Gender Role and Physical Bullying among School Adolescents in Nepal

Corresponding Author

Mr. Balaram Bhatta
Principal, Lunar English Boarding School, Samakhushi, Kathmandu
balaram.bhatta@gmail.com

Abstract: *The study purposed to examine the relationship between the degree of bullying with reference to gender. Gender was entered into ANOVA as independent variable, whereas, physical bullying was dependent variable. The results showed that boys had reported higher mean scores of physical bullying than girls. It supports the hypothesis that boys would report significantly higher mean scores of physical bullying than girls. The result clearly shows that boys have higher mean scores of physical bullying than girls; boys have 13.750 mean scores and girls 10.910.*
Keywords: bullying, gender, physical bullying

Introduction

Intentional as well as continual acts which take place between the same age, grade or position, where there is imbalance of power in case of physical or verbal skills is defined as bullying. This is also known as aggression. It occurs with influence of social networks: if someone has stronger group of friends (Francine Delany, 2013, p. 2). School bullying that takes place between the class mates, at school or during the school activities. It may take place during off school hours like way to home or school. Occasional attack for belongings or dispute on specific issue is not considered as bullying. To be bullying, a student or group intentionally and repeatedly attack other student either physically, verbally or indirectly (Quiroz, Arnette, & Stephens, 2006, p. 1). According to Olweus (1991) bullying is "an individual is a victim of bullying when he or she is exposed repeatedly over time to negative actions by one or more individuals and is unable to defend him or herself, excluding cases where two children of similar physical and psychological strength are fighting (Gladden, Vivolo-Kantor, Hamburger, & Lumpkin, 2014, p. 4)".

Given the high prevalence and negative consequences of bullying and aggressive behaviour in schools (Rigby A. , 1996) and widespread efforts to counteract bullying (Shute & Charlton, 2006), it is clear that social scientists and educators have an ongoing duty to look into these phenomena. There is sufficient evidence illustrating the possible unfavourable health effects of bullying and other aggressive behaviour upon victims (Rivers I. , 2004). For example, some of the investigations found that those suffering peer victimization are more likely to know anxiety, depression, suicidal ideation, physical and psychological distress, low self-esteem, and social dysfunction (Rigby K. , 2001). The ill effects of aggression and bullying can also extend beyond the peer group. Olweus (1991) observes that, in addition to the immediate victims, others (such as parents, teachers, or siblings) often become recipients of the typical bully's aggressive

behaviour and that those who bully are more likely to display criminal behaviour (Rigby & Cox, 1996). Such issues are clearly of great and immediate social concern.

Rigorous research into the possible causes and correlates of aggression and bullying will support in the planning, execution, and care of effective interruptions. For example, it is commonly thought that those who act aggressively do so as a result of low self-esteem and that using aggression is one way for these individuals to boost their self-esteem (Anderson E. , The code of the streets, 1994, May). It therefore seems apparent that interventions that advance self-esteem may lead to reduced levels of aggression (Haney & Durlak, Changing self-esteem in children and adolescents: A meta-analytic review, 1998). Conversely, given that some researchers now believe that it is certain types of high self-esteem that provide to certain individuals behaving aggressively (Baumeister, Smart, & Boden, Relation of threatened egotism to violence and aggression: The dark side of high self-esteem, 1996), implementing strategies to increase self-esteem may in reality be counterproductive.

Rigby states that gender differences in bullying and victimization have been a popular area of research (2008). In explaining gender differences in social behaviour, Eagly (1987) suggested a social role theory, according to that people act in a manner that is consistent with their gender roles. From social divisions such roles have been arisen, relating to domestic as well as work-related roles, such that females primarily perform domestic and child rearing duties and are more likely to fill positions in the workplace that are communal in nature for example, nurse, teacher. Through experiencing and enacting gender roles, males and females advance different attitudes, skills, and expectancies resulting in behaviour patterns that differ according to those gender-roles. Consequently, there are normative expectations that males are more agentic for example, instrumental, masculine, and females are more communal. For example, they are expressive, feminine, with these gender norms passed on through socialization processes to future generations (Archer, 2004).

