

Main Factors, Consequences, and Improvements of School Bullying

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Abstract: School bullying is a very common social problem that exists on campus nowadays, and many students have experienced it. By analyzing the consequences of school bullying, more people can be warned not to do so. Identifying the factors behind school bullying can allow people to come up with effective solutions and reduce the frequency of this type of violence in schools. There are many causes of school bullying, but they can all be classified into three broad categories, which are the differences of victims, inappropriate peer culture and lack of education in both schools and families. The unique qualities of victims make them targets for bullies, bad group culture can lead to the aggravation of this type of behavior, and a lack of education is the root cause of this type of behavior. Therefore, schools and governments should set rules and penalties for school bullying. In addition, families and schools also need to strengthen education in this regard and make them aware of the wrongness of such behavior. People need to work together to end bullying in schools and create a healthier learning environment for students.

Keywords: difference, social, education, rules

1. Introduction

According to the United Nations, more than 246 million students experience gender-based bullying, and one in three are physically bullied in or around school each year [1]. Additionally, half of the world's teens claimed that their peers have bullied them [1]. According to Cordeiro, school bullying is long-term intentional harm among students due to an imbalance of power [2]. In addition to physical harm such as pushing or beating, school bullying also manifests itself in insults verbally, abuse on the internet, and group exclusion [2]. The negative consequences of school bullying on students cannot be ignored because it can cause severe physical and psychological trauma to students. Physical injury is usually manifested in horrific scars and wounds that are hard to heal, while psychological damage is reflected in students becoming depressed and anxious, which shows in grades dropping rapidly and isolating themselves in their rooms rather than going to school [2]. In addition, many students even commit extreme behaviors such as self-harm and suicide because of the psychological barriers caused by school bullying. It is very important to find the cause of school bullying because people can come up with better plans for reducing and preventing the occurrence of

school bullying, then create a healthy and positive learning environment for students, and not let more students suffer from such violent behaviors. School bullying is an aggressive behavior that occurs among students, which brings them both physical and psychological torment, although many reasons contributed to school bullying, the three main factors that include most of the sub-causes are different qualities that victims have, inappropriate peer culture, and lack of education at home and school are the three major factors.

School bullying is a great challenge that today's society faces, but many people ignore it because they think it is just a conflict between students. In addition to endangering the healthy environment of the school, school bullying also causes long-term physical and psychological harm to both victims and bullies. Researching school bullying has important social and educational meaning. This research helps protect students' physical and mental health. Through in-depth research on school bullying, people can better understand the nature and impact of bullying behavior, which can help provide victims with more timely and effective support. Moreover, studying school bullying can help promote harmony between school and society. School bullying not only causes harm to the victim but also damages the social atmosphere of the school and makes the learning environment unsafe and unfriendly. By studying school bullying, schools and society can better identify and solve bullying problems. Furthermore, creating a more friendly, supportive, and inclusive educational environment is not a single power but the joint efforts of everyone.

2. Consequences

School bullying endangers students' physical and mental health. The main body of school bullying is students, they are not yet mature in their minds, and bullying behavior will undoubtedly have a negative impact on both bullies and bullies. For bullies, they lack the right sense of morality and law. It's easy to do some similar bullying or even break the law later in life. This has a huge impact on the trajectory of their lives. For those being bullied, the bullying has caused them physical damage. Moreover, they may be more introverted and timid people, and the experience of being bullied has aggravated their resistance to social interaction, and even caused psychological trauma to them, thereby causing serious mental diseases such as low self-esteem, anxiety, and depression, which has become an obstacle to their future development. School bullying also disturbs school order. Schools are the handlers of bullying in schools. School bullying runs counter to the school's educational philosophy and therefore has a negative impact on the school. Dealing with bullying incidents requires communication with the bully, the bullied person and their parents, teachers, witnesses, etc. If communication is not successful, not only will it take a long time, causing the school's original plan to be disrupted, but some people who are not satisfied with the results will continue to make trouble in the school, and the staff may also be threatened and even beat the teacher. This has undoubtedly caused disruption to the normal order of the school. In order to prevent the spread of the incident in the media, the school also needs to take many measures to suppress public opinion, invest manpower, material and financial resources to prevent the incident from spreading wildly, and stabilize campus order. Bullying harms a healthy learning environment too. School bullying endangers social harmony and stability. Study shows that bullies are more violent and less empathetic than other adolescents in adulthood, and the crime rate in adulthood is more than 30% higher than that of other adolescents [3]. If the psychological trauma of the bullied person is not repaired, because of the trauma they have received, they may also resist bullying in the future out of self-defense, use violence to fight violence, and become bullies, causing harm to social harmony and stability.

