

Pupils' Bullying Behaviors in Jordan: School Managers and Teachers' Perspectives

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Abstract

The study aims at identifying students' bullying behaviors from Schools managers and teachers' perspectives. To achieve the study objective, a questionnaire was designed to collect data, pilot-tested and peer-reviewed. The study sample was chosen randomly and consisted of (125) respondents from different cities in Jordan. The results of the study showed that the common bullying behaviors were as follows: verbal bullying (M=4.051, SD=1.118), physical bullying (M=3.97, SD=1.197), cyber bullying (M=3.742, SD=1.208), and gender bullying (M=3.65, SD=1.235). In addition, results revealed factors of bullying as schools managers and teachers indicated: the bad companions (M=4.90, SD=1.051), parent's educational and cultural background (M= 4.82, SD=1.135), family disintegration (M= .784, SD=1.223), the inadequate parental treatment (M=3.37, SD=1.262), and other reasons (M=3.742, SD= 1.207).

Keywords: Bullying behaviors, physical bullying, gender bullying, schools pupils, Jordan

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Introduction

Bullying started to gain more attention since the early 1970s in order to identify the problems to which bullies and their victims are exposed. Most bullies suffer from being under the control of aggressive motives and the lack of empathy with others; they usually seek to dominance over others and attract their attention. Bullying could be in the form of physical, verbal or emotional abuse; it has a hidden nature, which takes place in most schools and it is hardly uncovered due to the confidentiality surrounding it.

School is considered as the second educational institution after family, in terms of its impact on students; it takes care of the students, promotes their abilities and skills, develops their potentials and provides them with knowledge and updated information. Therefore, it contributes to preparing a generation which has the ability to take responsibility and directs the youth capabilities towards serving community. Furthermore, schools may contribute to acquiring some students aggressive and disrupted behaviors inside the school environment and the local community (Al-Zo'bi, 2015).

In this vein, bullying is viewed as one of the most common social pathological manifestations in the school environment. It is represented by the frequent aggressive behavior in the form of verbal, physical and psychological abuse. It is practiced by an individual or a group of people against others in a manner that has the potential of causing morale or physical harm to others. Bullying may contribute to stimulating chaos, threat, terrorism and fear due to the bad behaviors practiced by bullies against the bullied inside the school environment. Such bullying behaviors are the result of the absence of the school and family surveillance role as well as the weak systems and regulations (Jaradat, 2008).

Bullying is a widely-spread phenomenon inside schools, which threatens the security of educational institutions. The international statistics revealed that school bullying is common in the different school stages, where about (15 – 20%) of the students in the primary stages are exposed to bullying and violence practiced by their peers. This percentage is even more during the following stages, with (30%) during the middle stages and (10%) during the secondary stage. Statistics revealed that about half of the children all over the world were exposed, at least once, to bullying during the school stages, and that (10%) of those are exposed to a form of violent stressors in a regular basis (Ahmad and Abdo, 2016, 4).

As for the American schools, about (2.1) million students practice bullying, and while about (2.7) million students are victims of bullying (Field, 2004). Liang, Fisher and Lombark (2007) the suggested that (36.3%) of school students in South Africa are involved in bullying behaviors; (8.2%) of those are bullies, (19.3%) are victims and (8.7%) are victimized bullies. As for Jordan, (Jaradat, 2008) revealed that (18.9%) of basic school students were classified as bullies, (10.25%) as victims and (1.5%) as victimized bullies, while (69.4%) were classified as neutral.

Problem statement

School bullying is considered as one of the serious problems that face family and school security. Educationalists attempt to investigate this problem and reduce its prevalence due to its negative consequences, particularly on the bullies and victims, and generally on the whole educational process.

Bullying represents a form of unbalanced frequent aggressive behavior within the school environment between two parts, one of them is the bully while the other is the victim; it could be in the form of physical, psychological, sexual or social abuse. Such a behavior affects the secure and social structure of school and community, in addition to its impact on the victimized student, in that the student feels that he is rejected and unwelcome; he would also have feelings of fear and discomfort, where he always drops out of school and avoids taking part in extracurricular activities. Bullying is also exposed to firing from school and could involve in dangerous deviant behaviors. School bullying is one of the problems that hinder the educational process. Therefore, this study would highlight the problem of bullying among pupils in Jordan.

