

Exploring the Prevalence and Perception Towards Bullying Among
Adolescents: A Study on the Schools in Underserved Areas in Dhaka,
Bangladesh

By

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A thesis submitted to the BRAC Institute of Educational Development in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Education in Educational Leadership & School Improvement

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Declaration

It is hereby declared that

1. The thesis submitted is my own original work while completing degree at Brac University.
2. The thesis does not contain material previously published or written by a third party, except where this is appropriately cited through full and accurate referencing.
3. The thesis does not contain material which has been accepted, or submitted, for any other degree or diploma at a university or other institution.
4. I have acknowledged all main sources of help.

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Ethics Statement

As part of the fulfillment of the academic research entitled “Exploring the Prevalence and Perception Towards School-related Bullying among Adolescent Students: A Study on the Schools in Under-served Areas in Dhaka”.

Some of the questions might be sensitive, however, you are never required to discuss anything that you don't want to or that makes you uncomfortable. All of the responses have been kept confidential and has not been shared with anyone other than the team members.

The participation in the survey is completely voluntary. Participants may refuse to participate or withdraw from the survey at any time without penalty. Responses to this survey will be kept confidential. Only authorized individuals will have access to your data, and it will not be shared with any third parties without your consent. The data collected from this survey will be used for research and present plausible suggestions on school-related bullying. No part of this interview is being recorded in tape or video.

Abstract

Around 44.4 percent of school students in Bangladesh have been found to suffer from bullying in 2021 (Shivananda, 2022). Bullying is a common phenomenon at schools in both rural and urban areas of Bangladesh and there is a prevalence of several forms of bullying are prevalent among high school children in Bangladesh (Ahmed et al., 2021; Mahmood & Islam, 2017). This study aims to assess the prevalence of school-related bullying among adolescents of under-served areas, and the perception of major stakeholders regarding school-related bullying among adolescents of under-served areas. This mixed-method study assesses the prevalence of bullying behavior among adolescents of underserved communities through quantitative study and the perception among teachers and students through the qualitative has been utilized. This study used surveys and semi-structured interviews with teachers and principals/assistant teachers (ATs) for data validation and in-depth insights into perception analysis and exploration of factors associated. In this study, a thematic analysis has been used for qualitative data analysis, and for quantitative analysis descriptive and inferential statistics have been employed. The study reveals students ages 11-18 in grades 7-9 experienced different forms of bullying and its prevalence in the past school term. The study explores that of students ages 10-18 in grades 6-9, boys were more likely than girls to experience different forms of bullying in the past school term in the underserved area of Dhaka. Regarding predictors of students' perceptions of bullying in school, the study has included classroom factors, with school-level factors such as reporting mechanisms, and survivor support from the school ecosystem. The socio-economic background of the students, classroom-level factors, individual traits, the complexion of the students, and in some cases, school factors considering the local context are influencing school-related bullying behavior among students.

Keywords: Bullying, Adolescents, School safety, Underserved Areas, Bangladesh

Dedication

This Thesis is dedicated to my beloved family members for their love and support.

Acknowledgment

Firstly, all praise to the Almighty Allah for whom my thesis has been completed without any major interruption.

Secondly, I would like to show my gratitude to my advisor Wasima Nahrin ma'am for her for kind support during this study

And finally, it may not be possible for my parents and husband without their support. With their kind support and prayers, we are now on the verge of our graduation

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Glossary

Adolescence:

Adolescence is that phase that is characterized by biological, behavioral, and social changes that affect family, culture, lifestyle, alteration of self-identity, and spiritual interactions. In this phase, adolescents are largely influenced by their peers in hindering or promoting sound social and psychological development (Dubey et al, 2022).

Family-Level Drivers:

Family-Level Drivers include close relationships (preferably within a family) which include parental belief and attitudes regarding the awareness of violence against children (VAC); and exposure to violence against women in the home.

Individual-Level Risk Factors:

Individual-level risk factors include the personal characteristics that increase children's likelihood of becoming a victim of SRGBV. These risk factors include a student's gender identity, socio-economic background, disability, poverty, being an orphan, marital status, or belonging to any minority or ethnic group.

School Climate:

School climate denotes the "quality and character of school life" which is based on the patterns of stakeholder's (students, parents, and school personnel's) experience of school reflecting values, goals, norms, teaching, and learning practices, interpersonal relationships organizational structures (Cohen et al.,

2009). A positive school climate enhances learning and youth development and contributes to contributive, productive, and satisfying life

School-Level Drivers:

The school-level drivers are factors within the school where social interactions and relationships are formed and school-level drivers attempt to identify characteristics that can be associated with falling victims of violence. These drivers include gender attitudes and beliefs, prevalence and extent of disciplinary practices, modes of student punishment, prevalence and extent of student rewards, and interpersonal relationships.

School-Related Bullying Behavior: Bullying refers to “any nonsexual form of intimidation intended to harm, either psychologically or physically”. School-related bullying behavior is a repeated action, or this could be repeated over time which can be perpetrated by teachers, peers, school staff, or anyone encountered in and around the way to and from school, dormitories, cell phone technology, and cyberspace. Among the various forms, verbal bullying includes teasing, threatening, and name-calling. Verbal bullying also includes behaviors such as defamation, biased comments, and harassment (Dexis Consulting Group, 2020; Kennedy, 2020).

Underserved Communities:

The term ‘under-served groups’ refers to a range of stakeholders or the representatives of those groups that are ‘hard to reach’, ‘seldom heard’, or ‘under-

represented'. The characteristics of these communities include “lower inclusion in research than population estimates suggest is needed” and inhibits major differences in group behavior while responding and engaging in services, interventions, or research, according to the UK National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Clinical Research (Morris et al, 2022).

Chapter 1

Introduction And Background

1.1 Introduction

Violence in school settings is often targeted based on identity, race, sex, or gender identities, and bullying is the most prevalent form of violence in schools, which affects more than one in three students between the ages of 13 and 15 worldwide (UNGEI, 2020; UNDP, 2022; UNESCO, 2016). The bullying prevalence across different contexts worldwide shows that 35% of youth (12–18 years) engage in traditional bullying (both perpetration and victimization roles) (Menesini & Salmivalli, 2017). Around 44.4 percent of school students in Bangladesh have been found to suffer from bullying in 2021 (Shivananda, 2022). Bullying is a common phenomenon at schools in both rural and urban areas of Bangladesh and there is a prevalence of several forms of bullying such as verbal, emotional, exclusion, physical, sexual, cyber, and race, are prevalent among high school children in Bangladesh (Ahmed et al., 2021; Mahmood & Islam, 2017). These frequent occurrences of bullying pose greater risks for vulnerable children, such as children who are excluded; belong to a minority group, children with disabilities, and children who are affected by migration or refugees (Menesini & Salmivalli, 2017). Besides, adolescent students go through psycho-social and physical changes which accelerates the adverse effects of bullying (Wang et al, 2020). Therefore, this mixed-method paper aims to assess the prevalence of bullying behavior, conduct a perception analysis, and identify the factors associated with the perception of school-related bullying among adolescents of underserved areas.

1.2 Research Topic

The research topic of this study is to measure the perception of school-related bullying prevalence among adolescent students in Bangladesh. Following this, the specific goals of the study are; to assess the prevalence of school-related bullying among adolescents in underserved areas. The research attempts to understand how teachers and students perceive school-related bullying among adolescents in underserved areas. The research explores the factors affecting school-related bullying among adolescents in underserved areas.

