

# Periodic Research

## Bullying Behaviour in School: with Special Reference to Secondary Schools of Jammu (J&K)



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### Abstract

The rising incidents of school violence captured by media have become a primary concern of educational practitioners in India. In recent years the concern has raised much interest of researchers to do relative studies. As reported in many different studies around the world, school violence has become common wherever schools exist. The present study will try to find out to what extent the phenomenon has existed by diagnosing so called bullying behaviour among school students. Although bullying may have existed in Indian schools, many Indian educational practitioners do not realize the difference between bullying and school violence. To some extent bullying can lead to a broader context of violence. To realize this, the present study, which has addressed particular issues of bullying and aggressiveness, could enrich educational practitioners' sphere of knowledge concerning the phenomenon of bullying. Researchers could also take advantage of this study by using it as a reference for further investigation on other contexts of bullying.

**Keywords:** Bullying, Behavior, Motives, Aggression, Educational Practitioners and Violence.

### Introduction

The safety issues in schools have become a current academic concern in India. In recent years, the phenomenon of so called bullying and other school violence among students, youth and adolescents has been disrupting academic stability in most schools. According to some findings, the existence of bullying in schools has become a worldwide phenomenon and a problem that can create negative impacts for the general school atmosphere and for the rights of students to learn in a safe environment without fear.

Although bullying and general aggression are somewhat different, "bullying is commonly regarded as an aspect of aggression" (Roland and Idsoe, 2001, p.446). Masterson (1997) also said: "bullying is regarded as a form of aggression in which a person repeatedly harasses another person physically and/or psychologically"(p.1). If we refer to a commonly understood concept of bullying, we will clearly see the difference between aggression and bullying. As Roland and Idsoe (2001) have said: "aggressive behavior may involve conflicts between equal powers ,whereas bullying always involved hurting someone who is not quite able to defend himself/herself"(p.447). Masterson (1997) has also noted: "bullying is different from peer conflict. It is conflict between individuals that do not share equal physical and/or psychological power. Bullies are usually physically stronger and victims are usually perceived as weaker and unable to protect themselves". Roland and Idsoe (2001) have investigated how reactive aggressiveness and two aspects of proactive aggressiveness, power-related aggressiveness and affiliation-related aggressiveness, are related to being bullied and bullying others. In addition they have also attempted to differentiate between different kinds of aggressiveness in bullying among boys and girls in different grades. Overall, they have found that there was a good correlation between both proactive power-related aggressiveness and proactive affiliation-related aggressiveness, and being involved in bullying. However, reactive aggressiveness was not a good predictor for bullying behaviour. Fandrem et al. (2009) have also conducted a bullying study in Norwegian schools using the same scales developed by Ronald and Idsoe. The result showed that proactive power-related aggressiveness and affiliation-related aggressiveness are related to bullying behavior, but somehow different in strength in gender relation.

Thus, although there might be different results in other studies, Ronald and Idsoe and Fandrem et al. in their studies have somehow shown associations between bullying cultural patterns and aggressiveness as well as between gender and degree of aggressiveness. Ronald and Idsoe(2001) defined the two different dimensions of aggressiveness as follows: “reactive aggressiveness is a tendency to express negative behaviour when one is angry, while proactive aggressiveness is the tendency to attack someone to achieve some material or social rewards”(p.447).

Using the scales and questionnaires by Roland and Idsoe (2001) and Fandrem et al. (2009), the present study will aim: 1) to make a pre-study of the prevalence of bullying among students in a large town in Sulawesi, India; 2) to investigate forms of aggression (proactive and/or reactive) associated with bullying; and 3) to investigate which motive of aggression (power-related and/or affiliation-related) are associated with bullying behaviour among the students. While Roland and Idsoe conducted a study to find out the relationship between bullying and two different kinds of aggressiveness, Fandrem et al. have developed a study to investigate the role of proactive and reactive aggressiveness in bullying and victimization among native and immigrant adolescents. Both studies were conducted in Norway using the same scale on questionnaires, but different in purpose. This study, however, will be carried out among boys and girls within secondary schools of Jammu areas of J&K state.