3. Factors

3.1. Different Qualities

The fact that victims usually have qualities different from their peers plays an essential role in the causes of school bullying, and the differences can be displayed in several aspects, such as sexual orientation, religious beliefs, and differences shown in physical or psychological ways. The special characteristics of the victims are usually displayed as they are part of a minority group in school, such as Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBTQ). According to Marsh, LGBTQ groups are far more likely to experience school bullying than people who are not [4]. Nowadays, many people are not very accepting of groups like LGBTQ and this kind of unaccepting can easily lead to prejudice and fear, which makes people from this group become the target of bullies. The environment in some schools is not particularly friendly to groups like LGBTQ since many people are bound by traditional thoughts, which makes them not treat such groups well because that is contrary to their expectations. At the same time, it is also hard for them to provide some support when such minority groups are experiencing school bullying. For example, when LGBTQ groups are being bullied in schools, some teachers do not intervene and stop the behavior from the bullies in time, and sometimes these groups even suffer insults from the faculty on campus. Minority groups are not only referring to LGBTQ because students will also be targeted by bullies if they are from an ethnic minority or believe in a religion that is not familiar to most people. According to a survey of 96,000 schools, religious reasons accounted for 8% of school bullying incidents, and ethnic minority-based bullying accounted for 23%, which is even higher than LGBTQ groups [5]. However, victims' differences from others not only show their sexual orientation but are also illustrated in physical characteristics such as appearance or disabilities. If students look different in appearance from their peers, they will also be looked down upon by bullies, and leads to school bullying, such as being overweight or looking too thin and weak can make them victims of school bullying. In addition, students who have physical disabilities or psychological disorders are more likely to experience school bullying than students who are healthy both physically and psychologically [6]. Consequently, victims are targeted not only because they belong to a certain minority group, but also because of their distinctive looks, physical disabilities, and psychological barriers.

Although appearance is also one of the reasons for students become the victims of school bullying, their "not fitting in" due to their personality is also the factor why they are being school bullied. "Peyton was an easy target because he didn't like what other kids liked. He didn't play sports; he loved Dr. Who, YouTube and anime, and would rather read a book than play outside. He was soon being called a 'loser' or a 'geek' " [7]. When victims have different personalities and like things that others do not like, they will be considered as "not fitting in" in a group, so this can easily attract the attention of bullies and be bullied in school. When victims isolate themselves from the group, they lack the support of others, so when they are being bullied, there are few bystanders to stand up and help them. Furthermore, most of the students would hang out with like-minded friends, but when victims with different personalities appear, their behaviors and hobbies are often not understood by people around them, and this misunderstanding will become the hostility of others towards the victim, which leads to school bullying. Moreover, bullies will target those who are excluded by the group because they can show their superiority and power through such behavior. Hence, the victims may be bullied because they belong to a certain minority group or because they have a different appearance, but being "not fitting in" caused by their personality also plays an important role in the factors of school bullying. Therefore, even though the reasons why victims are bullied can be varied, the unique traits they have are one of the main factors.

3.2. Inappropriate Group Culture

Inappropriate group culture is also one of the major causes of bullying in schools, which can be analyzed in terms of bystander groups and bully groups. Research has shown that bullying is a group phenomenon and individuals, as a member of a group, the needs and expectations of group members will largely determine the development of individual behavior [8]. Groups always reward behaviors that meet their subjective standards and punish behaviors that do not meet their subjective standards, and through this group mechanism, individuals exhibit behaviors that meet the expectations of the group, thus forming different groups [8]. In these groups, the number of bystander groups is much larger than the number of bully and bullied groups, so bystanders' attitudes and behavioral orientations towards bullying can lead to two contrasting results, if the bystanders choose to resist, this will be able to somewhat extent inhibit the occurrence of bullying; however, if bystanders choose to instigate or help the bully, even if they just choose to ignore the bullying behavior, these attitudes will give positive and affirmative psychological cues to the bullies, and the bullying behavior will occur further. For example, Qiao and Wen find that the peer culture of recognition has been formed in the student group, and this special culture will make students choose to be bystanders [9]. At the same time, this culture can discourage students from taking the initiative to stop bullying because they don't want to become informers, which means they will be isolated for betraying others [9].

