Chapter 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

“These classes have helped me with my anger management. I now know how to stay in control” – Student feedback

2.1 BULLYING PREVALENCE, EXTENT, INCIDENCE AND EFFECT

Khamis (2015) conducted a study in Beirut to investigate the prevalence of bullying at schools and the extent to which differences in children’s socio demographics, family and school environment, and coping strategies could account for variation in academic achievement, PTSD and emotional and behavioral disorders.

Participants were 665 male and female children of mean age 13.8 years. 321 (48.3%) were males and 344 (51.7%) were females.

The Revised Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire (OBVQ) (Olweus, 1996) was used to classify students into bullying involvement categories. Five questions from the Olweus’ 1998 bully survey were used to assess whether there is a culture of bullying at schools. Post traumatic stress disorder was assessed by using the diagnostic criteria for an assessment of PTSD as outlined in the DSM-IV (American Psychiatric Association [APA], 1994). A structured clinical interview was used to ensure coverage of all the relevant signs and symptoms of PTSD. Behavioral and emotional disorders were assessed by using the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ), Child Form, by Goodman (2001). Student family social environmental characteristics were measured using the Family Environment Scale (Moos & Moos, 2002). The Ways of Coping questionnaire (WCS) was used to assess a broad range of cognitive and behavioral strategies that people use to manage internal and/or external demands in stressful situations.
Results obtained indicated that the prevalence of bullying behavior among school-age children was 53.4%. The prevalence of bullying behavior varied across the three types of bullying; 17.7% for the bully category, 19.8% for the victim category, and 15.8% for the bully-victim category.

Results revealed that high proportion of children had been involved in bullying on a regular basis, with victims having a higher prevalence ratio than bullies and bully-victims. Prevalence of bullying was more among boys than girls.

Verbal bullying (12.48%), including spreading rumors was the most common type of victimization followed by being rejected from a group (10.4%).

Being bullied about one’s religion or sect, comprised one of the most common bullying behaviors in schools (8%). Being threatened or forced to do things and having money and other things taken away or damaged were considered less prevalent among the students.

The correlation results revealed a strong association between the prevalence of bullying behavior and a culture of bullying, $r = .59$, $p < .02$.

Results further revealed that school bullying was not associated with academic achievement or with having difficulties in reading and math. Students who were identified as a bully-victim (35.2%), victim (26.5%), or bully (22%) suffered from PTSD than students who were not identified to be involved in bullying (12.9%).

The study found that both bullies and victims were at-risk for short term and long-term adjustment difficulties including hyperactivity, emotional symptoms, conduct problems and peer problems.
Garciáa & Margalloa (2014) reviewed scientific literature related to bullying in the last twelve months. The aim of their study was to understand whether the results obtained enhanced, confirmed or contradicted previous knowledge.

A systematic on-line search of the major databases of scientific articles - PubMed, PsycINFO, SciELO and DIALNET was conducted. Keywords such as “bullying”, “school bullying”, “school violence” and “cyberbullying” were used. Articles were selected to review for their thematic relevance and were classified according to various criteria (design type, geographical area of origin and principal thematic aspects developed).

169 papers from different countries were selected. Most of the studies reviewed had a cross design, with a sufficiently large sample to ensure statistical validity. The approach was focused on educational issues in 114 papers (67, 45%), it was related to health matters in 53 (31, 36%) and was based on legal dimensions in 2 cases (1, 18%).

The review revealed that research on bullying has focused almost equally on educational aspects and health ones. The interest in school bullying was found to be raising and spreading to more countries in all continents. The destructive effect of bullying in the short and long term on various aspects of physical and mental health was confirmed along with its malignant effect on school performance. Bullying was found to be one of the most traumatic experiences that threatened the mental and physical well-being and quality of life in children. In adult life, the antecedent of having been a school bully was shown as predictor of increased propensity for criminal behavior.

Epidemiological studies conducted earlier, had revealed that the prevalence of school bullying was greater in less developed countries. Data also suggested that bullying frequency could be increasing and that it begins at an earlier age. Bullying was not uniform throughout compulsory schooling. Victimization rates were higher for primary education, resulting in an
increase during the transition years between elementary school and lower secondary education. The age of higher risk was located between 10-14 years.

Kabasakal & Bas (2010) investigated some variables regarding the frequency of violent and aggressive behaviors among elementary school students and their families. The sample comprised of 951 students (478 girls, 473 boys) studying in 4 different elementary schools. 170 students were 4th graders, 167 students were 5th graders, 114 students were 6th graders, 257 students were 7th graders and 242 students were 8th graders. The ages ranged between 9 and 17 years (X=12.33, ss=1.55).

Two tools were used by the researchers to collect student data. The ‘Aggressiveness and Violence at School’ questionnaire developed by the researchers, was used to determine the frequency of violent and aggressive behavior among elementary school students. The questionnaire provided information on violent and aggressive behaviors as well as parents’ marital status, parent attitudes towards their children and their substance usage. In order to determine the frequency of violent and aggressive behaviors among elementary school students, students who responded with a “Yes” to questions, were asked to scale the frequency of their behaviors by selecting 1=Once, 2= A few times and 3= Many times. The same type of scale was used to determine the frequency of physical and relational violence that students encountered. In addition, a personal information form that asked about various socio demographic factors such as age, gender and parents’ educational level which was thought to be related with violent and aggressive behaviors was used. Data was analyzed through SPSS 12 using the Chi-square test.

Results revealed that student involvement in a physical fight, group fight, being punished in class, being punished at school, being exposed to physical violence and being exposed to relational violence significantly differed according to gender. In comparison to girls, boys were
more involved in physical and group fight and were punished by their teachers and the school administration.

This study has important implications, as it indicates that the frequency of violent and aggressive behavior among elementary school students is currently significantly high. Boys, more frequently engage in violent and aggressive behavior than girls.

Programs planned at schools should therefore take into account gender differences.

Frisen, Jonsson and Persson (2007) conducted a study with 119 adolescents between the age groups of 15 to 20 years old (48 boys and 71 girls) from six classes at two high schools in Goteborg, Sweden. The researchers were interested in descriptions of adolescent’s perceptions and experiences of bullying, their thoughts about why children and adolescents are bullied, their ideas about why some bully others and what they believe is important in order to stop bullying.

The school year was divided into four periods: 7 to 9 years, 10 to 12 years, 13 to 15 years, and 16 to 18 years. All participating adolescents were asked about experiences in each specific school period. Three open-ended questions were posed: “According to you, why do you think individuals are bullied?” “According to you, why do some children and adolescents bully others?” and “What do you think makes bullying stop?”

Of the adolescents who reported, 39% indicated that they had been bullied at some time during their school years and 28% said that they had bullied others. 13% reported being both victims and bullies. The age during which most students had been bullied at school was between 7-9 years. Bullies reported that most of the bullying took place when they were 10-12 years old. The most common reason as to why individuals are bullied was that they have a different appearance. The participants believed that those who bully suffer from low self-esteem. The most common response to the question “What do you think makes bullying stop?” was that
the bully matures. The next most frequent response was that the victim stood up for himself/herself. Only 14% reported that bullying stops when adults intervene. This may indicate that adolescents have little faith in an adult's ability to stop bullying. However, a teacher intervening was a most frequently picked category by victims (21%). Those who were not involved in bullying during their school years had a much stronger belief that victims can stand up for themselves than did the victims themselves.

The study revealed that there is a downward trend in bullying reporting from 8 to 16 years. Children reported that they are bullied mostly due to their appearance (different, small, weak, soft, less attractive, fat, and low physical strength). Students also stated that those who bully have hot temperament, less fortunate family background, view of relationships that values aggression and bullying as a means of achieving power and influence in a tough peer environment. Reports revealed that bullies engage in bullying mostly because they suffer from low self-esteem, and that bullying would only stop when the bully finally matures.

