Chapter 1
INTRODUCTION

“Before this workshop, I did not even know what bullying means…Now, not only do I know, but I am also much more careful.”—Student feedback

1.1 NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY:

Bullying refers to a physical, verbal, or psychological attack or intimidation that is intended to cause fear, distress, or harm to the victim; an imbalance of power (psychological or physical) with a more powerful child (or children) oppressing less powerful ones; and repeated incidents between the same children over a prolonged period of time (Olweus 1993b). According to this definition, it is not bullying when two persons of the same strength (physical, psychological, or verbal) victimize each other. Bullying, thus, refers to interpersonal aggression characterized by intentionality, repetition, and an imbalance of power, with abuse of power being a primary distinction between bullying and other forms of aggression (Vaillancourt, Hymel, and Mc-Dougall, 2003). Developmentally, peer bullying is evident as early as preschool, although it has been found to peak during the middle school years and decline around the end of high school (Currie, 2012; Espelage & Swearer, 2003; Vaillancourt, Trinh, et al., 2010). In a recent report by the World Health Organization (WHO; Currie, 2012), examining bullying and victimization among 10, 13, and 15-year-olds in 43 countries, rates of victimization varied from 2% to 32% across countries and rates of bullying varied from 1% to 36%. Bullying takes many forms, from direct physical harm (physical bullying); to verbal taunts and threats (verbal bullying); to exclusion, humiliation, and rumor-spreading (relational or social bullying); to electronic harassment using texts, emails, or online mediums (cyber bullying). Social and verbal bullying are the more common forms experienced by students (Vaillancourt & Trinh, et al., 2010). Both bullies and victims have been found to be at-risk for short term and long-term adjustment difficulties including hyperactivity, emotional symptoms, conduct problems and peer problems.
Bullying has evolved into a common stressful life experience worldwide. It has been reported to affect an average 13% of children and adolescents during their years in school (Craig et al., 2009). Bullying, thus not only infringes on the child’s right to receive education in a safe and secure school environment, but has also shown to have serious consequences for a child's academic, relational, emotional and behavioral development.

Keeping in mind the various theoretical viewpoints and given the various manifestations of bullying and its serious repercussions on a student's physical and emotional health, this research study was conducted to satisfy the following needs:

- Increase awareness and understanding of the problems of bullying, peer aggression and victimization in students, teachers and parents.

- Encourage active involvement of parents, teachers, and students in resolving bully-victim incidents.

- Reduce impulsive and aggressive behavior in children and improve their social competence by developing student skills in the areas of perspective taking/empathy, social problem solving, impulse control and anger management.

- Promote and help students recognize and engage in positive, friendly and prosocial behavior.

**Importance of the Study:**

- This study will provide a greater understanding of bullying as it occurs in the Indian context, along with its various causal factors and consequences. It will throw light on the current scenarios of bullying in schools.

- This study will help determine the relative effect of an intervention program in reducing bully-victim incidents among a high risk age group.
Due to the involvement of the whole school community, this study will also improve the child’s learning environment by encouraging and promoting pro social behaviors and increase awareness of negative behaviors such as bullying.

1.2 BACKGROUND

1.2.1 What is Bullying?

Bullying is a relationship problem in which individuals assert interpersonal power through violence and aggression. It involves negative physical or verbal action that is repeated over time. The power differential between bullies and their victims and the hostile intent causes distress to the victims. Victimization by bullying occurs when a person is made the recipient of aggressive behavior; the victim is typically someone less powerful than the perpetrator, who may be larger, stronger or older.

School Bullying is a serious social problem as children exploit power imbalances in order to dominate and harm others physically, socially, or emotionally (Olweus, 1993; Smith & Brain, 2000). Bullying begins in early childhood during pre-school as this is the time when individuals use their social power to gain dominance and then gradually evolves as children use less socially reprehensive ways to dominate others (Currie, 2012; Espelage & Swearer, 2003; Vaillancourt, Trinh, et al., 2010). Studies have shown that children learn to be aggressive by observing aggressive behavior in others and by receiving reinforcement for their own aggressive behaviors; that is, children raised in a culture with aggressive models will learn aggressive responses (Horne & Orpinas, 2003).
1.2.2 Definition and type

Based on the pioneering work of Olweus (1999, 2001), bullying has been defined as a subcategory of interpersonal aggression characterized by intentionality, repetition, and an imbalance of power, with abuse of power being a primary distinction between bullying and other forms of aggression (Vaillancourt, Hymel, & Mc-Dougall, 2003).

