Bullying in Schools: Types, Causes, Effects and Suggested Solutions
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Abstract

This research shows the most serious problem that occurs widely in schools, that is bullying. Bullying is the undesired, aggressive behavior. Both individuals who are bullied and who bully others have suffered from strong and persistent problems. The current study aims at investigating the main types of bullying in Iraqi schools, showing the causes of bullying in Iraqi schools and finding out students' reactions to bullying situations. To achieve the aims and test the validity of the hypotheses of this study, the following instruments are used: interviewing teachers to find out the causes and effects of bullying in their schools, using questionnaire to explore students' responses when they are exposed to situations of bullying and using a statistical method, represented by the percentage equation, to tabulate the results of the analysis. There are the most important findings of this study: both a victim and a perpetrator have bad problems that are effective and going for a long time, there are three types of bullying in Iraqi schools: verbal, physical and social bullying and verbal aggression is the commonest type of bullying in Iraqi schools.

Key words: Bullying, Trauma, Mental health, Behavior, Violence

التنمر في المدارس: (انواعه, اسبابه, اثاره, الحلول المقترحة)

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الملخص

يوضح هذا البحث أن أخطر مشكلة تحدث على نطاق واسع في المدارس هي التنمر. التنمر هو سلوك عدواني غير مرغوب فيه. كل من الأفراد الذين يتعرضون للتنمر والذين يتنمرون على الآخرين قد عانوا من مشاكل قوية ومستمرة. تهدف الدراسة الحالية إلى التعرف على أبرز أنواع التنمر في المدارس العراقية وبيان أسباب التنمر في المدارس العراقية ومعرفة ردود أفعال الطلبة تجاه مواقف التنمر. ولتحقيق أهداف هذه الدراسة واختبار صحة فرضياتها، تم استخدام الأدوات التالية: مقابلة المعلمين لمعرفة أسباب وآثار التنمر في مدارسهم، استخدام الاستبيان لاستكشاف استجابات الطلاب عندما يتعرضون لمواقف التنمر. التنمر واستخدام الأسلوب الإحصائي المتمثل في معادلة النسبة المئوية لتبويب نتائج التحليل. وهناك أهم النتائج التي توصلت إليها هذه الدراسة: يعاني كل من الضحية والجاني من مشاكل سيئة تكون فعالة وتستمر لفترة طويلة، وهناك ثلاثة أنواع من التنمر في المدارس العراقية: التنمر اللفظي، والجسدي، والاجتماعي، والعدوان اللفظي هو الأكثر شيوعاً. أكثر أنواع التنمر شيوعاً في المدارس العراقية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التنمر، الصدمات، الصحة النفسية، السلوك، العنف.

1.Introduction

It is worth mentioning that bullying is able to influence every person: those who are bullied, those who bully, and those who witness bullying. Moreover, bullying can be resulted in harmful results that have serious effects on mental health. The intentional violence , victimization, unequal strength and repetition are major components of the school bullying. It causes low self-esteem which resulted in depression and physical or emotional distress. Bullying is a serious problem that requires long, consistent effort to keep away from school.

There are research questions:

1- What are the types of bullying mostly found in Iraqi schools?

2-What are the causes of bullying in Iraqi schools from the teachers' point of view?

3-What are students' responses to situations of bullying?.

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This study attempts to answer these questions as well as achieve the following aims:

1- Pointing out the most common types of bullying in Iraqi secondary schools.

2- Identifying the main causes of bullying from teachers' point of view in Iraqi schools.

3- Presenting the expected students' responses to bullying situations.

To achieve the aims of this study, it is hypothesized that:

1- There are three types of bullying in Iraqi schools: verbal, physical and social bullying. The verbal bullying is the commonest type.

2-There are six causes behind doing bullying by some Iraqi secondary schools' students:

a-They are emotionally hurt.

b-They are not safe.

c-They are bullied.

d-Bullying is an acquired behavior.

e-They are socially awkward.

f-They feel unknown and obscure

g- They are insensitive

3- Victim, bully, bystander, intervener participant and helper are the expected students' reactions to bullying situations.

