Chapter 3

MATERIALS AND METHODS

“Wow! I want to be a bystander… that would be very cool”--Student feedback

With the aim of ensuring structure and validity, this research study was carried out in three phases, namely,

Phase 0 – Pilot Phase

Phase 1 – Main study

Phase 2 – Intervention Phase

Phase 3 – Follow up Phase

FLOW CHART OF THE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURE:

The flow chart on the next page (A3 pull out) is a pictorial overview of the procedure followed by the researcher in carrying out this research study.

Figure 1.1: A pictorial overview of the research procedure followed in the current study.
3.1 PILOT PHASE: STUDENTS

Aim:

The aim of the pilot study was:

- To finalize the tools for the main study and to examine the applicability of the questionnaires in assessing incidence, awareness and attitudes to bullying.
- To finalize the procedure of the study by testing its applicability, ease of administration and time required for administration.
- To determine the feasibility and practicality of the study.

Sample:

Five male students from 6th standard were randomly selected from the attendance register.

Tools and Technique:

The various tools along with the rationale for using them are mentioned below:
### Table 1: Details of various tools used in the study along with the rationale for using them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Serial No.</th>
<th>Name of tool</th>
<th>Purpose of Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td><strong>My Life In School Checklist (2001)</strong></td>
<td>The tool provides a Bullying Index and General Aggression Index which can be used to gauge the extent of bullying behavior, other types of aggressive behavior and friendly behavior in the school at a particular point in time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td><strong>Attitude Survey For Middle School Students (2008)</strong></td>
<td>The first section of the survey (Part 1) evaluates students’ acceptance of physical and relational aggression. The second section (Part 2) asks students to rate their competence using the social and emotional skills addressed in the Second Step program (for example, identifying emotions and problem solving).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td><strong>The Peer Relations Questionnaire for Children (1994)</strong></td>
<td>Was used to examine the nature of students’ peer relations in their school.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. **The Olweus Bullying Questionnaire (2007)**

   The tool consists of 40 questions for the measurement of bully-victim problems such as, exposure to various physical, verbal, indirect, racial, or sexual forms of bullying/harassment, various forms of bullying other students, where the bullying occurs, pro-bully and pro-victim attitudes, and the extent to which the social environment (teachers, peers and parents) is informed about and reacts to the bullying.

7. **Facing the Problem of Bullying in Schools**

   This tool was used to find out how much bullying is going on in the school and when and where it is happening.

8. **Anonymous Questionnaire on Bullying**

   This tool was used to assess the prevalence and nature of Bullying and Violence in Schools.

**Procedure:**

The researcher met the students individually and initially explained the purpose of the study. They were also provided an explanation of the term ‘Bullying’ and given various examples of the same in order to equip them with a better understanding. After this, eight individual questionnaires measuring the incidence and attitude towards and awareness of Bullying as a
negative behavior were administered to each child individually during their free period with the aim of attaining experiential feedback from each of the boys regarding each of the tools.

On each tool, the researcher noted down the time taken, along with doubts, queries, difficulties with regards to content as well as any confusion experienced by the student. The following questions were also asked at the end of administration:

a. Which questionnaire did you find the most interesting?
b. Did you get bored while answering any questionnaire?
c. Did you find any questions difficult to understand?
d. How did you find this entire experience?
e. Did you experience any problem of any kind while answering these questionnaires?

Findings:

Post the analysis of the data obtained from the pilot study and the experience of the students, three tools were shortlisted based on their applicability.

These tools were:

- **My Life in School Checklist – By Dan Arora and Thompson (1987).**
- **By Student Experience Survey: What School Is Like for Me (Attitude Scales) – By the Committee for Children (2004) as part of the Steps to Respect Program.**
- **The Peer Relations Questionnaire - By Ken Rigby and Slee (1993).**

The above three questionnaires were selected as the analysis of the responses made by the students indicated variations in responding, they were less time consuming, had a sound scoring procedure, had no overlapping scores and provided a better index of the bullying scenario.
The other five questionnaires were not used as they took a long time to administer, were difficult to comprehend and respond to (according to student feedback) and failed to provide a clear and comprehensive index of bullying.

Once the above three tools were selected, consent was obtained from their respective authors. Though the Committee for Children could not be contacted, authority to use their tools is clearly mentioned in their website (from which the tool was procured).

Upon obtaining consent, the researcher also made certain changes in the formatting of the questionnaires. Meanings and explanations were given in parentheses, for questions which had been indicated as difficult to comprehend language. This was done as some of the subjects in the pilot phase were unable to understand the language and the meaning of the items.

In the My Life in School Checklist, all 40 items were maintained. However, the language in six items was modified as students stated during the pilot phase that they found the statements difficult to comprehend. (E.g. Item 3. ‘Was nasty about my family’, was changed to, ‘Said mean things about my family’)

In the What School is Like For Me questionnaire, Item 21 was omitted to both maintain consistency across the number of items measured under each variable, as well as to accommodate student feedback of the item being hard to comprehend.

In the Peer Relations Questionnaire, out of the original 20 items, six were omitted and only 14 items were maintained. This was done to maintain consistency across the number of items under each variable measured by the tool (i.e. five items under each of the three variables). The items omitted were 1, 2, 6,7,13 and 16. Items were also omitted as students chose to skip/omit them during the pilot. Item 12 – ‘I like being nice to others’ was added to balance the number of items under the Pro-Social behavior scale. Changes were made in the language of two items (No. 4 and 10) post feedback received during the pilot phase about them
being difficult to comprehend. Item 4, ‘I give soft kids a hard time’ was changed to ‘I trouble kids who are timid and scared’, Item 10, ‘I like to help people who are being harassed’ was changed to ‘I like to help people who are being troubled.’

Post refinement, the researcher integrated the tools in order to form one comprehensive question booklet, which could be distributed amongst the students during data collection. A copy of the same is provided in [Appendix A.1]

The researcher then put together an answer booklet in order to capture not only the responses of the students but also their opinions and suggestions. A copy of the same is provided in [Appendix A.2].