**Mestry, Merwe and Squelch (2006)** reviewed literature on bullying and found that with reference to the types of bullying, learners reported a higher frequency of verbal and indirect bullying than physical bullying on a regular basis. Name calling, teasing and spreading lies were most reported behaviors. No apparent differences were obtained between genders with reference to the types of bullying experienced. Male and female learners were of the opinion that ‘unpleasant teasing’ and ‘name-calling’ are more prevalent than other forms of bullying, while female learners indicated that they experience more gossip and lies being spread about them. Interestingly, a high percentage of male learners and female learners were of the opinion that physical hitting or kicking, exclusion and threats did not take place as often as some of the other types of behavior.
Veenstra et al (2005) carried out a study to understand the extent to which uninvolved pupils, bullies, victims, and bully-victims differ on the basis of gender, and individual characteristics (aggressiveness, isolation, academic performance, prosocial behavior, and dislikability). They questioned whether victims and bully-victims have a weak social profile (not being prosocial and being disliked) and whether bullies and bully-victims have higher levels of aggressiveness and lower levels of academic performance, whereas victims have a higher level of isolation.

Bullying and victimization were assessed with peer nominations. Children received a list of all classmates and were asked to nominate them in a number of dimensions. They nominated their classmates on, among other things, bullying ("By who are you bullied?") and victimization ("Whom do you bully?").

The multinomial logistic model (MNLM) was used to examine the effects of independent variables on a nominal dependent variable, such as the four groups of bullies, victims, bully-victims, and uninvolved children.

With regards to the prevalence of bullying and victimization it was found that on average, respondents designated 6% of the relations with their classmates as bullying and 4% as victimization. Uninvolved children were almost never perceived as bullies (.02) or as victims (.01) by their classmates. The victims scored .03 on bullying and .13 on victimization; the bullies, .17 on bullying and .02 on victimization; and the bully-victims, .20 on bullying and .15 on victimization.

Analysis revealed that a boy was more likely to be a bully-victim or a bully than was a girl, and that the girls were more likely to be passive victims. As was expected by the study, individual characteristics had a stronger impact than social circumstances on bullying and victimization. In addition to the over-representation of boys among bully-victims and bullies, a
main characteristic of bully-victims and bullies, was their high level of aggressiveness. Bullies were less isolated and victims were more isolated than uninvolved children. Bullies, victims, and bully-victims were all more disliked than the uninvolved group.

De Wet (2005) presented a report based on the investigation of a group of Free State Educators’ recognition of bullying, their reaction to incidences of bullying, and their perceptions of the effectiveness of a number of bullying prevention strategies.

An investigation was conducted to determine the experience and perceptions of a group of Free State educators with regards to bullying.

The research instruments used in the study was a synthesis of the Delaware Research Questionnaire – sections A and B, and questions based on findings from previous research – Section C, on bullying in the Free State. Section A of the structured questionnaire provided biographical details of the respondents. In Section B, questions were asked about the respondents as possible observers and/or listeners of bullying, as well as their reactions to incidences of bullying. In Section C, the respondents were asked to give their perceptions on a number of bullying prevention strategies which were obtained from a previous study directed at Free State learners.

The sample for this study consisted of educators at secondary schools in the Free State. The average age of the respondents, of whom 100 (30, 67%) were male and 226 (69, 33%) female, was 39 years 8 months. The respondents’ average number of years of teaching experience was 14 years 9 months.

Respondents were mostly witnesses of direct physical bullying. More than 40% of the educators indicated that they had witnessed incidents of physical bullying on a daily basis. Only 6.44% of the educators had never seen incidents of physical bullying. Results revealed that the majority of Free State learners had been exposed to direct verbal bullying on a weekly basis.
Craig & Harel (2004) conducted a survey in order to identify percentages of young people reporting bullying, victimization and physical fighting in several countries around the world.

A global survey was conducted. Participants were provided with the Olweus definition of bullying. Two levels of involvement were examined – being bullied or bullying others at least once in the past couple of months, and being bullied or bullying others at least 2-3 times a month. This method of assessing the prevalence of bullying is well established in research and was validated with other HBSC surveys. A single item was used to assess fighting behavior. Time period assessed was ‘the past couple of months/past 12 months’. Based on the responses participants were identified as ‘Bullies’, ‘Victims’ or ‘Fighters’ respectively.

Results indicated that there was a wide geographical variation in the reported prevalence of bullying, victimization and physical fighting. It was found that these behaviors were more culturally sanctioned in some countries than in others.

About 35% reported being involved in bullying others at least once during the previous couple of months. Variations were found across countries – 9-54% for 11 year olds, 17-71% for 13 year olds, and 19-73% for 15 year olds. It was further found that bullying was more common in 13-year olds than 11-year olds and in boys than in girls. Higher increase in reported bullying occurs between the ages of 11 and 13. In all countries, boys report more bullying and physical fighting than girls. For both types of aggressive behavior, the rates for boys are almost double those for girls. This finding indicated that though boys may not necessarily be more aggressive than girls, they are more likely to engage in overt forms of aggression, while girls may be more likely to engage in subtler, more covert forms of indirect aggression.
The study also found that age changes related to bullying were not as consistent across countries and regions as those related to fighting and this may be an indication of the cultural and linguistic norms for bullying. Both fighting and bullying show some consistent results, which indicate that these behaviors usually increase around age 13. This may be related to other factors, such as puberty (particularly in boys) or school transitions.

Espelage & Holt (2001) carried out a study in U.S.A. with the aim of (a) examining the amount of bullying and victimization across sex and grade-level; (b) exploring the relation between popularity and bullying behavior across sex and grade level; (c) determining the extent to which students who bully affiliate with one another; and (d) identifying groups of students who bully others and/or experience victimization in similar ways and determine the extent to which these groups differ on psychosocial measures.

Of the 422 middle school students that participated in the study, 51% were females (n = 214) and 49% were males (n = 208), with 30% 6th graders (n = 128), 33% 7th graders (n = 138), and 37% 8th graders (n = 156).

A survey was conducted which consisted of three sections – (a) demographic questions, (b) self-reported bullying/aggression, victimization, and other psychosocial likert-scale measures, and (c) peer nomination tasks and a sociometric item.

With regards to self-reported bullying, the study revealed that males reported bullying their peers significantly more than females (p < .001), even when bullying was constrained verbal aggression. Males also scored high on the self-reported fighting and self-reported victimization item. Although, grade differences did not reach significance, there was a trend of an increase in the percentage of students classified as bullies across grade.
For popularity and bullying, it was found that students who bully their peers on a regular basis share the same amount of popularity or peer acceptance (i.e., number of friends) as those students who do not bully their peers. This finding suggests that students who bully others are not necessarily socially rejected but do have friends. A strong correlation was found between bullying and popularity among 6th grade males, which dropped considerably for 7th grade males and was not associated for 8th grade males. Teasing and bullying among 6th graders may represent a strategy for negotiating the new environment as well as a tactic to gain power and prestige within ones’ primary peer group. It seems that majority of the taunting and teasing within young males is seen as an effective and attractive means of interpersonal interaction. Probably, males use these bullying tactics to obtain status within the social structure and over time other characteristics (e.g., athleticism) are more predictive of popularity in males.

Transition from elementary school to the sometimes chaotic middle school cause stress that may promote bullying behavior as students attempt to define their place in the new social structure. For example, changing from one school to another often leads to an increase in other risk-taking behaviors, and bullying might be another way that young people deal with the stress of a new environment.

The study, therefore suggests that prevention and intervention programs should consider peer influences on bullying behavior for young adolescents, especially young males who are transitioning into middle school. Furthermore, it helps us understand that prevention and intervention programs will be effective only if we learn more about how bullying occurs within a middle school environment where students are vying for power and status within peer groups. Only then can we begin to design programs to educate students about the harmful effects of teasing and harassment and give them the skills to manage, and potentially change, the pressure to hurt their classmates in order to ‘fit-in’.
2.2 ATTITUDE TOWARDS BULLYING

Olweus (1997) said that reducing bullying is “primarily a question of changing attitudes, behaviors and routines in school life”.

Children must be more sympathetic towards the plight of victims, less tolerant of bullying behavior and more supportive of staff intervention (Eslea & Smith, 2000).

Researchers have assessed children’s attitudes towards bullying using self-report measures, and found that most children do not support the practice of bullying (Saracho, 2016; McGuire, Rutland and Nesdale, 2015). Boulton & Underwood (2011) in their study found that most children expressed negative attitudes towards bullying, and nearly a third said that they could understand why it happened.