To test the validity of these hypotheses, certain procedures have been followed:

1-Surveying the relevant literature about bullying to present   comprehensive description of bullying.

2- Conducting an interview with teachers to find out the causes and effects of bullying in their schools.

3-Designing suitable questionnaire to explore students' responses when they are exposed to situations of bullying.

4- Using a statistical method, represented by the percentage equation, to tabulate the results of the analysis.

This study is limited to show the types, causes and suggested solutions to stop bullying in secondary schools in Babylon Province. The sample of participants of this papers' questionnaire is limited to secondary schools' students.

The importance of this research can be shown as follows:

1. The present study is expected to have a great educational value to help teachers , parents and students to stop and prevent bullying in schools.

2.The theoretical value is hoped to present the most various strategies of how to deal with bullying in school.

3.Presenting the best ways to stop and prevent bullying in schools.

1.1. The Definitions of Bullying

The most prominent definition of bullying that is any unwanted aggressive behavior which has perceived power imbalance and repetition. Bullying involves physical, psychological, social, or educational harm. The term 'school bullying' refers to non-reactive aggression that happens when there is no obvious cause. (E. Figula *et al.*, 2019,5)

According to Jillian et al (2022, 1), in general, school violence (bullying) refers to the threat or use of force at school or during school-related activities with the purpose of causing harm. Bullying, aggression, fighting, threats, and weapons offenses all fall under this broad definition.

Bullying is known as any aggressive behavior directed by a perpetrator against a target of a similar age. The most important property of bullying is the unequal the bully is power between the bully and their victim. This is especially true when bigger and stronger than his victim or someone is bullied by a group of people. Besides, the unequal strength may be difficult to be recognized since it comprises abstract and unclear things: linguistic competence, popularity, knowledge, ability,

genuineness,   that   make   the   victim   embarrassed.
(Arseneault L. 2018,59)

1.2. The Types of School Bullying

There are commonest types of school bullying:

a- Bodily violence: hitting, kicking, and tripping, is called Physical bullying that is most prominent kind of aggressiveness. So, it is firstly supposed when bullying is mentioned. For (Olweus D. 2005,6) there are other forms of bodily violence: undesired hand and facial gestures, stealing, and destroying the others possessions. It is obvious that this type is done by ones who are stronger than their victims. For (Lansford *et al.,* 2012,88), men are engaged in the bodily violence more than women. Moreover, boys (aged 7 to 14) have encountered to violence more than girls.

b-Verbal bullying refers to bad words used to insult and threat victims. Also, boys have exposed to verbal violence more than girls. This is the commonest type that encountered by 7- to 10-year-old children. Verbal bullying cannot be proved and reported because of its intangible and not visible results. Sometimes, it is considered as a joke and funny talk between friends. So, the victims feel stress and anxiety when they are unable to prove that is bullying not a mere joke. (Iossi, *et al.,* 2013,10 & Wang *et al.,* 2020,30)

c-Social bullying, also called "relational bullying",   goals to hurt a victim's relationships or reputation. So the bullied are embarrassed and shy because of rumors that make them socially diminished. Isolation, loneliness, depression and social anxiety are attributed to relationship aggression. Centifanti, et al. (2015,5), Jacobsen and Bauman (2007,11) stated that according to the school counselors' views the relationship bullying is less serious than verbal and physical bullying since it is difficult to be recognized.

d-Cyberbullying aggression, it is also known as electronic bullying. A young person can be the aggressor, the victim, or both (also known as the "bullying/victim"). Text messages, social media, apps or online forums are used to spread hurt content: sharing insulting personal information, photos, and messages.

(Gynthia Vinney, 2021,5 and Patchin, *et al.*, 2020,8)

1.3. The Causes of School Bullying

There are common reasons behind doing bullying by some people:

a-They are Emotionally Hurt.