The relationship between peers not only affects the bystander's choice problem, but also influences the bully's behavioral choices. On the one hand, the bully who is the dominant person in the bullying incident, will drive the neighboring peers to participate in the bullying behavior. As Lin, Zhang, W. J. and Zhang, W. X. borrow from Olweus's book *Bullying at School: What we know and what we can do* published in 1993, the theory of social contagion suggests that bullying behavior is socially acquired in peer groups [10]. At the same time, the inclusion of peers is supportive of the bully and reinforces the bully's aggressive behavior, and there is a two-way influence between the bully and their peers. Some studies have speculated that the reason why girls conduct more verbal bullying is because they are more focused on social relationships since the girls usually form a group, and then bully the victims at school through exclusion or gossip [11]. In addition, under the influence of herd mentality, other members of the group voluntarily or involuntarily imitate bullying behavior. Socially learned behavior is voluntary imitation in the bully group, and involuntary imitation may be due to the fact that even though some people do not agree with this behavior in their hearts, they are forced to obey the group's consistency under the group pressure. Or in order to get the recognition of peers, seek a sense of belonging to the group, and do not act things against the will of the group, they will emulate the behavior of the bully [12]. On the other hand Lin, Zhang, W. J. and Zhang, W. X. also mention that aggressive behavior gives the bully a higher status and stronger control among their peers. Even in some groups that are aggressive or antisocial themselves, bullies are more popularly sought after by their peers [11]. Through bullying behavior, the bully gains inner satisfaction, and Yoko Noda suggests that the bullies use various psychological and physiological means to attack vulnerable targets and dominate one's group by creating fear. This behavior can be viewed as a declarative act aimed at reshaping the semantic space of the group so that the value of its own existence is recognized, and in this way, the hierarchical relationship within the group is revealed and the bully's sense of superiority is established [13].

3.3. Lack of Education

Education about bullying in schools is far from adequate. Moral education is more formalistic in schools, and is not implemented in students' lives, and cannot play a role in correcting students' behavior. First, school bullying has a certain degree of imperceptibility, and schools lack the implementation of moral education work, and do not pay attention to students' physical and mental

health, which may make school bullying hidden in the corner; Second, because of the school environment, schools mostly deal with bullies by criticizing education rather than severely punishing them. This solution is not suitable for bullying and does not eliminate the possibility of re-offending by bullies. Third, schools' attitudes toward school bullying tend to be avoided rather than confronted. Schools tend to keep a low profile about this incident. This approach leaves other students with no clear understanding of school bullying. At the same time, in usual school education, the problem of school bullying is rarely mentioned. Schools tend to focus on making students and parents think they are in a safe environment and deliberately neglect school bullying education, with the same consequences.