Brown, Osterman and Barnes (2009) in their study focused on understanding student perspectives regarding the magnitude of, causes of, and remedies for bullying. They found that when bullied, almost half of the students reported that they fight back, about a fourth tell an adult, and 20% do nothing; only 8% try to talk to the bully. Nearly two thirds claimed they tell or try to stop bullying when they see it, but 16% do nothing and 20% join in. Almost three fourths believed bullying is “uncool,” yet 42% said they bully at least occasionally. Frequent bullies were more likely to think it is cool, to fight back when bullied, and to join in when others are bullied.

Studies have found that bullies have strong positive attitudes towards the use of aggression in peer-interactions and often misunderstand peers intentions, indicating that other students provoke them. However, only a minority of children who bully others, lack pro-social skills indicating that bullying in most cases is not a defensive, legitimized response to an anger-provoking situation, but it rather intends to gain social outcomes such as dominance or status among peers and is related more to the proactive forms of aggression (Andreou & Metallidou, 2004).
It is significant to focus on the attitudes and behavior of the peer group. Although, most students are generally aware of bully-victim problems and agree something should be done, few actually take steps against peer aggression.

It is vital that intervention programs provide students education in the principles of cooperative work and conflict resolution. As such, they should help students acquire the attitudes, knowledge, and skills that will enable their cooperation with others in resolving constructively the inevitable conflicts that they are to experience at school (Coleman & Deutsche, 2000).

Curricular activities can be designed to instill anti-bullying attitudes in all children and assist them in developing prosocial conflict resolution skills. Positive perceptions of the school environment have been found to be related to decreases in school violence and its consequences. Therefore, it is equally important to improve the school social environment by not only teaching, but also rewarding prosocial behaviors.

2.3 AWARENESS OF BULLYING

In any anti-bullying work, it is vital that schools spread awareness about bullying as a negative behavior and foster positive change in student learning, achievement and well-being. Enhancing awareness of one’s own and others’ thoughts and feelings within the school environment serves to reduce the level of bullying. Students who tease others often do not define their behavior as bullying or even hurtful, despite the findings that their victims report significant distress from low-level verbal aggression, such as teasing. Creating situations where awareness of the subjective experience of other children becomes a focus therefore forms an important component of violence prevention programs (Fonagy et al., 2009).
Intervention programs typically raise student awareness of bullying; this could be one of the program aims – or even a general prerequisite, as with the Olweus Program. Making children more aware of bullying problems increases the likelihood that they will identify and report bullying (Smith et al., 2003). There needs to be a clear message to everyone that it is acceptable to ‘tell somebody (anybody) about it’. The Bergen Program aims primarily to increase adult’s and student’s awareness of problems of peer aggression and victimization, and it tries to encourage active involvement of adults and peers in resolving bully-victim incidents. The Steps to Respect Program (Committee for Children, 2001) aims to reduce school bullying problems by increasing adult awareness and monitoring; enhancing support for prosocial behavior, and teaching social-emotional skills to support healthy peer relationships and counter bullying. These interventions were found to increase students and staff member’s awareness of bullying behaviors as evidenced by the significant differences between groups on reports of bullying in school. The interventions also significantly improved their ability to identify the problem.

2.4 ROLE OF BYSTANDERS, TEACHERS & PARENTS

Khamis (2015) in his study explored students’ perceptions of whether other students or their teachers try to prevent bullying behavior, it was found that the majority of students (77.7%) reported that other students rarely tried to stop bullying at school (“once in a while,” 30.1%; “almost never,” 47.7%). Moreover, while very few students reported that teachers frequently tried to stop bullying at school (“almost always,” 8%; “often,” 13.4%), over 78% of the students reported that teachers only “once in a while” (32.8%) or “almost never” (45.9%) tried to stop bullying. Moreover, about two-thirds of the students reported that their teachers have done relatively little (“somewhat,” 25%; “fairly little,” 19.1%; and “little or nothing,” 33.7%) to counteract bullying. Finally, less than one-third of the students (28.7%) reported that their teachers exert great effort to counteract bullying (“much,” 14.3%; “a good deal,” 14.3%).
With regards to student belief that they can join in and help a student bully another student whom they do not like, results indicated that the majority of the students (75.8%) reported that they could not join in bullying another student (“definitely no,” 57.9%; “no,” 20%; and “no, I don’t think so,” 11%). However, nearly 10.8% of the students reported that they could join in bullying, and another 13.4% gave a noncommittal response (“I don’t know”).

Khamis also assessed whether students lack empathy for the victimized student. The results revealed that 66.8% of the students endorsed the empathic response, “I feel sorry for him or her and want to help him or her.” A sizable proportion of the students expressed less empathy for victims (“I feel a bit sorry for him or her,” 19.4%; “don’t feel much,” 10.4%; “most likely what he or she deserves,” 3.5%). The majority of the students (85.9%) were more likely to inform others about incidents of bullying in their schools, mainly a friend (43.7%), their parents (18.3%), their teacher (10.6%), another person at school (7.7%), and a sibling (5.6%). Only 2.9% of the students stated that their parents contacted the school several times in an attempt to stop bullying, and 2.9% stated that their parents contacted the school only one time.

Patterns of family interactions and relationships were associated with bullying severity among children. These findings highlight the potential role of family-focused prevention or treatment interventions aimed at reducing bullying among school-age children. Hence, programs that involve parents and emphasize warm and supportive parenting behavior may be generally effective. Further, interventions that are designed to increase the awareness and knowledge of bullying, involve both teacher/parent and impart strategies for responding assertively in a bullying situation can be effective in reducing the incidence and prevalence of school bullying.
**Garcíaa & Margalloa (2014)** – in their study identified crucial individual factors that could lead to victimization of certain students and that warrants the need for increasing awareness of parents and educational staff and the help of the entire school community. Some of the recently conducted studies revealed the deep roots that maintain the bullying behaviors among students and points out the necessity of some initiatives to change the group dynamics. Some of the most urgent initiatives identified were to understand and to change the attitudes of parents and teachers about bullying.

**Ruggieri et al (2013)** conducted a study to examine whether defenders of victims of school bullying befriended similar peers, and whether the similarity was due to selection or influence processes or both.

After controlling for reciprocity of friendship and gender, the researchers expected defenders to befriend peers who display similar defending behaviors. They tested whether adolescents select peers based on similarities in defending behavior (Selection effect) or whether they adjust their behavior in order to become more similar to their peers (Influence effect) or both. Furthermore, they examined whether these processes (selection and influence) result in different degrees of similarity between peers depending on the characteristics of the school environment.

They also examined whether these processes result in different degrees of similarity between peers depending on teacher’s self-efficacy and the school climate.

478 Swiss school students (mean age = 13.2, SD = 0.64, 51% females) from seven schools constituted the sample. An electronic self-report questionnaire was administered and peer nominations (across all classrooms of the same school) were assessed with the students. Teachers were asked to complete a questionnaire on netbooks gathering information about their perceived self-efficacy with regards to bullying behavior and the school climate.
The students were asked about defending the victim using an adapted version of the participant roles scale. To assess friendship networks, students were given a list containing the names of all the students in their school who were participating in the study, and were asked with which students they spent a lot of time outside school. Teacher’s self-efficacy was assessed using four items adapted from a validated scale (Alsaker & Nagele, 2008). School climate was assessed using four items adapted from a validated scale (Alsaker & Nagele, 2008). Results revealed that the similarity in defending behavior among friends was due to selection rather than influence. It was found that girls show a greater tendency to select peers based on similar defending behavior. However, students, in general, did not adjust their defending behavior in order to become more similar to the behavior of their peers.

It was that both teacher self-efficacy in handling bullying problems and school climate do bring about disparity in the selection similarity scores.

This study shows that teachers play a central role in bullying intervention. If students perceive their teachers to be unable to handle bullying, they seem to compensate for the same by grouping with other defenders and thereby potentially increasing their social power. It is therefore necessary and vital and students perceive their school to be safe and secure place.

Yıldırım, Selçuk, Ocak, and Sarıbaş (2013) aimed to reveal peer bullying as per the perception of teacher candidates and the solution offered by teacher candidates for peer bullying.