Personal tragedy can occasionally help us understand how others think and behave, even though it never allow to hurt another person. As a result, people who intentionally bully others suffer from difficult experiences in their own lives. They are unable to deal with frustration and depression correctly, therefore; they reflect their pains on others. (Michelle Felder, 2022,13) and

(Limor Weinstein, 2022, 5)

b-They are not Safe.

When people live in a society that has unclear levels of "social status," they are motivated to scorn and insult others for getting superiority and social value. This can be seen in the workplace, where envy and the want to "get ahead" can result in putting others down, especially in circumstances that are competitive. This can be noticed in the workplace, where jealousy and the desire to "get on top" can lead to putting others down, as well as it can happen especially in a competitive work environments.

c-They are Bullied.

Sometimes people bully because they are suffering from bulling. In a way, they may think that bullying others can save them from exposure to bulling. Some people try to overcome bullying in anticipation of being bullied and will bully others to protect themselves by taking action first. Although it is a wrong and negative defense way, but it is used commonly. (Limor Weinstein, 2022, 5)

d-Bullying is an Acquired Behavior.

When children see adults bullying others, or they are exposed to aggression by their own parents or adults, they may try to imitate and stimulate the behavior. Adults may experience bullying as a part of a toxic work environment or in other social settings, where it may gradually be become as the standard.

e-They are Socially Awkward.

Probably, the person who decides to hurt others has deficient social skills or has difficulty to communicate with others and he has no relationship in general. Essentially, in the uncomfortable social situations, they are unable to engage and behave correctly. For example: (Felder, 2022,5), they feel frustrated and neglected, or they lack attention and respect.

f-They Feel Unknown and Obscure

Because many people spend their time online, bullying has been increased for years. The extra draw of the digital world is that it appears to be more anonymous. As stated by (Weinstein, 2022,7) "The internet bullies are often separated from their computer activities, hiding behind a screen and acting out their bullying tendencies." That enables them to be more violent and brutal than they'd ever been in person.

g- They are Insensitive

They are careless and stolid, and they don't mind controlling, blaming, terrorizing, or taking advantage of others. In that way, they lack the capacity to grasp how their bad behavior negatively affects people and to relate to another person's perspective. They prey on the vulnerable and refuse to accept the consequences of their actions. They are motivated by a need for control and

limelight. They have not yet developed the ability to be kind, sympathetic, or courteous, no matter what kind of bully they are. (Weinstein, 2022,7)

1.4. The Consequences of Bullying

There is a strong relationship between school violence and bullying that shows that the adults who behave badly at school may also hurt others there or in other settings. Probably, in future, they get more violent things: self-harm, carrying weapons, suicidality , dropping out of school, being a victim of dating violence. (Wang *et al.,* 2020,33)

Any aggression committed, any hurt and unacceptable behavior are results of the school violence that results in being a victim of violence and there are the worst results: loneliness, low self-esteem, anxiety, despair, and other mildly negative effects. (Karcher, 2005,20)

2. Methods and Data Collection Procedures

In the present study, a questionnaire was distributed to (80) of the participants in order to obtain the empirical information that are useful for the present research. The participants are given both open answers and alternative answers to the open ended and "True", "False" questions respectively as shown in Appendixes (I) and (II).

Then, making interview with teachers for hearing their views and opinions that agree with their students' responses. The data gained have been carefully analyzed.

2.1. Participants

For (Hughes, 1996,44) and (Al-Samawi 2000,111) the sample must refer to the full scope of what is specified. (Richards *et al.,* 1992,282) show that sample represents any set of items, subjects, etc. that have some familiar and essential characteristics.

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The participants in this research are (80) randomly chosen students who are from different secondary schools, (50) male and (30) female subjects, their age ranges from (13) to (18) years.

2.2. Instrument

For achieving the goal of this research and verifying the hypothesis as well as illustrating the students' personal viewpoints that reflect the causes of bullying and its types, the rating scales questionnaire was constructed by the researcher.