**Objectives of the Study**

1. To find out the significant difference between bullying behaviour perceived by both boys and girls in secondary schools
2. To find out the significant difference between aggressions associated with bullying and motives underlying bullying behaviour.

**Hypothesis of the Study**

1. There will be no significant difference between bullying behaviour perceived by both boys and girls in secondary schools
2. There will be no significant difference between aggression associated with bullying and motives underlying bullying behaviour.

**Sample**

The sample for the study comprise of 246 students (equal number of boys and girls), and this sample collected from the secondary schools of Jammu areas of J&K state.

**Tools to be Used**

This simple questionnaire generally used by many researchers for such kind of researches will be adopted for the collection and interpretation of data for the present study. For example Rigby (2008) has been for eight years using Peer Relations Assessment Questionnaires (PRAQs) to assess bullying in Australia. This questionnaire was developed to help schools and researchers to understand the interpersonal relationship between students to discover the nature and extent of bullying in particular schools. This questionnaire was also

designed to draw additional information from teachers and parents, so that it is possible to compare results from different sources. Therefore, some questionnaires will be used for this study.

**Proactive Aggressiveness**

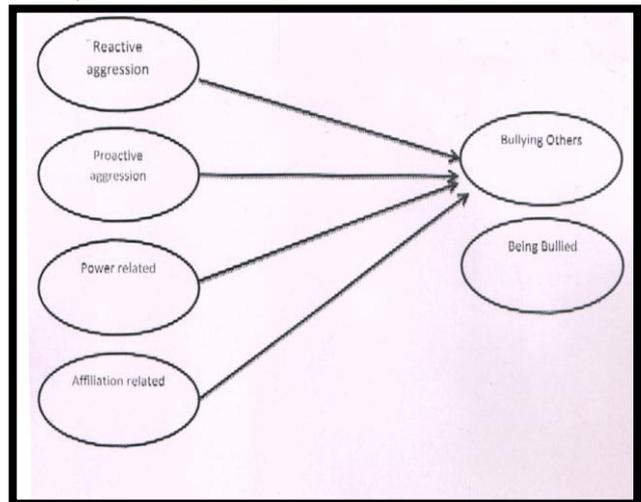
This scale will be an accumulation of both power-related aggressiveness and affiliation-related aggressiveness.

**Reactive Aggressiveness**

This scale was developed by Roland and Idsoe (2001) and will be used to identify the negative aspects of emotion that constitutes aggressiveness.

**Data Analysis Design**

The following is the structural model of relations among variables which was applied in m analysis:



**Figure 1. Structural Model of Relations Among Variables.**

Assessing the difference between the observed and expected value of variables in order to test the hypothesis of the present study and used the Chi Square (X<sup>2</sup>) statistics formula. Using 2x2 contingency table, boys versus girls, bullying others vs. being bullied and calling names vs. being called names were calculated. Also, boys vs. girl, proactive vs. reactive aggressiveness and power-related vs. affiliation-related aggressiveness were tested using 2x2contingency table. Statistical significant was set at p <0.05 level and the degree of freedom was (df =1). It was using semi structural interviews with both boys and girls during present study. The purpose of including study was to complement answers from questionnaires. The main items asked to the both boys and girls were merely about their empirical experiences such as common forms of bullying, motives of doing so, the long and short term effects, and justification or judgment about bullying behavior. The most important part of this study was to ask them about their contextual understanding of bullying. Therefore, to analyze this result was to simply use descriptive and explorative analysis. The exploration tried to describe the outcome of findings whether or

not it could have indicated an agreement between questionnaires and interviews.

### Result and Interpretation

The results obtained from the study, and will be divided into two parts: 1) empirical results from questionnaires and interviews on bullying and victimization, and 2) correlation between bullying others and power-related proactive aggressiveness, affiliation-related proactive aggressiveness, and reactive aggressiveness.

