Review Article

Addressing Bullying in Schools: A Study of Selected Primary Schools in Trinidad and Tobago

Mala Ramdass1[*], Roland Birbal1, Cyril Harripaul1, Gail-Joseph Alleyne1

[1]The University of Trinidad and Tobago, Center for Education Programmes, West Indies.

*Corresponding author: Mala Ramdass, The University of Trinidad and Tobago, Center for Education Programmes, West indies. Tel: +868 642 8888; E-mail: mala.ramdass@gmail.com

Abstract

The issue of school bullying is a major concern among educators in Trinidad and Tobago. This research investigated the kinds of bullying that are more prevalent in our schools and the extent to which bullying practices are related to school type, school location and sex. The study also addressed how supportive are our schools in addressing bullying.

The sample consisted of randomly selected 410 students from the standard four and five classes from two Education Districts in Trinidad and Tobago. The study examined the relationship among four kinds of bullying-physical, verbal, social and cyber and the weight of each on overall bullying.

The study adopted a quantitative research approach using a cross-sectional design. Statistical means and t-tests were employed to examine students' perceptions of bullying and to investigate differences between schools based on school type, location and sex of students. To examine the relationship between the different kinds of bullying as well as their influences on overall bullying, correlation and regression analyses were employed. Students perceived social, verbal and physical bullying as more prevalent in schools. Significant differences were found based on school type, location and sex. Furthermore, the findings suggest that a moderate to high correlation exists between the different kinds of bullying and social bullying behaviours had the strongest influence on overall student bullying. Government-assisted schools were perceived to have a more supportive climate in addressing bullying. Suggestions are made to assist schools to reduce bullying practices among students.

Introduction

It is imperative that there exists in schools a setting that would enhance the academic, social and personal development of students. Research has shown that students feel a sense of well-being and are able to make positive changes to their lives in schools that promote a psychologically healthy environment for student development [1,2] According to the World Health Organization [3], a non-violent, healthy and caring school environment is essential for the development of positive student behaviour and well-being, while a non-supportive environment that lacks these characteristics may result in the opposite.

Research over the past few decades has documented the harmful effects of bullying on the physical and psychological health of children [4-6]. Several studies have found that students who are victims of bullying are more likely to suffer from psychological illnesses such as loneliness, depression and anxiety [7,8] and are at greater risk of low self-esteem and social problems [9], and committing suicide [10]. Children who bully others report general aggression, delinquent behaviors [11] and substance use [12]. Bullying beginning in primary school is a precursor of anti-social behaviour, violent behaviour, delinquency, as well as criminality [13,14]. In this regard the issue of school bullying needs to be addressed in order to create a healthy environment that is conducive for learning.

Background and Context

Trinidad and Tobago is a twin-island state located in the Caribbean. The island was ruled by Britain from 1802 to 1962 when it gained its independence. As such many of the colonial educational structures still exist. The education system consists of early childhood schools, primary schools, secondary schools and tertiary institutions. Primary and secondary schools can be classified

into three types; privately owned schools, denominational schools (managed by a religious body), and government schools. Primary education is universal and is a seven-year programme with two Infants and five primary levels for ages 5 to11. There are approximately 454 public primary schools in eight education districts in Trinidad and Tobago. These consist of 322 denominational and 132 government.

The issue of school bullying in Trinidad and Tobago is not a new occurrence and many incidences have been highlighted in the media over the years. A newspaper article commenting about incidences of bullying in the schools stated that whatever form bullying takes "the emotional, psychological and mental well-being of all victims is severely compromised" [15]. The extent and seriousness of bullying with the ensuing effects on the victims has resulted in many reports being submitted to the Ministry of Education (MOE) over the last ten years. According to Deosaran (2015), the Minister of Education Anthony Garcia noted that the "suffering of victims of school bullying is immense [16]. The silent suffering creates a school climate of social injustice. The structures put in place some ten years ago by the MOE have gotten lost somewhere". Deosaran also suggests that if bullying in the schools is not dealt with immediately it may become "fashionable and permissive." In this regard he has called for a comprehensive overhaul of the MOE policies on dealing with bullying in schools.

Review of the Literature

Olweus (1993) defines bullying as the repetitive exposure to physical and emotional harm from more dominant students in school. Traditional forms of bullying include physical (pushing, kicking, hitting), verbal (e.g. taunting, ridicule), social (spreading rumors, exclusion from groups). The relatively new form of bullying known as cyber-bullying (the use of information and communication technologies to bully) is now becoming more prevalent. Cyber bullying can take place anytime and anywhere because there are no spatial or time limitations [17].