In this research, the closed questionnaire, has 50 (TRUE/ FALSE) items is distributed to (80) students. This questionnaire shows the phenomenon of student violence and conflict in the daily life of the school. Some items of this questionnaire refer to the most common type of bullying in the students' opinions. Moreover, items of the questionnaire refer to its six main dimensions: (Appendix I)

1.Victim of bullying

2. Intervening participant

3.Helper participant

4. Bystander

5. Bully

6. Which is the most common type of bullying?

Besides, making interview with teachers to show the main causes and effects of bullying. (Appendix II)

3. Results and Discussion

The results of the questionnaire show its dimensions and their branches:

3.1. The Dimension of the Victim

The sub dimensions of victims are arranged from the commonest type (77) which adds up to (96%) to the least common one (70) which adds up to (88%), they are as follows , see (Table 1):

a. Perception (perceiving and assimilating insults).

b. Affection (emotional effect of insult).

c. Physical response (body's response to insult).

4. Lack of social reinforce (class community refuses to help).

Table (1): The Sub Dimensions of Victims

No. of Item	"Yes"	%	"No"	%
A	77	96	3	4
B	75	94	5	6
C	74	92	6	8
D	70	88	10	12
Total	296	93	24	7

3.2. Intervener Participant

This dimension has (40) positive responses which adds up to (50%).

3.3. Helper Participant

The sub dimensions of helper participant are arranged from the commonest type (80) which adds up to (100%) to the least common one (75) which adds up to (94%), they are as follows, see Table (2):

a- Mediation intervention.

b-Interjections for asking for help.

c-Emotional (inner tension related to violence).

Table (2): The Sub Dimensions of Helper Participant

No. of Item	Agree "Yes"	%	Disagree "No"	%
A	80	100	0	0

B	78	98	2	2
C	75	94	5	6
Total	233	97	7	3

3.4. Bystander

There are two sub dimensions of bystander that are arranged from the commonest type (80) which adds up to (100%) to the least common one (75) which adds up to (94%), they are as follows, see Table (3):

a- Keeping one's distance

b- Fear

Table (3): Sub Dimensions of Bystander

No. of Item	Agree "Yes"	%	Disagree "No"	%
A	80	100	0	0
B	75	94	5	6
Total	155	97	5	3

3.5. Bully

There are four sub dimensions of bully that are arranged from the commonest dimension(78) which adds up to (96%) to the least common one (70) which adds up to (88%), they are as follows , see (Table 4):

a-Physical aggression

b-Verbal aggression   .

c- Exclusion

d-Positive profit (benefit of the assault)

Table (4): The Sub Dimensions of Bully

No. of Item	"Yes"	%	"No"	%

A	78	96	2	3
B	75	94	5	6
C	74	93	6	7
D	70	88	10	12
Total	297	93	23	7

3.6. Which is the Most Common Type of Bullying?

Here, bullying has three types that are arranged from the commonest type (80) which adds up to (100%) to the least common type (60) which adds up to (75%) , they are as follows , see (Table 5):

a- Verbal bullying

b- Physical bullying

c- Social bullying

Table (5): The Types of Bullying (Verbal, Physical and Social)

No. of Item	Agree "Yes"	%	Disagree "No"	%
A	80	100	0	0
B	78	98	2	2
C	60	75	20	25
Total	218	90	22	9

The results of the tables(1, 2, 3, and 4) validate the hypothesis that states: " Victim, bully, bystander, intervener participant and helper are the expected students' reactions to bullying situations.". The results of the table (5) verify the hypothesis that states " There are three types of bullying in Iraqi schools and the verbal bullying is the commonest type".

4. Conclusions

1- This research reflects the serious problem of bullying that spreads more in Iraqi schools nowadays which has an actual power imbalance and repetition. Since

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bullying represents a serious threaten against students' physical and emotional safety at Iraqi schools, it should be reduced and stopped.

2- Through this study, it is found that both a victim and a perpetrator have bad problems that are effective and going for a long time. Both of them have encountered anxiety, frustration, low self-esteem, depression and their low academic achievement.