### Questionnaire Findings on Bullying and Victimization

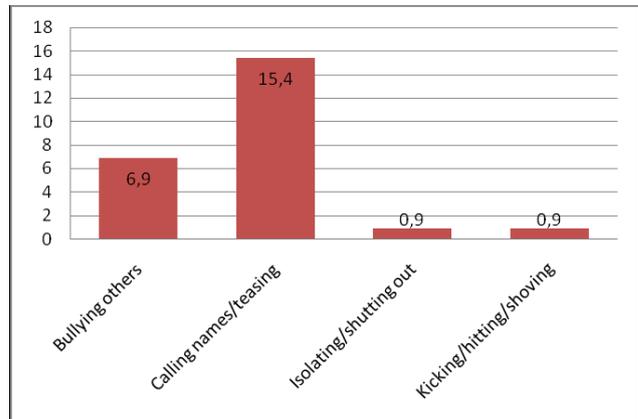
This questionnaire was designed to assess the level of bullying and victimization among students at school. It was comprised of four questions on bullying others, which were intended to ask students to identify themselves as bullies, and four questions on victimization that were intended to identify students themselves as victims. The items on the questionnaires were using the following descriptors: bullying by calling names or teasing (verbal bullying), bullying by isolation and shutting out (indirect physical bullying), and bullying by kicking, hitting and shoving (direct physical bullying). There is one general question on bullying that does not indicate any means used in bullying. It has been decided not to separate the general question from the rest on each of the following figures (see figures 2 and 3) although the answers may lead to overlapping interpretation. For present study, this is to show a clear difference in how the students relate to two types of questions: 1) Do they think they are a bully/victim? , and 2) Do they really commit bullying actions/are they exposed to such actions? Alternative answers were never, seldom, 2-3 times a month, weekly and daily. Since this part will only provide the result of identified bullies and victims, the figures below are based only on a daily basis responds. Respondents who have answered never, seldom, 2-3 times a month and weekly will not appear in the figures below due to the limitation of this paper. 246 students in the seventh and eighth grade of different schools participated in the survey conducted in 2014.

In the bullying and victimization questionnaires, students were asked if they have bullied other students or if they have been victimized by others at school during the year before, and how they experienced it. The following figures show how the students responded to the questions.

### Bullying Others

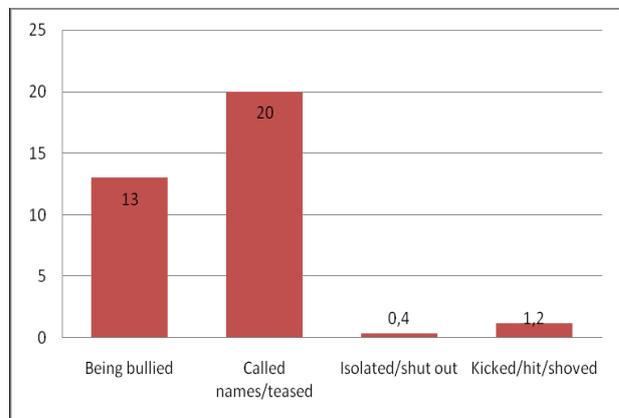
It is categorized someone as a bully if he/she conducts unpleasant things over and over again against an individual or group of individuals who are not able to defend themselves. The first four questions asked the students if they have ever bullied others at school. Figure 2 shows that in general, 6.09% (n=15) of the students admitted to bullying others without indicating any means they used. However, when it comes to concrete bullying actions, more students, about 15.04% (n=37), admitted using verbal means (calling names or teasing) to bully others. Only 0.9% (n=2) students have bullied others

by using indirect physical means (isolating/shutting out), and 0.9% (n=2) have bullied others by using direct physical means (hitting, kicking, or shoving).



**Figure 2. Percentage of Students Who Reported Having Bullied Other Students, N=246 Being Bullied or Victims**

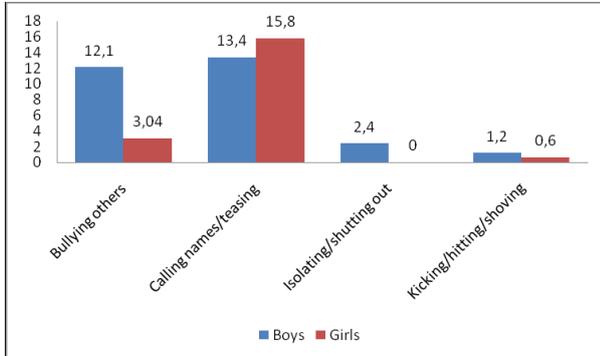
The second set of four questions asked students if they have been exposed to bullying actions during the last year and how they experienced this. I call a person a victim if "he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative action on the part on one or more persons" Olweus, 1991, p. 413). Figure 3 shows that in general 13% (n=32) of the students report having been bullied during the last school year, 20% (n=49) report having been teased or called names, only 0.4% (n=1) report having been isolated or shut out from others, and 1.2% (n=3) report having been kicked, hit or shoved.



