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Research Article

Bullying Victimization, Perpetration and Bystander Experiences of Learners in San Guillermo National High School

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ABSTRACT

This research outlined the situation regarding bullying victimization, perpetration, and bystander experiences among students at San Guillermo National High School for the academic year 2022 – 2023. This study employed a quantitative approach. A probability sampling method was utilized to identify the sample. The respondents' views on bullying were assessed based on their profile variables. A majority of those surveyed are women. The average age of those surveyed is 16.11. Eighth grade has the highest number of participants. Most of the respondents faced bullying (victims). The majority of them observed other students experiencing bullying (bystanders). Fewer respondents have become bullies towards other learners (bullies). Most bullying incidents occur in homeroom classes. Bullies usually target their peers. The reasons for it lie in physical attributes. Most of the time, the parents and the school are unaware of the bullying incidents. A notable disparity exists in how respondents perceive things when categorized by gender and grade level. The perceptions of the respondents show no significant differences when categorized by age. It is hence advised to educate teachers, students, and parents regarding Republic Act No. 10627, referred to as "The Anti-Bullying Act of 2013," and DepEd Order No. 40, series of 2012, known as the "DepEd Child Protection Policy." Developing an Intervention Program to tackle bullying events in schools is essential as well.

Keywords: *Bullying, Victimization, Perpetration, Bystander Behavior, Learners, School Climate, San Guillermo National High School*

Background

A common type of youth violence within schools is bullying. Bullying, according to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, is the mistreatment and abuse of a weaker individual by a stronger, more dominant person. It occurs

when one individual intentionally harms or frightens another, and the victim struggles to protect himself or herself. It tends to occur repeatedly (Hamburger, Basile & Vivolo, 2011). As stated by violence.chop.edu, a majority of school-aged kids encounter bullying in various

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ways because of the unequal distribution of power and influence prevalent in relationships and peer groups among youths. Studies indicate that bullying and harassment in educational environments rise during late childhood and reach their highest levels in early adolescence, particularly occurring in unstructured areas such as the cafeteria, hallways, and playground during recess. In the bullying dynamic, three roles are present: the bully, the victim, and the bystander. It is essential to focus on sustaining a child-friendly and bully-free atmosphere in schools. Identifying and measuring the prevalence of bullying incidents in schools is essential to prevent its harmful consequences on the lives of those affected

Vanderbilt and Augustyn (2010) noted in their research that in addition to the immediate trauma of bullying, victims face a significant risk of later physical and emotional issues. Bullies experience negative long-term consequences due to their actions, while bystanders are also affected by the harmful impacts of bullying and are not blameless in its presence. In a different study, witnessing bullying in school indicated mental health risks beyond those anticipated for individuals directly involved in bullying, whether as a victim or perpetrator (Rivers, Poteat, Noret & Ashurst, 2009). Studies indicate that boys tend to show higher rates of physical aggression, whereas girls are more inclined towards verbal aggression (Baldry & Farrington, 2000; Nansel, Craig, Overpeck, Saluja, & Ruan, 2004). Bullies tend to display rebellious and unlawful behaviors along with low academic achievement (Berthold & Hoover, 2000; Nansel et al., 2003; Nansel et al., 2004; Sourander, Helstela, Helenius, & Piha, 2000). Victims of bullying face depression, anxiety, low self-worth, and feelings of isolation; reduced academic performance; thoughts of suicide; and attempts to take their own lives

(Bond, Carlin, Thomas, Ruin, & Patton, 2001; Eisenberg, Neunmark-Sztainer, & Perry, 2003; Gladstone, Parker, & Malhi, 2006; Hawker & Boulton, 2000; Klomeck, Marrocco, Kleinman, Schonfeld, & Gould, 2007; Nansel et al., 2004; Sourander et al., 2000)

Bystanders or witnesses express emotions of guilt or powerlessness for failing to confront the bully and/or assist the victim (Hoover, Oliver, & Hazler, 1992; O'Connell, Pepler, & Craig, 1999). Salmivalli (2001) states that adolescent bystanders distance themselves from a bullied peer to prevent becoming targets of bullying themselves. The occurrence of bullying in educational institutions is a difficult and serious issue. Studying and measuring instances of bullying is crucial to implement necessary actions for its prevention. This research outlined the experiences of bullying victimization, perpetration, and bystander involvement among students at San Guillermo National High School during the 2022 – 2023 academic year, utilizing the Assessment Tools Compendium published by the National Center for Injury.

Methods

This research utilized quantitative research design specifically descriptive research design. This design is used to understand a phenomenon, or a population. It measures the variables to investigate them. According to Williams (2007), it is a method that can determine the situation in current phenomena. [2].

Result and Discussion

Anchored from the problems of this study which is to identify describe the status of bullying victimization, perpetration, and bystander experiences of learners in San Guillermo National High School for the school year 2022 – 2023, the gathered results are hereby presented and discussed.