3 important questions were explored. What are the roles of peer bullying experienced by teacher candidates in their school lives? What are the types of peer bullying experienced by teacher candidates in their school lives? And, what are the metaphors about bully and victim in peer bullying used by the teacher candidates?
A mix method comprising both qualitative and quantitative research methods were used for an enhanced understanding of the bullying phenomenon. The roles and the types of peer bullying experienced by the teacher candidates in their high school years were explored via the “Violence – Vulgar Power Questionnaire” developed by Kepenekçi & Çınkır (2003). Metaphors and teacher explanations of bully and victim roles in peer bullying were explored via open ended questions, along with their view on the preventive strategies for bullying.

573 senior class students in primary school teaching, primary school science teaching, primary school social sciences teaching and Turkish Language teaching programs constituted the sample. With the random sample selection model 185 students (about 30% of the population) were interviewed.

With regards to the type of bullying, teacher candidates reported high scores for verbal bullying group - nicknaming (59%), mocking (57%), continues kidding (52%) and dissing (49%). Teachers listed various metaphors about the roles of bully and victims. The metaphors about bullies were grouped into four themes.

The highest rated theme was aggressiveness (42%) followed by intentional harm (23%). The third highest rated theme was dominance (17%). and the last highest rated theme was forcing (17%). Roles were mostly used as metaphor and forcing somebody to do something was the highlighted reason in this part.
Metaphors about victim were grouped into six themes. The highest rated theme was defenseless – powerless (34%). Followed by being passive (21%) and humiliated - oppressed (21%). Innocence (10%) was the fourth theme, followed by being used (6%). Being withdrawn (2%) was the last theme.

Four preventive strategies for peer bullying were detected - Educational activities (44.3%), preventive activities (27.8%), provision of supportive services (20.9%), and development of disciplinary measures (7%).

The study has important implications, in which, it reveals to us an educators perspective of bullying and their firsthand knowledge and experience on what would curb this problem and what can be used as a preventive strategy. Most of the prevention ways suggested by teacher candidates were about educational activities. Providing education to students who bully was cited as being the primary preventive strategy. The second group that needed to be provided with education about bullying were teachers themselves according to the teacher candidates. Teachers have mentioned feeling inadequate in their ability to handle bullying. They seemed to have realized the importance of their role as teachers and requested school authorities to provide awareness based sessions on bullying to help them fulfill their primary roles of preventing bullying on their campus.

To determine the bully and victim level of the students, the Determination of Peer Bullying Scale – Adolescent Form developed by Ayas & Piskin (2007) was used. This form consisted of two parallel scales -“bully scale” and the “victim scale”. Students were expected to mark how often they performed words and actions mentioned in the bully scale and how often they were subjected to those very words and actions in the victim scale. To determine parent attitudes, the Parental Attitude Scale adapted into Turkish was used.
300 students studying in three different secondary education schools participated in this study, out of which 157 were female and 143 were male students.

Results revealed that being bullied did not change significantly according to parental attitude. Accordingly, parental attitudes affect levels of being bullied. Similar results were obtained for exhibition of bullying behaviors. Parental attitudes affect levels of bullying behavior exhibited by students.

A deeper analysis of parental attitudes showed that children of families with negligent parental attitudes were bullied more when compared with those of families with permissive and democratic parental attitude. Such families were also found to be disinterested in school or out-of-school activities. Children of negligent parents also exhibit more bullying behavior in comparison to children of parents with a more permissive attitude.

This study stresses on how important it is for parents to actively participate on their children’s academic and emotional lives. Awareness should be raised amongst parents on what constitutes healthy attitudes; how a more permissive and democratic attitude can be adopted into the upbringing of their children.

Giovazolias, Kourkoutas, Mitsopoulou, and Georgiadi (2010) conducted a study with 369 students, belonging to fifth and sixth grade, of which 183 (49,6%) were boys and 186 (50,4%) were girls. The average age was 11.34 years (SD= .63). All students completed the Peer Experiences Questionnaire (PEQ), the School Climate Scale and the Risk Behavior Scale.

Results revealed that the group of bullies/victims had a negative attitude towards school climate compared to the bullies or victims. Moreover, the victimization of others was found to be positively related to risky behaviors, as bullies were seen to get more involved in such behaviors compared to others. Furthermore, the negative school climate seems to lead to the engagement in risky behaviors, which in turn predicts the victimization of other children, as
when taking into account the effect of these behaviors, the effect of the school climate in victimization of others is significantly lower. Hence, negative attitudes or perceptions of students of their school climate as well as involvement in risky behaviors predicted bullying behaviors towards their peers and involvement in risky behaviors mediated this relationship.

These results highlight the role of the school climate in the phenomenon of victimization. Engagement of children in various behaviors entails a risk for the children themselves, while the expression of their feelings against themselves, against others and against their school directly relates to the psychological climate of the school. Teacher and school staff should be encouraged to foster a school climate that is based on the respect that each of its members has for him/herself and for others. Similarly, educators should exhibit an active interest for the problems of the children and set clear and precise limits for desirable behaviors.

The study further revealed the importance of school level interventions in reducing the levels of bullying. It is important that authorities first understand the dynamics of bullying and the impact it has on students. A survey must be conducted to determine the extent, nature, and location of bullying or ‘hot spots’ of bullying in the school premises. Significant adults and teachers must provide supervisory facilities to students and play an active role in changing their perception and attitude towards bullying. Counseling sessions must be made available to both bullies and victims of bullying.

Kabasakal & Bas (2010) assessed links between physical violence (hitting, pushing and kicking), relational violence (making fun, calling names) and parents’ marital status. 31.2 % of parents’ of students’ who were exposed to physical violence were married, 46.1 % were married but live separately and 42.1 % were divorced. It was found that exposure to physical violence was meaningfully related to parents’ being married or not. Significant relations were also found between parent’s educational level and a student’s involvement in a physical fight, usage of a
sharp object in a fight and students’ being punished. Lastly, the study found that the more families drink alcohol, higher is the frequency of physical fighting in students.

Further, it was found that the students exposed to relational violence meaningfully differed according to their mothers’ reactions when students behave in an undesirable way (α²=7.602a, SD=2, p<.022) but found no meaningful difference in terms of the frequency of other violent and aggressive behaviors. The results of this research also show the frequency of violent and aggressive behaviors among elementary school students differ meaningfully depending on parents’ reactions toward their children.

This study has important implications, as it shows that parents’ educational level, marital status, their alcohol consumption and abstinence, their reactions to their children when they act in an undesirable way, all are significantly related to the frequency of violent and aggressive behaviors in students.

As parental behaviors play important role in both the prevention of frequent violent, aggressive behaviors and students’ acquiring social skills, it is helpful to equip parents with functional parenting behaviors during school guidance studies. In addition, including parents in programs about coping with violent and aggressive behaviors at schools will increase the overall impact of such programs.

Frisen, Jonsson and Persson (2007) in their study found that when asked about adults at school and the support they offer most students stated that adults chose not to intervene. This indicates that adults have little faith in an adult’s ability to stop bullying.

It is very clear from this study that most learners have positive attitudes and intentions when observing bullying. The tendency of students to feel more comfortable informing a teacher rather than directly opposing the bullying is understandable in view of their possible vulnerability
to become victims of bullying. Informing teachers may place them at a greater risk and some protection by teachers is therefore necessary.

**Mestry, Merwe and Squelch (2006)** reviewed literature on bullying and realized that though bystanders play a crucial role in perpetuating the cycle of bullying, most of them do not take a stand against bullying. Against this background, the “Bystander Project” on Bullying in schools was conceptualized. The project was initiated by the University of South Australia, under the management of Dr. Ken Rigby.

The aim of this project was to describe the behavior of student bystanders (intended and observed) of bullying in schools; to relate the reported behaviors and intentions to past experiences of respondents as bullies, victims and neither; and to examine the reasons learners give for their actions or intentions through an analysis of open-ended questions.