**Figure 3. Percentage of Students Who Reported Being Bullied, N=246 Gender in Bullying and Victimization**

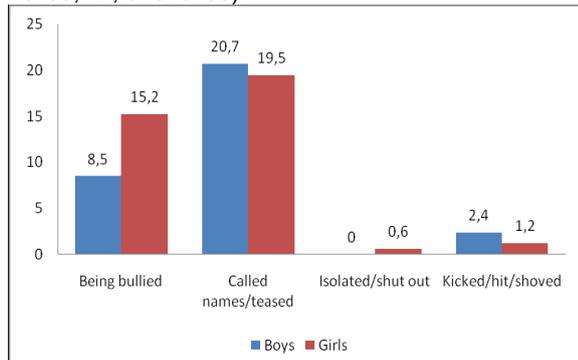
Figure 4 shows the difference between boys and girls in bullying others. The number of boys who participated in the survey was about n=82 while girls were about n=164. The result shows that among boys generally about 12.1% (n=10) admit having bullied others, about 13.4% (n=11) admit having called others names or teased them in ways that could be called "bullying", 2.4% (n=2) admit having isolated or shut out others in a way that can be called bullying,

and only 1.2% (n=1) admit having done this physically by kicking, hitting, or shoving. Figures on girls show that 3.04% (n=5) admit having bullied others, 15.8% (n=26) admit having called others names or teased them so that it may be called bullying, and only 0.6% (n=1) admit having kicked, hit, or shoved others. No one admits having isolated or shut others out.



**Figure 4. Percentage of Students Showing the Difference between Boys and Girls in Bullying Others**

The next figure (figure 5) shows victims among boys and girls. It shows that 8.5% (n=7) of boys had experienced being bullied in general, 20.7% (n=17) had experienced being called names or teased in way that may be called bullying, 2.4% (n=2) had experienced physical bullying (being kicked, hit, or shoved), and no one had experienced being isolated or shut out. Among girls, 15.2% (n=25) had experienced being generally bullied, 19.5% (n=32) had experienced being called names or teased by others so that it may be called bullying, 0.6% (n=1) had experienced being isolated or shut out, and 1.2% (n=2) had experienced physical bullying (being kicked, hit, or shoved).



**Figure 5. Percentage of Boys and Girls Who Reported Being Bullied, This Figure is Based on a Total of 82 Boys and 164 Girls.**

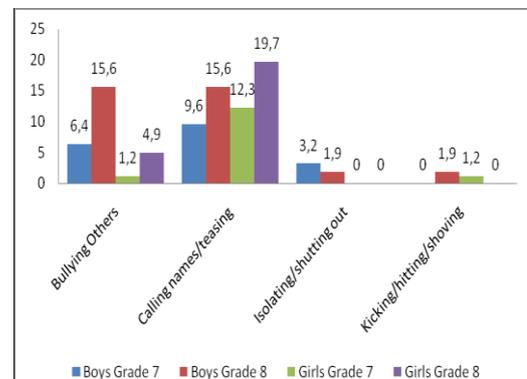
#### Bullies and Victims in Different Grades

It is reported from the survey that the different number and percentage of bully and victim vary in terms of grade as well as gender. The total number of boys in grade 7 who participated in the survey, were about 31 students while girls were about

83. In grade 8, boys were 51 and girls were about 81 in numbers.

Figure 6 shows that the percentage of boys in grade 7 who had identified themselves as participants in bullying others was 6.4% (n=2), as participants in calling other names or teasing 9.6% (n=3), and as participants in isolating participants in bullying others was 6.4% (n=2), as participants in calling other names or teasing 9.6% (n=3), and as participants in isolating or shutting others out 3.2% (n=1). No one had identified themselves as participants in kicking, hitting, or shoving. Among girls, only 1.2% (n=1) had identified themselves as participants in bullying others, 12.3% (n=10) had identified themselves as participants in calling names or teasing, 1.2% (n=1) had identified themselves as participant in kicking, hitting, or shoving others, and no one had identified themselves as participant isolating or shutting others out.

