

## PHENOMENOLOGY OF BULLYING: A SCHOOL INTERVENTION PROGRAM IN THE NEW NORMAL

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### ABSTRACT

This study aimed to determine the Phenomenology of Bullying towards an Intervention Program in the New Normal. The study was conducted at Rafael Palma Elementary School. Phenomenological Method was employed utilizing researchers-made Interview Guide Questions as the main instrument. A total of five participants were chosen through purposive sampling technique. The study covers only bullying cases from the school year 2019-2020. There were challenges of bullying in terms of physical, verbal, emotional and cyber-media. The common physical challenges would be wounds and body pain due to physical contact. Respondents had the same answer for verbal and emotional bullying, the detrimental consequences of bullying in this study were evident: they include feelings of depression, isolation, confusion, guilt, anger, fear and shame, as well as self-harm and withdrawal from peers and family. For cyber bullying, the tendency of the victims is to refrain from using social media or if ever they would use it, refrain from posting or uploading photos because they were captured by their classmates and make fun of their pictures.

### INTRODUCTION

Bullying is prevalent in schools worldwide. Foreign and local reports indicate cases of school crimes brought about by the occurrence of bullying within the school premise. World Health Organization's Health Behavior in School-Aged Children (Craig & Harel, 2004 as cited in James, 2010) found out that a survey of 35 countries indicate an average incidence rates of 11 percent for both victims and bullies. There were about 2.7 million students being bullied each year by about 2.1 students taking on the role of the bully. According to the same WHO report, one (1) out of seven (7) students in kindergarten through 12th grade has participated in the bullying incidents either as a bully or as a victim. Accordingly, over half or about 56 percent, of all students have witnessed bullying crimes inside the school (Bullying Statistics, 2010).

Bullying constitutes a complex problem in school kids lives. It is a problem that affects all students, either bullies or victims, and those who attended interpersonal violence. Bullying may involve many sections verbal, physical assaults, threats, jokes or language, and criticizing. All such factors affect individually, or collectively, and contribute in child's bullying. It is well known that bullying is difficult to eliminate or to stop it in schools because it is used by students. Alison (2016) stated that bullying is considered as a global problem that affects emotional, social, and physical wellbeing of school-age children worldwide.

Almost one in three students (32%) has been bullied by his peers at school at least once in the last month and a similar proportion is affected by physical violence, according to the publication. Physical bullying is the most frequent type of bullying in many regions, except for North America and Europe, where psychological bullying is most common. Sexual bullying\* is

the second most common in many regions. School violence and bullying affects both male and female students.

According to Lee (2014), physical bullying is more than punching or kicking which is a direct form. It can assume indirect forms, such as taking one's possessions or damaging property. Coloroso (2018) stated that, although physical bullying is the most visible and, therefore, the most readily identifiable form of bullying, it accounts for less than one third of bullying incidents reported by children. Salivalli, Kaukiainen and Langerspertz (2013) stressed that physical bullying involves behaviors whereby the perpetrator might punch, hit and/or steal money from the victim. Larsen (2015) was rather put it that the problem for a school is that physical bullying presents a challenge for that school to maintain a safe and orderly learning environment.

Verbal bullying is seen as one of the most common types of bullying used by both boys and girls. Verbal bullying accounts for 70 per cent of reported cases which can have an immediate impact (Lee, 2014; Coloroso, 2018). Verbal bullying is referred to as name calling, teasing and verbal threats as stated by Olweus (2013). Words alone do have power. While the effects of physical bullying may be more obvious at first, verbal bullying is more insidious and, over long periods of time, works to destroy a child's self- image and self- esteem. This can lead to depression, anxiety and other problems. In extreme cases, several well-noted instances of teen suicide have been linked to prolonged verbal bullying of a classmate or peer. Verbal bullying should not be treated as kids simply being kids and should be dealt with seriously by parents, counselors, teachers and school administrators (Lee, 2014).