Unlike reciprocal aggression where children exert force against each other, bullying is directed from one peer against another peer who is unable to stop the aggression or defend himself. This type of aggression is typically categorized according to whether the victim directly or indirectly experiences an attack from the aggressor (Olweus, 2001).

Direct forms include physical and verbal bullying; indirect forms include behaviors such as actively isolating an individual from the peer group (exclusion) and spreading rumors.

Name calling has been found to be the most prevalent form of bullying. The range of bullying behaviors reported vary from extortion, physical violence, rumor spreading, exclusion from groups or play, damaging belongings and threatening behavior.

1.2.3 Incidence of bullying

School bullying has been a concern for generations – perhaps for as long as there have been school systems- and is an international phenomenon (Carney & Merrel, 2001). There is an underlying suggestion in the research that all schools experience bullying and can anticipate its occurrence. The incidence of bullying is quite extensive not only in the United States but also in Europe, Australia and Asia. In a 2001 survey conducted by the World Health Organization, in the United States, it was found that of the 15,000 sixth through tenth graders, 30 percent of the students bullied others, were bullied by others, or both (WHO, 2001).
The bullying statistics of 2010 reveal that there are about 2.7 million students being bullied each year by about 2.1 million students taking on the role of the bully; and about 1,60,000 children miss school every day out of fear of being bullied (WHO, 2010).

Documented prevalence rates for bullying vary greatly across studies, with 10% to 33% of students reporting victimization by peers, and 5% to 13% admitting to bullying others (Cassidy, 2009; Dulmus, Sowers, and Theriot, 2006; Schneider, O'Donnell, Stueve, and Coulter, 2012; Nansel et al., 2001; Perkins, Craig, and Perkins, 2011; Peskin, Tortolero and Markham, 2006).

1.2.4 Why Schools?

Schools have been the most frequently studied environment in which bullying occurs. They are a miniature version of the broader society and culture, as they are the only settings in which children of all backgrounds come together under one roof. Hence, they provide an ideal, naturalistic environment where researchers can attempt to understand bullies, victims and bullying behavior; develop bullying prevention and intervention programs, and most importantly, investigate the effectiveness of these programs.

A child's experience in school is fundamental to his/her successful transition into adulthood. In school, children negotiate and renegotiate their relationships, self-image, and independence. They cultivate interpersonal skills, discover and refine strengths, and struggle with vulnerabilities. Schools are one of the primary contexts for social development and are frequently the setting in which interpersonal conflicts occur. Most bullying takes place at school, particularly at times and places where supervision is minimal.

Boulton & Underwood (2011) found that besides being bullied in school, children also reported that they got bullied on the way to/from school and in other places such as -in the streets close to where they live. Older studies have found that most bullying (2-3 times as much) happens in school rather than on the way to/from school; generally bullying during school hours
occurs where there is limited or no adult supervision, including lunchtime, between class periods, and recess. The playground was identified as the most common place for bullying to occur than during the journey to and from school and various interventions have been implemented to reduce the same (Espelage & Colbert, 2016)

Students who experience serious bullying problems feel less safe and less satisfied with their schools. When problems of bullying are ignored and aggressive behavior is not addressed, children are likely to become more aggressive as well as less tolerant. Bullying thus negatively affects the school climate and the learning environment.

Schools are meant to be a place where students feel safe and secure and where they can count on being treated with dignity and respect. But, because of bullying students do not feel safe. Hence, schools must provide a safe environment for children to develop relationally, emotionally and behaviorally. A safe environment frees students to focus on academic achievement and performance.

Schools are also a logical setting for implementation of interventions that are specifically designed to reduce the problem of bullying.

They provide researchers with settings in which they can access all children on a consistent basis over most of their formative years, and base their preventive efforts. Indirectly, they even provide access to parents and guardians. Furthermore, schools have readily available physical resources (classrooms, recreation facilities) which are useful in preventive efforts.