3.2 MAIN STUDY: PHASE 1

Sample Selection:

Stratified sampling based on geographical area and type of school was followed.

Sample:

The researcher prepared a list containing the name/contact information/address of various co-ed and all-boys schools in Bangalore. This list was subdivided on the basis of the five zones- North, East, West, South and Central. Each of these schools were contacted and an enquiry was made with regard to whether the school was – co-ed or boys only; following SSLC [Secondary School Leaving Certificate] or ICSE [Indian Certificate for Secondary Education] syllabus; the total number of sixth standard sections in the school and the number of students per section.

Inclusion Criteria:

Schools that qualified for this study had to meet the following criteria:
- Have a middle school section.
- Medium of Instruction should be English.
- Follow the standardized curriculum. [ICSE/SSLC]

- Socio Economic Status - Schools catering to the middle and lower middle socio economic strata with similar fee structure and admission procedure.

- All Boys/Co-ed Schools

**Exclusion Criteria:**

- Schools that cater to special and / or gifted children.

**Description of Sample:**

Once the school fit the inclusion criteria, the researcher randomly selected a sixth standard section from the class register and administered the questionnaires to all the students in the class. A total of 347 boys from 5 All-Boys schools and 5 Co-ed schools formed the sample. The mean age of this group was 11.47 years with an SD of 0.71. The tables below give some more details of the sample contacted.
Table 2: Description of the ten participating schools inclusive of their geographical zone, type and section class size.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Geographical zone</th>
<th>Co-ed or Boys only</th>
<th>ICSE/SSLC</th>
<th>Section chosen</th>
<th>Number of students obtained</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School 1</td>
<td>East</td>
<td>Co-ed</td>
<td>ICSE</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 2</td>
<td>South</td>
<td>All-boys</td>
<td>SSLC</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 3</td>
<td>South</td>
<td>All-boys</td>
<td>ICSE</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 4</td>
<td>South</td>
<td>Co-ed</td>
<td>ICSE</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 5</td>
<td>South</td>
<td>All-boys</td>
<td>SSLC</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 6</td>
<td>North</td>
<td>Co-ed</td>
<td>ICSE</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 7</td>
<td>West</td>
<td>Co-ed</td>
<td>ICSE</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 8</td>
<td>East</td>
<td>Co-ed</td>
<td>ICSE</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 9</td>
<td>South</td>
<td>All-boys</td>
<td>SSLC</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 10</td>
<td>West</td>
<td>All-boys</td>
<td>SSLC</td>
<td>A&amp;B</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3: Demographic details of the ten participating schools.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Religion</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Order of Birth</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Type of School</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Type of Family</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindu</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>Eldest</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>All-boys</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>Nuclear</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>Youngest</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>Co-ed</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>Joint</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>Extended</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>Only</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Under the demographic variable Religion majority of the students were found to be ‘Hindu’ (59%). For Order of Birth, majority of the students were found to be in the birth order ‘Youngest’ (38%). Out of the total sample (n= 347), majority were male students from all-boys schools (72%). With regards to the variable ‘Type of Family’, majority of the students were found to be from ‘Nuclear’ families (74%).
Figure 1.2: Pictorial representation of the sample for the variable – Religion.

Figure 1.3: Pictorial representation of the sample for the variable – Order of Birth
Figure 1.4: Pictorial representation of the sample for the variable – Type of School

Figure 1.5: Pictorial representation of the sample for the variable – Type of Family
Table 4: Demographic details of the ten participating school for the variables – ‘Number of Friends’ and ‘Type of Student’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Friends</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lots of friends</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>Day Scholar</td>
<td>99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Many friends</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>Hostelite</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Few friends</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No friends at all</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Family</th>
<th>Nuclear</th>
<th>Joint</th>
<th>Extended</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Under the demographic variable Number of Friends majority of the students were found to have ‘Many friends’ (37%). For Type of Scholar, majority of the students were found to be ‘Day Scholar’s’ (99%).

Figure 1.6: Pictorial representation of the sample for the variable – Number of Friends

![Pie chart showing the distribution of friends: 35% Many, 26% Few, 2% None, and 37% Lots.]

Figure 1.7: Pictorial representation of the sample for the variable – Type of Scholar

![Pie chart showing the distribution of scholars: 99% Day scholar, 1% Hostelite.]

Tools and Techniques:
Based on the results of the pilot study, three questionnaires were finalised for administration with the students for baseline assessment and outcome evaluation. Questionnaires were administered with the objective of obtaining information about the incidence, awareness and attitude of students towards bullying.

- **Personal Information Schedule**
- **My Life in School Checklist – By Dan Arora & Thompson (1987)**
- **Student Experience Survey: What School is Like for Me (Attitude Scales) – By the Committee for Children (2004) as part of the Steps to Respect Program.**
- **The Peer Relations Questionnaire - By Ken Rigby & Slee (1993)**

1. **Personal Information Schedule:** [Appendix A.3]

   This schedule was specifically developed for this research with the aim of understanding the socio demographic profile of the respondents. The schedule also included an item for academic success. Students’ academic success was identified through their performance scores on the previous academic exam that they attempted as part of their class curriculum. Class teachers were requested to provide this data to the researcher.


   This is a 40-item questionnaire which includes statements describing positive events (for example, ‘Another child said something nice to me’) and negative events (for example, ‘Another child said they’d beat me up’). The items in this tool include a mix of statements describing bullying behavior, friendly behavior and aggressive behavior. It is primarily used to gauge the extent of bullying behavior, other types of aggressive behavior and friendly behavior in the school at a particular point in time. This checklist can also be administered to check the
effectiveness of anti-bullying interventions.