Family education also has a strong correlation with children's perception of school bullying. The first cause of bullying is inappropriate parenting. There are four main ways of family upbringing: laissez-faire, doting, authoritarian, and democratic. Parents in laissez-faire families have less or even indifferent discipline of their children, so that children in the family often make decisions independently, may become willful, lack love, and do not know how to take responsibility. Parents in doting families overindulge their children, which can lead to children becoming selfish and arrogant and lacking a sense of independence. These two types of families are more likely to raise bullies: children in laissez-faire families lack parental care and guidance, are more susceptible to bad habits, and gain a sense of presence from bullying others. In authoritarian families, parents demand unconditional obedience from their children and scold them, and children may become cowardly, timid, and lack independence. Such families are more likely to raise bullies, and Paton et al.'s study of school bullying of African children in the United States found that parents are more likely to get involved in school bullying if they tend to treat their children in harsh, abusive forms in the family [14]. When children live in an oppressed environment for a long time, the personality traits formed make them more likely to be bullied. In addition, according to Zhang's research, children from divorced families, families with a violent family, families with a criminal history, and children without guardianship have more tendency to bully than children from normal families [15]. Second, negative parental behavior can affect children's behavior. If the family faces conflict and the parents have violent tendencies in conflict resolution methods, the child will be affected by the parents' behavior, and in the long run, the parents' behavior will be internalized into a sense of self-awareness and inappropriate behavior, thereby causing classmate conflicts and getting involved in school bullying. Third, the lack of parental care and education is also a cause of bullying in schools. Working parents devote less time to their children's education, especially for moral education. Because schools value intellectual education, parents are also more concerned about students' academic performance than moral character. In fact, if in adolescence, children do not receive good guidance and attention from their parents, it will cause many psychological problems such as bias, depression, anxiety, etc., and it is easy to cultivate bullies and bullies.

4. Solution

As mentioned earlier, the three main causes of bullying are individual causes, group cultural causes and family and schooling causes. In view of the three main reasons, in order to effectively solve the problem of campus bullying, the experience of school bullying management in various countries provides a lot of ideas for reference. First and foremost, the government and schools should face up to the harm and serious consequences of bullying in schools, and set up intervention mechanisms and disciplinary programs for bullying in schools, while at the same time enabling students to have an effective understanding of the issue, so as to minimize the likelihood of bullying occurring and reoccurring. Secondly, it is necessary to strengthen moral education in schools. Only when the education in schools is put into practice and the mental health of students is effectively paid attention to can students be helped to establish correct values and moral values. In this way, not only can the

wrong perception of bullies be corrected, but students will also choose to take the initiative to defend their rights in the face of bullying. Next, the influence of family education should not be overlooked. Parents should actively cooperate with the school and society to give their children proper guidance and supervision, as well as to not neglect the caring concern and moral education of their children. Finally, in the case of appropriate education and guidance for students, if students encounter school bullying situations as bystanders, then the intervention role of bystanders in the peer group can be effectively brought into play, as bystanders take the initiative to stop the bully and protect the bullied, which is equally effective in curbing school bullying behavior.

5. Conclusions

School bullying is a social phenomenon that occurs frequently on campus nowadays, which not only negatively impacts a healthy and positive learning environment in school, but also causes both physical and psychological harm to victims and perpetrators. In addition to depression and fear, victims may even commit extreme actions of self-harm and suicide. Moreover, bullies are also likely to engage in illegal and criminal behavior in the future because of the short-term satisfaction of such inappropriate conduct. School bullying is usually caused by many different sub-causes, but they can be classified into three broad categories, which are the difference between victims and others, improper peer culture, and lack of good education at school and home. Victims have different qualities that distinguish them from others, and different sexual orientations, religious beliefs, and appearances might make them the target of bullies. Inappropriate peer culture can make things even crazier by giving perpetrators a desire to project their strengths and superiorities as well as bystander attitudes toward bullying can also help the morale of bullies. The lack of good school and family education will make bullies unaware of the horrors of school bullying, thus making them lose the ability to distinguish right from wrong, resulting in more serious school bullying. Even though these three types of reasons are different, they are closely related to each other and can also let people understand the occurrence of school bullying from three perspectives. The unique qualities possessed by the victims can become the trigger for them to be bullied, the negative peer culture can lead to indirect harm by bystanders, and the lack of school and family education is the root cause of the bully's behavior. Even though people cannot change the unique qualities of victims, they can prevent school bullying by intervening in negative peer culture and strengthening education at home and school. Correcting improper peer culture can make bystanders intervene in times when school bullying occurs. Promote Good family and school education can let students know the wrongness of such behavior and will also make more victims stand up and protect themselves through the help of staff. Setting up regulations can also adjust the behavior of bullies and let them know the cost of conducting such behaviors. Eradicating school bullying is not the work of one person, but a joint effort of everyone. In this way, people can prevent such tragedies from happening and create a healthier and better learning environment for all students.

Authors Contribution

All the authors contributed equally and their names were listed in alphabetical order.

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