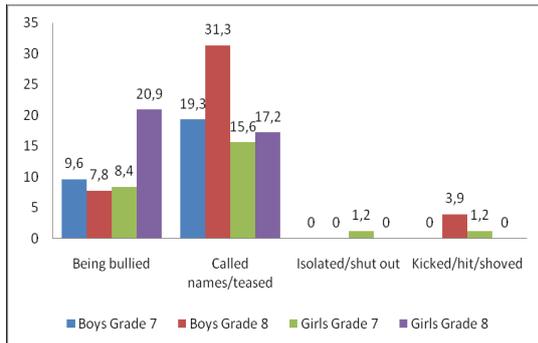
In grade 8, the percentage of boys who had identified themselves as participants in bullying others was 15.6% (n=8), as participants in calling other names or teasing was 15.6% (n=8), as participants in isolating or shutting others out was 1.9% (n=1), and as participants in kicking, hitting, and shoving others was 1.9% (n=1). Among girls, 4.9% (n=4) had admitted having bullied others, 19.7% (n=16) had admitted having calling other names or teasing, and no one had admitted having isolated or shut out other, as well as having kicked, hit, or shoved others. The figure is as follows:



**Figure 6. Percentage of Students in Different Grades Who Reported Having Bullied Others. This Figure is Based on a Total 31 Boys and 83 Girls in Grade 7, 51 Boys and 81 Girls in Grade 8.**

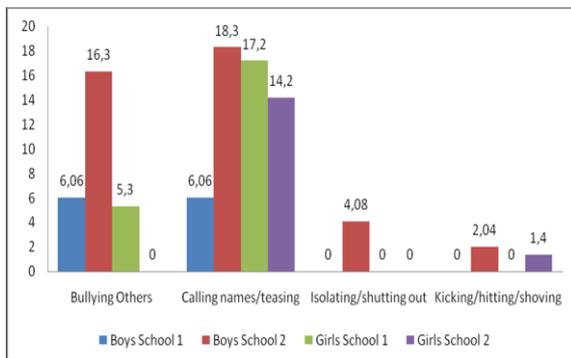
In terms of victimization, 9.6% (n=3) of the boys in grade 7 had experienced being bullied by other students and 19.3% (n=6) had experienced being called names or teased in ways, or so often, that it can be categorized as bullying. No one had experienced being isolated and being kicked. Among girls, 8.4% (n=7) had experienced being bullied in general, 15.6% (n=13) had experienced being called names or teased, and only 1.2% (n=1) had experienced being isolated or shut out as well as being kicked, hit, or shoved by others.

Figure 7 shows the percentage of victimization among boys and girls in the two age groups. In grade 8, the percentage of boys who had experienced being bullied by other students was 7.8% (n=4), by being called names or teased was 31.3% (n=16), by being kicked, hit or shoved was 3.9% (n=2), and no one had experienced being isolated or shut out. Among girls, 20.9% (n=17) had experienced being bullied, 17.2% (n=14) had experienced being called names or teased, and no one reported experiencing being isolated or shut out as well as being kicked, hit, or shoved by others. The figure is as follows:



**Figure7. Percentage of Students in Different Grades Who Reported Being Bullied, This Figure Is Based on A Total 31 Boys and 83 Girls in Grade Seven, 51 Boys and 81 Girls in Grade Eight. Bully and Victims in Different Schools**

Different schools atmospheres might cause different outputs of bullying behavior among students. Figure 8 shows that of the results in the two schools in our investigation: 6.06% (n=2) of the boys in school one had participated in bullying others and 6.06% (n=2) had participated in calling names or teasing in a bullying way. No one had participated in isolating or shutting others out or in kicking, hitting, or shoving. Among girls, 5.3% (n=5) had participated in bullying others and 17.02% (n=16) had participated in teasing or calling names in a bullying way. No one had participated in isolating or shutting others out or in kicking, hitting or shoving.