The study problem lies in the increased rates of bullying inside schools, which represents a risk that threatens the school environment and the community as a whole despite the rapid change and technological developments. The study problem is determined by answering the following questions:

- 1- What are Schools managers and teachers' attitudes towards verbal bullying across the pupils in schools campus?
 - a) What are Schools managers and teachers' attitudes towards verbal bullying across the pupils in schools campus?
 - b) What are Schools managers and teachers' attitudes towards bullying against victims' properties across the pupils in schools campus?
 - c) What are Schools managers and teachers' attitudes towards emotional bullying across the pupils in schools campus?
 - d) What are Schools managers and teachers' attitudes towards gender bullying across the pupils in schools campus?
 - e) What are Schools managers and teachers' attitudes towards cyber bullying across the pupils in schools campus?
- 2- What are the reasons of bullying act across pupils from Schools managers and teachers' perspectives?

The study objectives

The main objective of the current study is to identify students' bullying behaviors from Schools managers and teachers' perspectives. The objectives of the study as follows:

- a) To examine the Schools managers and teachers' attitudes towards bullying inside the school campus among the pupils.
- b) To identify reasons to act bullying inside school campus across pupils

Significance of the study

The importance of this study appears in being one of few studies that investigated attitudes, causes and behaviors of bullying across pupils in Jordanian schools. Therefore, the current study contributes to enriching literature with this subject. The current study provides educational institutions with significant information to revise principals in schools' settings, policies, plans, procedures and programs that may potentially reduce of the phenomena of bullying across pupils. In addition, the results and applicable recommendations in this study are beneficial for education experts and both public and private education sectors in Jordan if taken into consideration.

Setting and context

Bullying started to manifest as a dangerous phenomenon since the 1970s and the first to use the concept of bullying was the Norwegian scholar (Olweus) in 1973. The term bullying is derived from the Latin word (INCIVILITES CIVITE), which means the lack of civilization, indicating a behavior that doesn't respect the rules and public system (Cyntheia, 2014:20).

The phenomenon of bullying emerged in the West and the United States of America, where bullying affects about five million students in the primary and middle stages, and about (10-15%) of children around the world were exposed to bullying or saw other individuals exposed to the various forms of bullying either physically, verbally, psychologically or sexually. The results revealed that (25%) of children stated that were victims of bullying. In Australia, (50%) of male children whose ages ranged between (11-15) years old were exposed to bullying. Experts suggested that about (3.7) million children in the United States of America were exposed to bullying during the primary and middle school stages., and that about (20%) of those are exposed to long-term suffering of psychological and psychosomatic effects as well as suicidal ideation due to the effect of bullying (Saihi, et al, 2019: 101).

Due to the impact of Western media and globalization, this phenomenon started to have an effect in our schools despite the constant education about the risks of bullying at the level of schools and the local community. Bullying is considered as an abuse that is frequently directed towards others, either physically, psychologically or verbally (Shotaibi, 2014: 14).

Bullying behavior is represented by practicing physical abuse, as well as verbal insulations and threats towards others. Bullying could also include using the modern means of communication to send confusing or intimidating messages (Khouj, 2012:193). Bullying emerges in the crowded school environment that is suitable for the emergence of violence and aggression which, in turn, affect student's educational level in the context of an environment that is saturated with violence, stress, anxiety, threat and depression (Al-Qaddah, et al, 2013). Bullying is a form of aggressive behaviors, where there is no balance in power between the bully and the victim over a long period of time during which the bully causes harm to others at the physical and psychological levels; the bully is always stronger than the bullied victim who is exposed to verbal, physical or psychological abuse (Ocragi,2000). Bullying is a frequent aggressive behavior in order to cause harm to others either physically, mentally or psychologically (Brown, 2011).

Barton suggested that there are three criteria for the bullying behavior. The first criterion is the general deliberate aggression, which could be physical, verbal, financial or electronic. The second criterion is frequent over a certain period of time. The third criterion creates a tremendous disorder in personal relationships (Barton, 2006:104).

Trade suggested that all the patterns of behaviors are formed under the effect of an exemplary figure and an act that is imitated. This type of behavior or feeling is transmitted from one generation to the other, from one group to another. Akers suggested that the deviant behavior is a learnt one; it could be direct through conditioning or indirect through imitation or simulation. The deviant behavior is enhanced through rewarding, which encourages the individual to involve more in such a behavior (Al-Wereikat, 2004).