Bullying refers to “any nonsexual form of intimidation intended to harm, either psychologically or physically”. School-related bullying behavior is a repeated action, or this could be repeated over time which can be perpetrated by teachers, peers, school staff, or anyone encountered in and around the way to and from school, dormitories, cell phone technology, and cyberspace. Among the various forms, verbal bullying includes teasing, threatening, and name-calling. Verbal bullying also includes behaviors such as defamation, biased comments, and harassment (Dexis Consulting Group, 2020; Kennedy, 2020).

Other forms of bullying such as physical bullying involve pulling and grabbing someone’s belongings, hair, and clothes as less severe acts of violence and physical bullying can take more harsh forms such as hurting and beating. Psychological bullying includes public humiliation, name-calling, or teasing (Dexis Consulting Group, 2020). The term ‘under-served groups’ refers to a range of stakeholders or the representatives of those groups that are ‘hard to reach’, ‘seldom heard’, or ‘under-represented’. The characteristics of these communities include “lower inclusion in research than population estimates suggest is needed” and inhibits major differences in group behavior while responding and engaging in services, interventions, or research, according to the UK National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Clinical Research (Morris et al, 2022).

School climate denotes the “quality and character of school life” which is based on the patterns of stakeholder's (students, parents, and school personnel's) experience of school reflecting

values, goals, norms, teaching, and learning practices, interpersonal relationships organizational structures (Cohen et al., 2009). A positive school climate enhances learning and youth development and contributes to a productive, productive, and satisfying life. The study is on adolescents which refers to the phase that is characterized by biological, behavioral, and social changes that affect family, culture, lifestyle, alteration of self-identity, and spiritual interactions. In this phase, adolescents are largely influenced by their peers in hindering or promoting sound social and psychological development (Dubey et al, 2022). The adolescence phase of life comes between childhood and adulthood, ranging from 10 to 19 years (World Health Organization, 2019).

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Bullying is prevalent in different levels of educational institutions in Bangladesh, and it is having adverse effects on young students. The available statistics on violence in school settings often do not reflect the situation or meaningful trends over time (UNGEI, 2020; UNDP, 2022). Besides, there is a need for a greater focus on education for the urban poor because they lack wealth, power, and social connections; and they are underserved by both government and non-government organizations (Cameron, 2011). Hence the study attempts to analyze the perception of school-related bullying, especially among underserved communities. The study also attempts to explore the factors influencing the perception of students and teachers toward school-related bullying in underserved communities within urban areas.

1.4 Research Questions

The study undertakes the following research question:

1. What are the forms and frequencies of bullying among adolescents in underserved areas?

2. How do teachers and students perceive school-related bullying among adolescents in underserved areas?
3. What are the factors affecting school-related bullying among adolescents in underserved areas?

1.5 Purpose of the Study

The study aims to assess the perception of school-related bullying behavior among adolescent students in secondary schools particularly in the under-served areas. To understand the prevalence and the factors behind these frequent bullying experiences within different contexts, students' perceptions can help identify the atmosphere in schools that are the most prone to bullying (PISA, 2018). This mixed-method study assesses the prevalence of bullying behavior among adolescents of underserved communities through quantitative study and the perception among teachers and students through the qualitative have been utilized.

Regarding predictors of students' perceptions of bullying in school, the study includes classroom factors, with school-level factors providing conditions under which the effectiveness of classroom-level factors can be maximized by developing and evaluating policies on teaching and creating a positive learning environment in the school (Kyriakides and Creemers, 2008; Bokhove et al., 2022). The socio-economic background, classroom level factor, school factors, and national context have been utilized in this study.

The study also takes into account the notion that the school situation is influenced by the wider educational context in which students, teachers, and schools are expected to operate (Bokhove et al., 2022). The study explores the factors affecting the perception as well as bullying behavior. To assess the perception, the study analyzes the perception of teachers and students of school-related bullying behavior. The study identifies the factors associated with the

perception of school-related bullying behavior among adolescent students of underserved areas.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The study aims to look into the perception of school-related violence occurring through bullying among adolescent students of underserved communities and the factors associated. To focus on the inclusivity of a safe learning environment, the study focuses particularly on the underserved communities of the urban area. It provides an understanding of bullying behavior among adolescents that takes place within schools in underserved communities and sheds light on the factors affecting the perception from both the educators' and students' perspectives. The study significantly contributes to conducting situation analysis in preventing bullying and creating mass awareness of bullying behavior and provides insights for policymakers and stakeholders in designing inclusive strategies to ensure gender safety within the school setting.

Chapter 2

Literature Review & Conceptual Framework

In this literature review, I am presenting information from different books, articles, and documents that I reviewed to understand my research topic of bullying prevalence and the perception of the major stakeholders. I have organized my literature review under the following categories: 1) school-related bullying, 2) school climate, 3) the present situation of school bullying in Bangladesh, 4) policies, government initiatives, and implementation strategies regarding the prevention of school bullying and promoting child safety, 5) different forms of bullying, and drivers of bullying.

2.1 Literature Review

Bullying is conceptualized as a form of violence as it is rooted in widely held discriminatory gender norms and practices and enforced by unequal power dynamics. School-related incidents being occur when a student is on their way to or home from school; when the students are on school grounds, including before, during, or after school hours; and when they're on a school trip (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2011). In Bangladesh, the most common forms of bullying that the students experienced were pushing or shoving, being made fun of, and having rumors spread and male students from public schools in urban areas had significantly higher rates of bullying victimization experiences (Ahmed et al, 2021). Though bullying affects large numbers of high school children in both Bangla and English mediums, physical and emotional bullying was more common in the Bangla medium, while the frequency of verbal, sexual, and cyberbullying was high in English mediums and the students of grade 9 and 10 experienced more sexual and cyberbullying than other classes (Mahmood & Islam, 2017).

All forms of violence are a complex and sensitive area of study and it is underreported vastly in nature. Along with that the available statistics often do not reflect the situation or meaningful trends over time (UNDP, 2022). There is an association between adolescents' perceived school climate, bullying perpetration, and the mediating process, and adolescents with positive perceptions of school climate are less likely to bully others (Yang et al., 2020). The beginning of the academic year marks the most bullying cases such as physical bullying, verbal bullying, and cyberbullying, and less reporting of the younger students. Bullying is most likely to take place in areas with little to no adult supervision (Beaudoin & Roberge, 2014). Bullying might be placed in different places on the school premises, around the campus, or even on the school bus (Mahmood & Islam, 2017). Among the four main types of bullying (verbal bullying, physical bullying, relational bullying, and cyberbullying), physical bullying tends to be more prevalent among the younger ages. However, all forms of bullying result in severe consequences, these contain three criteria: repetition, intention (aggressiveness), and imbalance of power (Johansson & Englund, 2020).

There is a significant relationship between bullying victimization and several adverse health behaviors or outcomes in South Asian countries which needs to be addressed in health promotion and programs in these countries (Rahman et al., 2020). Despite the adverse effects, victims often refrain from seeking redress due to deficiencies in responsiveness and lack of commitment to the sexual harassment complaint committees. Besides, there is a lack of awareness of regulations on sexual misconduct, victims abstaining from legal aid, political influence in sexual harassment cases, and a lack of transparent reporting and monitoring mechanisms (Islam & Ferdous, 2023). Self-perceived safety and children's subjective well-being are heavily affected by factors such as vulnerability to material resources and peer-group victimization (Goswami et al, 2022). Victims of school-related bullying are more prone to get impacted with depressive symptoms, self-harm, psychological discomfort, and suicide. Such

occurrences influence the development of children and adolescents and can have extreme psychological, social, and physical consequences. The high prevalence of school violence has been a major public health issue and a global concern (Dubey et al, 2022).