While cyber bullying according to the study of Mickie Wong-Lo (2011) Cases of bullying are no longer confined to physical altercations between peers in school hallways or hostile verbal exchanges during recess periods. With the progression of technology, educators must recognize the changes of our students' behaviors as lives become modified by the digital era. The issues of cyber bullying have gained global visibility due to the disheartening publicized cases of the victims. While the families of victims mourn the loss of their children and earnestly seek to understand the cause of each account, researchers actively examine and implement preventative measures in hopes of educating individuals (e.g., general and special educators, parents, students, community professionals) to distinguish the warning signs of aggressive behaviors in digital forms.

### **BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

Bullying among school-age children occurs worldwide. A survey published in *Pediatrics in Review* reveals that in Norway, 14 percent of children are either bullies or victims. In Japan, 15 percent of primary school pupils say that they are bullied, while in Australia and Spain, the problem prevails among 17 percent of students. In Britain one expert figures that 1.3 million children are involved in bullying.

Professor Amos Rolider of Emek Yizre'el College surveyed 2,972 pupils in 21 schools. According to *The Jerusalem Post*, the professor found out that "65% complained of being smacked, kicked, pushed or molested by fellow pupils."

A new and insidious development is digital bullying the sending of menacing text messages via cell phones and computers. Youths also create hate-filled Web pages about a victim, including personal information. According to Dr. Wendy Craig of Queen's University in Canada, this form of bullying is "extraordinarily damaging to the child who is being victimized by it."

The Department of Education in the Philippines reported more than 1,700 cases of child abuse or bullying in schools for the years of 2013 and 2014, although the DepEd lately said that this number is decreasing, and that comes after they issued an order in 2012 known as DepEd Child Protection Policy which states the policy and guidelines for the child protection in schools against abuse, exploitation, violence, discrimination, bullying and other different forms that might be a threat for the child. The 2012 DepEd Child Protection Policy not only takes care of the violence targeted towards the children but it also look at the side of the Family and that is referring to school administrators, teachers, academic and non-academic staff, to take care of the children and deal with those who already suffered any kind of bullying before.

The House of Representatives in the Philippines has approved a bill that requires all the elementary and the secondary schools to adopt policies that prevent bullying or any other kind of violence in the schools. This bill requires the schools to include the anti-bullying policies in the school student's and employee's handbook, it should be apparent on the wall of the schools, the classrooms and websites. The schools should then submit to the DepEd six months after the law has taken effect, and any incidents should be reported immediately, and in case of absence of the policies in any school, there is a sanction that falls on the schools' administrators.

On the issue of whether the Philippines has an efficient child protection program or not, Santos said: "According to the consolidated report of Department of Education (Dep Ed), bullying cases in elementary and high school of both private and public schools in 2014 rose by 21% or a total of 6,363 cases, as compared with the 5,236 in 2013. This translates to 31 daily bullying cases from a divisor of 201 school days. The statistics was disclosed by Rep. Gerald Anthony Gullas Jr., a member of the House committee on basic education.

Last December 23, 2013, the RA 10627 was implemented to collectively address the problems on bullying. This covers elementary and secondary schools, and this also covers physical, social, verbal, and cyber bullying.

As requirements, the school must come up with policies defining and prohibiting bullying inside and outside school premises including retaliation against a person who reports bullying incident or bullies. The school should also come up with admin procedures and disciplinary actions, rehabilitation programs for bullies, and strategies and procedures for recording system, reporting and investigation, and filtering of false reports and disciplinary actions for students making false reports. In addition, the school should have strategies and procedures for the safety and security of the students, support services such as counseling for victims, privacy students involve, and education for parents and students on bullying dynamics.

As it is now established in the public and private schools, it was reported that in the school year 2013-2014, there were 1,700 reports of child abuse and bullying in school and 60 percent of these were resolved. Based from the observation and experiences of the researcher being a teacher for years now, bullying greatly affects the student's performance, with the above premises, the researcher intends to know the relationship of the level of bullying in schools and

the academic performance of the pupils in order to come up with an intervention program that would help eliminate bullying cases.

This study is significant to the school since the findings of the study was utilized to strengthen the student development program and the Anti-Bullying Campaign program.

### **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

This study aimed to describe the Phenomenology of Bullying from the perspective of the bully towards School Intervention Program.