Profile of the Respondents

Table 1. Gender of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Male	137	41%	2
Female	195	58%	1
Others	5	1%	3
Total	337	100%	

Table 1 shows that majority of the respondents are female comprising of 195 or 58% compared to male with 135 or 41% of the sample. Five (5) or 1% of the respondents declared

themselves belonging to other gender. Smith (2008) mentioned that females are more likely to respond to surveys compared to males.

Table 2. Age of Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
12 – 13	33	10%	4
14 – 15	95	28%	2
16 – 17	118	35%	1
18 – 19	80	24%	3
20 and above	11	3%	5
Total	337	100%	

Table 2 presents the age of the respondents. The mean age of the respondents is 16.15. According to Gordon (2022), turning 16 is big deal to most teens. They become more cognizant of what they want in the future. 118 or 35% of the

respondents has ages ranging 16 – 17. It was followed by those ages ranging from 14 – 15 and 18 – 19 with 95 or 28% and 80 or 24% respectively.

Table 3. Grade Level of Respondents

Grade Level	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
7	52	15%	6
8	66	20%	1
9	54	16%	3
10	59	17%	2
11	53	16%	4.5
12	53	16%	4.5
Total	337	100%	

Table 3 presents the grade level of the respondents. Grade 8 has the greatest number of respondents with 66 or 20% while Grade 7 has

the least number with 52 or 15%. It can also be inferred that the respondents were well-represented from each grade level.

Bullying Experiences of Learners

A. As a Victim of Bullying

Table 4. Bullying Experience of Respondents as Victim

Experienced Bullying	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Yes	213	63%	1
No	124	37%	2
Total	337	100	

Table 4 shows that 213 or 63% of the respondents are victims of bullying while 124 or 37% are not. This indicates that there is a high rate of bullying incidents at San Guillermo National High School. This result is aligned with the report of Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) in 2019 as revealed by

Senator Sherwin Gatchalian in a hearing where Philippines ranked 1 among 70 countries in bullying in school (Fernandez, 2023). The poll showed that 65% of Filipino high school students experience bullying at least a few times a month. This was way above the 23% average among the 79 countries that were surveyed.

Table 5. Frequency of Bullying Experience as Victim

How Often	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
one or more times a day	59	28%	2
one or more times a week	50	23%	3
one or more times a month	87	41%	1
No answer	17	8%	4
Total	213	100%	

Table 6. Place of Bullying Incident

Place	Usual Place of Incident			Main Place of Incident		
	Frequency	Percentage	Rank	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
homeroom	121	57	1	40	19	1
before school	37	18	6	4	2	6.5
gym	0	0	14.5	1	1	8.2
sporting events	6	3	11	1	1	8.2
telephone	12	6	10	0	0	13.3
cafeteria	14	7	9	2	1	8.2
bus	2	1	13	0	0	13.3
dances	17	8	8	2	1	8.2
bathroom	4	2	12	1	1	8.2
text messages	45	21	5	8	4	4
academic class	57	27	4	12	6	3
after school	70	33	2	6	3	5
hallway	30	14	7	4	2	6.5
online	69	32	3	23	11	2
others	0	0	14.5	0	0	13.3

Table 7. Forms of Bullying

Forms	Weighted Mean	Description
a. Called me names	2.55	rarely happened
b. Made fun of me	2.78	sometimes happened
c. Said they will do bad things to me	2.23	rarely happened
d. Played jokes on me	2.84	sometimes happened
e. Won't let me be a part of their group	1.96	rarely happened
f. Broke my things	1.88	rarely happened
g. Attacked me	1.82	rarely happened
h. Nobody would talk to me	1.93	rarely happened
i. Wrote bad things about me	2.14	rarely happened
j. Said mean things behind my back	3.22	sometimes happened
k. Pushed or shoved me	2.05	rarely happened

Table 8. Description of Bullies

Bully	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
older boys	53	25	4
younger boys	29	14	8
boys in my grade	122	57	1
someone who is strong	42	20	6
someone who is powerful	28	13	9

Bully	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
someone who has many friends	79	37	3
older girls	25	12	10.5
younger girls	25	12	10.5
girls in my grade	100	47	2
someone who is an adult	18	9	13
someone who is popular	22	10	12
someone who is smart	30	14	7
someone who I don't know	51	24	5

Table 9. Effects of Bullying to the Victim

Effects	Weighted Mean	Description
Made me feel sick	1.97	rarely a problem
I couldn't make friends	2.00	rarely a problem
Made me feel bad or sad	3.03	sometimes a problem
Made it difficult to learn at school	2.01	rarely a problem
Didn't come to school	1.51	not a problem
I had problems with my family	2.12	rarely a problem