1.2.5 Why middle school?

According to the developmental trajectory of bullying, researchers state that though it is found in all ages, it tends to peak during the middle school years (Rios-Ellis, Bellamy, and Shoji, 2000).
Sixth graders are seen as at particular risk because of their transition from elementary schools and because of the variety of developmental changes that occur. The transition from elementary school to the sometimes chaotic middle school can cause stress that might promote bullying behavior as students attempt to define their place in a brand new social structure. For example, changing from one division of school to another often leads to an increase in other risk-taking behaviors, and bullying might be one medium that young people use to deal with the stress of a new environment (Espelage & Holt, 2001). Pellegrini & Bartini (2000) call the period of transition between elementary and middle school the “brutalizing period” because of the increased frequency and intensity of aggression experienced by students.

Sixth graders are also focused upon, because, even though they may be the most likely to experience peer harassment, they may also be the least equipped to deal cognitively with such situations. (Nishina & Juvonen, 2005)

In a national study of bullying, conducted in the U.S., 13% of sixth graders reported being a victim of bullying at least once a week, and 10% reported being responsible for bullying someone (Nansel et al., 2001).

Espelage, Bosworth and Simon (2001) found an increase in bullying behavior among 6th graders over a 4-month period. They speculated that the 6th graders were assimilating into the culture of a middle school which had a certain rate of bullying behavior, as was seen in the initial scores for 7th and 8th graders. This was supported by the contention that bullying is a learned behavior that the 6th graders, as they enter middle school, have not yet learned how to interact in the social milieu of the school. Many 6th graders who wish to “fit-in” might adopt behaviors including teasing of those students that have been in the school longer and have more of the power to dictate the social norm.
Studies have even found that adult supervision decreases as students move from elementary to middle school. Less structure and supervision are found to be associated with increases in student bullying, particularly in locations such as play-grounds, lunchrooms and hallways (American Association of University Women Educational Foundation, 2001).

Therefore, middle childhood is an important time for administering interventions that integrate the emotional, cognitive, and behavioral skills needed to develop social competence and thereby reduce school bullying.

1.2.6 Outcomes of bullying

Research from the literature on bully-victims and general victimization shows that involvement in this aggressive process is associated with poor outcomes for those who bully (Andershed et al, 2001 Connolly et al, 2000 &Nansel et al, 2001) as well as for those who are victims of bullying (Hawker & Boulton, 2000) or bystanders to bullying (Polanin, Espelage and Pigott, 2012).

In a study conducted with an ethnically diverse sample of middle school students, peer victimization in the fall of sixth grade was found to be associated with psychosocial difficulties and somatic problems, which in turn predicted maladaptive school functioning (i.e., lower grades and higher rates of school absences) by the end of the school year (Nishina, Juvonen, and Witkow, 2005). The outcomes of victimization include anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, physical and psychosomatic complaints, posttraumatic stress disorder, and suicidal ideation (McKenney et al., 2006).

Bullying presents a serious threat to a healthy development during the school career. Bullies are at increased risk of becoming involved in delinquency, crime, and alcohol abuse (Kaltiala-Heino, Rimpela, Rantanen, and Rimpela, 2000; Nansel et al., 2001, 2004; Olweus, 1993a, 1993b, 1993c). Haynie et al. (2001) concluded that “bullying might allow children to
achieve their immediate goals without learning socially acceptable ways to negotiate with others, resulting in persistent maladaptive patterns”. Bullying is also associated with an increased risk of mental health disorders, such as attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder, depression, oppositional defiant disorder, and conduct disorder (Kumpulainen et al., 2001).

Bullying potentially affects the entire school. Students can be affected by bullying either directly or indirectly – the effects vary from mental health problems to fostering hostile social norms and a culture of bullying. Bullying has a negative influence on children’s mental, emotional and physical health (Ttofi & Farrington, 2008). It is therefore important that counselors, health care workers and teachers have a good understanding of bullying behavior and take measures to prevent or stop such behavior.

**Other variables that have been studied in detail in the past are:**

1.2.7 Gender Differences

Boys have been found to report more bullying than girls, but girls report more victimization (Craig et al, 2009; Cook, et al, 2010; Olweus, 1993).

Researchers found that boys performed physical bullying (Chan et al, 2005), while girls performed relational aggression (Chan et al, 2005; Defour, 2005). Boys seem to be involved in direct/physical forms of bullying and bullying involving threats. They seem to bully as a means to show their power and ability to control others (Macklem, 2003). Furthermore, boys have claimed to gain happiness and pleasure when they bully (Chan et al, 2005). Girls, on the other hand, report more subtle, indirect bullying which is typically verbal or socially based (e.g., social exclusion, nasty gossip, spreading rumors, sending intimidating letters) (Olweus, 1991, 1993; Macklem, 2003; Owen, 2005).
Boulton & Underwood (2011) found that reports of both bullying and being bullied were more prevalent among boys than among girls. Most boys were bullied by other boys only, whereas girls were more likely to be bullied by children of either sex.

