

From Bullying to Belonging: Teachers' Role in Peace-building in Primary Schools

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Abstract

Primary schools can be transformed From Bullying to Belonging: Teachers' Role in Peace-building in Primary Schools. By cultivating inclusive classrooms, encouraging empathy, putting conflict resolution techniques into practice teachers may reduce aggressiveness and create constructive peer relationships. Their proactive measures such restorative practices and anti-bullying initiatives, encourages students to value diversity and respect from one another. The purpose of this research was to identify the types of bullying, causes of bullying, effects of bullying and teachers' role to address and control bullying with effective interventions. In this descriptive research the data was collected through sampling. The population of this study was the teachers of Tehsil Attock. And the sample size of this study consisted of 220 teachers and 10 head teachers. The findings of this study were to explore different types of bullying in different public schools' system. The social emotional-learning and teacher-led conflict resolution strengthen student's sense of belonging and substantially reduce bullying incidents. The study comes to the conclusion that offering teachers peace-building training improves school climate, fostering long-term accordance and the welfare of students. Teachers generally think that to create a healthy environment in schools is essential part of students development, mental health and academic achievements.

Key Words

Bullying, Peace-Building, Primary Schools, Teachers Role

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Introduction

Education is frequently regarded as an approach to promote societal cohesiveness and harmony, particularly during the formative years when children are developing their social and emotional abilities. Apart from to academic courses, schools act as miniature versions of society, teaching student's empathy, social norms, and dispute resolution strategies. Although bullying prevents many students from feeling safe or accepted at school. The prevalent issue of bullying in primary schools persists to have an impact on students' general development, academic achievement, and well-being. Effectively dealing with bullying is essential for peace-building, not simply for disciplinary purposes. Subsequently they play a vital role in the educational ecosystem, teachers are essential in changing adverse school environment into setting where everyone feel valued and engaged.

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The Impact of Bullying in Primary Schools

In primary schools, bullying can take many different forms, including as verbal and physical assault, social exclusion, and cyber-bullying. Bullying has significance consequences for both victims and perpetrators, regardless of its form. Bullying victims frequently struggle academically and suffer from anxiety, sadness and low self-esteem. long term exposures to bullying can, in extreme circumstances, result suicidal thoughts and self-harm. Bullying present may grow aggressive throughout adulthood, which makes them more likely to do violent or illegal acts. When bystanders do little to stop bullying, they may also experience mental pain, helplessness and anxiety (Ulfah & Gustina, [2020](#))

In general, this subject delves into the intricacies of bullying behavior that are unique to female students, with the goal of comprehending the root causes and consequences while looking for ways to bring about a more secure and welcoming learning environment.

Students feel unsafe in a setting when bullying is not adequately addressed in schools, which reduces academic performance and causes alienation from learning. This antagonistic atmosphere may reinforce cycle of prejudice and violence, undermining efforts to build a society that is inclusive and peaceful. Therefore, eradicating bullying involves not just defending specific students but also fostering an environment of mutual respect, inclusivity, and comprehension (Aki, [2019](#)).

Teachers as Peace-Builders

Teachers have a specific and significant role in creating school culture. They may actively promote harmony in the classroom because they are not just teachers but also mentors, role models, and mediators, Teachers may create safe, respectful, and valued learning environments in primary schools by acknowledging their responsibility as peace-builders. The responsibilities in peace-building comprise a variety of essential domains:

Creating a Positive Classroom Environment

According to Bonds and Stoker ([2000](#)), Preventing bullying in classroom starts with creating a pleasant atmosphere. By determining specific requirements for polite conduct, encouraging kindness, and stimulating cooperation among students, educators may create an inclusive environment. Instances of exclusion and resentment are uncommon in classrooms that encourage collaboration and competitiveness. classroom management techniques that focus positive reinforcement and help students value variety can be used by teachers.

Recognizing and Addressing Bullying

Teachers needs to be aware for the potential indications of bullying and respond quickly to address it. Sometimes bullying is dismissed or passed away as normal childhood behavior. Teachers that are proactive can step in immediately to mitigate further harm. It is critical to establish broad avenues of communication so that students feel comfortable reporting instances of bullying. Teachers can also use conflict resolution strategies that emphasizes restorative justice above punitive measures so that both victims and offenders can learn from their mistakes and aspire for peace (Borgen et al., [2021](#)).

