

# Prevalence of Bullying in Kashmir and Its Relationship with Socio-Economic Status

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**Abstract – Bullying in every school is one of the biggest challenges and it is the common issue found in every country around the world. From the ages this issue was present in schools around the world and in Indian context its age-old concept too with different names. In every socio-economic section in the societies, it is widely prevalent and is having adverse effects on schoolchildren. The aim of this study is to understand the prevalence of bullying in war torn Kashmir: Northern state of India. In addition, the research will try to understand the gender difference in bullying and the relationship of bullying with socio-economic status of their families. The study used Quantitative method for data collection. The study was conducted among students of higher secondary schools in Kashmir valley. The research was conducted among 1003 adolescents (Boys n=501, & Girls n=502). The survey scale of English Translated version of Peer Bullying Survey Questionnaire was used to assess the bullying. The results show that the prevalence rates of peer victimization among male and female secondary school students were 25.8% are Victims, 14.0% are Bully, 15.7 % are Bully-Victim and 44.6 % are neutral and it was found that there is no significant difference among different socio-economic groups and bullying. In short, conclusion the data shows that Kashmir is not different in matter of bullying issues.**

**Keywords: Bullying, Victim, Bully-Victim, Socio-Economic Status**

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## INTRODUCTION

The word bullying is a repeated harmful behavior, which is usually due to the power imbalance between the perpetrator and victim. Many studies had found that bullying is having huge effect on child's mental health and wellbeing (Nazir & Piskin, 2015). The bullying victims are suffering high physical and mental health risks. Children who became the victims of bullying are usually at the high risk for maladjustment, attention difficulties, depression, poor social skills and anxiety. Many scholars tried to explain the bullying phenomenon and it can be explained as: a student can be considered as being victimized or bullied by exposed to negative actions on the part of one or more other students, repeatedly and over time. Negative actions can be further defined as when someone usually the "perpetrator" deliberately and intentionally inflicts, or attempts to inflict, injury or discomfort upon the "victim". These negative actions can be verbal for example teasing by name-calling, threatening, taunting, or it can be physical for example pushing, punching, hitting, kicking, pinching etc. Victims of bullying had shown huge impact on person such as depression, anxiety suicidal ideation psychosomatic symptoms. Many researches had shown that bullying had a strong effect on mental health and potential and it usually precedes the onset of emotional difficulties. Researches had found many risk factors for bullying

and targeting those risk factors can prevent the incidents of bullying in the schools. In early researches the common factors of bullying was age and gender and they showed clear association but there are some unclear other potential determinants whose relationship with bullying is not certain. One of such traditional determinant is socio-economic status of the family. Socio-economic status is an aggregate concept comprising resource-based and prestige-based indicators of socioeconomic position, which can be measured across societal levels and at different periods in time. It is assessed through individual measures, such as income, or occupation, but also through composite measures that combine or assign weights to different socioeconomic aspects to provide an overall index of socioeconomic level. There is no standard measure of socio-economic status; indicators are used to measure specific aspects of socio-economic stratification.

The current Literature shows some link between victims or bully-victims at school with low socio-economic status. Poor parental education, low parental occupation, economic disadvantage, and poverty had been reported to be associated bullying victimization. Also, Many researches had found that usually the bullying victims come from low socioeconomic backgrounds. However, others found little or no association between socio-

economic status and victims or bully-victims. The type of bullying may matter in relation to socio-economic status. Compared to other researches and links of bullying a very few researches had tried to study the link and relationship between socio-economic status and bullying. There are very few researches which studied bullying and socio-economic status and found some association between victimization and economic disadvantage, poverty, and low parental education. Globally huge number of studies shows the wide spread of bullying phenomenon all across the world. That means its not confined to any specific as its widely spread irrespective of Cultural groups or socio-economic status of the societies. However, it had been found that the prevalence of bullying varies country to country. Countries like Germany, United states, Italy, Korea shows high rate of bullying (Wolke., 2001; Nansel., 2001; Baldry.,2004; Kim.,2004). A study conducted in 66 countries tried to investigate the prevalence of bullying victimization reports that on average 32.1% of the children were bullied at school (Due.,2008). Boys often bully than girls, and there was not much difference in rates of victimization between the two genders (Craig.,2009).

While discussing the main theme a study found that socioeconomic status, of the student in school have been associated with bullying (Analitis., 2008). Another study found that victimization is common among children from lower socio-economic families and results show commonality among several countries (Due., 2009). In another similar study on socio-economic associations of bullying has shown increased risk of victimization among children from families with lower educational level. In nutshell we can say that bullying cannot be predicted by one factor and can be faced by any person but there are some indicators which make one vulnerable to it.

## OBJECTIVES

The main objective of the research is to study bullying in war torn Kashmir. Another important objective of the study was to understand the gender differences and bullying. It also tries to understand the relationship of bullying with socio-economic status of their families.

## METHODOLOGY

### Tools used

1. **Peer Bullying Survey Questionnaire:-** English Translated version of Peer Bullying Survey Questionnaire, developed by Metin Piskan (2010) was used to assessed Bullying.
2. **Demographics Information Form:-** This form included questions regarding gender, age, family income per month. The

participants were asked to fill every detail on the form. In order to assess family income, students were asked to report their total family income per month.

### Sample

The sample for the study was taken from higher secondary schools in Kashmir valley. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the participants. The total no. of participants consisted of 1003 adolescents, with equal number of Boys (n=501) and Girls (n=502).

