

**SOCIAL BULLYING AMONG THE SCHOOL GOING ADOLESCENTS IN KAMRUP DISTRICT- A STUDY****Prof Gayatree Goswamee<sup>1</sup> and Ranjeeta Kakoti<sup>2</sup>**<sup>1</sup>Professor and former Head, Department of Education, Gauhati University, Guwahati, Assam.<sup>2</sup>Research scholar, Department of Education, Gauhati University, Guwahati, Assam.**ABSTRACT :**

*Social bullying being the indirect forms of bullying inflicts a large amount of suffering, which often goes unnoticed by teachers. It has been found that social bullying increases among adolescents while direct bullying decreases. Statistics show that children who have been bullied experience greater social isolation, as well as suffer from lower self esteem than those who have not been bullied. The study has aimed at to find out the prevalence and to identify the causes of social bullying among the school-going adolescents of Guwahati city.*

*The sample of the study is selected through purposive sampling. The sample size of the study is 67 identified bullies and victims. The study shows that majority of the adolescents became victims of social bullying. It also shows another interesting fact that victim of social bullying is found to be high in comparison to the bully/bullies. This has highlighted the fact that most of the students have faced social bullying for the time period of about a month to two-three years. Primary reason behind bullying phenomenon from the victims' perspective is poor performances in studies followed by appearance/complexion, past/old quarrels, economic class, religion, caste/community as well as family issues.*

**KEYWORDS :** Social bullying, prevalence, factors**INTRODUCTION**

The ever expanding arena of social relationship of adolescents has various influences from home, school and peers. The interactions often evolve in a new and difficult character in social relationship. In the contemporary time indiscipline, mob violence at school has largely occupied an area of great concern.

Bullying implies that a student or a group of students, repeatedly engaged in malicious and objectionable things to another student. Olweus has defined it as "a person is being bullied or victimized when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative action on the part of one or more persons" He opines that when a person intentionally inflicts injury or discomfort upon another person either through physical contact, or through words or any other ways. Bullying has three basis features: Power imbalance; Repetitiveness; and Intention. It can be classified as direct bullying and indirect bullying. The bullies usually target the one who are weaker than them. The acts of bullying involve teasing, hitting threatening, spreading rumours, social exclusion etc. the direct form of physical and verbal bullying used in primary level transformed to verbal more specifically to social bullying.

Social bullying is that when a student repeatedly make fun, spread rumours about someone, excluding someone on purpose; telling other children not to be friends with someone; embarrassing someone in public, purposeful manipulate and damage of the peer relationship. Statistics show that children

who have been bullied experience greater social isolation, as well as suffer from lower self esteem than those who have not been bullied

### SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Bullying has been used in various ways and includes a variety of hurtful actions such as name-calling, social exclusion, and having money taken or belongings damaged, as well as the more obvious forms of hitting and kicking. Thus, bullying in schools can be redefined as the repeated exposure of an individual or group to negative interactions (social aggression) by one or more dominant persons. Physical and verbal bullying have a tendency to decrease with age however, social bullying does not. Moreover, it has been found that social bullying increases in among adolescents while direct bullying decreases. Social bullying being the indirect forms of bullying inflicts a large amount of suffering, which often goes unnoticed by teachers. The victims of social bullying are usually isolated, excluded and ignored. They report of being unhappy, miserable, anxious, fearful and insecure at school.

The seriousness of the school bullying problem has captured the attention of all corners in recent time but the matter has not been dealt in the way it should be. There is paucity of data on school bullying in India. In fact no uniform guidelines have been issued so far by the Ministry of Human Resource Development, India to check school bullying and to prevent the same. The school may have qualitative resources but most of the schools lack in anti school bullying program or prevention and intervention programs for bullying.

The limited research on bullying in the Indian context seems to reflect that the schools are in the grip of this problem. Thus in the light of above need, the study on social bullying seems to be worth taking to throw some light on this serious problem.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

There were many studies undertaken which reveal the prevalence and causes of bullying. A few of them are mentioned below:

**Darmawan (2010)** in his study investigated the prevalence of bullying among students and forms of aggression (proactive and/or reactive) associated with bullying behaviour. The findings showed that in general boys were more involved in bullying than girls. However, girls were more often to take part in calling names or teasing than did boys, and no less than boys in isolating or shutting others out and physical bullying. **Pengpid et.al in 2013** studied the factors associated with bullying. The causes of being bullied/victims were physically inactive; truancy, psycho-social distress among boys and girls, having been in a physical fight, lack of parental bonding, and psycho social distress were reasons behind being bullied. **Rao et.al in 2015** studied on similarities as well as the dissimilarities between bullying in school and ragging in institutions of higher education as they both involve aggressive behaviour. The finding of the study reflects 25.3% of social aggression. Yet 41% were involved in all the above four types of aggression or bullying. While comparing with the data of ragging, higher percentage of students in school reported having experienced bullying in some form. The data also shows that girls may engage in more indirect bullying like spreading rumour, gossiping, social exclusion etc. The study conducted by **Kulkarni et.al in 2016** aimed at studying the differences between male and female secondary school students on aspects of experienced bullying from boarding schools. The finding shows that the mean of the bullying score is 10.48 which implies that students have experienced a significant form of bullying.

### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The present study focuses on the prevalence of social bullying and its causes among the school going adolescents of Guwahati city. Thus, the statement of the problem has been formulated as-

***“Social bullying among the school going adolescents in Kamrup district- A study”***

**OBJECTIVES/RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

1. To find out the prevalence of social bullying among the school-going adolescents of Kamrup district
2. To identify the causes of social bullying among the school-going adolescents of Kamrup district

**DESIGN OF THE STUDY**

**Methodology**

The present study is based on descriptive study method.

**Sample:**

Simple random sampling is used in selecting the schools at the beginning. There are total 13 co-educational higher secondary schools of Kamrup (Metro) district. From these, 30% was taken as sample which makes 4 schools from Kamrup (M).

The second technique applied in selecting the sample is purposive sampling as the population is not known. From the identified population of bullies, victims and bully-victim, 30% of students have been taken as sample. Thus 67 identified bullies and victims were taken as the sample for the study.

**Tools:**

In any research the researcher have to use special technique or tools for the collection of research data. In this present study the investigator have use:

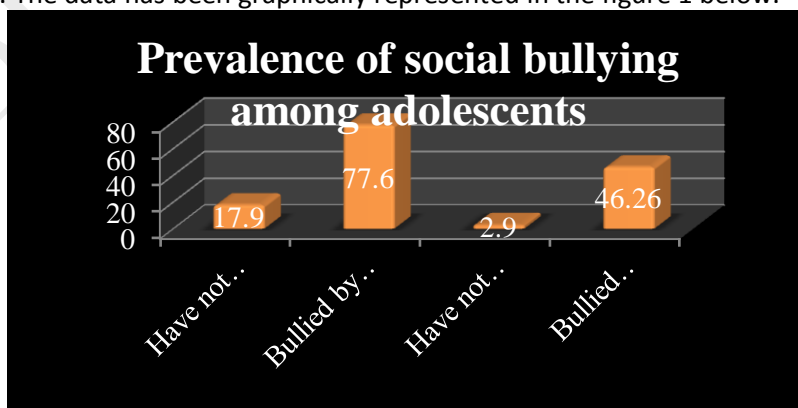
- a) Self-developed checklist to identify the bully and victim in school.
- b) Revised Olweus Bullying Questionnaire (ROBQ),2007 (Modified and localized accordingly)

**FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

The data has been statistically analyzed by using simple percentage and graphical diagrams have been used for better presentation of the scenario. The investigator also tried to highlight the prevalence of social bullying and its causes among the adolescents.

**Findings in relation to research question 1: To find out the prevalence of social bullying among the school-going adolescents of Guwahati city**

- i. **Prevalence of social bullying:** It has been found that social bullying is prevalent among the school going adolescents. Out of 67 identified adolescents 52 has responded of being bullied by others. It reflects that 77.6% has become victim of social bullying while 46.26% of the respondents have reported to bully others. It has also been found that only 17.9% of adolescents have reported of not being bullied by others while 2.9% have responded that they were not engaged in any kind of social bullying. Thus this reflects that majority of the adolescents became victims of social bullying. It also shows another interesting fact that victim of social bullying is found to be high in comparison to the bully/bullies. The data has been graphically represented in the figure 1 below.



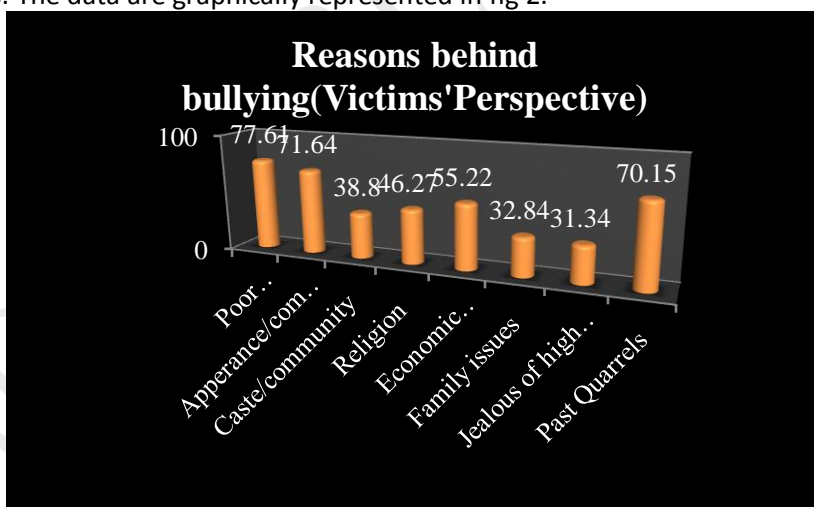
**Fig 1: Graphical representation showing prevalence of social bullying among adolescents**

- ii. **Duration of social bullying:** It has been observed that the adolescents have been bullied for a prolonged period of time. It reveals that 10.4% of school going adolescents has faced social bullying for one-two weeks. It has been found that 37.3% of adolescents were being bullied socially for about a month. 25.37% have faced it for six month duration and 26.86% have reported of facing it for a year. Further 17.91% have reported to face it for two-three years. This has highlighted the fact that most of the students have faced social bullying for the time period of about a month to two-three years. The duration of social bullying also reveal another interesting fact that most of the girls of the age group 14-16 years have faced social bullying.
- iii. **Places of social bullying:** It has been found the social bullying often takes places on and of the school campus. The investigator shows that 74.6% of social bullying takes place in playground/field. It has been followed by 65.67% of social bullying on the way to and from school followed by 61.19% in corridor or staircase. It also revealed that 64.17% happened at canteen followed by 52.23% of bullying takes place in classroom in absence of teachers. In fact, bullying also take place in presence of teachers (34.32%) and 26.86% responded to take place somewhere else like tuition classes, markets etc.