Participants viewed an audio and video presentation of drawings depicting physical bullying, verbal bullying and sexual coercion in the presence of student bystanders. They then anonymously answered questions using a questionnaire based on the video to give their estimates of occurrence of these forms of bullying behavior at their schools, and on how they believed they personally would respond as bystanders in each situation. In addition, respondents provided information about their expectations of what significant others would expect them to do in such incidences.

The sample comprised of purposively selected learners in grades six (6) and seven (7) at primary school level (n = 262) and learners in grades eight (8) and nine (9) at secondary school level (n = 201). The group consisted of 47,8% male learners (222) and 52,2% female learners (242). The group further comprised of 33,7% grade six (156); 27,9% grade seven (129); 23,8% grade eight (110); and 14,7% grade nine (68) learners.
With reference to the types of bullying, learners reported a higher frequency of verbal and indirect bullying than physical bullying on a regular basis. Name calling, teasing and spreading lies were most reported behaviors. No apparent differences were obtained between genders with reference to the types of bullying experienced. Male learners and female learners were of the opinion that ‘unpleasant teasing’ and ‘name-calling’ are more prevalent than other forms of bullying, while female learners indicated that they experience more gossip and lies being spread about them. Interestingly, a high percentage of male and female learners were of the opinion that physical hitting or kicking, exclusion and threats did not take place as often as some of the other types of behavior.

Differences between primary school and secondary school learners were also investigated with respect to weekly bullying in the presence of bystanders. Verbal bullying in the presence of bystanders, at least once a week, occurred more often than physical or sexual bullying in both primary and secondary schools. It was also found that verbal bullying in the presence of bystanders occurred more often in primary school than secondary school. Physical bullying in the presence of bystanders appeared to be less prevalent at secondary school than at primary school while sexual bullying in the presence of bystanders occurred more at secondary school.

With regards to respondents’ views on how they would react in certain bullying situations as bystanders, male learners in primary and secondary schools behave similarly as bystanders with regard to both verbal bullying and physical bullying. 27.5% of primary school male learners indicated that when observing bullying in both instances, they call for teachers’ attention, while 24.8% of secondary school male learners in both instances called for teachers when observing bullying. Though students claimed to speak out as bystanders to discourage bullying, most of them shared that they would just ignore what was going on and in a way let the bullying continue.
It is very clear from this study that most learners have positive attitudes and intentions when observing bullying. The tendency of students to feel more comfortable informing a teacher rather than directly opposing the bullying is understandable in view of their possible vulnerability to become victims of bullying. Informing teachers may place them at a greater risk and some protection by teachers is therefore necessary.

The role of parents, teachers and school management in designing and implementing a school wide intervention that is aimed at shaping, increasing and maintaining peer control over bullying incidents, is vital and crucial. Greater emphasis needs to be placed on the crucial role that all adults and the community play in monitoring and supporting positive and interceptive behavior of all bystanders witnessing bullying at school. Bystanders, on their part, need to be taught how their behaviors can either support or discourage bullies. Formal programs that teach bystanders to recognize, report bullying and to empathize with and support victims, can not only reduce bullying but improve the school ethos in general.

Veenstra, Lindenberg, Oldehinkel, De winter, Verhulst, and Ormel (2005), conducted a study to understand the extent to which uninvolved pupils, bullies, victims, and bully-victims differ on the basis of SES, familial vulnerability, and parenting (emotional warmth, overprotection, and rejection). Researchers were interested in exploring whether parenting characteristics (specifically reduced emotional warmth and an enlarged rejection) were positively related to bullies and bully-victims and whether overprotection and rejection were positively related to being a victim. They explored which characteristics are most related to bullying and victimization—individual characteristics or social circumstances (such as parenting, SES) familial vulnerability. They explored familial vulnerability and questioned whether bullies and bully-victims have an enlarged familial vulnerability to externalizing disorders, whereas victims have an enlarged familial vulnerability to internalizing disorders.
2935 children from 122 schools participated in the study. The mean age of the children was 11.09 years ($SD = 0.55$); 50.8% were girls. Well-trained interviewers visited one of the parents (preferably the mother, 95.6%) at their homes to administer an interview covering a wide range of topics, including the child’s developmental history and somatic health, parental psychopathology, and care utilization. The parent was also asked to fill out a questionnaire. Children filled out questionnaires at school (in the classroom), under the supervision of one or more research assistants. In addition, intelligence and a number of biological and neurocognitive parameters were assessed individually (also at school). Teachers were asked to fill out a brief questionnaire for all children in their class who were participating in the study.

Parental psychopathology with respect to depression, anxiety, substance abuse, antisocial behavior, and psychoses was measured by means of the Brief TRAILS Family History Interview administered at the parent interview. Each syndrome was introduced by a vignette describing its main symptoms and followed by a series of questions to assess lifetime occurrence, professional treatment, and medication use. The Egna Minnen Betra¨ff and Uppfostran (My Memories of Upbringing) for Children (EMBU–C; Markus, Lindhout, Boer, Hoogendijk, and Arrindell, 2003) was developed to assess children’s and adolescents’ perception of parents’ rearing practices. Each item, with a 4-point answer scale, was presented to both the father and the mother. The EMBU–C contains the factors Emotional Warmth, Rejection, and Overprotection.

For analysis, the study used chi-square tests and analyses of variance and conducted multinomial logistic regression.
With regards to familial vulnerability, the study found indications that bully-victims and victims had an enlarged familial vulnerability to externalizing and internalizing disorder, respectively. Thus, familial vulnerability is an additional factor that needs to be considered in any anti-bullying work.

Uninvolved pre-adolescents came from families with a higher SES than that of bully-victims, bullies, or victims. Their familial background was advantaged. However, neither emotional warmth nor rejection and overprotection distinguished between bully-victims, bullies, victims, and uninvolved children in the MNLM. Interestingly, parenting characteristics had no impact on bullying and victimization (not even indirectly). Victims were found to be positive about their relations with parents. They had relational problems with (some of) their peers but not with their parents. Bully-victims perceived their parenting circumstances to be less favorable than did victims or uninvolved children (less warmth and more rejection).

An important finding was that individual characteristics, such as: dislikability, aggressiveness, isolation, and gender, were strongly related, whereas parenting was unrelated to bullying and victimization.

The study has important implications. It points to the fact that parenting may have more impact on bullying and victimization in (early) childhood than in preadolescence, because then parents are rarely present when aggressive interactions occur. Familial vulnerability acts as a contributing factor in bullying, therefore parent level interventions and awareness need to be incorporated into any kind of anti-bullying work.

De Wet (2005) presented a report based on the investigation of a group of Free State Educators’ recognition of bullying, their reaction to incidences of bullying, and their perceptions of the effectiveness of a number of bullying prevention strategies.
Respondents were mostly witnesses of direct physical bullying. More than 40% of the educators indicated that they had witnessed incidents of physical bullying on a daily basis. Only 6.44% of the educators had never seen incidents of physical bullying. Results revealed that the majority of Free State learners had been exposed to direct verbal bullying on a weekly basis.

With regards to their perception of the effectiveness of bullying prevention strategies, the respondents did not see intervention strategies as involving educators, but saw those, in which parents played a key role, as the most effective bullying prevention strategies. It appears that as teachers typically report misbehavior to student parents, they feel their role as teachers lies mainly in creating an atmosphere of trust with their students, so that acts of bullying could be reported to them and positive relations could be created.

Results further revealed that majority of the respondents were willing to intervene in cases of verbal and physical bullying. Around 88.29% of the respondents intervened in cases of verbal and 89.71% in incidences of physical bullying. However, some of the educators ignored incidences of bullying or even helped the bullies.

The seriousness of this action warrants the need for educators to be provided with training and awareness based sessions on the nature of bullying, its negative effects and how they can effectively handle it. Both researchers and the respondents in this study lay emphasis on the necessity of parental involvement in the fight against bullying. Educators must therefore communicate with parents on a regular basis and school authorities must provide them with periodic awareness sessions on bullying.

It is vital that educators, learners, parents as well as school authorities in general, should work as a team to reduce bullying by implementing effective prevention strategies. A school environment must be created that prioritizes respect, recognition, security and growth for all learners.
Beran (2005) conducted a study to examine pre-service teachers’ attitudes about bullying according to the degree of concern, confidence, and commitment they experience. Beran assessed their concern about bullying as a problem, their confidence in managing bullying, their commitment to the problem of bullying, and their level of preparation in managing bullying. In addition, gender differences between teachers in these attitudes were explored.