This study was informed by several theories and perspectives such as theory of mind [18] child development [19], social-cognitive and social learning [20], moral development [21], social-ecological [22] and socio-cultural [23].

Theory of mind suggests that some students bully others because they can identify the students who are weaker, easy to intimidate and those who are unable to protect themselves [18,24]. According to Rigby [23], children who are bullied at school are usually those that are psychologically withdrawn, inclined to have low self-esteem and typically lack assertive skills.

Other theorists take into account the developmental level of children who bully and are victimized [19,25]. A child's stage of

development can influence the type of bullying they experience and in which they engage, their responses and the effects of bullying [23]. Studies have shown that peer bullying is evident at pre-school, reaches its peak during the 6th to 8th grade and reduces to some extent by the end of high school [26,27]. Also, there is some indication that physical forms of bullying are more common in early childhood while more verbal and indirect forms of bullying are characteristic of older children [19,25,28]. According to Swearer and Doll [29], the physiological and psychological changes that mark early adolescence also exacerbate the potential for bullying and explain the spike in bullying behaviours in middle school followed by a steady decline in later grades.

Bullying behaviour among children can also be understood using Bandura's theory of moral disengagement. [20] describes moral disengagement as the act of convincing oneself that moral standards do not apply in a particular situation thus allowing an average person to commit terrible acts against others. Empirical studies which have focused on moral cognition involved in bullying [30,31] found that bullies displayed the highest levels of moral disengagement while non-bullies showed the least.

Other theorists argue that the focus on individual characteristics and development is not sufficient and there is a need to take into account the social context in which bullying takes place [32,33]. The social ecological perspective has contributed significantly to a holistic understanding of bullying. The social ecological theory [22] is a systems approach that suggests that children live and operate in complex environmental systems and these may influence their behaviour in varying degrees.

According to Bronfenbrenner the environment can be looked at through four unique subsystems each one nested within the other. The first subsystem known as the micro-system is the immediate environment in which children operate. Therefore the home which consists of parents/family may have a more powerful influence on children behaviour. Empirical studies suggests that children who live in a home where they are exposed to domestic violence or who are rejected by their parents are more likely to be victims of school bullying [34,35]. Hoffman [36], has suggested that children who live with caring and supportive families develop very early in life social-emotional skills that help to prevent bullying. The second subsystem known as the meso-system is the school environment. The type of relationship that exists between parents and school, parents and peers may influence children's behaviour. The third subsystem also referred to as the exo-system is the community in which children function. In this system the characteristics of the community such as a high crime rate, social support, gang rivalry, norms and values may also influence children's behaviour [6]. The final subsystem which is the macro-system looks at the role of the larger school district, society e.g. media, Information and Commu-

nication Technologies (ICT's) in influencing children's behaviour. For example Tsitsika et al [37] suggests that the emergence of new technologies has contributed to the phenomena of cyber-bullying. Indeed, the ecological framework, allows for the understanding of the problem of bullying between an individual and each subsystem that is within the social context of the family, peer group, school, classroom and broader community and society [33].

Bronfennbrenner's social ecological framework has been used to study bullying in schools. Within this framework, there is a growing literature that focuses on factors within the school such as a supportive school climate that can help prevent bullying [38,39]. School norms that ignore minor forms of aggressive behaviour can further perpetrate bullying [40,41]. A study by Gendron et al. [32] integrated both individual characteristics and the school context to explain school bullying. Their findings showed that aggressive students were more likely to bully other students because teachers did not deal seriously with bullying unlike schools where there was a low tolerance for bullying.

Findings by Jeong, Kwak, Moon and San Miguel [42] suggest that students who perceived that the school rules and discipline were justly imposed were less likely to be victimized physically and emotionally. Research has revealed that students are less likely to be victimized when teachers paid attention to bullying and are involved in formulating and enforcing policies and procedures on students bullying students [40]. In such a supportive climate students are more inclined to seek help [39,43] and are less likely to engage in bullying.

Student bullying can also be understood from a socio-cultural perspective. This view focuses on differences between social groups which have a historical and cultural origin [23]. Cultural differences based on gender, social class or ethnic background can influence how children relate to one another. Studies Jansen et al, Due, Damsgaard, Lund and Holstein [44,45] have suggested a relationship between low socio-economic status of families and involvement in bullying.