Methodology

The study used survey approach which included office survey to construct the theoretical framework of the study and the field survey to collect data using the study instrument and analyze the data to answer the study questions. The study population consisted of managers, school counselors and teachers in Schools in Jordan. A random sample was selected from eight boys' schools. A questionnaire was distributed to a number of (managers, assistant managers, counselors, and teachers), respondents are (130). From questionnaires, only (125) questionnaires were successful for analysis; (8) managers, (7) assistant managers, (6) counselors, and (104) teachers. The characteristics of the study sample individuals are shown in (Fig 1).

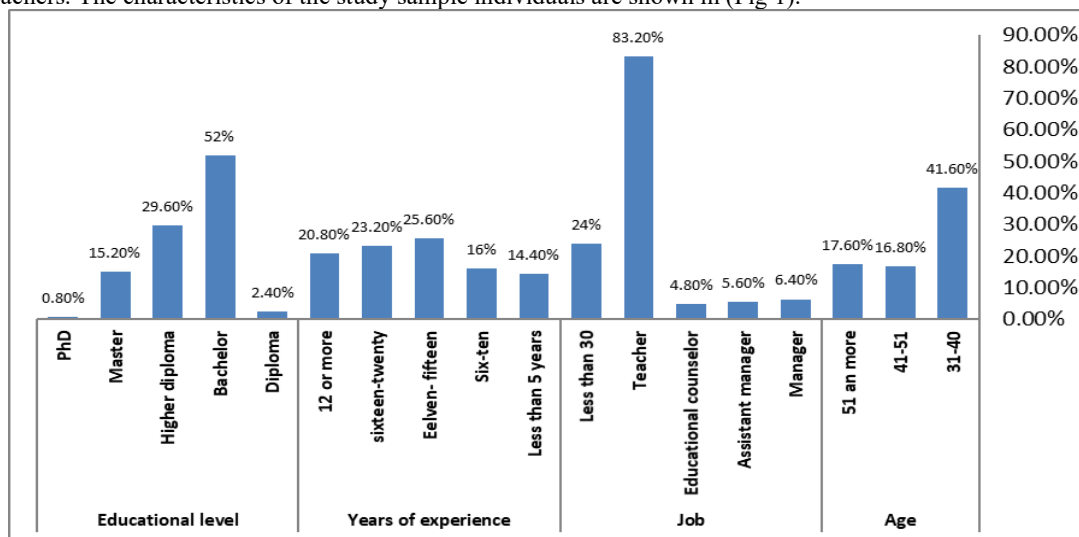


Figure 1. Demographic details of respondents

The questionnaire is consisted of the following parts:

First part: it includes the demographic variables of the study sample individuals (age, years of experience, educational level, monthly income), and were measured by the questions (1-5).

Second part: the most common school bullying and consisted of the following dimensions:

- 1- Items (6-14) measure physical bullying.
- 2- Items (15-22) measure verbal bullying.
- 3- Items (23-27) measure bullying against victims' properties.
- 4- Items (28-35) measure emotional bullying.
- 5- Items (36-39) measure gender bullying.
- 6- Items (40-43) measure cyber bullying.

Third part: investigated causes of bullying; it consists of the following dimensions:
 Items (44-60) measure the causes of school bullying, where groups mean and standard deviation values were calculated. The items were measured using Likert 5-point scale: (5) strongly agree, (4) agree, (3) neutral, (2) disagree, (1) strongly disagree. The following criterion was used to judge the means:
 (1-2.33)= low; (2.34 – 3.67)= medium; (3.68 – 5)=high

The validity of the study instrument

To verify the validity of the study instrument, it was introduced to (5) arbitrators of those specialized in criminology, sociology, psychology and educational measurement, and educational sciences in the Jordanian Universities. An agreement percentage of (84%) was adopted among specialists. arbitrators' opinions were taken into consideration and the required amendments were made by linguistic paraphrasing of some items.

Reliability and validity

In order to verify the reliability of the study instrument, Cronbach's Alpha was calculated using (SPSS), where the value of the correlation coefficient was (0.86). According to the results of validity and reliability, it is obvious that we can apply the study instrument in the current study.