In a study by Baldry (2004), it was found that boys are almost three times more likely than girls to physically hurt, spread rumors, threaten, take belongings, and they were also more likely to call someone nasty names and to spread rumors. No gender differences were found for 'not talking to someone on purpose.' Boys were found to be more involved in victimization than girls, but mainly in direct forms of victimization, with the only exception of 'belongings taken away' evenly reported by boys and girls.

Kepenekci and Çınkır (2006) found clear gender differences, with boys consistently experiencing more physical bullying including kicking/slapping, assaulting with a knife, rude physical jokes, and more verbal bullying including name calling and insulting/swearing.

In almost all countries, boys report more bullying and physical fights than girls. Studies have found that for both types of aggressive behavior, the rates for boys are almost double than those for girls. This finding does not necessarily indicate that boys are more aggressive than girls, but rather that they are more likely to engage in this overt form of aggression, while girls may be more likely to engage in more subtle, more covert forms of indirect aggression (Haynie et al., 2001; Natvig, Albrektsen, & Qvarnstrøm, 2001; Karatzias et al. 2002; Kristensen & Smith 2003; Pekel, 2004; Craig & Harel, 2004).

Further, in comparison to girls, bullied boys are especially vulnerable as they often seem to be prevented from seeking out the support that they need (Naylor et al, 2001).

Other studies have found no significant gender difference for bullying (Andreou, 2000; Wolke et al., 2000; Wilkins-Shurmer et al., 2003).
1.2.8 Age

According to developmental theories, peer bullying tends to become evident as early as preschool, although it peaks during the middle school years and declines somewhat by the end of high school (Currie, 2012; Espelage & Swearer, 2003; Vaillancourt, Trinh, et al., 2010).

Many of an individual’s undesirable behaviors and accompanying attitudes are evident long before adolescence. Children’s victimization experiences have been studied extensively. Researchers have focused on the age range of ten to thirteen, as during this time the bully-victim interpersonal patterns tend to become well established (Espelage, Bosworth and Simon, 2000; Pellegrini & Long, 2002).

Students in the age range of 11-12 years were focused upon for any kind of anti-bullying work since that was the year when they made the transition from primary to middle school, and were therefore more at risk of being bullied by stronger same-age peers or older pupils (Currie, 2012; Espelage & Swearer, 2003; Vaillancourt, Trinh, et al., 2010).

In Frey et al study (2005), it was found that older children in grades 5 and 6 reported more direct and indirect aggression, more acceptance of bullying/aggression, and less responsibility to intervene with friends who bully than did younger students in grades 3 and 4.

Fekkes et al (2005) found that more than 16% of the children aged 9–11 years reported being bullied on a regular basis and 5.5% reported regular active bullying during the current school term. In a study by Frisen et al’ in 2007, most victims reported being bullied at younger ages – 7 to 9 years, and most children reported bullying others at a later age of 10 to 12 years.

Craig and Harel (2004) in their study found that age influences aggressive behaviors. Higher increase in reported bullying occurs between the ages of 11 and 13. However, early interventions may reduce the problem, which means targeting children before the prevalence of these behaviors start to increase. Thus, from a policy perspective, prevention programs need to be in place long before children are 11 years old.
1.2.9 Bullying in Indian Schools – Incidence and Current practice

There is a dearth in the amount of research studies conducted on bullying in India. Only recently have researchers made an attempt to study and understand this complex negative phenomenon.

With regards to the prevalence of bullying, Indian researchers have found figures ranging between 34% to 69%. Bullying was found to be more prevalent among boys than girls. Boys were more likely to be bully-victims (27.9 %) and girls were more likely to be victims (21.6 %). (Malhi et al, 2014; Ramya & Kulkarni, 2011; Munni & Malhi, 2006; Kshirsagar et al, 2007).

Basu et al (2014) in their study found bullying to be most prevalent in the age groups of 14-15 years (46 %) followed by the age groups of 12-13 year (40.5 %).