Studies to determine if there are gender specific patterns of bullying behaviour among children are currently being done. Many previous studies indicate that boys are more often offenders or victims of physical bullying, whereas girls tend to participate in indirect forms of bullying [37,42]. In the local context, Lall [46] study of primary school students found a gender differential in students' fear of being bullied and victimized as girls expressed greater fear than boys of being bullied at school.

Research Questions

What are the types of bullying students perceive as more prevalent in our schools?

Are there differences in bullying among students in schools based on a) school type (Government and Government-Assisted) b) location (urban and rural) and c) sex (male and female)?

What is the relationship between the different kinds of bullying?

What kinds of bullying have the greatest weight on overall bullying?

How supportive are our schools in addressing bullying based on school type, location and sex?

Methodology

The study employed a cross-sectional survey design Cresswell 2008 to examine students' perceptions of bullying behaviours in schools. Four hundred and ten (410) students participated in the study. The students were randomly chosen from the Standard 4 and Standard 5 levels of Government and Government-Assisted schools in two educational districts of Trinidad and Tobago. The educational districts were the St. George East Education District which is a more urban district and the South Eastern Education District in which more rural schools are located. The age range of students was from 9 to 11 years. The sample comprised 165 male and 245 female students. Questionnaires were completed by students in their classrooms. All data were collected with acquired informed parental and student consent. (Table 1) shows the demographic characteristics of participants according to school type, geographic location and sex.

Demographic	N (%) Students
School Type	
Government	198 (49.5%)
Gov't Assisted	212 (53%)
Total	410 (100.0%)
Location	
Urban	279 (68%)
Rural	131 (32%)
Total	410 (100.0%)
Sex	
Male	165 (40.2%)
Female	245 (59.7%)
Total	410 (100.0%)

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics.

Instrument

The survey instrument used in the study was adapted from the Revised Olweus Bullying Victim Questionnaire (OBVQ) [47]. The OBVQ is a psychometrically sound instrument and has been widely used in studies on bullying in different countries [48]. The 25

items were related to four categories of bullying: physical, verbal, social and cyber [49-51].Principal component analysis was performed on student responses to the 25 items. All items loaded on a single factor. One item ("Students are teased because of race or color") was removed as it did not meet a minimum cut-off point of 0.4 [52]. The final questionnaire comprised 24 items that represented four types of bullying (Table 2).

Statements	Factors			
	1	2	3	4
Factor 1 Physical (6)				
Students pick fights	0.55			
Students push others	0.48			
Physical fights in my school	0.51			
Students hit others	0.59			
Money or other things to hurt other	0.56			
threaten to hurt others	0.57			
Factor 2 Verbal (7)				
Students say mean things to hurt others		0.55		
Students threatened to do things against their wishes		0.52		
Call others bad names		0.49		
Ridicule others		0.55		
Teased based on physical appearance		0.56		
Teased based on ethnicity		0.46		
Teased based on sexual preference		0.56		
Factor 3 Social (7)				
Spread rumor about others			0.59	
Give others mean or dirty looks			0.59	
Leave others out on purpose			0.5	
Threaten not to be friends if not comply with wishes			0.54	
Lies on others to encourage dislike			0.54	
Insulted by looking at others the wrong way			0.5	
Make fun of others appearance			0.55	
Factor 4 Cyber (4)				
Mean calls on cell phones				0.63
Mean text messages				0.63
Mean videos or photos posted on-line				0.57
Hurtful e-mails				0.54

Table 2: Loadings of the 4-Factor solution principal component analysis result.

The first factor was physical bullying with 6 items ranging from .483 to .572. Physical bullying involved physically hurting someone such as hitting, kicking, pushing, shoving and picking fights. The items within this factor yielded a Cronbach alpha of .743. The second factor was verbal bullying with items ranging from .460 to .563. Verbal bullying behaviours involved name calling, hurtful teasing, insults, racist remarks, remarks on the basis of gender or sexuality threats/threatening behaviour. The items within this factor yielded a Cronbach alpha of .714. The third factor was social bullying with items ranging from .498 to .590. Social bullying included excluding others, spreading rumors/gossip, telling lies on another student. The items within this factor yielded a Cronbach alpha of .766.The fourth factor was cyber bullying with items ranging from .541 to .626. These items involved using technology (cell phone, e-mail, text messages) to threaten someone or hurt someone's feelings. The items within this factor yielded a Cronbach alpha of .882.