A total of 514 students (n = 346, 67% females, n = 122, 24% males, n = 46) enrolled in a teacher preparation program at a Canadian university were surveyed. Pre-service teacher's perspectives on bullying were measured via a questionnaire that was specifically developed for this study. Several items asked about each area: their concern about bullying (e.g., “Bullying is a problem in schools”), their confidence in managing bullying (e.g., “I feel confident in managing bullying”), their commitment (e.g., “I want to learn more about bullying in my university education”), and their level of preparation in managing bullying (e.g., “My current university education has been preparing me to deal with bullying”). Pre-service teachers also attended an organizational meeting with their course instructors to review program policies and procedures.

To determine which of the scale’s items measure the types of attitudes of interest and to examine gender and year of study differences, a principal components analysis with a varimax rotation was used for analysis.

Results showed that majority of pre-service teachers held negative attitudes about bullying. Only a few indicated feeling confident or prepared to deal with the problem.

Pre-service teachers appear to be sensitive about the problem of bullying and feel a desire to support students. The majority of pre-service teachers show concern for bullying and take responsibility for bullying according to their recognition of the need for activities that fall within their domain (i.e., teaching classroom curriculum on bullying, leading classroom activities that address bullying).
In addition to their sense of commitment to address bullying, the majority of pre-service teachers in this study recognized the need for other school system personnel (administrators, counselors and other professionals), family members and community people to share the responsibility of managing bullying. Rather than assign responsibility to others, a large majority of pre-service teachers seem to commit themselves alongside school administrators and others who are directly and indirectly involved in the education system. It seems like they wanted to work collaboratively with others to find and implement creative and effective solutions to reduce bullying and increase student safety.

The study highlights an important finding. In contrast to the high degree of commitment and concern reported by pre-service teachers, confidence about managing bullying was relatively low. This lack of confidence may be due to the lack of training they have received that specifically addresses bullying. However, this finding may also reflect pre-service teachers’ uncertainty about their abilities as teachers in general, rather than about bullying, in particular.

Government agencies, schools and colleges have been identifying a lack of awareness and know-how amongst pre-service educators. Hence, it is vital that teacher training programs cover numerous matters related to both the socio-emotional and academic development of children.

Another important implication of this study is that it was found that teachers reported experiencing stress while managing student’s disruptive behaviors.

Hence, it was recommended that teacher preparation programs include training not only on the nature of school bullying (e.g., prevalence, types, and impact of bullying), but also on effective management skills (e.g., bullying prevention and intervention strategies, stress management etc.).
Craig & Harel (2005) - This study revealed that the more frequently young people engage in bullying, the more likely they are to be at risk of developing emotional, physical, psychological and academic problems. Though various intervention studies have achieved 50% reduction in such behaviors, many young people are still at risk of regular abuse at the hands of their peers and many aggressive young people are not receiving the support they need to move off pathways that may have long-term negative health consequences. 36% of young people were found to be uninvolved in fighting and bullying, although they were negatively influenced by what they saw. Hence a universal program targeted at changing the behavior of these bystanders and engaging them in preventing bullying was more likely to be effective.

2.5 BULLYING PREVENTION

Williams, Gavine, Ward, Donnelly, Barlow, Dawes, and Goodall (2015) conducted a systematic review to evaluate the effectiveness of universal school-based programs that are aimed at the primary prevention of violence in 11-18 year olds. A pre-defined strategy was used to search various databases, gray literature, previous reviews, and reference lists of included studies. 9 databases: EMBASE, Medline, PsycINFO, CINAHL, Education Resources Information Centre (ERIC), Applied Social Sciences Index and Abstracts (ASSIA), Web of Knowledge, Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials (CENTRAL), Social, Psychological, Educational and Criminal Trials Register of the Campbell Collaboration were accessed.

The researchers primarily looked for randomized design trials and quasi-experimental design trials published between 2002 and March 2014 in the English language. 8051 abstracts were screened and 21 studies were identified that satisfied the inclusion/exclusion criteria. These studies evaluated 16 different programs based mainly in the US.

The study identified two specific types of interventions. First, social development (SD) programs that aimed to develop pro-social skills (PSS; e.g. anger management, empathy,
problem-solving, communication and decision-making skills). Secondly, social norms (SN) programs that aimed to promote school wide norms for non-violence. Seven programs were stand-alone SD programs (Botvin, Griffin, and Nichols, 2006; Castillo, Salguero, Fernandez- Berrocal, and Balluerka, 2013; Espelage, Low, Polanin, and Brown, 2013; Griffin, Holliday, Frazier, and Braithwaite, 2009; Jiménez-Barbero et al, 2013; Kliewer et al., 2011; Yeager, Trzesniewski, and Dweck, 2013) and aimed to give students the skills to avoid violence and manage conflict peacefully.

Five studies combined social development programs with attempts to foster caring school communities which it was hoped would also create pro-social norms within the student body (Chauveron, Thompkins, and Harel, 2012; Farrell et al, 2003a; Farrell et al, 2003b; Meyer, Roberto, Boster, and Roberto, 2004; VanSchoiack-Edstrom et al, 2002). Two studies utilized only a SN approach (Katz, Heisterkamp, and Fleming, 2011; Swaim & Kelly, 2008), which were delivered by peer mentors in an attempt to influence and change students’ normative beliefs and behaviors.

SD programs varied in their duration with ranges from four sessions (Kliewer et al, 2011) to four years (Flay et al, 2004).

Majority of the SD programs utilized a combination of scenario-based, didactic and experiential activities designed to develop pro-social skills to prevent violence. However, one program utilized expressive writing, which aimed to reduce aggressive behavior by enhancing emotional control (Kliewer et al, 2011).

Programs were mostly carried out in middle schools (students aged 12-14 years) with only three implemented in a high-school setting (Castillo et al, 2013; Katz et al, 2011; Yeager et al, 2013). However the study designed by Van Schoiack-Edstorm et al (2002) comprised of
an evaluation of level 1 of the program (delivered to 6th grade students) and level 2 of the program (delivered to 7th grade students).

All studies were conducted in the US with the exception of two studies in Spain (Jiménez-Barbero et al, 2013), and one in the US and Canada (Van Schoiack-Edstrom et al, 2002). Moreover, the schools tended to be located in urban settings with high levels of socioeconomic deprivation (SED), with only two studies in rural communities (Farrell et al, 2003b; Swaim & Kelly, 2008).

All studies utilized a cluster-controlled trial design, with the clusters either at the school- or class-level, and allocation was randomized in eight evaluations.

Results revealed that there was heterogeneity between studies in the methods used to measure outcomes (i.e. different scales, self-report, or school data). Further, follow-up varied considerably from immediately post-intervention up to 2-years.

**Violent Behavior:** Seven different interventions were evaluated (AbanAya, BRAVE, Get Real About Violence, LST, RIPP- 6, RIPP-7, Resolve It Solve it, Second Step: Student Success Through Prevention). These studies examined the impact on the frequency of perpetration of physical violence. Four studies showed that there were significant improvements ($p < .05$) in self-reported violent behavior (VB). Botvin et al (2006) found that the intervention group who received at least 50% of the intervention, were about half as likely to be involved in frequent fighting at 6-months post-intervention. Flay et al (2004) reported a significantly reduced rate of increase in physical violence compared to the control groups; however, a further analysis of this data by Segawa et al (2005) identified that this effect was only found in “high risk” students, primarily because there was a floor effect in “low risk” students. Swaim & Kelly (2008) reported a significantly faster rate of decline in violent behavior in intervention group students. Espelage et al (2013) reported that intervention students were significantly less likely to report violent
fighting behavior at post-test. However, though Farrell et al (2003a) reported no significant effect at any of the follow-up periods, analysis did indicate there was a significant pre-test x treatment effect at 6 months and at 12 months which suggests that those with the worst pre-test scores had the biggest improvements. In addition, Griffin et al (2009) and Meyer et al (2004) reported no significant effects.