The authors report that each item in the checklist was examined for its validity using Cronbach’s alpha. The internal consistency was computed using the alpha coefficients. Cronbach’s alpha provides a coefficient of inter-item correlations. A Cronbach’ value of $\alpha = 0.80$ was obtained, indicating high reliability. Loewenthal (2001) stated that the alpha should be at least 0.70 for reliability to be satisfactory.

The MLSC has been found to have strong split-half reliability and show a high level of correlation with the Olweus Questionnaire (Thompson et al, 2002). According to Hamburger et al. (2011), split-half reliabilities for two samples are 0.80 and 0.93.

Some research studies that have used the MLSC are The ABC (Anti-Bullying Consortium) project in Ireland (2009); Sharp, Thompson and Arora (2000); Zaplluzha & Shahini (2015), Potterton (2014) and Wong et al (2014). One of the advantages of the MLSC checklist is that it does not mention the word ‘bullying’, which reduces the confounding effect of children reporting an increase in bullying because their level of awareness has been raised (Arora, 1999).

In the present research, based on the outcome of the pilot phase and with the author’s consent, the language of certain items was modified to suit the Indian context. Further, though the original tool measured behavior which took place during the week in which the questionnaire was administered, the present study modified the time period to assess behavior that took place a month earlier to administration. This was done to accommodate the time period that other questionnaires or the research was following.

Students were asked to indicate whether they had experienced the situation on a five point rating scale ranging from ‘Never’, ‘Once/twice’, ‘2/3 times a month’, ‘About once a week’, or ‘Several times a week’. The checklist takes around 25 minutes to complete.
To establish levels of bullying in a school the checklist was scored to provide a Bullying Index, Indirect Bullying Index and the Aggressive Behavior Index. The questionnaire was also scored to acquire a Pro-social behavior Index.

**Bullying Index:** 6 key items were scored to identify the incidence of bullying in a school (Items 4, 8,10,24,37 and 39). Responses for these items were scored on a 5 point rating scale with ‘never’ being scored 0 and ‘several times a week’ being scored 4. Responses for these items were scored and added up to arrive at the bullying index. Maximum and minimum possible scores range between 0 to 24. High scores on this index indicate that the student is experiencing being bullied by others in a more direct way. A high bullying index can be interpreted as indicating the likelihood of a high level of bullying all around and vice versa.

**Indirect Bullying Index:** Items 33 and 35 measure indirect bullying. Responses on these two items were scored and added to arrive at the index. Maximum and minimum possible scores range between 0 to 8. A high score indicates that the student is experiencing being bullied by others in a more indirect way.

**Aggressive Behavior Index:** Negative behavior/other types of aggressive behavior was measured by summing the responses on seventeen items (1,3,6,11,13,14,15,16,18,26,27,28,29,30,31,32 and 33). Maximum and minimum possible scores range between 0 to 68. High scores on this index indicate that the student is experiencing negative events.

**Positive Behavior Index:** was measured by summing up student responses on fifteen items (2,5,7,9,12,17,19,20,21,22,23,25,34,36, and 40). Maximum and minimum possible scores range between 0 to 60. High scores indicate that the student is experiencing friendly behavior by other children.

Apart from the 40 items, various other qualitative questions from the MLSC were also included to enhance the information availed in the present study. These items explored any unfriendly incident that hurt the child the most, assessed where the bullying incidents took
place, the nature of the bully, whether adults at home and school were informed, if the child found confiding with an adult beneficial and what according to the child the school could do to make him/her feel safer and to stop/reduce bullying at school.

*Item 16* from the Olweus Bullying Questionnaire (Olweus Bullying Prevention Program, 2007) was also incorporated as it provided information regarding the number of students the child was bullied by.


   This tool is a 21-item, four point rating scale for third to sixth standard students. It is designed to assess perceptions and attitudes related to bullying. Students are asked about perceptions of bullying or aggressive behavior, assertiveness skills, and their own and adult's responsiveness to bullying at school. The survey was originally designed as a pre/post measure to evaluate effects of the Steps to Respect program. It is administered in classrooms and takes around 15-20 minutes to complete.

   Factor analysis on the items that make up all the scales of the SES was conducted by Edstrom, Broderick &MacKenzie (2004) and eight scales were found. The item and scale statistics revealed that the Cronbach alpha coefficients ranged from .76 to .88 for seven scales (Direct Aggression, Indirect Aggression, Victimization, Acceptance of Bullying/Aggression, Perceived Assertiveness, Bystander Responsibility and Spectator Interest – Edstrom, Broderick &MacKenzie, 2004). The eighth scale – Perceived Adult Responsiveness revealed an alpha of .59, demonstrating inadequate internal consistency. Seven out of eight scales demonstrate adequate to high internal consistency.

   The WSLFM was found to have adequate to high internal reliability: direct bullying or aggression ($\alpha = .86$), indirect bullying or aggression ($\alpha = .77$), victimization ($\alpha = .84$), acceptance of bullying or aggression ($\alpha = .86$), bystander responsibility ($\alpha = .88$), difficulty responding
assertively ($\alpha = .82$), and perceived adult responsiveness ($\alpha = .61$). Test-retest reliability correlations ranged from .54 to .72 (Edstrom, Broderick, and MacKenzie, 2004).

Some studies that have used the WSLFM are Frey et al (2005); Hirschstein et al (2007) and Manees (2007).

For the present study, brief modifications were made in the survey questions to accommodate language issues that arose during the pilot phase. One item (It's okay to stop talking to a kid to get even) was omitted keeping in mind the language difficulties the students experienced with the same during the pilot phase and also to ensure equality (5 items) in the number of items under each subscale.

The SES yields scores for four scales:

- **Perceived Assertiveness** – This scale assesses how hard the student finds it to be assertive in bullying situations he experiences. Maximum and minimum possible scores range between 0 to 15. High scores indicate that the student finds it hard to be assertive in bullying situations he experiences.