Implementing Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Programs

Programs for social-emotional learning (SEL) provide children the tools they need to manage their emotions, resolve conflicts, be self-aware, and have empathy. Children can participate in these programs learn how to control their emotions, from positive relationships with others, and manage social situations. Teachers are essential in incorporating SEL into the curriculum by employing exercise in mindfulness, role-playing and group discussions. By nurturing emotional intelligence, teachers assist students in acquiring the ability to settle disputes peacefully and create a feeling of community inside the school (Arseneault, [2018](#)).

Engaging Parents and the Community

Teachers need to collaborate with parents and the entire community to prevent bullying; they cannot do it alone. The whole support network for students is strengthened by conducting workshops on healthy parenting, talking to parents about bullying, and enrolling their participation in school-related activities. Relationships with community groups organizations may also provide the knowledge and resources needed to anti-bullying initiatives practice (Camodeca & Nava, [2022](#)).

Incorporating Peace Education into the Curriculum

Peace education develops a culture of nonviolence respect, and global citizenship along with reducing bullying. By teaching conflict resolution strategies, fostering multicultural understanding, and discussing historical and modern examples of peace-building, educators can integrate peace education into a variety of topic areas. Classes In social studies, literature, and history offer abundant chances to investigate concepts of justice, empathy, and reconciliation (Arseneault, [2018](#)).

Challenges and Opportunities

Teachers frequently struggle to properly handle bullying, although the crucial role they play in promoting peace. Their ability to build a bullying-free atmosphere may be challenged by a lack of specialized training, high student-teacher values and inadequate resources. Teachers may also find it challenging to apply restorative strategies to conflict resolution due to structural problems including strict disciplinary procedures and a lack of administrative assistance (Thornberg & Jungert, [2013](#)).

But there are also prospects for systemic reform because of these difficulties. Governments and educational institutions must fund teacher preparation programs emphasizing inclusive education, trauma-informed instruction, and conflict resolution. Teachers can perform their peace-building responsibilities more successfully if they are given the tools and assistance they need. Furthermore, cooperation between teachers, administrators, students, parents, is necessary to promote an inclusive and respectful school atmosphere.

Statement of the Problem

In primary schools, bullying remains a common problem that has a detrimental effect on students' academic achievement and general well-being. Although their methods and difficulties are still poorly understood, teachers are essential in reducing bullying and creating a feeling of community. The views, experiences. And interventions of teachers in bullying prevention and peace-building are examined in this study. Comprehending their function may assist in creating training initiatives and strategies that are more successful. In order to fulfill the deficiencies in the current anti-bullying efforts, the research will examine at bullying dynamics and the role that teachers play

Objectives of the Study

- ▶ To explore practices employed by teachers to reduce bullying and peace-building in primary schools.
- ▶ To identify the causes of bullying at primary level.

Research Question

What type and nature of bullying is prevailing in primary school?

Literature Review

In primary schools, bullying is a prevalent issue that has an impact on students' social development, academic performance, and psychological well-being. Bullying causes have long been studied by academics, who have examined at peer relationships, teachers' attitudes, and school climate (Cook et al., [2010](#)).

The importance of teachers in changing hostile school environments into welcoming ones has come to light more and more in recent years (Gaffney et al., [2019](#)).

This study of the literatures examines how teachers might contribute to peace-building in primary schools by emphasizing restorative practices, social-emotional learning (SEL), intervention techniques and the broader implications for educational policy.

Types of Bullying:

There are several forms of bullying.

Verbal Bullying: There are various forms of bullying that can occur in schools; Saying or writing hurtful things is known as verbal bullying. Teasing, name calling, offensive sexual remarks, mocking, and threatening, to hurt someone are examples of verbal bullying (Camodeca, & Nava, [2022](#)).

Social Bullying: Social Bullying: sometimes known when a person tries to hurt another person relationships or reputation. in leaving someone without any purpose, urging other children not to be friends with someone, spreading rumors about someone in public or examples of social bullying (Dixon & Smith, [2011](#))

Physical Bullying: Physical bullying includes harming a person physical or possession. Physical bullying comprises hand gestures that are cruel or disrespect, hitting, punching, spitting, trapping, pushing, taking or damaging objects (Aki, [2019](#)).

Cyber Bullying: Cyber-bullying is the term of using technology to harass threatens or embrace someone else. Online threats or not the same as offensive texts, tweets, posts, or communications. Posting pictures videos, or personal data with the goal to harm or humiliate another person also qualifies (Olweus, & Limber, [2018](#)).