In order to find out students' perceptions of how supportive their school was in addressing bullying a 12-item scale was adapted from [53] School Climate Bullying Survey. Students rated the extent to which their schools provided a supportive environment by responding to each item along a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree (with 1 being Strongly Disagree and 5 being Strongly Agree). Examples of a supportive school climate were "Teachers listen to what students have to say"; "Teachers treat all students fairly" and "Students tell teachers when students are being bullied". A principal components analysis which was performed on students' responses to the 12 items showed that all items loaded on a single factor. One item ("Students are encouraged to report bullying") did not meet the minimum cut-off point of 0.4 and was removed. The final 11 items within this scale had a Cronbach alpha of .857 (Table 3).

Statements	Factor loading
Teachers pay attention to students	0.668
Students feel safe and protected	0.584
Teachers really care about all students	0.762
Teachers want all students to do their best	0.673
Teachers listen to what students have to say	0.771
Teachers treat all students fairly	0.7
Teachers believe every student can be a success	0.653
Teachers treat students with respect	0.681
Students tell teachers when students are being bullied	0.427
School has clear procedures to address bullying	0.519
Teachers act to solve problems when students report bullying	0.658

Table 3: Supportive School Climate Items: principal component analysis results.

Data Analysis

Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the research questions. Statistical tests that were performed with the help of the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS-v-17) software were school means, t-tests, Pearson Moment Product Correlation and multiple regression.

Findings

Research Question 1: What are the types of bullying students perceive as more prevalent in our schools?

This research question used descriptive statistics to ascertain which bullying factors students perceived as affecting them the most. The means and standard deviations were used for comparison. Of the four bullying factors students rated social bullying behaviours (M=3.85) followed by verbal (M=3.58) and physical (M=3.57) as the more prevalent types of bullying. Cyber bullying was viewed as the least important bullying behaviours (Table 4).

Student Bullying Factors	N	Mean	SD
Social	410	3.85	0.75
Physical	410	3.57	0.99
Verbal	410	3.58	0.7
Cyber	410	2.82	1.08

Table 4: Student Bullying Factors: Scale Mean, N and Standard Deviation.

Research Question 2: Were there differences in bullying among students in schools based on a) school type (Government and Government-Assisted) b) location (urban, rural) and c) sex?

2 a: Differences based on School Type

T- test results showed that there was a significant difference between students' perceptions of physical, verbal, social and cyber bullying in Government and Government-assisted schools. Students in Government schools viewed all four forms of bullying (physical, verbal, social and cyber) as more prevalent in their schools (Table 5).

Factor	School Type	N	Mean	SD	t	Significance
Physical	Gov't	198	3.94	0.68		
	Gov't Assisted	212	3.27	0.75	9.5	.000*
Verbal	Gov't	198	3.85	0.63		
	Gov't Assisted	212	3.33	0.67	8.2	.000*
Social	Gov't	198	3.99	0.62		
	Gov't Assisted	212	3.7	0.81	4.1	.000*

	Cyber	Gov't	198	3.14	0.98		
		Gov't Assisted	212	2.52	1.08	6	.000*

2 b: Urban and Rural Schools

T-tests results showed that there was a significant difference between students' perceptions of bullying in urban and rural schools. Students in urban schools viewed physical, verbal and social bullying as more prevalent in their schools.

Factor	Location	N	Mean	SD	t	Significance
Physical	Rural	131	3.36	0.75	-4.3	.000*
	Urban	279	3.7	0.79		
Verbal	Rural	131	3.38	0.71	-4.1	.000*
	Urban	279	3.68	0.68		
Social	Rural	131	3.56	0.77	-5.2	.000*
	Urban	279	3.97	0.69		
Cyber	Rural	131	2.83	1.07	0.1	.000*
	Urban	279	2.81	1.08		

Table 6: T-test Results: Urban and Rural Schools.

2 c: Differences based on sex

T-tests results showed that there was a significant difference between male and female students' perceptions of social/relational bullying. Female students viewed social/relational bullying behaviours more prevalent in their schools than male students.

Factor	sex	N	Mean	SD	t	Significance
Physical	Male	165	3.63	0.75	0.78	0.427
	Female	245	3.57	0.82		
Verbal	Male	165	3.54	0.73	-0.89	0.374
	Female	245	3.61	0.68		
Social	Male	165	3.73	0.72	-2.51	.012*
	Female	245	3.92	0.74		
Cyber	Male	165	2.87	1.06	0.75	0.45
	Female	245	2.79	1.09		

Table 7: T-test Results: Male and Female Students.

Research Question 3: What is the relationship between the different types of bullying?