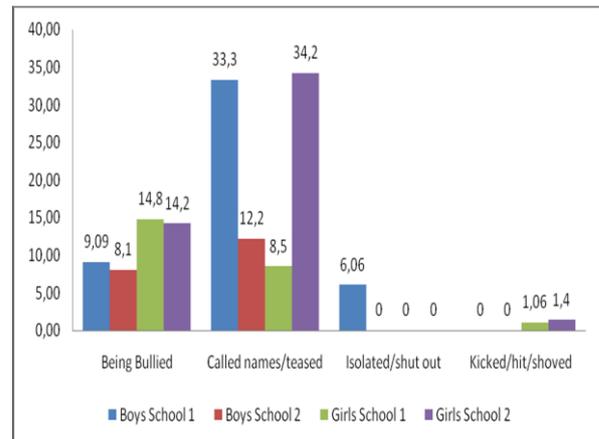


**Figure8. Percentage of Students in Different School Who Reported Having Bullied Others, This Figure is Based on a Total 33 Boys and 94 Girls in School One; 49 Boys and 70 Girls in School Two.**

In school two, 16.3% (n=8) of the boys had generally identified themselves having bullied others, 18.3% (n=9) had identified themselves as having participated in calling names and teasing in a bullying way, 4.08% (n=2) had been participated in isolating or shutting others out, and 2.04% (n=1) had participated in kicking, hitting, or shoving others. Among girls, no one identified themselves as bullies, 14.2% (n=10) identified themselves as participants in calling names or teasing, and only 1.4% (n=1) identified themselves as having participated in kicking, hitting or shoving others. No one identified themselves as participants in isolating or shutting others out.

Concerning victimization (figure 9), 9.09% (n=3) of the boys in school one had experienced being bullied, 33.3% (n=11) had experienced being called names or teased in a bullying way, and 6.06% (n=2) had experienced being isolated or shut out. No one had experienced physical bullying (being kicked, hit, or shoved). Among girls, 14.8% (n=14) had experienced being bullied, 8.5% (n=8) had experienced being called names or teased in ways that may be categorized as bullying, and 1.06% (n=1) had experienced being isolated or shut out as well as being kicked, hit, or shoved.

In school two, 8.1% (n=4) boys had experienced being bullied in general and 12.2% (n=6) had experienced being called names and teased in a bullying way. No one had experienced being isolated or being kicked, hit or shoved. Among girls, 14.2% (n=10) had experienced being bullied, 34.2% (n=24) had experienced being called names or teased, and only 1.4% (n=1) had experienced being kicked, hit, or shoved. No one had experienced being isolated or shut out.



**Figure9. Percentage of Students in Different School Who Reported of Being Bullied By Other Students, This Figure Is Based on a Total 33 Boys and 94 Girls in School One, 49 Boys and 70 Girls in School Two.**

In order to assess the place where victimization occurred, the students were also asked to rate the place where they had experienced being victimized. The result in table 1 shows that 41.4%

(n=34) of the boys had experienced being bullied in the schoolyard, 47.5% (n=39) had experienced being bullied in classroom, 43.9% (n=36) had experienced being bullied in the corridor, 8.5% (n=7) had experienced being bullied in the restroom, 8.5% had experienced being bullied on the way to/from school, 19.5% (n=16) experienced of being bullied after school/in the street, 7.3% had experienced being bullied on public transportation, and 21.9% had experienced being bullied in other places at school.

Among girls, 37.8% (n=62) had experienced being victimized in the schoolyard, 55.4% (n=91) had experienced being victimized in the classroom, 34.1% (n=56) had experienced being victimized in the corridor, 3.6% (n=6) had experienced being victimized in the restroom, 6.09% (n=10) had experienced being victimized on the way to/from school, 15.8% (n=26) had experienced being victimized after school/in the street, 8.5% (n=14) had experienced being victimized in the public transportation, and 22.5% (n=37) had experienced being victimized in other places at school.