Specifically, this study sought answers to the following queries:

1. Describe the experiences of bullying from the perspective of the bully in terms of:
  - 1.1. Physical;
  - 1.2. Verbal; and
  - 1.3. Cyber-media;
2. What are the challenges experienced by the bully in terms of the aforementioned variables?
3. What are the recommendations of the bully, victim, parents, teachers and school heads in dealing with the bully?
4. What school intervention program can be proposed as a result of the study?

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Research Design**

The researcher used the method, the Phenomenological Method (qualitative) for desired responses from the participants.

Phenomenology is a philosophy that states that “truth” can be known through the experiences of people. It is necessary to understand some historical background of the philosophy of phenomenology in order to place the method in its proper perspective according to Giorgi and Giorgi (2013).

An important aspect of the descriptive phenomenological psychological method in psychology is the way by which it distinguishes itself from those approaches that are strictly interpretive. In Descriptive Phenomenological Psychological Method there are both descriptive and interpretive moments, but the researcher remains careful to attend to each type of act in unique ways. Through a sort of empathic immersion with the subjects and their descriptions, the researchers get a sense of the ways that the experiences given by the participants were lived, which is in turn described. During this process, however, theoretical or speculative interpretation should be avoided to flesh out the full lived meaning inherent to the descriptions themselves (Giorgi, 2009, p. 127). Interpretation may then occur to various extents during other phases of the research process, but only as it relates to implications of the results rather than the lived meaning of the participants' experiences.

Qualitative data collection includes open-ended information like interviews, observation, documents and audio-visual materials. Data analysis uses text and image data for coding, theme development and relating themes.

### Research Locale

This study was conducted at Rafael Palma Elementary School located at Zobel Roxas St. Manila.

### Research Participants

A total of 5 participants were chosen through purposive sampling technique. The table below shows that 5 of the participants are the bully.

Table 1  
Participants in Qualitative

School	Qualitative
Rafael Palma Elementary	5
Total	5

### Research Instrument

A researcher-made Interview Guide was used as the main instrument in gathering the needed data on the Phenomenology of Bullying towards a School Intervention Program

### Sample and Sampling Technique

Purposive sampling, also known as judgmental, selective, or subjective sampling, is a form of non-probability sampling in which researchers rely on their own judgment when choosing members of the population to participate in their study.

### Data Analysis

According to Cariño (2008), Giorgi promotes phenomenology as a theoretical movement that avoids certain reductionist tendencies sustained by many contemporary approaches to psychological research. They claimed that this method was founded on the phenomenology of Edmund Husserl. According to the phenomenological psychological perspective espoused by Giorgi, researchers are encouraged to "bracket" their own assumptions pertaining to the phenomenon in question by refraining from positing a static sense of objective reality for oneself and the participants whose experiences are being studied. This allows the researchers to attend to the descriptions of the participants without forcing the meaning of the descriptive units into pre-defined categories.

There are four steps in the Descriptive Phenomenological Method ( Giorgi and Giorgi, 2003) according to Cariño (2008) namely: (1) reading the entire description in order to grasp the sense of the whole, (2) re-reading the description and demarcating spontaneous shifts in meaning, or "meaning units," in the text with a psychologically sensitive interest in the phenomenon under investigation, (3) reflecting on each and every meaning unit in order to discern what it reveals about the phenomenon under investigation or whatever relevant research psychological insight can be gained from it, and (4) synthesizing these reflections and insights into a consistent statement that expresses the general psychological structure of the experience.

### Ethical Considerations

In this study, the following ethical considerations are considered based on Bryman and Bell (2007). Research participants should not be subjected to harm in any ways whatsoever. Respect

for the dignity of research participants should be prioritized. Full consent should be obtained from the participants prior to the study. The protection of the privacy of research participants must be ensured. Adequate level of confidentiality of the research data should be ensured. Anonymity of individuals and organizations participating in the research must be ensured. Any deception or exaggeration about the aims and objectives of the research must be avoided. Affiliations in any forms, sources of funding, as well as any possible conflicts of interests must be declared. Any type of communication in relation to the research should be done with honesty and transparency. Any type of misleading information, as well as representation of primary data findings in a biased way must be avoided.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Experiences of Bullying in terms of Physical, Verbal and Cyber-media.