- **Perceived Adult Responsiveness** – This scale assesses the extent to which the student feels it is true that adults in his school are aware, approachable and responsive about bullying in school. Maximum and minimum possible scores range between 0 to 15. High scores indicate that the student feels it is very true.

- **Bystander Responsibility** – This scale assesses whether a student feels that he is able to perform bystander responsibilities. Maximum and minimum possible scores range between 0 to 15. High scores indicate that the student feels he is able to perform them.

- **Acceptance of Bullying/Aggression** – This scale assesses whether the student feels it is okay to be mean/aggressive towards other students. Maximum and minimum possible scores range between 0 to 15. High scores indicate that the student does
feel it is okay to be mean/aggressive towards other students.

Items are scored on a four point rating scale (0-3).

- Perceived Assertiveness – Not hard at all (0), A little bit hard (1) Pretty hard (2), Really hard (3).
- Perceived Adult Responsiveness – Very true (3), Pretty true (2), A little true (1), Not true (0).
- Bystander Responsibility - Very true (3), Pretty true (2), A little true (1), Not true (0).
- Acceptance of Bullying/Aggression – Agree a lot (3), Agree some (2), Agree a little (1), Don’t agree (0).

The first scale follows a scoring of 0,1,2,3 while the following three scales follow a reverse scoring pattern of 3,2,1,0. The mean for each scale is calculated by dividing the sum of scores across all items for the scale by the total number of items in the scale.


This tool is used to assess the prevalence of different forms of bullying in schools. It originally comprises of 20 items and is suitable for usage with children aged 8-18 years. This tool takes around 30 minutes to complete.

Rigby and Slee originally developed the PRQ with 6 items representative of the tendency to bully others, 6 items measuring the tendency to be victimized, 4 items measuring prosocial behavior and 4 items as fillers. These scales were reported to be factorially distinct from each other and have adequate internal consistency reliability (Rigby & Slee, 1993). These scales were later separated into three distinct measures, and a
number of single-item measures (taken from the Olweus’s Bully/Victim Questionnaire) were
included to provide validity assessments for the three domains (Rigby, 1993). The authors
reported that significant correlations between self-reports and peer nominations for the three
scales attest to the validity of the instrument (Rigby & Slee, 1995). However, because it is a
self-report measure, peer and/or teacher ratings should also be used to validate the self-
report data.

Some studies that have used the PRQ are Rigby & Bagshaw (2003), Seals & Young

In the present study, based on the outcome of the pilot conducted, and upon availing consent
from the author, only 14 items were retained. The language of two items was changed to suit
the Indian context (Item 4 and 10). Five items (Items 1,2,6,7 and 13) from the original scale
were omitted as they were filler items and/or repetitive in content. One new item (Item 12 – ‘I
like being nice to others’) was added for this study in order to balance the pro-social scale.

This tool provides three subscales – Bully scale, Victim scale and the Pro-Social scale. Each of the items on the three subscales are scored on a four point rating scale with

- **Bully Scale:** This scale assesses whether the student admits to engaging in bullying
behavior. Maximum and minimum scores range between 0 to 20. High score
indicates that the student admits to engaging in bullying behavior. This scale
comprises five items (2,5,7,9,11)

- **Victim Scale:** This scale assesses whether the student admits to being victimized by
others. Maximum and minimum scores range between 0 to 20. High scores indicate
that the student admits to being victimized by others. Five items comprise this scale
(1,4,8,1314)
- **Pro-social Scale**: This scale assesses whether the student admits to engaging in friendly/helpful behavior with other students. Maximum and minimum scores range between 0 to 20. High scores indicate that the student admits to engaging in friendly behavior. This scale comprises of five items (3,6,10,12,15).

**Procedure:**

A total of 26 schools were contacted. The researcher approached these schools with an official letter requesting for permission. This letter was prepared by the researcher’s educational institution [Appendix A.7]. 10 schools agreed to provide the researcher an appointment with the head/administration of the school. The remaining 16 schools refused citing disinterest or unavailability of time whilst some did not respond back at all.

The researcher then collated a list containing the details of 10 schools on the basis of homogenous variables such as demographic characteristics and location. Of these, five were co-ed schools and five were all-boys schools. All five co-ed schools followed the ICSE syllabus. Amongst the five boys-only schools, four of them followed the state syllabus while only one school followed the ICSE syllabus.

An initial meeting was organized with the authorities in each school, wherein a detailed explanation of bullying as a negative behavior and its various consequences were provided. Alongside, they were also briefed about the study, its purpose and the procedure to be followed for collecting data.

The researcher also enquired about the number of 6th standard students in the schools, the reported incidents of bullying and victimization amongst the 6th standard students, as well as the various disciplinary measures used by the school authority and staff towards reported
incidents of bullying. The researcher discussed with the Principal/Head Master as to what according to them and their school environment, would be the best possible way to accept the study’s methodology. An exploration of the extent of teacher and school cooperation and involvement towards the study was done. Verbal consent was obtained from schools interested in participating in the study

**Data Collection:**

The researcher visited each of the schools individually on dates that were convenient to the school authorities. Upon being introduced to the students, the researcher also introduced herself and explained to the students the purpose of her visit.

The students were provided with a brief explanation of bullying behavior along with some examples. This was done to familiarize them with this kind of behavior before they started answering the questionnaire.

Consent was obtained from the participants on the very first page of the answer booklet. Students were also informed that their participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw from the survey at any point during data collection.

Once consent was obtained, students were requested to fill in their demographic information using a pen. The researcher made it a point to be available to all students during data collection, in order to clarify their doubts and address any questions/queries.

After the demographic details were obtained, students were provided with the question booklet. The researcher read aloud the instruction initially for each of the questionnaires, and later read through them along with the students. Students were also provided with examples to help them understand the items and the procedure for answering them.
Group administration of the tools was done in one sitting alone in each of the schools. Time taken by the students to answer the questionnaire varied between 35 and 50 minutes.