Teachers' perceptions of bullying vary heavily based on the context, nature of aggression, reaction of the victim, and gender. According to Bell & Willis (2016), teachers often seem to acknowledge the aggressive response of the victim to be more serious than that of no reaction or passive reaction and in cases of bullying physical aggression has been perceived more seriously than verbal or relational bullying. Regardless of the reaction, female-male bullying has been perceived as the least serious (Bell & Willis, 2016).

For bullying, there is an influence of national policies on school and classroom factors, and it impacts the perceptions of having a safe school climate, as well as the perceptions of school discipline and safety. The socio-economic background of the school also influences the students' perceptions of bullying. However, the individual characteristics of the students also influence and are influenced by individual characteristics. the perception towards violence. The model therefore suggests that bullying can be affected by factors at individual, classroom, school, and country levels (Bokhove et al., 2022).

Bullying prevention by the government of Bangladesh can be traced back to the Education Policy, 2010 which recognizes the issue of school safety and provides policy guidelines. According to Chapter 22 of the policy initiated counseling services and student welfare with designated teachers at all educational levels. The Education Policy 2023 further mandates forming a working committee consisting of students, guardians, teachers, and community representatives for the enhancement of safe learning environments at primary and secondary level schools. Chapter 28 of the policy suggests establishing a code of conduct for students and teachers at all levels of primary and secondary level schools to prevent any sort of mental and physical torture (Ahmed, 2023).

Later on, the Ministry of Education launched the Bullying & Ragging Prevention Policy 2023 aimed to create a safer environment for students by emphasizing the roles of teachers, managing committee members, and other stakeholders in actively preventing bullying within schools and establishing consequences for perpetrators. The policy identifies five forms of bullying and ragging in educational institutions which are verbal, physical, social, cyber, and sexual bullying. According to the policy, each educational institution has to establish an Anti-Bullying Committee (ABC) with 3-5 members. The committee has the jurisdiction to take necessary actions regarding any case of suicide, bullying, and ragging. These committees are to hold meetings, workshops, seminars, or symposiums at the beginning of the academic year and subsequently every three months throughout the year. It is also mandated for the committees to create and maintain Bullying/Ragging Logs using Self Report Peer Nomination or Teacher Nomination if necessary. Additionally, education institutions are to maintain the Complaint Box/Digital Drop Box and act on it. Apart from mandating responsibilities, the authority is supposed to install CCTV cameras in every corner where bullying is more likely to occur. Any occurrences in the residential halls have to be reported and taken into consideration. Personnel related to school, teachers, parents, and students have to take an oath and sign a pledge to not bully, report any incident, and take necessary steps. A specific teacher from the institution is supposed to be trained as a “counselor” and assist students as required (GoB, 2023).

Additionally, Bangladesh has also launched the “Bangladesh Child Helpline (1098)”. The Department of Social Services under the Ministry of Social Welfare has launched the nationwide, Centralized Call Center (CCC), 'Child Helpline 1098' with the technical support of UNICEF to ensure the rights of the child and the social facilities of the child following the Child Act 2013. The helpline serves as a support system for children dealing with any form of abuse or bullying and offers confidential assistance and guidance to affected individuals. Child

Helpline 1098 was launched under the Department of Social Services with the support of UNICEF to help any child in any part of the country who might be a victim of any kind of violence, exploitation, and or torture. This helpline is free for the child or anyone seeking a remedy (GoB, 2024).

The existing literature mostly focused on forms of violence, the effects of bullying against students in terms of association with health impact, and the identification of the forms of bullying in general. There is a notable knowledge gap regarding bullying among underserved communities, particularly among adolescents. Limited research has been conducted to comprehensively assess the students' perception of violence and bullying, especially within urban underserved communities. To address this gap, this study aims to conduct a perception analysis of gender-based bullying among adolescent students of underserved communities in urban areas. The findings provide a comprehensive understanding of the violence faced by adolescent students in underserved communities and shed light on the experiences and challenges faced by individuals. The findings provide insights for policymakers and stakeholders in designing inclusive strategies to ensure gender safety in Bangladesh.

2.1 Conceptual Framework of the Study

Based on the available literature, the study has incorporated the following conception framework. Bullying among adolescents refers to any unwanted (any aggressive behaviors of the perpetrator that the targeted youth want to stop) repeated behavior by another youth or group of adolescents/youths which might involve perceived or observed power imbalance. The mode and types of bullying behavior among youth can be as follows (Gladden et al., 2014);

1) Direct: Direct mode of bullying refers to the aggressive behavior(s) that occur in the presence of the targeted youth. For instance, face-to-face interaction, pushing the targeted youth, and harmful written or verbal communication with youth.

2) Indirect: The indirect mode of bullying aggressive behavior(s) refers to those acts that are not initiated by any direct communication with the targeted youth. For instance, spreading false information, harmful rumors, or directing harmful rumors electronically.

Mode of Bullying	Forms of Bullying
Direct (Direct mode of bullying refers to the aggressive behavior(s) that occurs in the presence of the targeted youth.)	Physical Bullying (kicking, hitting, spitting, punching, pushing and tripping)
	Verbal Bullying (calling the youth names, taunting, inappropriate comments, threatening or offensive written notes or hand gestures, or threatening the targeted students verbally)
	Relational Bullying (intentional isolation of the targeted youth by refraining them from connecting and interacting with their peers or making them ignore their peers.)
Indirect (indirect mode of bullying aggressive behavior(s) refers to those acts that are not initiated by any direct communication with the targeted youth.)	Verbal Bullying (calling the youth names, taunting, inappropriate comments, threatening or offensive written notes or hand gestures, or threatening the targeted students verbally)
	Relational Bullying (harmful rumors, spreading false information, writing derogatory comments publicly, or spreading embarrassing photos in a physical or electronic space without the target youth's consent or prior knowledge)

Despite the mode of bullying the following forms of bullying could take place.

1) Physical: Physical bullying refers to the use of coercive physical force by the perpetrator against the targeted students. For instance, kicking, hitting, spitting, punching, pushing and tripping.

2) Verbal: Verbal bullying denotes any oral or written communication directed by the perpetrator against the targeted students that results in harm. For instance, calling the youth names, taunting, inappropriate comments, threatening or offensive written notes or hand gestures, or threatening the targeted students verbally.

3) Relational: Relational bullying refers to such behaviors directed by a perpetrator intended to harm the relationships and reputation of the targeted students. Direct relational bullying behavior includes intentional isolation of the targeted youth by refraining them from connecting and interacting with their peers or making them ignore their peers. Indirect relational bullying behaviors involve harmful rumors, spreading false information, writing derogatory comments publicly, or spreading embarrassing photos in a physical or electronic space without the target youth's consent or prior knowledge. Bullying may inflict harm or distress on the targeted youth including physical, psychological, social, or educational harm.