Causes of Bullying: Bullying action can have a greater tendency to occur when certain risk factors are present. According to the researchers the causes of these behavior are found in home environment. (Moon et al., [2011](#)). Youngsters are more prone to display bullying behaviors if they have any of the following traits:

Low Self-Esteem: Youngsters who bully others typically don't think well of themselves. This can be result of their sense of achievement following their bullying (Espelage et al., [2015](#)).

Attention: They imitated their parent's actions after witnessing them treat someone disrespectfully. They are not too concerned about you; they just enjoy watching how you react (Ulfah & Gustina, [2020](#)).

Parental Neglect or Negative Perception: Children who experienced unfavorable opinions or abuse at the hands of one or both of their parents (or principal caregivers) may be more inclined to mistreat other kids (Evans et al., [2014](#)).

Fractured or Dysfunctional Family Unit: A child's propensity for engaging in bullying conduct possibly impacted by an unsettling home environment (Espelage et al., [2015](#)).

Authoritarian Parenting Styles: An abusive home environment or any other form of violence might influence or individual's aggressive behavior at school (Garandeau et al., [2019](#)).

Poor Academic Performance: When they are having difficulty at school, kids may get angry and resort to bullying as a means to vent their feelings (Hester, [2017](#)).

Emotion Dysregulation: The potential link was mediated by uncontrollable emotional, which based on a later psychologist, anxiety and depression symptoms (Hester, [2017](#)).

Peer Pressure: Kids usually give into peer pressure because they want to fit in or be expected. They worry that if they break away from the colleague or group (Lereya et al., [2015](#)).

Physical Assault: Physical attack, joking around, either being underweight or overweight. Having different gender, religion, or race, symptoms related to physical health, a young person could have (Rose et al., [2022](#)).

Physical Disabilities: As physical limitations or impairment that keeps a person from using one or more of their limbs as they normally would is referred to as a physical handicap. It could be temporary or permanent (Camodeca, & Nava, [2022](#))

Effects Of Bullying: Bullying in schools is on the rise globally and endangering the health of students as well as the stability of their physical and mental well-being.

Bullying and victimization, particularly in the adolescent population are linked to an increase in mental well-being problems (Chapell et al., [2006](#))

The progression of suitable skills and personal abilities for suitably responding to environmental demand is referred to as healthy adjustment. Bullying both traditional and cyber has become widespread in Pakistani institutions as a huge body of literature has proved. Bullying transpires throughout the educational spectrum, encompassing elementary, middle, higher secondary and tertiary education.

Living a healthy lifestyle mean placing equal value on one's physical, emotional, and mental well-being. Bullying has been found as a major element that has lasting negative impacts on student's life and personality among many other factors that also have an effect on student's mental health (Hall, [2017](#)).

Research reveals that school climate has an effect on student's behavior in addition to their academic performance. Student's psychology is directly impacted by their school environment. Students will succeed academically at a school if they are given secure and encouraging environment; otherwise, it may negatively impact their academic growth (Rose et al., [2022](#)). Subject of students who engaged, who are facing and bystander bullying

Students Engaging in Bullying

These students could have acquiring social skills and forming wholesome connections. They might be subject to academic sanctions and disciplinary actions, which would be detrimental to their overall academic record and future opportunities. They might carry on acting aggressively in the absence of appropriate intervention, which could have detrimental long-term effects on both them and other students (Bosacki et al., [2006](#)).

Students Facing Bullying

Bullying victims often suffer from psychological and emotional anguish, which raises their risk of discouraged and increase their anxiety and pessimistic. If bullying is not properly addressed, it can have a long-term negative influence on the victims attendance, academic performance, and general well-being. Bullying victims may also struggle to healthy peer relationship and experience social isolation (Axford et al., [2020](#)).

Bystanders

Bystanders who do not speak up intervene against bullying practices may feel powerless, afraid, or guilty. The general school atmosphere as well as the perception of safety and well-being of onlookers can be negatively impacted by seeing bullying since it can foster a climate dread and insecurity.

It is critical to understand that bullying has a variety of negative impacts that can last a lifetime for each victim. Interventions and tactics should center on encouraging bystanders to take constructive action, creating an environment of respect and empathy throughout the school community, and providing assistance to victims as well as addressing the actions of those who engage in bullying (Baldry & Farrington, [2000](#)).

Teachers Perspectives and Practices

A substantial field of investigation is the literature review on the subject of investigating bullying and peace-building in primary schools from the viewpoint of teacher's attitude and actions. Numerous explorations have been directed on the frequency and effects of bullying in primary organizations as well as method for creating inclusive and tranquil learning environments.