Throughout the process of data collection, the researcher maintained her presence within the classroom, so as to ensure that the students understood the format and the meaning of the items.

In some schools, especially where classroom strength was high, the researcher was assisted by the section class teacher

### 3.3 MAIN STUDY: PHASE 2

**INTERVENTION PROGRAM**

The researcher scored the 347 answer sheets obtained based on the scoring criteria provided by each test. The responses were analyzed to verify the hypotheses stated for Phase 1 and to determine the sample for the next phase.

Three ‘all-boys’ schools which reported the highest incidence of bullying were selected for Phase 2. Selection was based on schools reporting high scores on three indices – Bullying Index, Bully scale and Acceptance of Bullying/Aggression. Of the three schools showing the highest scores, one school was assigned to the Intervention group and two schools were assigned to the Control group.

The assignment of the school to the intervention group was based on the following reasons:

a. Language issue – The students in the school had to be comfortable with spoken English.
b. The sample size had to be large

c. Higher consistency across scores – the standard deviation was small.

The other two schools where the children scored high on the Bullying index were assigned to the control group.

SAMPLE DESCRIPTION

The Intervention School comprised of 32 male students, while the Control Schools comprised of 56 male students in total. The mean age of the sample was 11.47 years (S.D. 0.71). Parental consent was obtained from all students (n=32).

INTERVENTION SCHOOL

The Intervention school was an all-boys, church education funded organization that caters to a large number of lower middle class families. The school aims to reach out to neglected sections of society and provide them with optimal English education as well as all-round formation for character and growth development. Hence, the school readily accepted to participate in this study.

The school offers both the state board and the ICSE syllabus. It comprises the pre-primary, primary and the high school levels.

The sixth grade was divided into two sections- A and B. There were in total 45 students that participated in the study. Parents of these students were either factory workers, small scale employees or worked as domestic maids. Teachers shared that parental involvement within this grade was minimal due to the nature of their jobs. According to the teachers, most parents did
not even attend the ‘report card days’ in spite of it being mandatory. Hence the disciplinarian role was mostly taken up by the class teacher.

Both the principal and the middle school teachers claimed that as the institution caters to boys alone, incidents of aggressive behavior were reported daily. The teachers claimed to engage in physical punishment, shaming and ridiculing as a means of disciplining the child. In extreme cases only parents were summoned.

The school lacked the presence of a school psychologist or a counsellor. Certain teachers, especially those with a softer personality, typically took on such a role and spoke to students. Most teachers expressed that though moral science and catechism classes were taught regularly, the students would benefit more with the teaching of adequate social skills and appropriate social behavior by professionals in the field.

CONTROL SCHOOLS

School A is a private English medium school. It was founded in the year 1935 and is affiliated to the Karnataka Secondary Education Examination Board. It is managed by the Church of South India. The school is a boy’s school and has classes from 1 to 10. The School also has a pre-primary section.

School B was founded in 1904 by the Jesuit priests of St. Ignatius of Loyola. It is currently run by the MEP Fathers. It comprises a primary, middle and high school section. It is a boy’s school and is affiliated with the state board.
**Table 5: Frequency scores and chi square values of both the Intervention and Control Schools on various demographic variables.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency - Intervention School (%)</th>
<th>Frequency - Control Schools (%)</th>
<th>( \chi^2 )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RELIGION</td>
<td>Hindu 47%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Christian 38%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>0.286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Muslim 13%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jain 0%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORDER OF BIRTH</td>
<td>Eldest 38%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Younger 34%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>0.168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Middle 18%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5 shows that non-significant chi square values have been obtained for the demographic variables Religion, Order of birth, Type of family and Number of friends. These non-significant chi squares values therefore indicate that the intervention and control groups were comparable on these demographic variables prior to the intervention.

**INTERVENTION**

The intervention was conducted in three ways:

- Students - underwent a 11-session program – Second Step Violence Prevention Program [SSVPP]
- Teachers – each teacher was interviewed post the student intervention. At a later point in time, teachers also underwent a one-day workshop on stress management and awareness of and methods to deal with bullying
• Parents were provided with information regarding bullying and how they could tackle it through a booklet that was prepared specifically for this sample.

3.4 PHASE 2a – STUDENT INTERVENTION

SECOND STEP VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAM (SSVPP):

Based on internet research, review of related literature and conversations with other researchers in the field, it was decided that the SSVPP program would be used for the intervention. The researcher then made contact with the Client Services and Online Community Manager from the Committee for Children, and procured the SSVPP package which was then used for the intervention.

The Second Step middle school program is a universal program. It was designed with the aim to promote skills and attitudes that increase students’ social and school success and prevent violence, bullying, and substance abuse. As a program aimed for all students, it helps provide schools with the foundation for creating a safe, respectful learning environment.

The curriculum is grounded in the Social Learning theory (Bandura, 1986). It also draws from other conceptual frameworks such as:

• Social Information Processing (Dodge et al, 1994)
• Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
• Luria’s model of self-regulation through verbal mediation (Luria, 1982)
• Empathy research by Feshbach and Eisenberg (Feshbach & Eisenberg, 1987)
• Spivack and Shure’s work on problem solving (Shure & Spivack, 1979).
Various concepts and strategies from the above frameworks have been integrated into a developmental sequence of social-emotional skill acquisition.

The goals of the **Second Step** are to help children:

- Reduce aggressive and impulsive behaviors
- Increase protective factors
- Learn social and emotional skills
- Change the attitudes and behavior that contribute to violence.

The program universally caters to children who have:

- Adjustment problems
- May not have behavior problems but are limited by social-emotional deficits.
- Are in requirement of intensive behavioral interventions

The SSVPP curriculum (Committee for Children, 1986) is organized into three skill building units:

- Perspective taking/empathy – teaches young people to identify and understand their own emotions/thoughts and those of others.
- Impulse control and Social problem solving – helps young people choose positive goals; reduce impulsivity; and evaluate consequences of their behavior in terms of safety, fairness, and impact on others; and
- Anger management – enables young people to manage emotional reactions and engage in decision making when they experience high negative emotions.