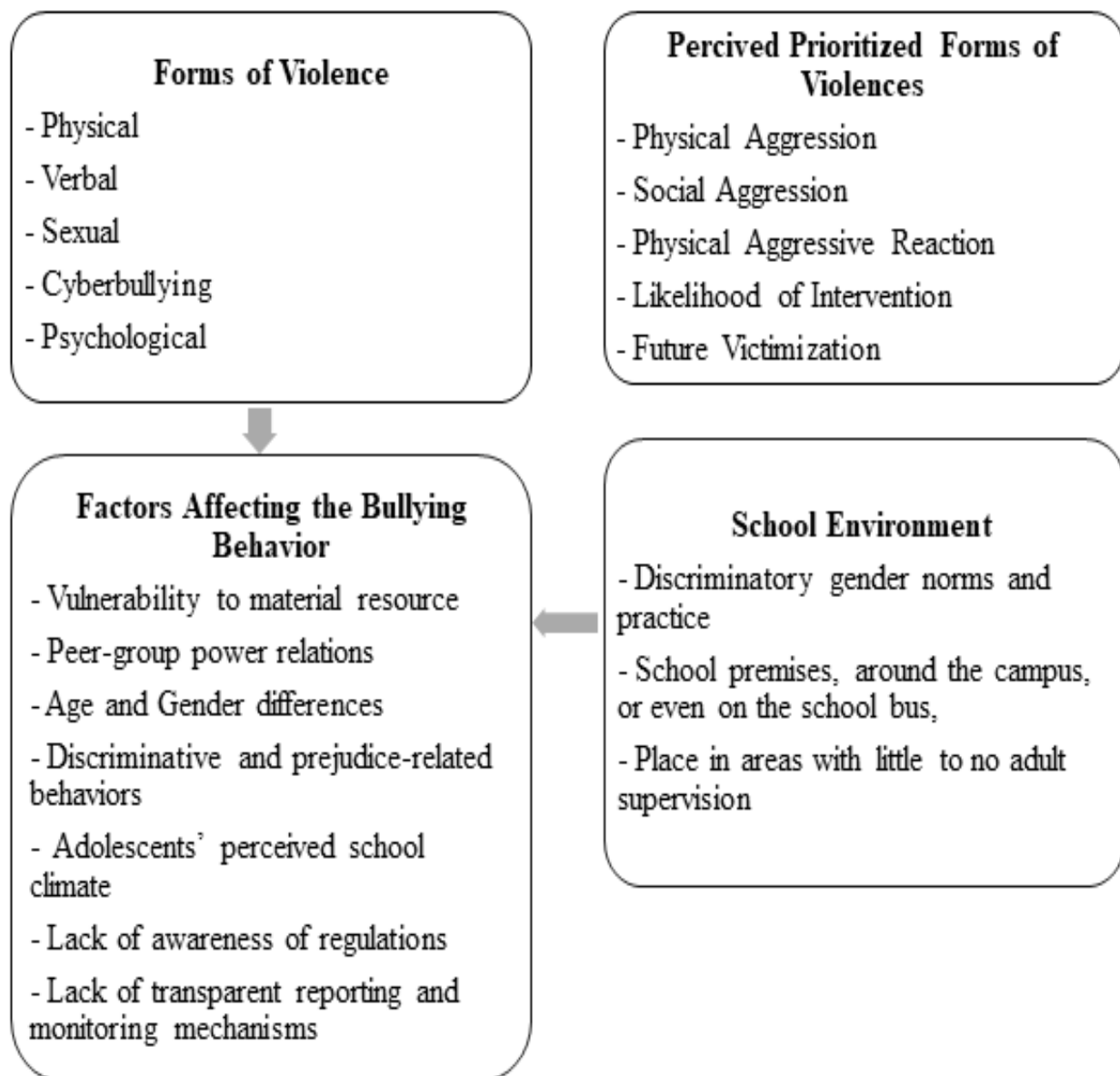


Figure: Conceptual Framework of the Study

Analyzing the conceptual framework of school-related bullying requires multiple factors such as drivers at the individual level, school level, and family level that can impact a student's likelihood of experiencing any form of violence. The risk factor of school-related bullying refers to individual traits or characteristics that enhance the potentiality of children's risk of

experiencing any form of bullying. Drivers indicate the structural and institutional factors in the school and family in which violence is more or less likely to occur (Dexis Consulting Group. (2020);

Individual-Level Risk Factors: Individual-level risk factors include the personal characteristics that increase children's likelihood of becoming a victim of SRGBV. These risk factors include a student's gender identity, socio-economic background, disability, poverty, being an orphan, marital status, or belonging to any minority or ethnic group.

Family-Level Drivers: Family-Level Drivers include close relationships (preferably within a family) which include parental belief and attitudes regarding the awareness of violence against children (VAC); and exposure to violence against women in the home.

School-Level Drivers: The school-level drivers are factors within the school where social interactions and relationships are formed and school-level drivers attempt to identify characteristics that can be associated with falling victims of violence. These drivers include gender attitudes and beliefs, prevalence and extent of disciplinary practices, modes of student punishment, prevalence and extent of student rewards, and interpersonal relationships.

The perception of bullying within school settings has been frequently identified based on the evident physical and social aggressive behaviors, frequency of intervention, and probability of future victimization. The prevalence of different forms of bullying behavior has been assessed in this study. The factors that have influenced the bullying behavior are mostly peer-group power relations in the classroom, age, and gender differences, discriminative and prejudice-related behaviors, and vulnerability in accessing material resource material deprivation.”

Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1 Research Approach

The study is followed by the mixed method which includes both qualitative and quantitative research. It follows a QUAN+qual simultaneous design. The quantitative study contributes to understanding the prevalence of bullying behavior among adolescent students of the underserved community. The qualitative study helps understand how teachers and students perceive school-related bullying among adolescent students of underserved areas and the factors associated. The mixed-method analysis helps comprehend the prevalence and perception as well as identify the factors affecting the perception of school-related bullying in and around schools among adolescent students.

3.2 Research Site

Based on non-probability convenience sampling, the study has included sampling units of the population into relatively homogeneous groups of underserved communities which are urban poor and lack wealth, power, and social connections. The study has selected areas (strata) based on convenience among the underserved communities of Dhaka city, and following that, secondary-level students have been randomly chosen within those areas.

3.3 Research Participants

From the selected school, convenience sampling has been applied to select 40 students from the schools of the selected four areas. Assessing the prevalence of bullying behavior can be best understood through student surveys (Crothers & Levinson, 2004; Olweus, 2010). Several kinds of literature with qualitative studies conducted on school bullying adopted in-depth interviews with relevant adults such as teachers, parents, and professionals working particularly

with children for triangulation (Patton et al, 2015). This study incorporates semi-structured interviews with teachers and principals/HTs for data validation and in-depth insights into perception analysis and exploration of factors associated. In this study, semi-structured interviews have been conducted to assess factors associated with bullying behavior among adolescents in underserved communities.

Table 2: Particulars of the Participants

No	Areas of the School	Data Collection Techniques	Category of the Respondent	Total Unit
1	Old Dhaka (Hazaribagh, Lalbag), Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC)	Survey Questionnaire	Student Grade 7, Grade 8	40
2	From the Schools of the Selected Area	Semi-structured interview	Teacher	04
Total Respondents				44

3.4 Sampling procedure

The study used non-probability convenience sampling, and the study has included sampling units of the population into relatively homogeneous groups of underserved communities which are urban poor and lack wealth, power, and social connections. The study has selected areas (strata) based on convenience among the underserved communities of Dhaka city, and following that, secondary-level students have been randomly chosen within those areas. From

the selected school, convenience sampling has been applied to select 40 students from the schools of the selected four areas.