Teachers have diverse viewpoints and experiences that should be taken into account when addressing these issues because they are essential in forming the school's culture and promoting the welfare of the pupils.

A few important topics in literature review would be the frequency and effects of bullying in primary schools, the responsibility of teachers in recognizing and disciplining bullying conduct, methods for developing student's empathy and conflict resolution abilities and the effects of school wide interventions and policies on fostering a welcoming and peaceful learning environment.

Studies emphasizing the value of professional development and teacher training in combating bullying and advancing efforts to promote peace-building. Additionally, investigating the methods in which teachers work together to address these challenges with students, families, and other staff members can yield insightful information about practices (Hutson et al., [2019](#))

Significance of the Study

This study is important because it reveals the strategies primary schools by addressing the fundamental causes of bullying, school administrators, teachers, and law-maker can create focused interventions. Acquiring comprehension into the methods used by teachers may improve educational programs and offering them the tools they need to resolve conflicts students benefit from a safer and more welcoming learning environments due to the findings. Ultimately this study reinforces efforts to reduce bullying and promote positive school climate.

Research Methodology

A mixed-method approach was employed in the study to investigate teachers' experiences with bullying and their methods for promoting harmony, including semi-structured interviews and questionnaires. In order to determine teachers' opinions on bullying, its origins, and its consequences, data analysis was done using SPSS and statistical methods including frequencies and percentages. The questionnaires were validated by experts and included questions about demographics, bullying types, causes of bullying, and the opinion of teachers about bullying.

Research Design

The study used purposive sample for the semi-structured interviews with head teachers and stratified random sampling for the quantitative data. A self-developed questionnaires and interviews were used to gather information

from Tehsil Attock primary schools about bullying, its types, its causes and the behavior of teachers. Teachers' views, behaviors, and experiences with bullying and peace-building were investigated using a descriptive research approach.

Population

The study includes 60 public schools with 60 head teachers and 300 teachers, and it focuses on all primary schools, teachers, and head teachers in tehsil Attock. These schools are essential to comprehending bullying and peace-building strategies because of their diversity in size, resources and student populations. In terms of classroom management, student behavior intervention, and creating a positive school atmosphere, teachers and head teachers are significant.

Table 1

No of school	No of teachers	Head Teacher	Boys Campus	Girls Campus
60	300	60	21	39

Source of Data: from. www.SIS.Punjab.Gov.pk

Sampling

In order to ensure broad representation based on school size, location, and experience, 220 of the 300 accessible teachers were chosen to complete the questionnaire. 10 head teachers were also selected for in-depth interviews based on their leadership abilities and the difficulties the school confronts in dealing with bullying. Their observations offer insightful perspectives on the effect of school-wide policies on learning settings in classroom.

Data Collection

Semi-structured Interviews & Questionnaires

Questionnaires were distributed to 220 primary school teachers in Tehsil Attock and 10 head teachers participated in semi-structured interviews to gather data. Although surveys gathered general opinions, interviews offered in-depth insights on teacher's perspectives on bullying and promoting harmony. Anonymity and confidentiality were assured to participants and the questionnaires made clear the purpose of the study.

Instrumentation

Demographics, bullying types, causes, impacts teachers' opinions and trainings were all covered in the self-made questionnaire, which had several sections and generally closed-ended questions. A 5-point likert scale was used to evaluate the sections on bullying, its effects, and causes. In order to gain a deep understanding of teachers' perspectives, interviews were conducted in addition to the questionnaire.

Reliability

A strong cronbach's alpha value of 0.891 was collected by pilot testing the questionnaire with 30 individuals, ensuring its reliability. Strong internal consistency was confirmed by this, suggesting that the items measured the intended constructs accurately. it was suggested to review for potential duplication or validity enhancement.

Table 2

Chronbach's Alpha	No of items
0.891	59

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Quantitative Data Analysis

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics of Lack of Supervision is Bullying Cause

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	204	92.7
Agree	16	7.3
Neutral	00	00
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagree	0	0
Total	220	100

Results: The statistics of “bullying behavior in primary schools may cause from a lack of supervision or adult interference” is as (strongly disagree = 0, disagree = 0, neutral = 0, agree = 7.2 and strongly agree = 93.7). According to these statistics the highest percentage is of strongly agree = 93.7%).

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics of Teachers Encourage Students to Report Bullying Incidents

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	166	70
Agree	44	20
Neutral	10	10
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagree	0	0
Total	220	100

Results: The statistics of “students encourage to report if they face bullying” is as (strongly disagree = 0, disagree = 0, neutral = 10, agree = 44, and strongly agree = 166) According to these statistics the highest percentage is of strongly agree = 100%).