The program firmly believes that competence in the areas of empathy, social problem solving and impulse control are factors that buffer students from risks such as early problem behavior and poor peer relationships.
**Risk and Protective factors Framework:**

The Second Step program weaves skills and concepts throughout the lessons to target risk and protective factors linked to violence and aggression, substance use, and low academic achievement or school dropout. Children learn how to respond empathically to others and practice skill steps for calming down, reducing anger and solving problems. It also teaches children risk assessment, goal setting and decision-making skills.

The SSVPP program is directed towards providing training to all school staff, parents and students. Hence, it seeks to address and provide skills training to the whole school environment.

*Figure 1.8: The Second Step Violence Prevention Program Kit*
Student Component:

The grade 6 curriculum, titled ‘STEPPING UP’, of the middle school program contains 15 lessons that are put together in a binder. These are organized under five main units. They are:

UNIT 1 – Empathy and Communication:

This unit contains five lessons, namely

- Lesson 1 – Working in Groups
- Lesson 2 – Friends and Allies
- Lesson 3 – Considering Perspectives
- Lesson 4 – Disagreeing Respectfully
- Lesson 5 – Being Assertive

UNIT 2 – Bullying Prevention:

This unit contains two lessons that focus on bullying prevention.

- Lesson 6 – Recognizing Bullying
- Lesson 7 – Bystanders

UNIT 3 – Emotion management:

This unit contains two lessons

- Lesson 8 – Emotions – Brain and Body
- Lesson 9 – Calming-down Strategies

UNIT 4 – Problem Solving:

This unit contains two lessons

- Lesson 10 – Using the Action Steps
- Lesson 11 – Making a Plan

UNIT 5 – Substance Abuse Prevention:
This unit contains four lessons. However, as substance abuse prevention was not the focus of this research study, this unit was excluded.

Lessons in the SSVPP curriculum are designed in a sequential and developmentally appropriate pattern. Activities within lessons provide students with opportunities for modeling, practice and skills reinforcement. Posters and video clips are the mediums used to depict skill practice demonstrations, role plays and interviews. Teachers also model certain skills in class based on the training provided to them through the curriculum. Various interactive techniques ranging from classroom discussion, rehearsal, individual and group activities, games, skill practice activities and role plays are used to help students engage and learn. Stories are used to demonstrate important peer relation skills, and to teach affective, cognitive, and behavioral social skills. As the lessons are designed keeping a wider applicability in mind, they can be incorporated into various mainstream studies.

Each lesson in the SSVPP is designed so that it could be used once or twice weekly and lasts for a period of 50 minutes per lesson.

The SSVPP emphasizes the importance of self-reflection, performance and reinforcement in both the acquisition and maintenance of behavioral repertoires. Students are thereby provided with homework sheet and reflective writing worksheets for every lesson. This helps children develop insight about their experiences and at the same time help them capture and consolidate their learning’s from each lesson.

The program binder contains additional review and practice activities for each lesson. These are specially designed to help reinforce skills learnt by the student during regular school classes. All lessons provide recommended ways to transfer skills to the classroom and practice and reinforce them during regular school activities. To promote transfer of learning the binder contains posters that list problem solving action steps, bystander responsibilities and steps for staying in control.
Figure 1.9: The SSVPP posters for ‘Bystander Power’, ‘Staying in Control’ and ‘Action Steps’.

Teacher/Administrator Component:

The second step curriculum binder provides the administrator with various tools, tips and strategies. Teachers/Counselors are provided with a comprehensive overview of the program, its characteristics and core components, both as a hard copy and online for their perusal. They are given detailed instructions about the curriculum format, helpful teaching strategies that could be employed, methods to apply lesson content to everyday student life and academics, tips on responding to bullying, positive behavior reinforcement techniques and suggestions with regards to handling disclosures of abuse or neglect.

Administrators are also provided with direction if the curriculum needs to be customized and adapted to a culturally diverse or a special needs classroom.

A Lesson Observation Form is made accessible to administrators for use when observing lesson presentations. This helps administrators maintain a log of each learning experience as well as to aid in identifying areas of success and areas of improvement while teaching. Similarly
the program kit also contains an Observational Assessment Form that could be used during lessons to note down the skills, attitudes and behavior observed for each student.

**Parent Component:**

This program firmly believes that adult family members play a critical role in their children’s development of social emotional skills. Problem behaviors like aggression cannot be addressed solely by schools or youth agencies. Communicating to family members that bullying and violence are not okay is also considered critical to prevention.

The binder therefore contains parent education components and a family guide for use with families of children in the sixth grade while they participate in the intervention.

A family letter is provided to introduce the program and provide information about its objective and benefits. Each new theme is also introduced to parents, who are thereby made aware of the lesson objectives and are also provided with various at home interactive practice activities.

As each lesson’s homework assignment requires the involvement of an adult, this ensures that students interact with the family members while using the skills and concepts being learned, and, gives the adult family members an opportunity to become familiar with these skills and concepts as well.

**Procedure:**

As the number of participating students in the intervention school was high \((n=45)\), it was decided that the class be divided into two groups, to ensure active participation by all. To teach the other group of students, a female research assistant was involved. The research assistant had acquired a Master’s degree in Clinical Psychology and was working with a local school as the middle school counselor. The groups and classes alternated between the researcher and the research assistant in order to control for any form of bias and variability.
Before the initiation of the program, the researcher made contact with the Principal and class teachers of the sixth standard and shared with them the results of the analysis. The researcher briefed them about the intervention package - Second Step Violence Prevention Program (SSVPP), and addressed their concerns and queries.

Upon receiving their consent, the researcher had a discussion about the time slots and days wherein she and the research assistant could provide classes to the students. It was decided by the school, based on their convenience, that the program would be conducted for a period of 11 days. There were 1½ - 2 hour sessions conducted twice a week over 6 weeks.