With regard to types of bullying observed amongst Indian students, Sharma et al (2014) found name calling, being made fun of, teasing, theft, being physically hurt, abusing by using bad words and spreading rumors were the most common. Boys were largely responsible for direct physical aggression (78%). Girls reported a higher incidence of indirect bullying such as calling names (59 %) (Sharma et al, 2014; Basu et al, 2014; Ramya & Kulkarni, 2011; Kshirsagar et al, 2007).

Srisiva et al (2013) found that about 56% of the respondents had been bullied by their own peers /class mates and another 37% had been bullied by both class mates as well as senior students. Bullying mostly took place both within the school campus (86%) and outside the school campus (73%). Almost all students reported that physical abuse took place outside the class room or outside the campus; however, a few students stated that it occurred inside the school and within the class room at a time when no class teacher was around.
With regard to the repercussions of bullying, students have reported feeling sick, having headaches, loose motions, fever, feeling bad/sad, not wanting to go to school, having no friends, having difficulty in sleeping, low self-esteem, decrease in appetite, not talking to anyone, waning of interest in play and other activities, becoming irritable, having nightmares, feeling frightened when alone, bed wetting and academic difficulties (Sharma et al, 2014; Malhi et al, 2014; Ramya & Kulkarni, 2011).

In the Indian context, studies have found that teacher's sanction student's wrong doings publicly, and students who bully are normally shamed and ordered to correct their behaviors. Similar to schools all around the world: reprimanding, calling parents to the school, and suspension are common tactics used to stop bullying. However, harsh punishment does not effectively curb bullying. Students typically don't talk when they are dealt with by authorities, and may take revenge afterward.

Studies have also found that only a few parents knew that their children were being bullied. Teachers, on the other hand were found to be unaware of bullying on their school premises. Those teachers, who were aware, were found to lack the will or the technical know-how on how to effectively deal with bullying. (Ramya & Kulkarni, 2011; Srisiva, 2013). These studies seem to indicate that, as both teachers and parents play a significant role in any kind of anti-bullying work, they need to be a lot more aware, proactive and understanding in the way they handle bullying.

Various articles have been published in newspapers across India citing bullying incidents that have taken place among young school students and educating the masses about its nature and detrimental effects - Bullying: CBSE issues guidelines (Times of India, March 2015) and 'Bullying Can have Lasting Scars on Children (AnushaRao, 20th May 2014).
It is very evident from the findings mentioned above that bullying is prevalent in the lives of Indian middle school students. The impact of bullying on the psychosocial adjustments of these young children is detrimental. Early identification and corrective interventions of these young adolescents is therefore both vital and urgent.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

Bullying is a form of aggressive behavior that is widespread among school children and is often characterized by repetition and an imbalance of power. Both bullying and victimization can impact the physical, emotional and social health of the children involved. Though bullying is a well-researched behavior, many schools still employ the conventional methods of punishments such as behavioral referrals to the Principal's office or award school suspension. Further, only few bullying prevention programs involve the whole school community or promote a positive school climate.

1.4 AIM AND OBJECTIVES:

This study focuses on examining the factors that influence bullying behavior among sixth standard boys.

OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH:

The research is divided into four phases with specific objectives for each.

Phase 0 – Pilot Phase

- 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.
Phase 1 – Main Study

- To study whether type of school affects incidence of bullying
- To study whether factors such as – religion, order of birth, type of family, number of friends, number of years in present school, type of scholar and academic success affect the attitude towards and the incidence of bullying.
- To determine the level of awareness of bullying as a negative behavior among students
- To determine attitudes of students towards bullying.
- To study the relationship between attitude towards bullying and incidence of bullying in students.
- To study the relation between awareness of bullying as a negative behavior and incidence of bullying in students.

Phase 2 - Intervention

To evaluate the effectiveness of an intervention program composed of psycho-education and social skills training in:

- Enhancing awareness of bullying as a negative behavior among students.
- Reducing existing bully-victim incidents, preventing the development of new incidents and fostering positive, friendly and pro social behavior among students.
- Bringing about a change in participants’ attitudes towards bullying.

Phase 3 – Follow Up

To evaluate, 6 months later, the effectiveness of the intervention program in:

- Sustaining changes in enhanced awareness of bullying as a negative behavior among students.
Sustaining reduction of bully-victim incidents, preventing the development of new incidents and fostering positive, friendly and pro social behavior among students.

- Sustaining the change in participants’ attitudes towards bullying.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES:

Research Questions:

- What are the demographic factors that influence incidence and attitude to bullying?
- Will anti-bullying interventions be successful in reducing aggression in middle schools?