The relationship between the four types of bullying was investigated using the Pearson r statistic. There were moderate positive relationship between physical and social behaviours (r = 0.44, p<

0.01); physical and verbal behaviours (r = 0.55, p<0.01) and verbal and cyber bullying behaviours (r=0.45, p< 0.01). There was a strong positive relationship between social and verbal bullying (r=0.73, p< 0.01) and a weak positive relationship between physical and cyber bullying behaviours (r=0.37, p < 0.01) (Table 8).

Factors	Physical	Social	Cyber	Verbal
Physical	1	.442**	.370**	.546**
		0	0	0
Social		1	.380**	.729**
			0	0
Cyber			1	.454**
				0
Verbal				1

Table 8: Correlations: Student-Bullying Factors.

Research Question 4: What kinds of bullying had the greatest influence on overall student bullying?

Regression analysis was employed to examine the greatest influence on overall student bullying. Social bullying behaviours appeared to have the strongest influence on overall student bullying (β= .357), followed by verbal (β=.331), and cyber (β= .314). The weakest influence was physical bullying (β= .246) (Table 9).

Factor	Beta	t-value	Significance
Social	0.36	28.8	.000*
Verbal	0.33	24	.000*
Cyber	0.31	32.6	.000*
Physical	0.25	24	.000*

Table 9: Beta and Significance.

Research Question 5: How supportive are schools in addressing student bullying based on school type, location and sex?

Supportive Climate: Differences based on School Type, Location and Sex

T-test results showed that there were significant differences between students' perceptions in Government and Government-Assisted and urban and rural schools (Table 10). Students in Government-Assisted schools and rural schools viewed their school climate as more supportive. Comparison between male and female students also showed that female students had more positive perceptions of school climate in addressing bullying.

	N	Mean	SD	T	Significance
Gov't	198	3.77	0.71	-6.8	.000*
Gov't Assisted	212	4.23	0.67		
Rural	131	4.17	0.68	3.16	.002*
Urban	279	3.93	0.74		
Male	165	3.78	0.79	-5	.000*
Female	245	4.16	0.64		

Table 10: T-test Results based on School Type, Location and Sex.

Discussion and Recommendations

Students rated social/relational bullying behaviours as more prevalent in the schools in the study. This result is consistent with international and local research on bullying in elementary school age children [6,44,54,55].

The findings suggested that physical, verbal, social and cyber bullying were more prevalent in government schools. One possible explanation can be attributed to the organization of the Government-Assisted schools. The School Boards of these schools exercise power in the on-site management and the appointment of school personnel. School boards have an input in the appointment, promotion and transfer of principals and teachers [56]. In Trinidad and Tobago, there is a growing tendency by parents to enroll their children in the Government-Assisted schools which are controlled by the religious boards because these schools are seen as having a more disciplined climate. Also, these schools have a tight-knit community and traditions, mores, beliefs held by most members of staff. Another possible explanation is the greater degree of parental involvement in school activities in these schools which can help reduce student indiscipline and violence.

Comparison between urban and rural schools showed that physical, verbal and social forms of bullying were more characteristic of urban schools. One possible explanation is that urban schools have more exposure to community violence [57,58]. Indeed, in Trinidad, there exists in the more urban districts in North Trinidad along the East-West corridor a high incidence of crime and youth gangs which often permeate the schools. Seepersad [54] reported that the majority of students (98.4%) in his study in primary schools in North Trinidad indicated that they had experienced one or more forms of bullying.

Another explanation is that urban schools are larger with higher pupil-teacher ratio. In larger schools teachers are less able to monitor student behaviour which can lead to increased rates of problem behaviors [59]. Rural schools tend to be smaller which allows for more personal connections among everyone [60]. According to Lleras [61] such personal connections are associated with less aggression and violence.

With regard to gender differences, girls rated social/relational bul-

lying as the most prevalent form of bullying compared to boys. Girls are more inclined to react negatively to relational problems as they tend to place more emphasis on relationships [62] and threatening those friendships can do more harm for females than it can for males [63].

The findings also showed a relationship between the four types of bullying especially with regard to social and verbal. Students who engage in physical bullying such as fights or hitting may also use threats or insults at the same time. With the increasing use of computers and cell phones students can now spread rumors or send embarrassing pictures or hurtful text messages to ruin friendships. Indeed, the wider society has become aware of increasing incidents of school bullying because these have been made public through social media.