The researcher formulated an administration schedule for the 11 lessons that were to be taught as part of the SSVPP curriculum. This was handed over to the school along with a letter which was to be sent home to the parents of the participating students. The letter [Appendix B.8] was provided to introduce the Second Step program to families.

Each new theme in the curriculum included a family letter, both in English and Kannada (translated) [Appendix B.9] that introduced its skills and concepts. As a core program component, the family letters provided suggestions for ways in which parents and caregivers could talk to their children about the skills they were learning in the program.

Before beginning the classes, various articles were collected and reviewed by the researcher that contained studies that have used the SSVPP program. This was done with the intention of familiarizing the researcher with the process of conducting the intervention package.

Both the researcher and the research assistant also familiarized themselves with information provided by the Committee for Children on the following topics:

a. Middle school teaching strategies
b. Middle school class discussion tips
c. Tips for middle school group work

d. Individual middle school work

e. Conducting middle school skill practises

f. Customizing the middle school program

g. Tips for using the middle school program in culturally diverse classrooms

h. Tips for using the middle school program with students with special needs

i. Tips for using the middle school program with English-language learners

j. Positive behavior reinforcement suggestions for middle school

k. Responding to bullying with the middle school program

While teaching the students, emphasis was placed on attitudes and beliefs about aggression. All 11 lessons were taught to the students in the selected section of the intervention school.

Table 6: Schedule followed for administering the SSVPP Curriculum at the Intervention school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson No.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Time Taken</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Working in Groups</td>
<td>1.5 hours</td>
<td>• Identify behaviors involved in listening and respecting others’ ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Apply group communication skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Define empathy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Apply empathy skills while identifying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>Objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Friends and Allies</td>
<td>1 hour</td>
<td>• Apply empathy skills&lt;br&gt;• Apply active listening skills&lt;br&gt;• Identify ways to make friends and join groups&lt;br&gt;• Define the term <em>ally</em> and identify when and how to be one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Considering Perspectives</td>
<td>1.5 hours</td>
<td>• Understand that people’s perspectives are based on their feelings, experiences, and needs or wants&lt;br&gt;• Recognize the value in being able to consider another’s perspective&lt;br&gt;• Apply perspective-taking skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Disagreeing Respectfully</td>
<td>1 hour</td>
<td>• Apply perspective-taking skills&lt;br&gt;• Distinguish between disrespectful and respectful disagreement&lt;br&gt;• Identify and apply effective communication skills&lt;br&gt;• Apply skills to give constructive feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Being Assertive</td>
<td>1.5 hours</td>
<td>• Distinguish differences between passive, assertive, and aggressive communication styles&lt;br&gt;• Identify and assume the physical and verbal characteristics of assertive communication&lt;br&gt;• Apply assertive communication skills</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**BULLYING PREVENTION**
Recognizing Bullying 2 hours

- Recognize and define *bullying*
- Understand how bullying can affect them and their peers
- Empathize with individuals who are bullied
- Understand what they can do if they or someone they know is bullied

Bystanders 1.5 hours

- Recognize and define the role of a bystander in bullying
- Understand how a bystander can be a part of the problem or part of the solution
- Apply empathic concern and perspective taking
- Identify ways to be part of the solution to bullying

EMOTION MANAGEMENT

Emotions—Brain and Body 1 hour

- Understand what happens to their brains and bodies when they experience strong emotions
- Identify the first three Steps for Staying in Control
- Understand why using self-talk is a key to managing emotions
- Apply self-talk strategies

Calming-Down Strategies 1.5 hours

- Apply centered breathing techniques correctly
- Recognize self-talk that intensifies or calms down strong feelings
PROBLEM SOLVING

10 Using the Action Steps 2 hours
- Analyze a problem by stating what the problem is and identifying the perspectives of those involved
- Generate multiple options for solving a problem
- Understand how to consider each option and decide on the best one
- Apply the first four Action Steps

11 Making a Plan 1 hour
- Generate a plan for carrying out an option
- Apply the Action Steps
- Understand how to make amends

As was pre decided, the classes were alternated between the researcher and the research assistant. Both the researchers recorded their observations post each class on the *Second Step Lesson Observation Form*, provided in the kit. This was done with the intention of maintaining a log of each learning experience as well as to aid the researchers in identifying areas of success and areas for improvement. Further, the researchers recorded attendance and participation of the students along with a general comment on classroom behavior. This was
done with the intention of observing students who scored high on both the bully and victim scales during the pre-intervention assessment.

The researchers made visual documentations of their classes by taking photographs of students engaged in group work, chart discussions, board discussions etc.

Each student was provided with their personal file and writing materials at the beginning of a class. Techniques such as videos, classroom activities, group discussion and overhead transparencies were used for lesson presentation. Role playing and reflective discussions (Focus groups) were conducted with each sub group of the selected 6th grade section individually. After every class, students also took home simple home work sheets and reflective writing worksheets to help them capture and record the day’s learning.

The workshop also included an educational awareness about bullying as a negative behavior, its consequences, types, effective prevention strategies etc. Material from Unit 1 of the Second Step Violence Prevention Program (SSVPP) which focuses on the provision of knowledge and information about violence was included in awareness building.

Feedback was collected from the students at the end of every unit. A simple form was circulated amongst the students that contained questions regarding their personal feelings about the class, along with questions related to the lesson content and their understanding of the same.

At the end of the entire curriculum, a 30 item multiple choice test was provided to all students. The primary aim of administering the formal test was to check whether the students were able to comprehend the lessons taught and apply the same to their everyday behavior.
Figure 1.10 a&b: Pictures taken during the intervention workshop with the students.
3.5 PHASE 2b- TEACHER INTERVENTION AND WORKSHOP

Sample Description:

6 teachers from the Intervention school and 7 from both the control schools constituted the sample.