There are supporting reviews for social role theory which explain gender differences in aggression. It can be found in meta-analytic reviews of research based both in the laboratory and in real-world settings. Bettencourt and Miller (1996) assessed the effect of provocation on gender differences in aggression in experimental studies. They found that social role theory was generally supported although provocation reduced the effect of gender role norms, thereby reducing gender differences in physical and verbal aggression. In effect, females' aggression levels approached those of males under conditions of provocation, suggesting that gender differences may not be clear-cut. Citing Maccoby and Jacklin (1974), the authors proposed that biological influences might explain gender differences whereby males possess a greater aggressive readiness. Bettencourt and Miller also suggested that, in conjunction with these biological determinants, gender role norms might further predispose males to aggress in ambiguous situations or when provocation is low, whereas female gender roles may inhibit aggression in such situations. It is possible to illustrate gender differences in what children consider to be appropriate behaviour, providing at least face value support for social role theory.

A survey of second through fourth grade children ($N = 293$) found that not only were boys more physically aggressive than girls, but that boys also believed physical aggression to be more acceptable across a range of targets (i.e., adults and girls) and circumstances (e.g., when out of control) than did girls (Huesmann, Guerra, Zelli, & Miller, 1992).

Methodology

There are mainly two research approaches: deductive and inductive. The deductive approach – known as testing a theory, in which the researcher develops a theory or hypotheses and designs a research strategy to test the formulated theory. The inductive approach – known as building a theory, in which the researcher starts with collecting data in an attempt to develop a theory. The present study has applied the deductive research approach.

The design of the main study was correlational. It employed a pen and paper self-report survey. The survey had four separate instruments. The four instruments were bullying, victimization, personal self-esteem and narcissism. There are a number of research designs. Among them why the researcher chose the correlational one is that especially in the quantitative type of research where two or more than two variables are existed correlational design is suitable (Thompson, Diamond, McWilliam, Synder, & Synder, 2005).

The total participants of the study were 936 from 15 government funded schools and 15 private schools of Kathmandu District, Nepal. Kathmandu is the capital city that represents the nature of almost population of Nepal. Among the total participants boys were 469 (50.1%) and girls 467 (49.9%). The following table no. 3.1 shows the gender wise participants.

Results

The following table shows the results of gender-wise mean scores of physical bullying. Gender was entered as independent variable, whereas, direct bullying, direct, indirect, verbal victimization, global personal self-esteem and narcissism were dependent variables. The following table no. 5 shows that boys have higher mean scores of physical bullying than girls; boys have 13.750 mean scores and girls 10.910. It supports the hypothesis that boys would report significantly higher mean scores of physical bullying than girls.

Table 1: Gender-wise mean scores of physical bullying

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Boys	469	13.750	4.25868	.19665	13.3641	14.1370	7.00	35.00
Girls	467	10.910	2.74301	.12693	10.6606	11.1595	7.00	23.00
Total	936	12.330	3.85319	.12595	12.0862	12.5805	7.00	35.00

Thus, hypothesis predicted that boys would report significantly higher mean scores of direct bullying than girls, and results presented clearly support for this hypothesis. These results correspond with those of Owens and MacMullin (2005) who used a peer-estimation method based on the DIAS (Bjorkqvist, Lagerspetz, & Osterman, 1992) found that boys used significantly more physical bullying than girls. This finding corresponds with those of Paquette and Underwood, Galen & Paquette (2001) who also found that boys reported experiencing significantly more physical aggression than girls.

Conclusion

A series of analysis of covariance (ANOVA) tests was performed to test the hypothesis. Gender was entered into ANOVA as independent variable, whereas, physical bullying was dependent variable. The results showed that boys had reported higher mean scores of physical bullying than girls. It supports the hypothesis that boys would report significantly higher mean scores of physical bullying than girls. The result clearly shows that boys have higher mean scores of physical bullying than girls; boys have 13.750 mean scores and girls 10.910.