Physical Aggression: The impact of the intervention programs on physical aggression was measured in six evaluations, four of which reported a significant positive effect compared to the control group – Botvin et al (2006), Castillo et al (2013) and Farrell et al (2003b) at 9-months only. Kliewer et al (2011) reported a significant reduction in teacher ratings of aggression compared to controls. In contrast, Swaim & Kelly (2008) reported no significant difference in self-reported physical aggression, and the Multisite Violence Prevention Program (2009) reported a small but significant increase in self-reported physical aggression in the intervention group and slower decreases in teacher-rated physical aggression.

Non-physical Aggression: Six program evaluations measured non-physical aggression, four of which reported a significant positive program: Botvin et al (2006), Castillo et al (2013) Meyer et al (2004) and Yeager et al (2013). However, Farrell et al (2003a) did not report a significant effect on non-physical aggression in the evaluation of RIPP-7 (although there was a significant pre-test treatment group interaction at 6 months and at 12 months. Swaim & Kelly (2008) reported no significant difference in the evaluation of Resolve It, Solve It.

Victimization: Four programs measured victimization as an outcome, two of which reported a significant decrease. In addition to small improvements in physical aggression, Farrell et al (2003b) reported a small decrease at the midpoint of the intervention compared to controls; however, this was not sustained at 4- or 9-month follow-up. Secondly, while the Multisite Violence Prevention Program (2009) reported that the GREAT program was
associated with increased physical aggression, victimization in the universal intervention students decreased slightly over the course of the study. Furthermore, Swaim & Kelly (2008) reported a significant positive effect on verbal victimization but not physical victimization. In contrast, Griffin et al (2009) reported no significant effect on victimization.

Violence within school: Three studies examined the effect on perceived school safety or violence. Swaim & Kelly (2008) reported that although perceived school safety declined in both control and intervention schools, the rate of decline was greater in the control schools. Although the GREAT program was associated with a small but significant decrease in self-report victimization, there was no significant effect on perceived school safety. Jimenez-Barbero et al (2013) used perceived school violence as an outcome measure and reported significant changes in perceived playground violence by girls only.

Attitudes towards violence: this was the most commonly measured outcome (9 evaluations) using a range of scales and measures. It was found that programs that utilized social development and social norms approaches generally had positive impacts on beliefs and attitudes towards violence. Farrell et al (2003b) found that compared to control students, intervention students had small but significant improvements in approval of violent behavior at 4-month follow-up. They also found that intervention students had significantly higher approval of non-violence at 4-month and 9-month follow-up compared to control students. However, Farrell et al (2003a) reported no positive whole group effects for attitude towards violence, although it was found that there was positive effect for boys only at 12 months. Van-Schoiack-Edstorm et al (2002) reported that both level 1 and 2 intervention students had significant reductions in pro-aggressive attitudes compared to controls. The Leadership Program’s Violence Prevention Project reported positive effects in terms of intervention students having a significantly slower increase in normative beliefs about aggression compared to controls (Chauveron et al, 2012); however, it should be noted that at baseline, intervention students had
significantly worse attitudes and behaviors towards violence and this study was graded as weak due to the high level of selection bias.

Of the two programs that utilized social norms approach only, only *Katz et al (2011)* used attitude towards violence as an outcome measure and reported that intervention students had significantly higher mean scores in perceived wrongfulness of aggressive behavior compared to control students.

However, the evaluations of social development programs had more mixed effects on attitudes towards violence. Whilst *Ngwe et al (2004)* demonstrated that the AbanAyaproject had a significant positive effect on attitudes, *Jimenez-Barbero et al (2011)* reported that the Count on Me program had no effect on attitudes. Moreover, students receiving the GREAT program actually had significantly higher levels of goals and strategies supportive of aggression and individual norms for non-verbal aggression.

**Pro-social Skills:** Five programs measured pro social skills as an outcome; however, there was considerable variation in how this was undertaken. *Jagers et al (2007)* reported that the AbanAyaproject was associated with less steep declines in empathy compared to the control, and *Castillo et al (2013)* reported a positive effect on empathy in male students. *Van Schoiack-Edstorm et al (2002)* reported that level 2 program students were less likely to perceive pro social skills as difficult to perform at post-test, although there was no significant effect for level-1 students. *Yeager et al (2013)* measured pro-social behavior by the percentage of students who wrote pro-social notes in the vignette and reported that three times as many incremental theory students left a note compared to control students.

**Conflict resolution skills:** Six studies examined the effect of the program on conflict resolution skills (CRS)/violence avoidance, with variation in the measurement tools and mixed program effects. *Chauveron et al (2012)* reported a positive program effect, with intervention
students being significantly more likely to avoid conflict using pro-social verbal skills or avoidant conflict resolution strategies. **Swaim & Kelly (2008)** reported significant positive effects in one of the two sub-scales for measuring violent behavior. Interestingly, there was no significant program effect on self-efficacy for non-violence at a whole group level; there was a significant positive effect for students classified as a high risk at baseline. However, **Jaegers et al (2007)** reported that the program had no significant effect on self-efficacy for violence avoidance. Similarly, neither RIPP-6 nor RIPP-7 (**Farrell et al, 2003a; Farrell et al, 2003**) had any significant effect on conflict resolution skills.

This review has important implications in that it reveals that universal school-based primary prevention intervention programs may have a small effect on a number of outcomes relating to violence (i.e. reducing violent behavior, physical aggression, non-physical aggression, and/or pro-violent and aggressive attitudes). The most frequently reported positive effects were for attitude towards violence and non-physical aggression.

Evaluations that conducted further analysis into mediating variables reported that program effects were greater for students who were considered at high risk of violence on the basis of baseline scores (**Farrell et al, 2003; Segawa et al, 2005**). Although these effects were only measured on a short-term basis (i.e. until the end of the school year or end of the following school year), we can understand that resources would be more effectively used if they target prevention violence programs rather than deliver them universally.

**Khamis (2015)** in his study identified that a child’s gender and emotion-focused coping stood out as risk factors for the development of bullying behaviors whereas age, problem focused coping, family environment, and school environment were significant protective factors. Children who were older, who used problem-focused coping strategies, and who had positive
perceptions of their family and school environments were less likely to be involved in bullying behavior than other children.

Iudici & Faccio (2013), carried out a literature review and found that aggression was often conceptualized as emerging, being maintained, and modified by a child's personality characteristics and the interactions between these and the social contexts (e.g., peers, family). The available research showed that there had been an improvement in anti-bullying intervention programs and prediction models of victimization and perpetration, nevertheless, there were still several difficulties in the management of specific prevaricating situations, due to the tendency to: (1) not consider the subjective point of view of children and their definition of aggression, often different from the one proposed by adults (2) underestimation of the role of adults and their relationships with the victims in modifying or exacerbating hostilities between peers (3) conceptualization of bullying as an individual phenomenon (the characteristics of the bully and the victim) rather than interpersonal and socially constructed.

In their article, they discuss the bullying phenomenon as departing from the critical analysis of different conceptualizations and introduce a relational perspective deriving from the labeling theory and Interactionism.

The theoretical matrix of interactionism suggests that the attribution of the role of bully may activate processes labeling and oversimplification of reality, radicalize the stigma, and freeze the possibilities of change as well as repositioning of the boy and his actions. Therefore, according to this perspective:

a) So-called arrogance is not an intrinsic property of the person, but a property given to him or her by the social community and by social norms;

b) Bullying is the result of the application of labels and sanctions by the offender (real or presumed);
c) It is necessary to abandon the synchronic search of causes that encourage people to act with plunging behavior in order to study a sequential perspective; the individual goes along a path of small steps, each of which is a condition for the development of a specific new perspective that is the premise for new actions;

d) The bully is generated within an existential path that can be defined in terms of a “career” in which he learns techniques, rules of conduct, justifications, and mature beliefs, interests, and opinions; and

e) The study of the school context laws and rules on which criteria actions are transformed into transgressions is of fundamental importance.

The researchers presented operational suggestions and strategies for teachers and families dealing with deviant minors – (1) Identifying the informal roles in the classroom (2) Analyzing the narratives used to make offensive actions and (3) Identify the contribution of adults in building prevaricating actions.