ASSESSMENT

The researcher conducted individual interviews with teachers using the TCT Bullying Prevention Initiative Staff Questionnaire (The Colorado Trust, 2007) as a framework. These interviews were conducted with the middle school staff of both the intervention and control schools. Through the interview, information regarding – frequency of bullying and victimization, strategies being used and teacher understanding of bullying as a negative behavior were obtained.

The interview was conducted to find out how aware school teachers are of bullying and to help them become aware of the extent of bullying and victimization within their schools as well as to justify the researchers’ intervention efforts.

INTERVENTION

The researcher also conducted a one-day workshop for the middle school teachers and the head mistress of the school.

This workshop aimed at achieving the following goals:

1. Equipping teachers with increased awareness of the skills, techniques, intervention and prevention strategies related to bullying.

2. Enhancing their self-efficacy for confronting bullying and victimization in the classroom.
3. Helping teachers continue management of bullying and victimization in their classes by employing resources and activities suggested by the researcher.

4. Helping teachers feel de-stressed, healthy, and positively-able during classes.

Through a power point discussion, teachers were provided with-

- Detailed and in-depth information pertaining to bullying and victimization.

- An opportunity to share their individual experiences and ways of dealing with bullying.

- Knowledge about the SSVPP curriculum – its content and purpose. Teachers were also shown a sample lesson.

- Recommendations on intervention and prevention strategies/techniques – A booklet was prepared for the teachers containing various handouts from the SSVPP kit, additional lesson practice activities, academic integration activities, middle school teaching strategies, anti-bullying classroom games and activities etc. The researcher also formulated a handout for the teachers wherein they were provided with tips and strategies for dealing with children who bully, children who are bullied, bystanders and common school bullying locations [Appendix B.10]

- Information about classroom/curriculum activities that they can employ with students in their classes – specifically related to bullying.

- Various stress management techniques and tips – A handout was prepared and provided to the teachers for the same [Appendix B.11]
The researcher put together a parent workshop with the aim of achieving the following goals:

1. Increase parental awareness of bullying as a problem behavior
2. Increase their knowledge about contributing familial factors.
3. Inform them on what they can do if their child is a bully-victim.
4. Inform them on the various strategies to determine and handle bullying/victimization in their homes.
5. Encourage parents to involve themselves with their children’s schools/administration to tackle bullying/victimization in their children.

Prior to preparing for the workshop, the researcher attempted to meet the parents of the sixth standard students with the aim of obtaining:

a. Feedback about the SSVPP lessons conducted – based on what their child shared with them.

b. Information regarding changes (if any) that they noticed in the behavior of their child/children.

c. Information regarding their requirements from the workshop – what skills and knowledge they feel they need in order to deal with bullying at home.

The researcher formulated a letter requesting parents to attend a personal meeting at the school campus on two predetermined dates. This letter was personally handed over to them by the staff at the intervention school during the PTM of the sixth standard [Appendix B.12].

Unfortunately, no parent showed up on either of the two days. The researcher learnt later that most of the parents were employed in services such as house-maids, store sales, factory employees etc., and hence found it difficult to skip their work and attend such meetings.
Hence in order to compensate for the workshop and with a higher aim of providing information and skills to the parent, the researcher formulated a Parent Booklet that could be sent home via the students.

**Parent Booklet –**

The booklet was specially put together by the researcher for the parents of children between the age group of 6-12yrs. A conversational format was followed in the booklet in order to engage the parents. Parents were provided with information regarding bullying as a negative behavior, its forms, causal factors, effects, symptoms in their children and familial risk factors. Tips and strategies were also provided to aid parents when they address children who bully, are bullied or witness bullying. Parents were also provided with a Bullying Checklist [Appendix B.13]. This booklet was translated into the local language Kannada as most of the parents in this study were more comfortable with that language [Appendix B.14]

**Post Intervention Assessment of Students:**

Immediately after the intervention, three questionnaires were group administered to each of the sixth grade classes in the three participating schools. The three questionnaires were:

- **My Life in School Checklist – By Dan Arora & Thompson (1987)**
- **Student Experience Survey: What School is Like for Me (Attitude Scales) – By the Committee for Children (2004) as part of the Steps to Respect Program.**
- **The Peer Relations Questionnaire - By Ken Rigby & Slee (1993)**
3.7 **PHASE 3 – FOLLOW UP ASSESSMENT**

Six months after delivering social emotional training to students in the intervention school, questionnaires were re-administered to students in both the intervention and control schools. This was done with the aim of assessing whether the intervention continued to reduce bully victim incidence, improve attitude and raise awareness of bullying as a negative behavior.

Teachers and the principal were also interviewed individually by the researcher. During this interview an enquiry was made with regards to whether any change had been noticed in the behavior of the participating class in the last six months. An elaboration of the responses was also requested. Teachers were also asked to identify the factors that attributed to the change. All this information was taken down verbatim by the researcher on a form during the interview [Appendix C.15].

**3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

- Written informed consent was obtained from the authorities in the intervention and control schools.
- Printed information about the research was made available to all the participating schools.
- Consent was obtained from children in the form of signatures on the very first page of their answer booklet. Confidentiality was maintained.
- Students were also informed that their participation was voluntary and that they could pull out anytime during the research.
- The researcher encouraged students via the answer booklet to come forward and talk to an adult if they were being bullied.
- Teachers were provided with various tools and strategies to combat work stress and bullying in their classrooms/schools.
- Parental consent was obtained by sending home printed letters informing them about the study, its purpose and that their child's participation was voluntary.

- During the intervention phase, letters were sent home to parents informing them about the unit content, purpose and practice activities that they could perform at home in order to strengthen learning. In this way, parents were kept in the loop at all times.

- Parents were provided with a booklet that provided them with information on bullying as a negative behavior, its characteristic signs, consequences, and most importantly what they as parents can do to help their children.

- Students in the Control school were provided with an awareness session on bullying.