Bibliography

Anderson, E. (1994, May). The code of the streets. *Atlantic Monthly , 273*, 80-90.

Archer, J. (2004). Sex differences in aggression in real world settings: A meta-analytic review.

Review of General Psychology , 8, 291-322.

Baumeister, R. F., Smart, L., & Boden, J. (1996). Relation of threatened egotism to violence and aggression: The dark side of high self-esteem. *Psychological Review , 103*, 5-33.

Bettencourt, B. A., & Miller, A. (1996). Gender diferences in aggression as a function as provocation: A meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin , 119*, 422-447.

Bjorkqvist, K., Lagerspetz, K. M., & Osterman, K. (1992). Direct and Indirect Aggression Behavior (DIAS). VASA, Finland: Department of Social Sciences. Abo Akademi University.

Eagly, A. (1987). *Sex differences in social behavior: A social role interpretation.* Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Francine Delany. (2013). Parent Handbook. Retrieved November 22, 2014, from fdnsc.net/parents/parent-handbook

Gladden, R. M., Vivolo-Kantor, A. M., Hamburger, M. E., & Lumpkin, C. D. (2014). *BULLYING SURVEILLANCE AMONG YOUTHS:UNIFORM DEFINITIONS FOR PUBLIC HEALTH AND RECOMMENDED DATA ELEMENTS.* Atlanta, Georgia: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Haney, P., & Durlak, J. (1998). Changing self-esteem in children and adolescents: A meta-analytic review. *Journal of Clinical Child Psychology , 27*, 423-433.

Huesmann, L. R., Guerra, N. G., Zelli, A., & Miller, L. (1992). Differing normative beliefs about aggression for boys and girls. In K. Bjorkqvist, & P. Niemela (Eds.), *Of mice and women: Aspects of female aggression* (pp. 77-87). San Diego, CA: Academic Press.

Maccoby, E. E., & Jacklin, C. N. (1974). *The psychology of sex differences.* Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Olweus, D. (1991). Bully/victim problems among schoolchildren: Basic facts and effects of a school based intervention program. In D. Pepler, & K. Rubin (Eds.), *The development and treatment of childhood aggression* (pp. 411-448). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Owens, L., & MacMullin, C. E. (2005). Gender differences in aggression in children and adolescents in South Australian schools. *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth , 6*, 21-35.

Quiroz, H. C., Arnette, J. L., & Stephens, R. D. (2006). What is school bullying? In H. C. Quiroz, J. L. Arnette, & R. D. Stephens, *Bullying In Schools: Fighting the Bully Battle* (pp. 1-3). California: National School Safety Center.

Rigby, A. (1996). *Bullying in Schools: And what to do about it.* Melbourne: Australian Councils for Educational Research.

Rigby, K. (2008). *Children and bullying: How parents and educators can reduce bullying at school.* Victoria: Blackwell Publishing.

Rigby, K. (2001). Health consequences of bullying and its prevention in schools. In J. Juvonen, & S. Graham (Eds.), *Peer harassment in schools: The plight of the vulnerable and victimized* (pp. 310-331). New York: Gulford Press.

Rigby, K., & Cox, I. (1996). The contribution of bullying at school and low self-esteem to acts of deliquency among Australian teenagers. *Personality and Individual Differences , 21*, 609-612.

Rivers, I. (2004). Recollections of bullying at school and then long-term implications for lesbians, gay men, and bisexuals. *Crisis: The Journal of Crisis Intervention and Suicide Prevention , 25*, 169-175.

Shute, R., & Charlton, K. (2006). Anger or compromise? Adolescents' conflict resolution strategies in relation to gender and type of peer relationship. *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth , 13*, 55-69.

Thompson, B., Diamond, K. E., McWilliam, R., Synder, P., & Synder, S. W. (2005). Evaluating the Quality of Evidence from Correlational Research for Evidence-Based Practice. *Exceptional Children , 71* (2), 181-194.

Underwood, M. K., Galen, B. R., & Paquette, J. A. (2001). Top ten challenges for understanding gender and aggression in children: Why can't we all just get along? *Social Development , 10*, 248-266.