3.5 Data Collection Methods

The primary data has been collected through surveys of the students and semi-structured interviews of the teachers and principals/HT to ensure depth in the qualitative data. For surveys, paper-based questionnaires have been used to collect responses from the participants. This study utilizes the student questionnaire on bullying along with other forms of non-sexual intimidation from the School-Related Gender-Based Violence Measurement (SRGBV) Toolkit prepared by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and Social Solutions International's Monitoring and Evaluation Capacity Building (MECap) team with IMPAQ International, RTI International, and Dexis Consulting Group. The toolkit has been designed to holistically measure forms of violence, drivers, and risk factors at the individual and school/community levels (Dexis Consulting Group, 2020).

Semi-structured paper-based interviews have been conducted for interviews with teachers. The tools help address research questions by considering insights into both student perception and teacher perspectives. The study has used secondary data from several scholarly articles from research journals and newspapers, existing policies, periodicals, annual reports, and different internet resources have been utilized.

3.6 Role of the Researcher

The practical challenges might occur in terms of time constraints and the medium of question if it is not translated into the participant's native language. Therefore, the data collection tool for the students has been formulated in a student-friendly language as well as has been translated into Bangla considering the allocated time frame. Confidentiality and anonymity of

participants have been maintained. The participants would be made aware of their right to withdraw from the study at any point without consequences.

3.7 Data analysis

Qualitative Analysis: For qualitative analysis, the study considers thematic analysis to achieve the research purpose involving understanding students' measure secondary-level adolescent students' perception of bullying in schools in Bangladesh. Thematic Analysis is chosen to analyze the data in this study as this analysis is accessible, flexible, and not aligned with one theoretical framework (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Besides, the literature regarding perception, prevalence, and factor analysis of bullying behavior among young students and adolescents, several studies have undertaken thematic analysis (Forsberg, 2021; Francis et al., 2022). In this study, a thematic analysis has been conducted to explore factors related to country/social context, school climate, and classroom context to understand bullying behavior among adolescents in underserved areas.

Quantitative Analysis: Descriptive statistics has been used to analyze the demographic features of the respondents and prevalence. The data includes socio-demographic features, prevalence of bullying behavior, and frequencies of bullying behavior.

3.8 Ethical issues and concerns

For ethical consideration, approval has been taken from relevant educational institutions to ensure ethical standards. The consent form has been taken from students and their parents, ensuring they fully understand the purpose, procedures, and potential impacts of the study.

3.9 Limitations of the study

Limitation of the Study: The study acknowledges the following limitations:

i. Representation of the Community: The study includes only urban underserved areas of Dhaka, and the findings may not be inclusive to adolescents regarding the other regions. The study focuses on the underserved urban communities exploring the prevalence of bullying.

ii. Time limits: Due to several unforeseen situations such as political unrest, shifts in school structure, and lack of presence of students, created a difficulty in data collection.

iii. Cultural Barriers: The survey and interviews were conducted in local languages, which might have led to misinterpretation of questions or nuances in responses. Additionally, cultural stigmas surrounding bullying may have hindered participants from fully disclosing their experiences.

Chapter 4

Findings

Demographics of the Respondents

The study explores individual traits, family background in terms of the parent's education level, and how the respondents perceive the school climate.

Table 5.1.1 Demographics of the Respondents

Attributes	n (%)
Gender	
Boy	50%
Girl	50%
Age Group	
11-14	65%
15-18	35%
Grade	
Seven	58%
Eight	33%
Nine	10%
Mothers' Education	

Primary School (Class 1-5)	25%
Junior School Certificate (JSC)	17.5%
Secondary School Certificate (SSC)	37.5%
Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC)	5%
Undergraduate (Bachelor's)	2.5%
Postgraduate (Master's)	12.5%
Father's Education	
Primary School (Class 1-5)	35%
Junior School Certificate (JSC)	17.5%
Secondary School Certificate (SSC)	10%
Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC)	27.5%
Undergraduate (Bachelor's)	5%
Postgraduate (Master's)	5%
Traveling to School	
Alone	45%
With a friend	32.5%
With parents	22.5%

Table 5.1.1 represents the demographics of the participants. The respondents are 50% female and 50% male students. Among the respondents of the study, the age group distribution shows that 65% of the respondents are from the (11-14) age group, and 35% of them belong to the age group of (15-18) years. While 58% of the respondents are from grade seven, 33% and 10% of them are from grade eight and nine respectively.

Parental information of the students reveals that the majority of the mothers have pursued Secondary School Certificate (SSC) (37.5%), followed by Primary School (Class 1-5) (25%), Junior School Certificate (JSC) (17.5%), Postgraduate (Master's) (12.5%), Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) (5%) and Undergraduate (Bachelor's) (2.5%) level of education. The father's education level shows that the majority of them have completed Primary School (Class 1-5) (35%), followed by Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) (27.5%), Junior School Certificate (JSC) (17.5%), Secondary School Certificate (SSC) (10%), Undergraduate (Bachelor's) (5%) and Postgraduate (Master's) (5%) level of education. Among the respondents, 45% of the students travel to school alone, while 32.5% of them travel with a friend and 22.5% of them are accompanied by their parents.

Perception of the School Climate

The study has incorporated positively, and negatively phrased statements related to activities and behaviors regarding school climate. The study represents the self-reported prevalence of bullying among adolescents. Students have about 62.9% favorable perceptions of a positive school climate. Younger students have more favorable perceptions than older students, with students ages 11-14 responding positively to 66.1% of items, compared to students ages 15-18 responding positively to 57.1% percent of items.

Among the respondents, 59.1% of the male students had favorable perceptions of a positive school climate whereas 66.8% of the female students had favorable perceptions of a positive

school climate. The study reveals that among adolescents, the younger students express a more positive perception of their school climate. Similarly, gender has an impact on the perception of the school climate, as female students expressed a more favorable perception of their school climate. The students with favorable perceptions mostly believed there that the teachers treat girls and boys equally, and students felt safe when traveling to school. Students reported that their teachers listened to them when students came to them with their problems. Students ask their teachers for help with their classwork and teachers listen when students come to them with their problems. The negatively phrased school climate includes the students threatening other students and calling them names. However, in general revealed that they mostly know who to report to when they experience or witness violence, and when students experience or witness physical bullying, they "report it." Generally, students do not hesitate to report incidents of physical bullying. If a student reports an incident of bullying at school, the bullies may harass or harm them.

5.2 Prevalence of Different Forms of Bullying

The study identifies several forms of bullying behavior among adolescents.

Verbal Bullying: In terms of verbal bullying, 82.5% of the students aged (11-18) in the grade level (7-9) have reported being made fun of and teased in the past school term (six months). While 67.5% of them experienced being said mean things and called names, and 35% of them were threatened to hurt, but did not do it. The teachers' perception in this regard reveals to have experienced similar forms of bullying among the students. Students engage in verbal bullying by speaking in a derogatory manner to another student or through inappropriate comments, humiliation, and condescending behaviors among peers. The respondents shared their experiences of witnessing verbal bullying within the school premises.

“What I see among students is that one person might speak down to another. One person might speak rudely to another or make bad comments.” – Interview Informant, Assistant Teacher of a Secondary School at Old Town, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Some of the responses marked these as playful teasing and calling others derogatory names when students are together in class or during play or sports. As another respondent shared *“They frequently tease people by using nicknames or making fun of their names, in a mocking tone.”* Additionally, teachers have reported witnessing the students occasionally threatening others.