Of the four forms of bullying, social bullying behaviors such as telling lies, spreading rumors and leaving others out on purpose had the strongest influence on overall bullying. Verbal bullying such as threats, insults and calling names had the second strongest influence. This finding also corroborates previous findings by [46] that indicated that boys and girls were both victims of verbal abuse through obscene language. Also, [54] reported that the most prevalent types of victimization were more social/relational (children laughing at each other), verbal (children calling each other names) and physical (children hitting and pushing each other). Further research Vaillan court et al, Wang et al, [27,64] also found a prevalence of verbal and social bullying in their studies. This finding is instructive for principals and teachers in our schools. Physical and verbal bullying behaviours can be easily detected, unlike social/relational which can be missed more easily. Furthermore, teachers tend to focus more on verbal and physical bullying and are less likely to intervene in situations involving social exclusion [65,66]. Indeed, such situations can be exacerbated if left unattended and can escalate to more overt forms of bullying such as fights and physical violence which are often highlighted in our daily newspapers and social media. A study by Low, Frey & Brockman [67] also highlighted the need to pay more attention to social/relational bullying as their findings suggested that children found relational type of bullying to be more painful than physical bullying.

With regard to the supportive climate in schools, students in government-assisted and rural schools had more favorable perceptions of issues such as caring about all students, fair treatment, taking action to solve bullying and reporting bullying. Studies [68,69] have reported a strong sense of community which includes such factors as shared values and staff collegiality that lead to a more positive school environment in Government-assisted schools. In Trinidad and Tobago many of the rural schools are also Government-Assisted schools. In rural communities the school is seen as an extension of the community and parents and teachers generally have a more personal relationship with parents and members of the wider community. Such closer relationships can contribute to more positive perceptions of their school.

Female students had a more positive perception of support with regard to issues such as listening to what students have to say, feeling safe and taking action to solve bullying. A possible explanation can be how teachers perceive the behaviours of boys and girls. Generally, teachers view boys as the cause of more disruptive behaviours which are often the focus of teachers' attention. Girls, on the other hand, are seen as more attentive, hard-working and nurturing. These beliefs may lead boys to view their school environment as less supportive than girls. Indeed, there is need for further research in our local context on students' experiences of their school environment and how these impact their attitudes and behaviours.

It is recommended that:

Schools develop and enforce policies that discourage bullying in all its forms.

Regular training should be done to ensure principals and teachers have the required skills to recognize and respond effectively to bullying behaviours particularly social/ relational.

More attention must be given to the teaching of social and emotional skills (e.g. empathy development, perspective taking, social problem solving) in the curriculum to prepare students to deal with bullying situations and to relate positively to peers.

Teachers and principals should develop a peer support system in their schools.

Schools should develop a system where students can report incidences of bullying anonymously.

School supervisors should regularly monitor bullying behaviours at schools by using student surveys.

Schools must develop partnerships with parents and community organizations to support interventions to counteract bullying behaviours.

Parent education workshops should be conducted on parenting styles that are more supportive of their children emotional and psychological health.

Schools must create a climate that is characterized by warmth, caring, connection and cooperation among students and teachers.

References

1. Nutbeam D, Smith C, Moore L, Bauman A (1993) Warning! Schools can damage your health: alienation from school and its impact on health behaviours. Journal of Pediatrics and Child Health 29: 25-30.

2. Baker, Dolly, Aupperlee, Patil (2003) The developmental context of school satisfaction: schools as psychologically healthy environments. School Psychology Quarterly 18: 206-221.

3. World Health Organization (2003) Creating an environment for emotional and social well-being.

4. Arseneault L. Bowes, Shakoor S (2010) Bullying victimization in youth and mental health problems: much ado about nothing? Psychological Medicine 40: 717-729.

5. Gini G, Pozzoli T (2009) Association between bullying and psychosomatic problems: a meta-analysis. Pediatrics 123: 1059-1065.

6. Swearer SM, Hymel S (2015) Understanding the psychology of bullying: moving toward a social-ecological diathesis-stress model. American Psychologist 70: 344-353.

7. Woods S, Done J, Kalsi H (2009) Peer victimization and internalizing difficulties: the moderating role of friendship quality. Journal of Adolescence 32: 293-308.

8. Abdirahman, H.A, Bah, T.T, Shrestha, et al. (2012). Bullying, mental health and parental involvement among adolescents in the Caribbean. West Indian medical Journal 61: 504-508.

9. Hazler RJ, Carney JV, Granger DA (2006) Integrating biological measures into the study of bullying. Journal of Counseling and Development 84: 298-307.