Data analysis

The study used a number of statistical tests and methods to answer the study questions using (SPSS). The most important tests and methods are: Descriptive statistics measure: it was used to describe the characteristics of the study sample individuals, based on frequencies and percentages. The means and standard deviations were used to answer the study questions and identify the relative importance of dimensions.

Findings

Physical bullying

The results revealed in (table 1) show means and standard deviations of Physical bullying paragraphs. As shown, attitudes towards **physical bullying** across pupils from educational managers and teachers' perspective are as follows: kicking and pushing was (M= 4.10, SD= 1.052), hitting and boxing (M=4.08, SD= 1.015).

Table 1. Means and standard deviation values of verbal bullying behaviors across pupils

Items	Mean	SD	Order	Level
Kicking or violent pushing	4.10	1.052	1	High
Hitting or boxing	4.08	1.015	2	High
Smothering	4.05	1.103	3	High
Slapping	4.00	1.272	4	High
Hair-pulling	3.98	1.225	5	High
Pinching	3.92	1.220	6	High
Touching in an indecent way	3.91	1.275	7	High
Knocking down	3.88	1.330	8	High
forcing the victim to do unacceptable behavior	3.85	1.283	9	High
Average mean	3.97	1.197	-	High

In addition, smothering (M=4.05, SD=1.103), forcing the victim to do unacceptable behaviors (m=3.85, SD=1.823). The *average mean* for physical bullying is (3.97) and the *standard deviation value* is (1.197).

Verbal bullying

In order to achieve the objective of measuring verbal bullying behaviors across pupils, means and standard deviations were calculated for the patterns of verbal bullying Means and standard deviation values are shown in (table 2)

Table 2. Means and standard deviation values of verbal bullying behaviors across pupils

Items	Mean	SD	Order	Level
Disseminating false rumors	4.20	1.072	1	High
imitating and threatening	4.17	1.151	2	High
Insulting and cursing	4.12	1.122	3	High
Intimidation	4.11	1.062	4	High
Using an indecent titles	4.03	1.109	5	High
Using profanity	3.98	1.099	6	High
title humiliating	3.91	1.191	7	High
Race- insulation	3.89	1.141	8	High
Average mean	4.051	1.118	-	High

Table (2) shows **verbal bullying** behaviors across pupils, the answers to questions were as follows: Disseminating false rumors (M=4.20, SD=1.072), imitating and threatening (M=4.17, SD= 1.151), Insulting and cursing (M=4.12, SD=1.122), race insulting (M=3.89), the average mean for verbal bullying was (4.051) with a standard deviation of (1.118).

Bullying victims' properties

Table 3. Means and standard deviation values of bullying victims' properties across pupils

Items	Mean	SD	Order	Level
Taking over the properties of their colleagues	4.15	1.112	1	High
Spoiling books	4.02	1.251	2	High
Spooling the properties of the school	3.55	1.202	3	High
Taking others' properties by force	3.45	1.232	4	High
Tearing clothes	3.34	1.221	5	Medium
Average mean	3.792	1.203	-	High

The most common attitudes of bullying on victims' properties are as follows: Taking over the properties of their colleagues (M=4.15, SD= 1.112), spoiling victims' books (M=4.01, SD= 1.251), spooling the properties of the school (M=3.55, SD= 1.202), tearing clothes (M= 3.34, SD= 1.221). The average mean for verbal bullying was (3.792) with a standard deviation of (1.203).

Emotional bullying

In order to achieve the objective of investigating the emotional bullying behaviors across pupils, the following results were found as shown in (table 4):

Table 4. Means and standard deviation values of emotional bullying across pupils

Items	Mean	SD	Order	Level
Intimidation	3.85	1.222	1	High
constant harassment	3.75	1.236	2	High
Avoidance and exclusion	3.74	1.239	3	High
Isolation	3.68	1.295	4	High
Provocation	3.67	1.118	5	High
Humiliation	3.56	1.243	6	Medium
Ignorance	3.47	1.250	7	Medium
Annoyance by whispering	3.42	1.266	8	Medium
Average mean	3.642	1.233	-	High

Intimidation was (M= 3.85, SD= 1.222), constant harassment (M=3.75, SD= 1.236), avoidance and exclusion (M=3.74, SD= 1.239), tearing clothes (M=3.42, SD= 1.266). The average mean for emotional bullying was (3.642) with a standard deviation of (1.233).

Gender bullying

In order to answer the question of this dimension, means and standard deviations were calculated as shown in (table 5).