Physical Bullying: The study identifies the prevalence of physical bullying in the form of stealing, being physically hurt, and coercive behavior. 67.5% of the students aged (11-18) in grade level (7-9) have reported experiencing stealing in the past school term (six months). While 60% of them reported experiencing damage or disruption of personal belongings, 55% of the respondents were physically hurt on purpose and 25% of them were forced to do something unwillingly in the past school term. The teachers’ perception in this regard reveals to have experienced similar forms of bullying among the students.

“Students often engage in playful teasing, name-calling, pinching, or making faces when they're together. While these actions might be meant in fun, other kids can take them seriously, feeling hurt or upset. It's common for children to react negatively to being teased or touched, even if it's meant as a joke.” - Assistant Teacher of a Secondary School at Old Town, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Other respondents shared,

“They might also bully others by throwing things like rubber bands from behind.”,
“They often throw paper at others, like crumpling up a piece of paper and throwing it

at someone sitting behind or beside them”. – Interview Informant, Assistant Teacher of a Secondary School at Old Town, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

From the teacher’s perspective, there is a noticeable prevalence of physical bullying among students. This type of bullying includes behaviors such as pushing, pinching, or shoving another student. The teacher's observations indicate that students often throw objects from behind or the side to distract or provoke others. Additionally, they may call out to someone in a way that encourages them to turn around by throwing something at them. Students also engage in non-verbal acts, such as making faces, which convey degrading or demeaning implications. These actions are typically intended to belittle others, making them feel inferior.

Psychological and Relational Bullying: The study further finds the prevalence of psychological bullying and relational bullying. 77.5% of the students aged (11-18) in grade level (7-9) have reported experiencing rumors being spread about themselves in the past school term (six months), and 60% of them left the respondent out of the group of friends. Students furthermore engage in activities such as making faces or using non-verbal cues to express degrading and demeaning implications. For instance, as one respondent shared,

“Children from affluent families say various things to those from less fortunate families”. – Interview Informant, Assistant Teacher of a Secondary School at Old Town, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Such actions of students are often intended to belittle others, making others feel inferior. There is an indication of witnessing relational bullying in group settings where students may target another individual for physical abuse, meaning that groups may engage in fights or use physical force against others. While teachers’ perception towards the frequency of occurrences indicates to be periodical or occasional in nature, they witnessed these activities to be more frequent during play or sports activities.

Table 5.2.1 Prevalence of Different Forms of Bullying among the Respondents

Forms of Bullying	Attribute	(%) of students experienced bullying
Verbal Bullying	Made fun of and teased the student (20)	82.5%
	Said mean things and called names (21)	67.5%
	Threatened to hurt you or your family, but did not do it (26)	35%
Physical Bullying	Stole something (23)	67.5%
	Broke or ruin something (24)	60%
	Physically hurt the respondent on purpose (25)	55%
	Forced you to do something you did not want to do (27)	25%
Psychological Bullying	Told lies about the respondent (28)	77.5%
Relational Bullying	Left the respondent out of the group of friends (22)	60%

The self-reported bullying experience from the respondents indicates a frequent occurrence of different forms of bullying behavior among adolescents. Whereas 82.5% of the students aged

(11-18) in the grade level (7-9) have reported being made fun of and teased, 60% of them reported experiencing damage or disruption of personal belongings, 55% of the respondents were physically hurt on purpose and 25% of them were forced to do something unwillingly in the past school term. Responses from the teacher's interview shared;

“Children don't engage in this behavior every day. Maybe it happens occasionally, or during playtime, but it doesn't always get noticed.”

– Interview Informant, Assistant Teacher of a Secondary School at Hazaribag, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

The other respondents noticed a repeated pattern of bullying and very frequent cases of complaints and reporting coming to class teachers from the students, as respondents shared *“Students are constantly reporting incidents of one another saying hurtful things”*. Apart from the self-reported bullying experience, the perception of the teacher further triangulates the fact of frequent occurrences of bullying on school premises, be it during playtime extra-curricular activities or in the classroom.

5.3 Factors/Determinants of the Bullying Behavior

The analysis of teacher's experience with bullying reveals several factors that instigate bullying behavior among adolescents which include physical appearance based on one's skin color or height, transitioning to a senior grade level, family background, gender dimension, and involvement in gang culture.

Physical appearance and Socioeconomic Background: Perpetrators often engage in bullying targeting students based on their physical appearance, commenting on their complexion or height, family status, or occupation. It has often been that students from a better socioeconomic background have been targeting students with vulnerable backgrounds. The responses from

teachers, such as *“They often make fun of people's families and what they do for a living”*, and *“Children from affluent families say various things to those from poor families”*,

The external societal prejudices have been heavily internalized by the perpetrators and resulted in bullying behavior within school settings. Furthermore, bullying based on family status or occupational background indicates socioeconomic stereotyping in the urban underserved communities as well, which might have been inherited in the students from their environments.

Gender Dimension: The gender dimension of bullying behavior is revealed to have different patterns when it is within the same gender than that of different gender identities.

As the response reveals,

“I've noticed these two things (Students bullying opposite gender) but I've also observed that sometimes boys bully boys, and girls bully girls. It seems like the reason why they bully girls differently is because they see girls differently.” – Interview Informant, Assistant Teacher of a Secondary School at Old Town, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

It has been found that male students usually engage in bullying other male students and female students engage in bullying other female students, however, bullying behavior has been found to differ based on gender. Boys might engage in different types of bullying than girls. Extremism and level of severity of bullying pattern is comparatively low among the female students.

Parental reluctance: Additionally, in many cases, parental reluctance is another reason for continued bullying behavior as parents often stay in disbelief about their child's involvement in bullying. As respondents shared

“It seems that some parents refuse to believe their children are capable of such actions. They say their children behave differently at home compared to school”, “We hear about such instances, and some parents assure us that their child will improve and

won't repeat such behavior.” – Interview Informant, Assistant Teacher of a Secondary School at Old Town, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Downplaying and lack of cooperation in such issues make it difficult for the teacher or school authority to resolve bullying behavior.

Transition to Senior Grades: Adolescents, being vulnerable in this stage, change behavior. It has been found that older students, especially those in higher grade levels tend to exhibit more altered behaviors compared to younger students, and the incidents of bullying occur more frequently in higher grades than in junior ones.

“Sometimes the bullying in the ninth and tenth grades is different from that in the sixth and seventh. The bullying in the ninth and tenth grades is often more severe or physical, isn't it? Yes, it often becomes physical. As they get older, their behavior changes. In this case, they tend to resort to physical fights more often.” – Interview Informant, Assistant Teacher of a Secondary School at Old Town, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Similar notions have been repeatedly found out such as *“It happens more in the upper classes and less in the junior classes”*, and *“It's rare to see it in the lower classes, but in the upper classes, it happens almost every other day”*. Another crucial reason for students engaging in different and, in some cases, severe, bullying behavior due to their transition to the senior grades. There is another influence that according to the teacher's perception comes or occurs outside of school and can be linked to issues such as gang violence, however, such incidents are less likely to occur within the school premises.

5.4 Effects of Bullying Behavior among Students

Bullying behavior among students leaves the children with adverse effects which has been represented in Table 5.4.1. The study finds that 47% of the students reported feeling anxious and afraid of exams despite being well-prepared. Among the respondents, 15% of them

considered dropping out of school due to facing bullying in school, and 13% of them skipped at least 3-4 days of school a week. While 11% of the students wanted to complete their education regardless of the situation, 9% of the respondents dealt with isolation at school, and 6% of them experienced a feeling of lack of contentment with themselves.