**Findings in relation to research question 2: To identify the causes of social bullying among the school-going adolescents of Guwahati city**

- i. **Reasons behind bullying phenomenon from the victims’ perspective:** The data reveals that 77.61% adolescents were bullied due to poor performances in studies followed by 71.64% were bullied due to appearance/look or complexion. It also shows that 70.15% were bullied for past quarrels, 55.22% for being poor, 46.27% for the religion they follow. 38.8% were bullied for their caste/communities, 32.84% for family issues and 31.34% for jealousy of high class.

The data bring to light that primary reason behind bullying phenomenon is poor performances in studies followed by appearance/complexion, past/old quarrels, economic class, religion, caste/community as well as family issues. The data are graphically represented in fig 2.



**Fig 2: Graphical representation showing reasons behind social bullying from victims’ perspective**

- ii. **Reasons behind bullying (Bully/bullies perspective):** It has been found that 86.57% socially bullied others to take revenge, followed by 80.6% for past quarrel and 70.14% for abuse /insult by others. The study also highlighted that 67.16% of the respondents opines that the victims deserve being bullied followed by 62.68% for fun. It has also been found 58.20% for following the trends of social bullying by others, 50.74% to express anger. These data bring to light the fact that intention to take revenge, past quarrels and abusiveness nature are leading reasons for social bullying. Further, it is also found that aggressiveness, for fun and following the trend of social bullying plays crucial role in social bullying. The data are graphically represented through the bar diagram in fig 3.

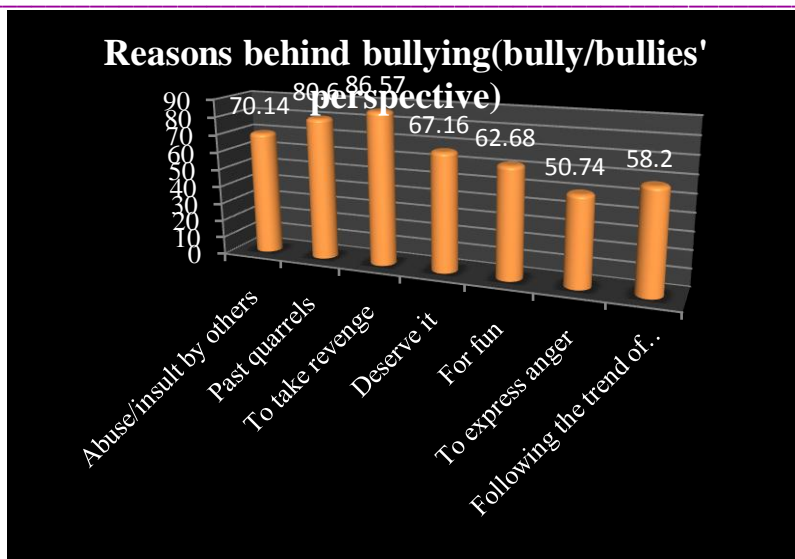


Fig 3: Graphical representation showing reasons behind social bullying from bully/bullies' perspective

**CONCLUSION**

Social bullying among adolescents increases with the increase in age. The victims of social bullying are usually found to be isolated, excluded and ignored. They report of being unhappy, miserable, anxious, fearful and insecure at school.

The study shows that majority of the adolescents became victims of social bullying. It also shows another interesting fact that victim of social bullying is found to be high in comparison to the bully/bullies. This has highlighted the fact that most of the students have faced social bullying for the time period of about a month to two-three years. The duration of social bullying also reveal another interesting fact that most of the girls of the age group 14-16 years have faced social bullying. Social bullying often takes places on and of the school campus which include playground, classroom (presence and absence of teachers),staircase and corridor, as well as outside the school campus like market place, tuition classes etc

The data bring to light that primary reason behind bullying phenomenon from the victims' perspective is poor performances in studies followed by appearance/complexion, past/old quarrels, economic class, religion, caste/community as well as family issues. The study also reflect the perspective of bullies for engaging in social bullying as intention to take revenge, past quarrels and abusiveness nature are leading reasons for social bullying. Thus the study reflects that social bullying is prevalent among the adolescents and it continues for a considerable length of time. Keeping in view with the prevalence rate and causes of social bullying, it's high time for to execute an anti bullying programme by the school authority. Furthermore all the members of the school, parents, psychologists, counselors, community must work together to built up a healthy school environment in a sound society.

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