Interpretation of Table 3 and 4

According to table 3, 92.7% of respondents strongly agree with the statement, while only 7.3% agree. None of the respondents chose to disagree, strongly disagree, or neutral. This demonstrates a resounding endorsement of the subject. Table 4 displays a different distribution, with 10% of respondents being neutral and 75.5% strongly agreeing or agreeing. The remaining 14.5% is unaccounted for in terms of strongly disagree or disagree replies. Despite the slightly more varied range of responses shown in the second table, both tables show an overall positive feeling.

Qualitative Data Analysis and Interpretation

Bullying Behavior is common in Girls

In general, this subject delves into the intricacies of bullying behavior that are unique to female students, with the goal of comprehending the root causes and consequences while looking for ways to bring about a more secure and welcoming learning environment.

Name calling, insults teasing and bullying behavior is common in school.

Participants 6 Describes with These Words:

Name calling, teasing of girls and physical violence is common in girls.

Analysis

In order to analyze name calling, teasing and other girl's issues as bullying behaviors among girls, it is necessary to look at the school climate, gender expectations, psychological effects and motivations. A safe, secure and encouraging school environment where all children may flourish without worrying about bullying is only possible to control these kinds of bullying behavior.

Bullying Behavior in Boys

With the goal of understanding the root reasons and proposing solution to make institutes a safer and more respected place for all pupil, these themes delve into the nuances of bullying behaviors that are unique to boys' students.

Participant 3 Clarify With these words:

Hitting, punching, kicking, copy-cutting, ink spreading on clothes and notebooks were common bullying behavior in boys.

Participants 10 Defined with These Words.

Bad touches, hitting, punching bullying behaviors were common in boys.

Analysis

Understanding the social, psychological and environmental elements that influences these actions is necessary for accessing these types of bullying that occurs among boys. It emphasizes the significance of establishing a secure and welcoming learning environment in which these aggressions are not accepted at all students are treated with dignity and support.

Summary

This study used questionnaires and interviews to investigate the role of teachers and promoting peace in tehsil Attock's primary schools; From bullying to belonging. According to the findings, the most prevalent types of bullying are verbal and physical, and they frequently take place during games or after school. The necessity for early intervention was emphasized by teachers who identified social, environmental and developmental variables are the main causes of bullying. In order to effectively reduce bullying, the entire school- students, teachers and parents must be involved. In order to apply the most recent strategies for peace-building and bullying prevention. It is essential that teacher's continuous education training.

Findings

- ▶ Unsupervised spaces, such as hallways and playgrounds, offer bullying chances.
- ▶ If there is no adult involvement, bullying behavior continuous and get worse.
- ▶ Clear reporting procedures provide student the confidence and safety to speak up.
- ▶ Students feel more comfortable asking for assistance when teachers take proactive measures to address issues.
- ▶ The most prevalent types of bullying are verbal and physical, and they frequently take place during games or after school.

Conclusion

- ▶ In conclusion, fostering enduring peace requires changing the school culture from one of bullying to one of belonging.
- ▶ Teachers are the driving force behind the development of secure welcoming classrooms where each child is treated with dignity.

- ▶ Their constant mediation of disputes creates the groundwork for understanding and empathy.
- ▶ Students are inspired to accept diversity by teachers who actively promote positive habits.
- ▶ Young students' social relationships are strengthened when peace-building activities are incorporated into regular classes.

Recommendations

Recommendations for Practice

The foundation for schools to ensure adherence to rules and policies is the bullying issue in schools. The study's conclusion serves as the basis for recommendations made to public educational institutions, ensuring that all staff members follow the set of guidelines to decrease in the number of bullying incidents. The survey found that teachers ought to serve as example for the students should follow the regulations in order to prevent bullying. This suggestion is made on the majority of students are greatly impacted by bullying. Thus, guaranteeing compliance adherence to school regulations and guidelines regarding bullying may aid in the prevention of bullying incidents.

Recommendations for Future Research:

The research was limited to look in only Tehsil Attock public schools. This serves as foundation of suggestions for additional study in other institutions to improve the dependability and quality of research. Additionally, since teachers and head teachers alone supplied their perspectives on incidents of bullying at their school, more investigation is required to examine the law makers opinion on suitable tactics that should be implemented in schools to lessen situation of harassment. Additionally, the qualitative and quantitative nature of this study suggests that future research utilizing different study techniques to ascertain whether bullying has a substantial connection to student's academic achievements.

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