10. Klomek AB, Sourander A, Gould M (2010) The association of suicide and bullying in childhood to young adulthood: a review of cross-sectional and longitudinal research findings. The Canadian Journal of Psychiatry 55: 282-288.

11. Menesini E, Modena M, Tani F (2009) Bullying and victimization in adolescence: concurrent and stable roles and psychological health problems. The Journal of Genetic Psychology 170: 115-134.

12. Kim M, Catalano R, Haggerty K, Abbott R (2011) Bullying at elementary school and problem behaviour in young adulthood: a study of bullying, violence and substance use from age 11 to age 21. Criminal Behaviour and Mental Health 21: 136-144.

13. Le Blanc L, Swisher R, Vitaro F, Tremblay R (2008) High school social climate and anti-social behaviour: a 10 year longitudinal and multi-level study. Journal of Research and Adolescence 18: 395-419.

14. Olweus D (1993) Bullying at school. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell

15. Maharaj-Sharma R (2012) Bullying – Here we go again. Daily Express.

16. Deosaran R (2015) Govt Schools and Bullying. Newsday.

17. Ortega R, Mora-Merchan JA, Jager T (2007) Acting against school bullying and violence: the role of media, local authorities and the internet.

18. Sutton J, Reeves M, Keogh E (2000) Disruptive behaviour, avoidance of responsibility and theory of mind. British Journal of Developmental Psychology 18: 1-11.

19. Hawley PH (1999) The ontogenesis of social dominance: a strategy-based evolutionary perspective. Developmental Review 19: 97-132.

20. Bandura, A (1977) Self-efficacy: toward a unifying theory of behavioural change. Psychology Review 84: 191-215.

21. Bandura A (2002) Selective moral disengagement in the exercise of moral agency. Journal of Moral Education 31: 101-119.

22. Bronfenbrenner U (1979) The ecology of human development. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

23. Rigby K (2003) Addressing bullying in schools: theory and practice.

24. Garbarino J, de Lara E (2002) And words can hurt forever: how to protect adolescents from bullying, harassment and emotional violence. New York.

25. Smith PK, Sharp S (1994) School bullying: insights and perspectives.

26. Espelage, D.L. & Swearer, S.M. (2004). Bullying in American schools: a social- ecological perspective on prevention and intervention. Lawrence Erlbaum mahwah, NJ, USA

27. Vaillancourt T, Trinh V, McDougall P, Duku E, Cunningham L, et al. (2010) Optimizing population screening of bullying in school-aged children. Journal of School Violence 9: 233-250.

28. Simone P, Routledge NY (2014) Beyond bullying: researching student perspectives.

29. Swearer SM, Doll B (2001) Bullying in schools: an ecological framework. Journal of Emotional Abuse 2: 7-23.

30. Gini G (2006) Social and moral cognition in bullying: what's wrong? Wiley Interscience 32: 528-539.

31. Hymel S, Bonanno R (2014) Moral disengagement processes in bullying. Theory into Practice 53: 278-285.

32. Gendron BP, Williams KR, Guerra NG (2013) An analysis of bullying among students within schools: estimating the effects of individual normative beliefs, self-esteem and school climate. Journal of School Violence 10: 150-164.

33. Olweus D (1997) Bully/victim problems in school: facts and interventions. European Journal of Psychology of Education 12: 495-510.

34. Mohr A (2006) Family variables associated with peer victimization: does family violence enhance the probability of being victimized by peers? Swiss Journal of Psychology 65: 107-116.

35. Lereya S, Samara M, Wolke D (2013) Parenting behaviour and the risk of becoming a victim and a bully/victim: a meta-analysis study. Child Abuse and Neglect 37: 1091-1108.

36. Hoffman M (2000) Empathy and moral development: implications for caring and justice.

37. Tsitsika AK, Barbu E, Andrie E, Dimitropoulou C, Tzavela, EC, et al. (2014) Bullying behaviours in children and adolescents: an ongoing story. Frontiers in Public Health 2: 1-4.

38. Bosworth K, Ford L, Hernandez D (2011) School climate factors contributing to student and faculty perception of safety in select Arizona schools. Journal of School Health 81: 194-201.

39. Eliot M, Cornell D, Gregory A, Fan X (2010) Supportive school climate and student willingness to seek help for bullying and threats of violence. Journal of School Psychology 48: 533-553.

40. Payne AA, Gottfredson DC (2004) Schools and bullying: factors relating to bullying and school-based bullying interventions in C. sanders & G. Phye (eds) Bullying: implications for the classroom 159-176.