3- According to the students' questionnaire as well as teacher' opinions, there are three types of bullying in Iraqi schools: verbal, physical and social bullying. Fortunately, because of no use of mobile phone in Iraqi schools, there is no cyber bullying.

4- Verbal aggression is the commonest type of bullying in Iraqi schools.

5-Teaching kindness and empathy, creating opportunities for connection and using the arts to create context are valuable solutions to prevent bullying in Iraqi schools .

6- Parents as well as educators can reduce and stop bullying in schools through:

a-Making students face bulling positively.

b-Showing the reality of bullying and it is unacceptable behavior.

c-Ensuring and enabling students to get help as soon as they need it.

7- According to the interview that made with teachers to show their opinions about the causes of bullying in their schools, there are six causes:

a- They are emotionally hurt.

b- They are not safe.

c-Bullying is an acquired behavior.

d-They are socially awkward.

e- They are insensitive bullying.

So, the hypothesis that states: "There are six causes behind doing bullying by some Iraqi secondary schools' students" is verified. These causes that can be avoided by the following recommendations to stop bullying in Iraqi schools:

5. Recommendations

In order to make schools safer and prevent bullying, the following important points should be done:

1-Supporting the bullying prevention efforts by training school staff and students to reduce bullying.

2-The school should provide students with an environment that is free from bullying to enable them to enhance their performance and have comfortable and enjoyable days at school, that is done by:

a- The lines of communication must be kept open with students.

b-Listening to students, knowing their friends and understanding their needs.

c-Telling students to speak to someone they can trust when they are harassed and see that others have been treated badly.

d-Encouraging students to report bullying when it occurs.

e-Training and enabling students how to face students who bully confidently.

f-Outlining safety precautions, such as remaining near adults or groups of other students.

g-Helping students who are bullied by showing kindness or getting help.

3-The prevention of bullying can be covered in courses and extracurricular activities in schools. Activities to teach about bullying include, for instance:

a-Research on the Internet or in a library to learn about different forms of bullying, prevention strategies, and student response options.

b-Presentation on the prevention of bullying, such as a speech or role-play.

c-Presenting topics that related to the reporting bullying.

d-Writing stories or poems speaking out against violence.

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e-Meaningful situations that deal with bullying and how to address it should be made inside classroom to make students understand bullying that it is unwanted behavior and it should be reduced and stopped.

f-Increasing classroom meetings to talk about peer relations

4- It is possible for schools to implement evidence-based programs or curriculums. In elementary and middle schools, there are many bullying prevention programs that have been evaluated

5- Parents have a powerful role and they should be given chances to share their valuable experiences. So, they must be invited to present periodic meetings at parents and teachers council in the school to follow up on the status of their sons and daughters.

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Appendix I

THE QUESTIONNAIRE ON SCHOOL BULLYING

You will find statements in this questionnaire that allude to behaviors that can occur during confrontations at school, either between you and your classmates or between your peers.

Please carefully consider each statement before selecting the response ("TRUE" or "FALSE") on the answer sheet that you believe most accurately captures your actions in the given circumstances.

1-	There are certain of my classmates that I am terrified of.	"TRUE" "FALSE"
2-	One of my classmates bullies me.	"TRUE" "FALSE"
3-	My classmates talk to me badly in breaks.	"TRUE" "FALSE"
4-	If someone bullies me, In front of the others, I feel embarrassed.	"TRUE" "FALSE"
5-	My classmates call me bad names.	"TRUE" "FALSE"