Table 5.4.1 Effects of Bullying Behavior among Students

Effects of Bullying Behavior among Respondents	(%)
Considering dropping out of school	15%
Skipping at least 3-4 days of school a week	13%
Feeling anxious and afraid of exams despite being well-prepared	47%
Lack of contentment	6%
Isolation at school	9%
Wanted to complete education regardless of the situation	11%

5.5 Reporting Mechanism

The schools often have their distinct and convenient way of resolving bullying occurrences, and complaints among students. Students mostly have been found to resolve the bullying behavior based on the students' complaints. As respondents shared *"Sometimes, when the situation escalates to an extreme level, we might have to involve the guardians. We often receive complaints from students that certain behaviors are being repeated"*. Upon the severity

and complexity of the occurrences the teacher, Head Teacher (HT), and parental involvement are ensured.

Students often tend to report incidents by identifying the offender and their actions and students usually complain when the behavior is repeated. When the teacher is involved, they initiate a discussion with the students who reported. As the teachers revealed *“Schools have support. As class teachers, we try to counsel students. If our advice isn't enough, we involve our principal to reinforce the message. We also try to deter students by informing them of the legal consequences of their actions.”* Upon the “seriousness” of the occurrence, the Head Teacher (HT) and parents are involved to intervene in resolving the matter through discussions.

“In the higher grades, especially when things turn physical, we emphasize the legal consequences. We might mention things like involvement in juvenile gangs or potential police intervention.” – Interview Informant, Assistant Teacher of a Secondary School at Old Town, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Schools in general arrange called for meetings in the repeated occurrence of bullying. Apart from the teachers providing the necessary guidance and counseling, in severe cases, students are warned about the potential legal consequences and police interventions if the frequency of bullying persists or escalates.

However, teachers have mostly recommended the inclusion of content related to school-related violence to be discussed regularly in class. There is a need to educate the students about what bullying is, why it is harmful, and its negative consequences.

Chapter 5

Discussion & Conclusion

5.1 Discussion

The study reveals the prevalence of different forms of bullying among adolescents in underserved communities. Adolescent students of these communities experienced verbal bullying in different ways such as by speaking in a derogatory manner to another student or through inappropriate comments, humiliation, and condescending behaviors among peers. Some of the responses marked these as playful teasing and calling others derogatory names when students are together in class or during play or sports. From the teacher's perception of bullying behavior among the students, there is a prevalence of the students being involved in physical bullying. Such bullying behavior involves one student pushing, pinching, or shoving another. The responses reveal that students often engage in behavior such as throwing objects from behind or from the side to distract or provoke others or calling someone to turn around by throwing something at them. Students furthermore engage in activities such as making faces or using non-verbal cues to express degrading and demeaning implications. Such actions of students are often intended to belittle others, making others feel inferior. There is an indication of witnessing relational bullying in group settings where students may target another individual for physical abuse, meaning that groups may engage in fights or use physical force against others. While teachers' perception towards the frequency of occurrences indicates to be periodical or occasional in nature, they witnessed these activities to be more frequent during play or sports activities. Perpetrators often engage in bullying targeting students based on their physical appearance, commenting on their complexion or height, family status, or occupation. It has often been that students from a better socioeconomic background have been targeting

students with vulnerable backgrounds. The external societal prejudices have been heavily internalized by the perpetrators and resulted in bullying behavior within school settings. Furthermore, bullying based on family status or occupational background indicates socioeconomic stereotyping in the urban underserved communities as well, which might have been inherited in the students from their environments. The gender dimension of bullying behavior is revealed to have different patterns when it is within the same gender than that of different gender identities. It has been found that male students usually engage in bullying other male students and female students engage in bullying other female students, however, bullying behavior has been found to differ based on gender. Boys might engage in different types of bullying than girls. Extremism and level of severity of bullying patterns is comparatively low among female students. Additionally, in many cases, parental reluctance is another reason for continued bullying behavior as parents often stay in disbelief about their child's involvement in bullying and such lack of cooperation in such issues makes it difficult for the teacher or school authority to resolve bullying behavior.

5.2 Conclusion and Recommendation

Adolescents, being vulnerable in this stage, change behavior. It has been found that older students, especially those in higher grade levels tend to exhibit more altered behaviors compared to younger students, and the incidents of bullying occur more frequently in higher grades than in junior ones. Another crucial reason for students engaging is different and, in some cases, severe, bullying behavior due to their transition to the senior grades. There is another influence that according to the teacher's perception comes or occurs outside of school and can be linked to issues such as gang violence, however, such incidents are less likely to occur within the school premises. The study recommends on;

- i. Local-level intervention and larger engagement of the stakeholders to prevent bullying.

- ii. The curriculum should include content that emphasizes student well-being, child safety, a positive school climate, and conceptualizing the adverse effects of bullying. Such lessons could be added in social science, Bangla, and English literature.
- iii. Lessons in the classroom and daily activities, bi-yearly awareness-building campaigns, and impact sharing can also gradually build upon the development of students' cognitive ability to refrain from such behavior.
- iv. The government's policy recommendations in Education Policy 2010 and Bullying & Ragging Prevention Policy 2023 have not been functional in the school settings. Such initiatives should be made functional.
- v. Counselling and training for teachers on bullying prevention and student support should be introduced.

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APPENDICES

Informed Consent Statement

I, _____, give permission for my child, _____ to participate in the research project entitled, “Exploring the Prevalence and Perception Towards Bullying among Adolescents: A Study on the Schools in Underserved Areas in Dhaka, Bangladesh.” The study has been explained to me and my questions answered to my satisfaction. I understand that my child’s right to withdraw from participating or refuse to participate will be respected and that his/her responses and identity will be kept confidential. I give this consent voluntarily.

Parent/Guardian Signature:

Signature

Date

Investigator Signature:

Signature

Date

Survey

This survey is part of the research entitled “Exploring the Prevalence and Perception Towards School-related Bullying among Adolescents: A Study on the Schools in Underserved Areas in Dhaka, Bangladesh”. Your participation in the survey is completely voluntary. You may refuse to participate or withdraw from the survey at any time without penalty. Your responses to this survey will be kept confidential. Only authorized individuals will have access to your data, and it will not be shared with any third parties without your consent. The data collected from this survey will be used for research and present plausible suggestions on school-related bullying.

What do we understand by bullying: Bullying refers to situations where one or more students harm, harass, or intimidate another student or group of students. Bullying can take various forms, such as:

- Physical acts like hitting, pushing, or damaging belongings.
- Teasing, spreading rumors, isolating someone, or insulting them.
- Hurting someone without reason, such as by hitting, using hurtful words, teasing, or excluding them.
- Using power to belittle others: Those who are physically stronger or have a large group of friends may sometimes try to assert their dominance over others.
- Intimidation: Bullies often use fear to make others act according to their wishes.

Section 1: Student Information

1	Are you a girl or a boy? 1 = Boy 2 = Girl
2	Age: _____
3	Grade: _____
4	Mother's Education 1. Primary Level Education (Grade 1-5) 2. JSC 3. SSC 4. HSC 5. Honors 6. Master's
5	Father's Education 1. Primary Level Education (Grade 1-5) 2. JSC 3. SSC 4. HSC 5. Honors 6. Master's

6	Mother's occupation 1. Unskilled 2. Skilled
7	Father's occupation 1. Unskilled 2. Skilled
8	Do you travel alone or with a friend? 1 = Alone 2 = With a friend 3 = With parents 98 = Don't know/No response
Section 2: School Climate	
9	Teachers treat girls and boys equally. 0 = Never 1 = Rarely 2 = Some of the time 3 = Always 98 = Don't know/No response
10	I feel safe when traveling to school 0 = Never 1 = Rarely 2 = Some of the time 3 = Always 98 = Don't know/No response
11	Teachers listen when students come to them with their problems.