In this part presents the interviewed data from the five (5) chosen to be the participants in order to draw the actual experiences of the participants when it comes to bullying among their pupils. Participants were asked using an interview guide. Answers were recorded through voice.

Table 1 Experiences of Bullying in terms of Physical

1.1	Physical	Theme
P1	<i>They punch and slap me.</i>	Punching, kicking, hitting, slapping.
P2	<i>One time I went to school and my classmate punch me and always bully me.</i>	
P3	<i>Teading, kicking and hitting</i>	
P4	<i>Suntok!</i>	
P5	<i>Sabunot, sapak and tulak, etc.</i>	

Table 1 shows that participants experienced physical bullying such as being punched, slapped, kicked and pushed. This was further explained by the study of Becton (2020), that 28% of students in grades 6-12 experience bullying that involves aggressive physical intimidation and is often characterized by repeated tripping, pushing, hitting, kicking, blocking, or touching in some other inappropriate way.

Table 2 Experiences of Bullying in terms of Verbal

1.2	Verbal	Theme
P1	<i>They are saying bad words to me (mataba).</i>	Physical appearance, intellectual capacities, names.
P2	<i>One time when its launch time sabi ng classmate ko sakin wala kang kuwenta hindi ka na namin papansinin.</i>	
P3	<i>Pangit at puknat.</i>	
P4	<i>Inaasar ang aking pangalan at iniinsulto.</i>	
P5	<i>Maitim! Bobo!</i>	

Table 2 shows that participants experienced verbal bullying based on their physical appearance, disabilities intellectual capacity and their name or last name. Study of Besa (2020)

verbal bullying includes name calling, insults, teasing, intimidation, racist remarks and verbal abuse and 64% of students who are bullied do not report it (Hanson 2010).

Table 3 Experiences of Bullying in terms of Cyber-media

1.3	Cyber-media	Theme
P1	<i>Inaasar ako na hindi magaling (vlogging).</i>	Physical appearance, talents.
P2	<i>They said I'm ugly.</i>	
P3	<i>Pangit mukhang unggoy.</i>	
P4	<i>Trash talk</i>	
P5	<i>Insults</i>	

Table 3 clarifies that the victims experienced bullying in cyber-media specifically in social media such as text message bullying, picture/video clip, bullying via mobile phone cameras, email message bullying, bullying through instant messaging, chatroom bullying and bullying via websites. the results show that the cyber-media bullying is a mixed of verbal, physical and emotional. The common target of this kind of bullying is the bad shots and stolen pictures of the victim.

## 2. Challenges Experienced by the Bully/Bullied in terms of Physical, Verbal, and Cyber-media.

Table 4 Challenges of Bullying in terms of Physical

2.1	Physical	Theme
P1	Nagkaroon ng pasa ang aking katawan.	Injuries
P2	Masakit ang katawan at nanghina.	
P3	Anxiety at pagkamahiyain at pagkawala ng confidence sa sarili.	
P4	Pananakit ng katawan.	
P5	Pasa.	

The common physical challenges would be body pain due to physical contact having and anxiety and losing his or her confidence. Supporting this is the study of Garret (2013) put it that physical bullying is a moderate risk factor for serious violence at ages 15-25 and that bullies are four times more likely to be convicted of crimes by the age of 24 than non-bullies.

Table 5 Challenges of Bullying in terms of Verbal

2.2	Verbal	Theme
P1	<i>Nalulungkot at naiinis.</i>	Anger, Low self-esteem
P2	<i>Nalungkot at umiiyak.</i>	
P3	<i>Wala, hindi ko na lang sila pinapansin, minsan nagagalit.</i>	
P4	<i>Nawawalan ng lakas ng loob.</i>	
P5	<i>Every year that I was in the school many students are always saying hurtful words about me that's why I just get used to it.</i>	

Table 5 shows that the common effects of being bullied verbally were often they tend to lose their self-confidence, they got angry but most commonly they just get used to it and just ignore them. In the study of Patchin and Hinduja (2006) conducted an online survey involving 384 respondents who were under 18 years of age. Their results showed that close to 45% thought people should simply ignore cyberbullying because it was “no big deal.”