41. Greene MB (2005) Reducing violence and aggression in schools. Trauma Violence and Abuse 6: 236-253.

42. Jeong S, Kwak D, Moon B, San Miguel C (2013) Predicting school bullying victimization: focusing on individual andschool environmental security factors. Journal of Criminology.

43. Williams F, Cornell D (2006) Student willingness to seek help for threats of violence. Journal of School Violence 5: 35-49.

44. Jansen PW, Verlinden M, VanBerkel A, Mieloo C, Vander Erde J, et al. (2012) Prevalence of bullying and victimization among children in early elementary school: do family and school neighbourhood socioeconomic status matter? BMC Public Health 12: 494.

45. Due P, Damsgaard MT, Lund R, Holstein BE (2009) Is bullying equally harmful for rich and poor children? : a study of bullying and depression from age 15 to 17. European Journal of Public Health 19: 464-469.

46. Lall V (2007) Bullying, victimization and delinquency in primary schools in Trinidad and Tobago. Caribbean Journal of Criminology and Social Psychology 12: 155-176.

47. Olweus D (1996) Revised Olweus bully/victim questionnaire.

48. Kyriakides L, Kaloyirou C, Lindsay G (2006) An analysis of the Revised Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire using the Rasch Measurement Model. British Journal of Educational Psychology 76: 781-801.

49. Monk CP, Smith PK (2006) Definitions of bullying: age differences in understanding of the term and the role of experience. British Journal of Developmental Psychology 24: 801-821.

50. Solberg ME, Olweus D (2003) Prevalence estimation of school bullying with the Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire. Aggressive behaviour 29: 239-268.

51. Felix ED, Sharkey JD, Green JG, Furlong MJ, Tanigawa D (2011) Getting precise and pragmatic about the assessment of bullying: the development of the California bullying victimization scale. Aggressive Behaviour, 37: 234-247.

52. Tabachnick R, Fidell LS (2007) Using multivariate statistics. 5th Ed.

53. Austin G, Duerr M (2005) Guidebook for the California Healthy Kids Survey. Part 111. School Climate Survey for teachers and other staff edition.WestEd.

54. Seepersad R (2014) Bullying and victimization in selected primary schools in North Trinidad. Report commissioned by the Citizen Security programme and Ministry of Education. May 2014.

55. Koonce GL, Mayo SS (2013) Effects of elementary school students' gender and grade level on bullying. American International Journal of Social Science 2: 16-25.

56. Ministry of Education (1960) The Concordat of 1960.

57. Robers S, Kemp J, Truman J (2013) Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2012.

58. Mayer MJ, Furlong MJ (2010) How safe are our schools? Educational Researcher 39: 16-26.

59. Chaux E, Molano A, Podlesky P (2009) Socio-economic, socio-political and socio-emotional variables explaining school bullying: a country wide multi-level analysis. Aggressive Behavior 35: 520-529.

60. Smokowski PR, Cotter KL, Robertson C, Guo S (2013) Demographic, psychological and school environment correlates of bullying victimization and school hassles in rural youth. Journal of Criminology.

61. Lleras C (2008) Hostile school climates: exploring differential risk of student exposure to disruptive learning environments in high school. Journal of School Violence 7: 105-135.

62. Crick NR, Nelson DA (2002) Relational and physical victimization within friendships: nobody told me thre'd be friends like these. Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology 30: 599-607.

63. Bjorkqvist K (1994) Sex differences in physical, verbal and indirect aggression: a review of recent research. Sex Roles 30: 177-188.

64. Wang J, Iannotti RJ, Nansel TR (2009) School bullying among US adolescents: physical, verbal, relational and cyber. Journal of Adolescent Health 45: 368-375.

65. Chen LM, Liu KS, Cheng YY (2012) Validation of the perceived school bullying severity scale. Educational Psychology 32: 169-182.

66. Yoon JS, Kerber K (2003) Bullying: Teachers' attitudes and intervention strategies. Research in Education 69: 27-35.

67. Low S, Frey KS, Brockman CJ (2010) Gossip in the playground: changes associated with universal intervention, retaliation beliefs and supportive friends. School Psychology Review 39: 536-551.

68. Bryk AS, Lee VE, Holland PB (1993) Catholic schools and the common good. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

69. Lee VG, Dedrick RF, Smith JB (1991) The effect of the social organization of schools on teacher efficacy and satisfaction. Sociology of Education 64: 190-208.