turku and the developer of Kiva.

Previous studies on bullying have found that:

- People on social media are often unsupportive of cyberbullying victims who have shared highly personal feelings.
  • Bullies are considered the "cool" kids in school.
  • Nearly 3 in 4 teenagers say they were bullied online at least once during a 12-month period.
  • Nearly half of the sixth graders at two Los Angeles–area schools said they were bullied by classmates during a five-day period.
- <u>Kiva International</u>
- <u>Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology: Can a school-wide bullying prevention…</u>