Hypotheses:

Based on the objectives, the hypotheses are specifically formulated for the three phases:

Phase 1–Main Phase

Hypothesis 1.5.1 - Type of school [co-ed v/s all-boys] will affect incidence of bullying.

Hypothesis 1.5.2 - Attitude to bullying will be related to experience of bullying in children.

Hypothesis 1.5.3 - Number of years in present school will be co-related to experience of bullying in children.

Hypothesis 1.5.4 – Number of years in present school will be co-related to attitude to bullying in children.

Hypothesis 1.5.5 – Academic success will be co-related to experience of bullying in children.

Hypothesis 1.5.6 – Academic success will be co-related to attitude to bullying in children.

Hypothesis 1.5.7 – Experience of bullying will significantly differ according to order of birth.
Hypothesis 1.5.8 - There will be a significant difference in attitude to bullying depending on order of birth.

Hypothesis 1.5.9 - Experience of bullying will significantly differ according to type of family.

Hypothesis 1.5.10 - There will be a significant difference in attitude to bullying depending on type of family.

Phase 2 - Intervention

Post intervention – Intervention – Control group Comparison

Hypothesis 1.5.11: After the intervention, attitude towards bullying will be significantly different in students in the intervention school when compared with those in the comparison school (control group).

Therefore, post intervention, students in the intervention school will demonstrate:

- Higher assertive behavior in bullying situations compared to the control group.
- Higher perceived adult responsiveness in bullying situations compared to the control group.
- Higher bystander responsibilities in bullying situations compared to the control group; and
- Lower acceptance of bullying as an acceptable behavior compared to the control group.

Hypothesis 1.5.12: Post intervention, students in the intervention school would demonstrate increased pro social behavior in comparison to those in the comparison school (control group).

Hypothesis 1.5.13: Students in the intervention school, compared with those in the comparison school (control group), would demonstrate a significant decrease in the bully-victim incidents reported, after the intervention.
Intervention group – Pre – Post comparison

Hypothesis 1.5.14: Post intervention, students in the intervention school will demonstrate a change in their attitude towards bullying, in comparison to their pre-intervention baseline scores.

Therefore, post intervention, students who undergo social skills training will demonstrate:

➢ Higher assertive behavior in bullying situations.
➢ Higher perceived adult responsiveness in bullying situations.
➢ Higher bystander responsibilities in bullying situations; and
➢ Lower acceptance of bullying as an acceptable behavior.

Hypothesis 1.5.15: Post intervention, students in the intervention school will engage in increased pro-social behavior in comparison to their pre-intervention baseline scores.

Hypothesis 1.5.16: On comparison of pre-post intervention assessment, the number of bully-victim incidents would decrease in the intervention school as reported by the students, after intervention.

Control group – Pre – Post comparison

Hypothesis 1.5.17: Students in the control school would demonstrate no change in their attitude towards bullying between pre and post intervention assessment.

Therefore, post intervention, students in the control school would demonstrate:

➢ No change in their assertiveness,
➢ No change in their perceived adult responsiveness,
➢ No change in their bystander responsibility; and
➢ No change in their attitude to bullying as an acceptable behavior.
Hypothesis 1.5.18: Students in the control school will show no change in pro social behavior between pre and post intervention assessment.

Hypothesis 1.5.19: On comparison of pre-post intervention assessment, the number of bully-victim incidents would show no change in the control school, as reported by the students.

**Phase 3 – Follow Up**

**Follow Up - Intervention – Control group Comparison**

Hypothesis 1.5.20: There will be a significant difference in attitude towards bullying between the students in the intervention school and those in the comparison school (control group), during follow up assessment.

Therefore, at follow up, students who undergo social skills training will demonstrate:

- Higher assertive behavior in bullying situations compared to the control group.
- Higher perceived adult responsiveness in bullying situations compared to the control group.
- Higher bystander responsibilities in bullying situations compared to the control group; and
- Lower acceptance of bullying as an acceptable behavior compared to the control group.

Hypothesis 1.5.21: During follow up, there will be a significant increase in pro-social behavior of students in the intervention school, compared with those in the comparison schools.

Hypothesis 1.5.22: During follow up, there will be a significant decrease in the number of bully-victim incidents reported by students in the intervention school as compared with those in the comparison schools.