### Procedure

The data of the present study was collected through personal contact with the participants. The purpose of the study was explained to the participants and they were assured that their responses would be kept as confidential and will be used for research purpose only. The study used Quantitative as well as Qualitative method which allows researcher to go in depth of the problem and understand it in broader terms.

### Results

The results show that the prevalence rates of peer victimization among male and female secondary school students were 25.8% are Victims, 14.0% are Bully, 15.7 % are Bully-Victim and 44.6 % are neutral. The Gender differences in bully/Victim/bully-victim/Neutral in higher secondary students of Kashmir is shown in the table below.

**Table 1.1** Frequency and Percentages of male and female participant's bully/Victim/bully-victim/Neutral.

	<i>F</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>Female</i>
	%			
<i>Victim</i>	142	28.3	117	23.3
<i>Bully</i>	70	14.0	70	13.9
<i>Bully-Victim</i>	80	16.0	77	15.3
<i>Neutral</i>	209	41.7	238	47.4
	$\chi^2=4.351$ $sd=3$ $p=.226$			

The above table 1.1 shows the gender difference in bully/Victim/bully-victim/Neutral in higher secondary students of Kashmir. The table shows males 28.3% are victimized and females 23.3%. There is no significant difference between male and female  $\chi^2(sd=3, n=1003)=4.351, p>.05$ . According to the analysis, male victimization seems to be slightly higher than the female victimization but it is not statistically significant. This was a recurring finding in a number of studies which stated that males were more likely to be involved in bullying that was physical in nature, whereas girls were more likely to be involved in spreading gossip and rumors

about their peers (Ali, Sameeta, & Alamans, 2017; Nazir & Nesheen, 2015).

The study also try to find out that is there a significant difference in family income among the bully/victim/bully-victim among in higher secondary students of Kashmir. Before making a One Way ANOVA for income normal distribution among groups have been searched. Table 1.2 below shows the descriptive statistics of family income.

**Table 1.2** Descriptive Statistics of Family Income

Family Income	Group	n	$\bar{X}$	$S_x$	Skewness	Kurtosis
	Victim	259	16575.29	5215.987	1.402	2.982
	Bully	140	17671.43	5810.488	1.134	1.698
	Bully/Victim	157	17331.21	5471.826	0.588	0.094
	Neutral	447	18156.60	6453.184	2.708	18.865

As can be seen from the table above skewness and kurtosis scores are beyond the border between -1 and +1, so it means normal distribution cannot be provided. As for the relevant literature in some subjects like bullying, normal distribution is not an expected outcome because of the unique nature of the variable. Therefore, nonparametric statistical techniques should be used in this analysis. In order to examine family income for being bully, victim, bully/victim and neutral a Kruskal Wallis H-Test has been used.

**Table 1.3** Bullying and Victimization KW H-Test Scores

Bullying and Victimization	N	Mean Ranks	sd	$\chi^2$	p
Victim	259	451.95	3	11.998	.007
Bully	140	509.25			
Bully/Victim	157	500.54			
Neutral	447	529.24			

*p* = .007

According to the result, it can be seen that family income differs among subgroups. Highest income is belonging to the neutral group while lowest is in the victims. Also Mann Whitney U Tests used for making group comparisons.

**Table 1.4** Family Income U-Test Scores between Groups

Group	N	Mean Ranks	Sum of Ranks	U	P
Victim	259	191.99	49726.50	16056.50	.057
Bully	140	214.81	30073.50		
Victim	259	201.24	52120.50	18450.50	.110
Bully/Victim	157	220.48	34615.50		
Victim	259	318.72	82548.00	48878.00	.000
Neutral	447	373.65	167023.00		
Bully	140	150.34	21047.00	10803.00	.798
Bully/Victim	157	147.81	23206.00		
Bully/Victim	157	290.25	45569.00	33166.00	.302
Neutral	447	306.80	137141.00		
Bully	140	285.10	39914.50	30044.500	.473
Neutral	447	296.79	132663.50		

According to the results of subgroup comparisons, significant differences cannot be found between these groups. Therefore, whether there can be mean differences between victim and bully it is not significant for instance. This is also same for all other sub group comparisons except between the sub group of victimization and neutral. Thus, when it is compared among sub groups of this behavior according to family income there seems to be a significant difference for Kruskal Wallis H-Test but when it is examined between sub groups, it seems to be there is only one significant difference between them and it is victim and neutral sub groups.

**CONCLUSION**

Bullying can happen to anyone, at any time, and anywhere. However, the contexts, when and where bullying happens, can bring about harm to the surroundings. The research provides information regarding prevalence of bullying in higher secondary schools of Kashmir almost in same rate as in other parts of the world. There was no significant difference between male and female in bullying but male victimization seems to be slightly higher than the female victimization but it is not statistically significant. In addition, there was no significant difference found between different socio-economic groups. The study was first of its kind in Kashmir region, as no study had been conducted yet in order to measure the prevalence of bullying in the region. Due to the use of a very small sample from higher secondary schools some regions of Kashmir the result, therefore, cannot be generalized to any other places or schools in Jammu and Kashmir State or even for the whole India. It is possible that in the future, the same study could be carried out with a larger sample, which could be on a regional or national scale in order to see how prevalent the phenomenon is throughout the region or country.

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