## Conclusion

### Prevalence of Bullying and Victimization

In the study it has been explored that the differences in the level of bullying and victimization across the gender and grade levels. The result indicates that generally boys thought they were significantly more involved in bullying than girls. However, girls seemed more often to take part in verbal bullying (e.g. calling names or teasing) than did boys, and no less than boys in other forms of concrete bullying (isolating, physical bullying isolating others etc.). It was also indicated that girls were more often victimized than boys. In the previous studies, Roland and Idsøe (2001) and Fandrem et al. (2009) found that boys are more likely to bully others in comparison to girls, and to also be victims of bullying. Having compared these two findings, But it would like to say that present study results indicate that girls, more than boys, are victims of bullying, whereas previous findings indicate that more boys than girls are victims of bullying. Across grade levels, in the present study findings shown a different direction from the previous studies (e.g. Olweus, 1993; Seals and Young, 2003; Rigby, 2008). These studies have indicated that the general trend in bullying is likely to decrease the higher the level of grade. Present study indicates that both boys and girls in grade eight scored higher in bullying others than in grade seven. In victimization boys in grade seven scored higher than in grade eight. However, girls scored higher in grade eight than in grade seven. Having looked at this pattern, it seemed that in bullying others, both boys and girls in this study are opposed to the general pattern as presented in previous (Western) studies. In victimization, however, boys are in line with previous studies, whereas girls are not.

### Underlying Mechanisms of Aggressive Behavior Among Boys and Girls, in Grade Seven and Eight

The present findings on the correlation analysis, particularly in finding out which form of

aggression is related to bullying behavior, opposed the general expectation as presented in the previous study in Roland and Idsøe (2001). They have indicated that in the Norwegian school context, proactive and reactive aggressiveness were related to bullying others among boys and girls in the lower grade. In higher grades only proactive aggressiveness was related to bullying others, but was slightly different among boys and girls. Whereas in present study it is found that proactive and reactive aggressiveness were significantly related to bullying others for girls in the seventh grade, but not for boys. However, among the eighth graders, neither proactive aggressiveness nor reactive aggressiveness was related to bullying others for boys as well as girls.

This study has also sought to discover the motives behind the bullies' aggressive means: either power or affiliation. It is indicated that power-related aggressiveness was a good predictor for being involved in bullying among girls, but not for boys. However, affiliation-related aggressiveness was a good predictor for boys, but not for girls. In terms of grade, power-related aggressiveness was a good predictor for being involved in bullying for girls in grade seven, but not for affiliation-related aggressiveness. However, neither power-related nor affiliation-related aggressiveness was a good predictor for being involved in bullying for boys. In grade eight, neither power-related nor affiliation-related aggressiveness was related to bullying others among girls, while only affiliation-related aggressiveness was a good predictor for being involved in bullying among boys. Generally, these findings are quite different from what Roland and Idsøe have found in their study in a Norwegian context in which "power-related aggressiveness is a better predictor for being involved in bullying for boys than for girls, and affiliation-related aggressiveness is a better predictor for girls than for boys" (Roland and Idsøe, 2001, p. 459).

### Suggestions Future studies

This study is the beginning of a diagnosis of the problem of bullying in India, using a very small sample from two secondary schools in the area of Jammu. The result, therefore, cannot be generalized to any other places or schools in the city or even for the whole India. It is possible that in the future, the same study could be carried out with a larger sample, which could be on a regional or national scale in order to see how prevalent the phenomenon is throughout the region or country.

India, with its cultural diversity, made it difficult to conclude that this study reflected the general trend of school bullying present in the country. This heterogeneous cultural issue may also influence the overall result of my finding. In light of this, it is sometimes difficult to claim one's study reflects the whole population; instead it only reflects the very specific society within the particular area where the study was conducted. For example, if my study of bullying were to cover all schools in the rural areas of Jammu, it would not necessarily reflect another area

in another neighboring region, for they have different cultural considerations. Having said this, it would be interesting if future studies in school bullying in India could be carried out on a regional base. By doing this, a researcher can infer how important cultural differences are in shaping every perception and consideration of a study. Moreover, possible explanations as to why school violence occurs within a particular school could be interesting to look at in future studies. As I mentioned earlier, school violence seemed to be prevalent within schools in this region, but unfortunately I did not find any indications that it existed in the two schools where I conducted my study. If one can do a national scale study, it could be a great contribution to build a more solid perception of school violence in India.

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