**Intervention group – Post – Follow Up comparison**

Hypothesis 1.5.23: Students in the intervention school would demonstrate a significant difference in their attitude towards bullying between post and follow up assessment.
Therefore, at follow up, students who undergo social skills training will demonstrate:

- Higher assertive behavior in bullying situations.
- Higher perceived adult responsiveness in bullying situations
- Higher bystander responsibilities in bullying situations; and
- Lower acceptance of bullying as an acceptable behavior.

Hypothesis 1.5.24: Students in the intervention school will engage in increased pro social behavior between post and follow up assessment.

Hypothesis 1.5.25: Students in the intervention school will show a significant decrease in the number of bully-victim incidents reported between post and follow up assessment.

Control group –Post – Follow Up comparison

Hypothesis 1.5.26: Students in the control school would demonstrate no significant difference in their attitude towards bullying between post and follow up assessment.

Therefore, at follow up, students in the control school would demonstrate:

- No change in their assertiveness,
- No change in their perceived adult responsiveness,
- No change in their bystander responsibility; and
- No change in their attitude to bullying as an acceptable behavior.

Hypothesis 1.5.27: Students in the control school will show no significant difference in pro social behavior between post and follow up assessment.

Hypothesis 1.5.28: Students in the control school will show no significant difference in the number of bully-victim incidents reported between post and follow up assessment.

1.6 OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS:

- **Bullying** - This study followed the Olweus definition (1999):
“a student is being bullied when another student or a group of students:

a) Say mean and unpleasant things or make fun of him, or call him/her mean and hurtful names.

b) Completely ignore or exclude him or her from their group of friends or leave him/her out of things on purpose.

c) Hit, kick, push and shove around, or threaten him/her.

d) Tell lies or false rumours about him/her or send mean notes and try to make other students dislike or hurt him/her.

- **Peer Victimization** – refers to a form of relationship in which children are frequently targeted by peers for verbal and/or physical aggression, or other forms of abuse. It also refers to a role that children occupy when they are bullied by their peers—a subtype of aggression that is unprovoked, chronic, and perpetuated by a stronger child against a weaker one (Olweus, 1993).

- **Pro-social behavior**—also referred to as helping behavior. It includes behaviors such as -caring about the welfare and rights of others, feeling concern and empathy for them, and acting in ways that benefit others.

- **Awareness** – this refers to one’s knowledge of bullying as a negative behavior - its causes, consequences and ways to deal with it.

- **Attitude** – in the present study, this refers to one’s perspective towards bullying and how one handles/deals with it.

- **Bullying Index** – Also known as physical or direct bullying. This index is measured by the My Life in School Checklist by Arora & Thompson (1987). It refers to a student being bullied by other students in a more direct way. A high bullying index indicates the likelihood of a
high level of bullying all around and vice versa. E.g. Kicked me/hit me; beat me up; make me give money; hurt me; tried to break something of mine; tried to hit me.

- **Indirect Bullying** – This variable is measured by the My Life in School Checklist by Arora & Thompson (1987). High scores on this index refer to the student experiencing being bullied by others in a more indirect way. E.g. told a lie about me; laughed at me horribly.

- **Negative Behavior** – Measured by the My Life in School Checklist, Arora & Thompson (1987), this variable refers to the amount of times a student experiences negative events/indirect forms of bullying. E.g. called names, said mean things about family, were unkind, etc.

- **Positive Behavior** – This variable is measured by the My Life in School Checklist by Arora & Thompson (1987). High scores refer to the child experiencing friendly behavior by other children. E.g. said something nice; was nice to me; shared something with me; chatted with me; visited me at home; etc.

- **Perceived Assertiveness** – Measure by the What School is Like For Me questionnaire (Committee for Children, 2004) which refers to the student's ability to be assertive in bullying situations he experiences. High scores reflect a student finding it hard to be assertive in bullying situations.

- **Perceived Adult Responsiveness**: This variable is measured by the What School is Like For Me questionnaire (Committee for Children, 2004). High scores reflect that the student feels that adults are aware, approachable and responsive about bullying in school.

- **Bystander Responsibility**: This variable is measured by the What School is Like For Me questionnaire (Committee for Children, 2004). High scores reflect that the child is able to perform bystander responsibilities
- **Pro Social Scale**: This variable is measured by the Peer Relations Questionnaire developed by Rigby & Slee (1993). Highscores reflect that the student feels it is okay to be mean/aggressive towards other children.