	0 = Never 1 = Rarely 2 = Some of the time 3 = Always 98 = Don't know/No response
12	Students ask their teachers for help with their classwork. 0 = Never 1 = Rarely 2 = Some of the time 3 = Always 98 = Don't know/No response
13	Teachers listen when students come to them with their problems. 0 = Never 1 = Rarely 2 = Some of the time 3 = Always 98 = Don't know/No response
14	Students threaten other students and call them names. 0 = Never 1 = Rarely 2 = Some of the time 3 = Always 98 = Don't know/No response
15	Gang culture is a problem 0 = Never 1 = Rarely 2 = Some of the time 3 = Always 98 = Don't know/No response
16	Students know who to report to when they experience or witness violence. 0 = Never 1 = Rarely 2 = Some of the time 3 = Always 98 = Don't know/No response
17	When students experience or witness physical bullying, they "report it."

	0 = Never 1 = Rarely 2 = Some of the time 3 = Always 98 = Don't know/No response
18	Generally, students do not hesitate to report incidents of physical bullying 0 = Never 1 = Rarely 2 = Some of the time 3 = Always 98 = Don't know/No response
19	If a student reports an incident of bullying at school, the bullies may harass or harm them 0 = Never 1 = Rarely 2 = Some of the time 3 = Always 98 = Don't know/No response
Section 3: Bullying Each term question begins with “In the past school term, how many times did someone...”	
20	Made fun of you and teased you. 0 = Never 1 = Rarely 2 = Some of the time 3 = Always 98 = Don't know/No response
	Did this happen to you during the past term? 0 = No 1 = Yes
21	Said mean things to you or called you names that you did not like. 0 = Never 1 = Rarely 2 = Some of the time 3 = Always 98 = Don't know/No response

	Did this happen to you during the past term? 0 = No 1 = Yes
22	Left you out of your group of friends, 0 = Never 1 = Rarely 2 = Some of the time 3 = Always 98 = Don't know/No response
	Did this happen to you during the past week? 0 = No 1 = Yes
23	Stole something from you. 0 = Never 1 = Rarely 2 = Some of the time 3 = Always 98 = Don't know/No response
	Did this happen to you during the past week? 0 = No 1 = Yes
24	Broke or ruin something of yours on purpose 0 = Never 1 = Rarely 2 = Some of the time 3 = Always 98 = Don't know/No response
	Did this happen to you during the past week? 0 = No 1 = Yes
25	Physically hurt you on purpose by pushing you down, kicking you, or hitting you with a hand, clenched fist, object or a weapon.

	0 = Never 1 = Rarely 2 = Some of the time 3 = Always 98 = Don't know/No response
	Did this happen to you during the past week? 0 = No 1 = Yes
26	Threatened to hurt you or your family, but did not do it. 0 = Never 1 = Rarely 2 = Some of the time 3 = Always 98 = Don't know/No response
	Did this happen to you during the past week? 0 = No 1 = Yes
27	Forced you to do something you did not want to do such as join a group in making fun of or hurting another student. 0 = Never 1 = Rarely 2 = Some of the time 3 = Always 98 = Don't know/No response
	Did this happen to you during the past week? 0 = No 1 = Yes
28	Told lies about you or spread rumors or stories about you to other students or a teacher that were not true. 0 = Never 1 = Rarely 2 = Some of the time 3 = Always 98 = Don't know/No response
	Did this happen to you during the past week? 0 = No 1 = Yes

29 How did you feel after all that happened?

- I considered dropping out of school.
- I wanted to complete my education.
- I felt isolated at school.
- I was unhappy with my life.
- I skipped at least 3-4 days of school each week.
- I was very anxious and afraid of exams, no matter how well I studied."

Thank you

Semi-structured Questionnaire: Teachers and Principals/HTs

Section 1: Background and Socioeconomic Characteristics:

Background Characteristics	
Name of Area	
Name of School	
Interview Date	
Time Interview Starts	
Consent form: As part of the fulfillment of the academic research entitled “Exploring the Prevalence and Perception Towards School-related Bullying among Adolescent Students: A Study on the Schools in Under-served Areas in Dhaka”. The questions will take about thirty minutes. Some of the questions might be sensitive, however, you are never required to discuss anything that you don't want to or that makes you uncomfortable. All of the answers you give will be confidential and will not be shared with anyone other than members of our team.	

No part of this interview is being recorded in tape or video. If I ask you any question you don't want to answer, just let me know and I will go on to the next question. You can also stop the interview at any time.	
Agree/Refuse interview	1 = Agree 2 = Refuse (If 2 Stop Survey)
TEACHER CHARACTERISTICS	
Indicate whether the the teacher is male or female	1 = Male 2 = Female (Select the response without asking)
How many years have you worked as a teacher?	Write Response
What classes do you teach this year?	Write Response

Perception Towards Bullying Behavior

Nature	No.	Question
Perception on prevalence	1	What do you understand by bullying?

		1.1 How frequently have you noticed the students engage in bullying behavior?
Forms of Bullying Behavior	2	What type of bullying behavior have you seen prevalent within the school?
Psychological bullying	2.1	Have you noticed any repeated pattern of abusive behavior among the students? Probing Question: 3.1 Bullying between students that is characterized by children using abusive language or name-calling? 3.2 What are the other forms of verbal abuse you have observed? 3.3 Do students engage in threatening other students and call them names? 3.4 Do students engage in threatening other students and call them names based on their gender identity and behavior? 3.5 Why do you think they are engaging in such behavior?
Physical bullying	2.2	Have you noticed any repeated pattern of physical abuse among the students? Probing Question:

		1 Did you observe any physical bullying between students characterized by children pushing, hitting, or grabbing each other's clothes? 2 What are the other forms of physical abuse you have observed? 3 Do students engage in threatening other students? 4 Do students engage in threatening other students based on their gender identity and behavior? 5 Why do you think they are engaging in such behavior?
Relational bullying	2.3	Did you ever observe students purposefully leaving students out of their group or ostracizing them? Probing Question: Why do you think they are engaging in such behavior?
Sexual harassment	6	How does the gender dimension affect the student behavior? Probing Question: Why do you think they are engaging in such behavior?

Reporting Mechanism (Factor)	7	Is there any reporting mechanism where students can complain about the bullying incident? Probing Question: 7.1 Students know who to report to when they experience or witness violence. 7.2 Students report incident(s) of physical violence when they experience or witness it. 7.3 Students report incident(s) of bullying, sexual harassment, or sexual violence. 7.4 What sort of support do students get from school when they report cases of bullying?
Factor	8	8.1 Do you think students are aware that their certain behavioral patterns are harmful to others? 8.1 Why do you think students are engaging in bullying behavior? 8.3 Do you believe peer pressure and peer influence play a role in bullying behavior? 8.4 Are any specific factors at your school (e.g., school policies, disciplinary actions) contributing to bullying? 8.5 How does the school support in managing a bully?

		8.6 How effective do you think the school rules and policies are in addressing bullying? 8.7 What do you think the school could do to improve its response to bullying?
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