Table 5. Means and standard deviation values of gender bullying across pupils

Items	Mean	SD	Order	Level
Sexual gestures	3.69	1.220	1	High
Indicators of sexual threat	3.66	1.216	2	High
Indecent touch	3.64	1.240	3	High
Provocative sexual behaviors	3.61	1.265	4	High
Average mean	3.65	1.235	-	High

Table (6) shows the most common patterns of gender bullying. The items are as follows: sexual gestures (M=3.69, SD= 1.220), indicators of sexual threat (M=3.66, SD= 1.216). The behavior of indecent touch (M=3.64, SD= 1.240), provocative sexual behaviors (M=3.61, SD= 1.265). The average mean for sexual bullying was (3.65) with a standard deviation of (1.235).

Cyber bullying

In order to answer the question of this dimension, means and standard deviations were calculated as shown in (table 6).

Table 6. Means and standard deviation values of cyber bullying mediums across pupils

Items	Mean	SD	Order	Level
bullying via Phone calls	3.85	1.103	1	High
bullying via social media	3.77	1.252	2	High
bullying via chat rooms	3.70	1.217	3	High
bullying via e-mail	3.65	1.262	4	High
Average mean	3.742	1.208	-	High

Table (6) shows cyber bullying mediums across pupils in Jordanian schools. The item of phone calls (M=3.85, SD= 1.103), bullying via social media (M=3.77, SD= 1.252), bullying via chat rooms (M=3.70, SD= 1.217), bullying via e-mail (M=3.65, SD= 1.262). The average mean for cyber bullying was (3.742) with a standard deviation of (1.208).

Bulling factors

Means and standard deviations for causes of bullying are shown in (table 7)

Table 7. Means and standard deviation values of bullying victims' properties across pupils

Items	Mean	SD	Order	Level
Bad companions	4.90	1.051	1	High
The low educational and cultural level of the family	4.82	1.135	2	High
Family disintegration	4.784	1.223	3	High
Lack of communication between school, and family	4.724	1.275	4	High
Depression, personal disorders and irritability	4.684	1.237	5	High
Bad socialization	4.664	1.251	6	High
Arrogance and underestimating others	4.634	1.271	7	High
Feeling of frustration	4.57	1.212	8	High
Misunderstanding others	4.55	1.241	9	High
Ridicule	4.54	1.319	10	High
Watching violent movies	3.70	1.380	11	High
Not implementing the school regulations	3.50	1.035	13	High
Over-care by parents	3.48	1.255	14	High
Low economic level	3.47	1.121	15	High
Crowded classrooms	3.46	1.240	16	High
Inadequate parental dealing	3.37	1.230	17	Medium
Average mean	4.204	1.207	-	High

Table (7) shows causes items of bullying across pupils in Jordanian schools from the perspective of schools managers, administrators, and teachers. The items responses are as follows: bad companions (M=4.90, SD= 1.051), parents' low educational and cultural level (M=4.82, SD= 1.135), family disintegration (M=4.78, SD= 1.223), inadequate parent dealing (M=3.37, SD= 1.262). The average mean for the causes of bullying behaviors across pupils was (3.742) with a standard deviation of (1.207).

Discussing and recommendations

The current study identifies pupils' bullying behaviors, from Schools managers and teachers' perspectives. The results show the dimensions that are related to verbal bullying, physical bullying, gender bullying, and Cyber bullying. This finding is consistent with Abdo (2016), Shotaibi (2014), Jenkins et al., (2017), Mishra et al., (2018), Rezapour et al., (2014), and Richard's (2012) studies.

The study results factors of bullying behaviors. This finding agrees with Al-Omari (2019), Gholi et al. (2018), Sahloul, et al. (2017), AbdulRahim (2017), Mishra et al., (2018), and Shotaibi's (2014) studies.

It is recommended that holding seminars and courses should be taken into consideration to educate students about the different forms of bullying and activating the extracurricular activities related to spending free time. In addition, it is recommended that it is interesting to highlight the role of educational counselors and the necessity of warning parents and pupils about risks of bullying. However, the institutions should apply effective procedures against those who practice bullying in school campus. Finally, it is necessary to schedule plans of a school day in order to avoid the existence of long free time and to enhance the values of love, tolerance and dialogue among students and giving them the feeling of taking responsibility.

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