Table 6 Challenges of Bullying in terms of Cyber-media

2.3	Cyber-media	Theme
P1	<i>Nagpupursigi ako.</i>	Strived harder
P2	<i>Natatakot at hindi na masyado gumagamit ng cyber media.</i>	Low self esteem
P3	<i>Nalulungkot ako na tinatawag nila akong ganito at minsan naririnig ng mga tao.</i>	
P4	<i>Anxiety, pagkamahiyain at pagkawala ng confidence sa sarili.</i>	
P5	<i>Hindi na gumagamit ng media.</i>	

Table 6 shows that for cyber bullying, the predisposition of the bullied is to lessen or prohibit themselves from using social media or if ever they use it, refrain from showing or uploading photos as it was be took by their friends and make fun it. According to Bradshaw (2007), kids and students who are cyberbullied exhibit many of the same characteristics as kids being bullied physically, verbally or socially. They may become withdrawn, anxious, distant, or want to stay home from school.

### 3. Recommendations in Dealing with Bullying

Table 7

P1	Hindi magandang gawain.
P2	Hindi masaya at minsan masaya dahil pinagtatangol ko ang aking sarili.
P3	Sana ito ay itigil na at huwag na ipairal muli.
P4	Huwag nalang itong pansinin o tawagin ang guro.
P5	Huwag mong gawin sa iba ang ayaw mong gawin sa iyo.

Recommendations from the victims are almost the same that is to stop bullying as it is not good, and they should tell it to their teachers to stop the bully in doing such awful act. According to Becton (2020), if an incident of bullying is beyond your comfort level or scope of expertise, don't hesitate to enlist the services of a professional or a colleague with more experience.

### SUMMARY

The participants of this study experienced physical bullying such as being punched, slapped, kicked and pushed. This was further explained by the study of Becton (2020), that 28% of students in grades 6-12 experience bullying that involves aggressive physical intimidation and

is often characterized by repeated tripping, pushing, hitting, kicking, blocking, or touching in some other inappropriate way. They also experienced verbal bullying based on their physical appearance, disabilities intellectual capacity and their name or last name. Study of Besa (2020,) verbal bullying includes name calling, insults, teasing, intimidation, racist remarks and verbal abuse and 64% of students who are bullied do not report it (Hanson 2010).

The most common that they encounter in bullying is the cyber-media bullying specifically in social media such as text message bullying, picture/video clip, bullying via mobile phone cameras, email message bullying, bullying through instant messaging, chat-room bullying and bullying via websites and the common target of this kind of bullying is the bad shots and stolen pictures of the victim.

With physical bullying the respondents experienced physical challenges like body pain due to physical contact having and anxiety and losing his or her confidence. They also experienced loosing their self-confidence, they got angry but most commonly they just get used to it and just ignore them due to verbal bullying and for cyber bullying they lessen or prohibit themselves from using social media or if ever they use it, refrain from showing or uploading photos as it took by their friends and make fun of it.

### CONCLUSION

Apparently, bullying can be a huge problem. Although it has declined over time, it still affects so many students that it leaves a negative impact on our schools. Student grades start falling and students themselves stop attending school altogether. However, schools can address this by collecting data on what's happening inside of their halls. Partnerships can be formed with community members that inspire students to better behavior or inspire them to find help when they need it. By adopting multiple strategies to bullying, schools can position themselves so that they deal with bullying before it has resulted in anything tragic. Loveless, 2021)

### RECOMMENDATION

Based on the summary of findings and conclusions, the following are hereby recommended:

1. Parents and teachers must distinguish the signs that their children are being bullied, the most common signs are having injuries like wounds, change in attitudes and fear of attending schools.
2. Recognize bullying as a huge problem as it is extremely damaging to the emotional, physical and psychological wellbeing of the person getting bullied.
3. Act immediately when someone is being bullied as it can affect kid's life for a lifetime.
4. As a teacher, counselor and adviser be knowledgeable in handling or addressing the bullying incidents.
5. Let the parents know to monitor the behavior of their child so that they will be guided towards discipline.

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