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6-	I will kick anything or someone if I expose to bullying.	"TRUE" "FALSE"
7-	If someone bullies me, I feel depressed.	"TRUE" "FALSE"
8-	My classmates are friendly to me.	"TRUE" "FALSE"
9-	Since I am not like others, I expose to bullying.	"TRUE" "FALSE"
10-	If someone bullies me, I have a headache.	"TRUE" "FALSE"
11-	I feel fatigued and tired if I expose to bullying.	"TRUE" "FALSE"
12-	My classmates annoy me and taunt me.	"TRUE" "FALSE"
13-	If I expose to bully, I will hit the wall.	"TRUE" "FALSE"
14-	My classmates say nasty words to me.	"TRUE" "FALSE"
15-	There is no reasons behind my exposure to bullying.	"TRUE" "FALSE"
16-	I encounter bullying just the others like it.	"TRUE" "FALSE"
17-	Those who bully me are older than me.	"TRUE" "FALSE"
18-	When I expose to bullying, I will break something.	"TRUE" "FALSE"
19-	Those who bully me are stronger than me.	"TRUE" "FALSE"
20-	Since I am isolated, I expose to bullying,	"TRUE" "FALSE"
21-	Those who bully me outnumber me.	"TRUE" "FALSE"
22-	Since the others hate me, I expose to bullying.	"TRUE" "FALSE"
23-	I feel sorry for myself when I encounter bullying.	"TRUE" "FALSE"
24-	If someone bullies me, I can hardly concentrate in class.	"TRUE" "FALSE"
25-	I expose to bullying since they feel better than me.	"TRUE" "FALSE"
26-	I engage in bullying with my classmates so that they see that I belong with them.	"TRUE" "FALSE"
27-	When my classmates quarrel, I ask a teacher for help.	"TRUE" "FALSE"
28-	When my classmates quarrel, I try to fit in with them.	"TRUE" "FALSE"

29-	When I see someone bullied, I feel sorry for him .	"TRUE" "FALSE"
30-	I get depressed in an inimical and unfriendly environment.	"TRUE" "FALSE"
31-	When my classmates quarrel, I sympathize with the weak.	"TRUE" "FALSE"
32-	I'm not going to intervene when my friends quarrel since it doesn't bother me if they get into fight.	"TRUE" "FALSE"
33-	I'm not going to intervene when my friends quarrel since they might tell a teacher and he or she might scold me.	"TRUE" "FALSE"
34-	I'm not going to intervene when my friends quarrel since my parents might get upset.	"TRUE" "FALSE"
35-	I'm not going to intervene when my friends quarrel since I'm afraid of getting hit.	"TRUE" "FALSE"
36-	I'm not going to intervene when my friends quarrel since I'm not responsible for that.	"TRUE" "FALSE"
37-	I hurt one or more of my friends.	"TRUE" "FALSE"
38-	I am unfriendly with one or more of my classmates.	"TRUE" "FALSE"
39-	If I bully someone, I feel brave.	"TRUE" "FALSE"
40	I angrily push one or more of my classmates.	"TRUE" "FALSE"
41-	I say bad words to one or more of my classmates.	"TRUE" "FALSE"
42-	If I bully someone, the others admire me	"TRUE" "FALSE"
43-	I yank one or more of my classmates' hair.	"TRUE" "FALSE"
44-	one or more of my peers from activities. I expelled	"TRUE" "FALSE"
45-	If I bully someone, I feel stronger.	"TRUE" "FALSE"
46-	I hit one or more of my classmates.	"TRUE" "FALSE"
47-	I think the physical bullying is the most common type	"TRUE" "FALSE"
48-	I think the verbal bullying is the most common type	"TRUE" "FALSE"

| 49- | I think the social bullying is the most common type | "TRUE" "FALSE" |
| 50- | I think there are other types of bullying | "TRUE" "FALSE" |

Appendix II

Interview with Teachers

Conducting the interview with secondary schools' teachers (male and female) to answer some important questions that deal with bullying.

* Please read the following questions carefully and try to answer them from your points of view:

1- How does bullying affect academic performance of students?

2- Is bullying the serious problem in your schools?

3- Are both the victim of bullying and students who bully are suffering from serious and long lasted problems?

4- What are the main causes of bullying?

5- What are the types of bullying in your schools?

6- What is the commonest type of bullying in your schools?

7- What are the valuable solutions of bullying ?

8- What is the role of school to stop bullying?

9- What is the role of parents and teachers council to stop bullying?

10- Do the individual differences have a role in increasing bullying in your schools?