Table 10. Reasons of Being Bullied

Reasons	Perceived Reason			Perceived Main Reason		
	F	%	R	F	%	R
They think my face looks funny.	127	60	1	18	9	1
They think I'm fat.	54	26	2	11	5	3
They think I'm skinny	48	23	3	10	5	4
They think I look too old	19	9	15.25	0	0	20.09
They think I look too young	5	2	28.33	0	0	20.09
They think I am wimp	28	13	12.5	6	3	7.2
They think my friends are weird	22	10	14	2	1	15.2
I'm sick a lot	6	3	24.25	0	0	20.09
I'm disabled	10	5	19.2	1	1	17.2
I get good grades	47	22	4	12	6	2
I get bad grades	18	9	15.25	0	0	20.09
Where I live	6	3	24.25	0	0	20.09
The clothes I wear	33	15	11	1	1	15.2
The color of my skin	40	19	7	4	2	12.33
The country I'm from	10	5	19.2	1	1	15.2
I am different	28	13	12.5	4	2	12.33
The church I go	7	3	24.25	1	1	15.2
My parents	5	2	28.33	2	1	15.2
My brother	2	1	31	0	0	20.09
My sister	6	3	24.25	0	0	20.09
My family is poor	11	5	19.2	0	0	20.09
My family has a lot of money	5	2	28.33	0	0	20.09
Someone in my family has a disability	10	5	19.2	0	0	20.09
I am too tall	18	9	15.25	4	2	12.33
I am too short	35	16	10	8	4	5.5
I am in special education	11	5	19.2	0	0	20.09
I get angry a lot	46	22	5	6	3	7.2

Reasons	Perceived Reason			Perceived Main Reason		
	F	%	R	F	%	R
I cry a lot	45	21	6	6	3	7.2
I can't get along with other people	36	17	9	6	3	7.2
They say I'm gay	18	9	15.25	6	3	7.2
The way I talk	39	18	8	8	4	5.5

Table 11. School's Awareness on Bullying Incident

Teacher/School Awareness on Bullying Incident	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Yes	34	16	3
No	91	43	1
I don't Know	81	38	2
No Answer	7	3	4
Total	213	100	

Conclusion

Through the findings of this study, it is therefore concluded that: 1. Most of the respondents are female. The mean age of the respondents is 16.11. Grade 8 has the greatest number of respondents with while Grade 7 has the least number. 2. Many of the respondents are victims of bullying. Most of these victims experienced bullying one or more times a month. Homeroom classes is where they were bullied the most. Victims experienced saying mean things behind their back. Mostly, the bullies are from their grade level, particularly the boys at their grade level. Most of the respondents who were bullied felt bad or sad about the incident. Most of the reasons for being bullied is because of physical attributes like their face looks funny, being fat, being skinny, color of skin, and being short. The school is not aware of bullying incidents most of the time. The respondents also answered that they do not know how the school handled the bullying. The parents of the victims were unaware of it. Most of the victims were able to defend themselves. 3. Majority of the respondents have witnessed other learners being bullied. They have witnessed the incidents one or more times a day. The bullying incidents they witnessed happened in the homeroom. Among the forms of bullying witnessed by the respondents are making fun of them, playing jokes with them, saying mean things behind their back and name calling. Moreover, the bullies are boys in their grade and girls in their grade. The effect of bullying to the victims as witnessed by the respondents are feeling

bad or sad. The reasons behind the bullying act were having face with funny looks, getting bad grades, color of the skin, being fat, the way of talking, being skinny and the clothes being wear. The school is aware of most of the bullying incidents that they have witnessed. The school's ability to handle the situation was perceived to be "okay". 4. Many of the respondents have yet to bully other learners. For those who bullied other learners, bullying was committed one or more times a day in their homeroom classes through playing jokes, making fun of them, name calling, saying mean things behind the back and isolation. The given effects of bullying to the bully were described as never a problem except for feeling bad or sad with 2.37 as weighted mean. The five (5) most answered reasons of committing bullying are having funny face, being fat, way of talking, getting bad grades and being different. It is a mix of physical attributes, gestures, and school performance. The school is not aware of the bullying act committed. They do not know how the school handled the bullying incidents. 5. The respondents conveyed their thoughts about bullying in this way. For them, they don't like bullying. It is a problem for kids. It hurts their feelings and makes them feel bad. They feel sorry for the victims of bullying. The respondents thought that bullies are popular in either good or bad way. Their fright to bullies in school is also on a case-to-case basis. Understanding the reason behind bullying act will also depend on the situation and provoking factors. The respondents oppose the statement

that most people who get bullied ask for it. They also would not make friends with a bully. They also do not believe that bullies don't mean to hurt anybody. They disagree totally disagree that bullying is good for wimpy kids and that being bullied is no big deal. The respondents believe that bullying is a problem and that the school should worry about it. They also perceived that bullying at their school has changed significantly in the last years. 6. There is a significant difference in the perceptions of the respondents when grouped according to gender and grade level. There is no significant difference in the perceptions of the respondents when grouped according to age.

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