The researchers state that in any anti-bullying work, it is necessary to pay attention to the narratives that generate it, and assume the perspective of the observer who describes and explains the phenomenon. It is necessary to analyze the construction of meanings that actors attribute to the prevaricating actions and possible narratives that they include, triggered by the relational roles, including both victims and aggressors, forms of communication between peers, forms of communication between children and adults and their interaction, and the role of the school system.

This study affirms that the intervention of the psychologist should not be designed to contrast the so called bullying, but to manage the complex process of interactions between formal and informal education systems that regulates the social life of the boys, and the boys
too, with their expectations of social success in a symbolic universe made available by the dominant culture, but continuously renegotiated within peer and adult relationships.

Swearer, Espelage, Vaillancourt, and Hymel (2010) reviewed recent research on academic achievement, school climate, peer group functioning, and individual factors that were critical for enhancing the researchers efforts to effectively address school bullying. The impact of school-based anti-bullying programs and the challenges currently facing educators and researchers were considered. An ecologically based model of school bullying influenced by the emerging empirical literature was then proposed.

With regards to academic achievement, it was found that some studies demonstrated links between involvement in bullying and poor academic performance. However, the review further revealed that involvement in bullying may not automatically place a child at risk for poor achievement but can be one of a combination of factors that undermine a child’s engagement in school, underscoring the need for educators to pay particular attention to children who are victimized. Though the link between victimization and achievement were complicated, researchers have shown that school-based bullying prevention efforts can positively enhance school performance and achievement. It is therefore, crucial for educators to create a safe learning environment wherein all students can achieve optimally in school.

School climate was reviewed as adult supervision typically decreases when students move from elementary to middle and secondary school. Less structure and supervision were found to be associated with concomitant increases in student bullying, particularly in locations such as playgrounds, lunchrooms, and hallways. A positive school climate buffers the potentially negative impact of low parental caring and low positive peer influences on bullying perpetration and bullying victimization.
Studies showed that general aggression levels in the classroom and schools co-occur with other school-related problems. This suggests that prevention programs that address aggression can have significant impact on other school-related problems.

Another important influencing factor of bullying that was reviewed was bystander reaction and behaviors. Although many bullying prevention programs do address the role of the bystander, they do not address the fact that in many peer groups bullying might be the norm. Until these peer norms are modified, it is likely that bullying behaviors will remain intractable in schools. Based on the review it was recommended that strategies to foster positive bystander responses in bullying situations may be more effective with younger, elementary students than with older, secondary students, given evidence that younger students are significantly more likely to take direct positive action as bystanders (e.g., direct intervention, helping the victim, talking to adults) and that passive (do nothing) and aggressive (get back at the bully) responses increase with age.

The researchers in their review studied the methodological challenges in transferring research findings to practise. They found that intervention and prevention efforts that seek to raise awareness regarding bullying initially increase student reports of bullying, making evaluation of changes in rates of bullying difficult in short-term longitudinal evaluations. Further, one’s interpretation of bullying varies across cultures, language groups, reporters and individual characteristics like age and gender. Lastly, the use of different approaches to the assessment of bullying can lead to different findings.

This study provides important implications for future research, policy and practise. Before selecting a specific intervention, educators should investigate whether or not the intervention is based in research, if it promotes pro social behavior and if there are documented outcome data. Anti-bullying initiatives should include individual, peer, family, school, and
community efforts. Finally, it is important to consider school bullying as part of a larger focus within schools on social and emotional development and learning.

Vreeman & Carroll (2007) conducted a systematic review of rigorously evaluated school-based interventions that aimed at decreasing bullying. The data sources accessed were MEDLINE, PsycINFO, EMBASE, Educational Resources Information Center, Cochrane Collaboration, the Physical Education Index, and Sociology: A SAGE Full-Text Collection was searched for the terms bullying and bully.

For inclusion in the review, a study needed to describe an experimental intervention with control and intervention groups and to include a follow-up evaluation with measured outcomes. In addition, the intervention needed to be school based and designed to reduce or prevent bullying. Each article was analyzed to determine the study method, intervention components, outcomes measured, and results. The researchers found 2090 article citations and reviewed the references of relevant articles. Two reviewers critically evaluated 56 articles and found 26 studies that met the inclusion criteria. Though the articles varied substantially in intervention type, study population, study design, and outcome measures, the researchers managed to divide the interventions reviewed into 5 categories: curriculum interventions (10 studies), multidisciplinary or “whole-school” interventions (10 studies), targeted social and behavioral skills groups (4 studies), mentoring (1 study), and increased social work support (1 study). All 26 studies investigated interventions for some group of primary school students, but the primary grade levels varied from first to eighth grade. Six studies included secondary school students (older than eighth grade) in their interventions and outcomes. The selected studies reported a range of outcomes that were subsequently categorized into direct and indirect outcomes.
The researcher’s extracted data regarding direct outcome measures of bullying (bullying, victimization, aggressive behavior, and school responses to violence) and outcomes indirectly related to bullying (school achievement, perceived school safety, self-esteem, and knowledge or attitudes toward bullying).

The review revealed that 4 of the 10 curriculum studies showed decreased bullying, however, 3 of those 4 also showed no improvement in some populations. Of the 10 studies evaluating the whole-school approach, 7 revealed decreased bullying, with younger children having fewer positive effects. Three of the social skills training studies showed no clear bullying reduction. The mentoring study found decreased bullying for mentored children. The study of increased school social workers found decreased bullying, truancy, theft, and drug use.

This review has important implications as it helps us understand that though many school-based interventions directly reduce bullying, better results are availed for those interventions that involve multiple disciplines. Curricular changes alone less often affect bullying behaviors. Further, outcomes indirectly related to bullying are not consistently improved by these interventions. The school staff’s commitment to implementing the intervention also may play a crucial role in the success of an intervention. It is, therefore, critical to first address the systemic issues and social environment related to bullying and then apply the whole school approach involving multiple disciplines and the whole school community.

Johnson (2009) conducted a review on articles that focus on school violence in general. This area was chosen as school violence has the potential to impact the social, psychological, and physical well-being of both students and teachers and disrupt the learning process. In the review, she focused on a new area of research - the mechanisms by which the school environment determines the likelihood of school violence.
A search for peer-reviewed articles was made in six databases and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s report on school-violence interventions. Twenty-five articles that attempted to understand the influence of either the school social or physical environment in determining teacher and student perceptions of safety and experiences of violence were included.

The review revealed that most of the included articles were cross-sectional surveys of junior high or high school students and staff. As the articles used different measures of the school physical and social environment, a classification system was created. Using this system, studies showed that schools with less violence tend to have students who are aware of school rules and believe they are fair, have positive relationships with their teachers, feel that they have ownership in their school, feel that they are in a classroom and school environment that is positive and focused on learning, and in an environment that is orderly.

This review has important implications. The review shows us that a school’s social and physical environment appears to offer intervention opportunities to reduce school violence. However, the lack of consistency in school environment variables as well as the lack of longitudinal and experimental research designs limits the applicability of the findings obtained in these studies.

Craig & Harel (2004) through their study identified that effective interventions were required to deal with the young people who bully, those who are victimized and peer groups, teachers, parents and the wider community. Age influences these behaviors. Early interventions could therefore help reduce the problem. This means that children need to be targeted before the prevalence of these behaviors starts to increase. From a policy perspective, prevention programs need to be in place long before children are 11 years old.
2.6 SPECIFIC ANTI-BULLYING INTERVENTIONS


A total of 37 schools at 4 sites were randomized to 4 conditions: (1) a universal intervention that involved implementing a student curriculum and teacher training with 6th-grade students and teachers, (2) a selective intervention in which a family intervention was implemented with a subset of 6th-grade students exhibiting high levels of aggression and social influence, (3) a combined intervention condition, and (4) a no-intervention control condition.

Sixth graders were seen as at particular risk because of their transition from elementary schools and because of the variety of developmental changes that occur. Nonetheless, they were also representative of the smallest and least influential group of students within middle schools.

Analyses of multiple waves of data from 2 cohorts of students at each school (\( N = 5,581 \)) within the grade targeted by the interventions revealed a complex pattern. There was some evidence to suggest that the universal intervention was associated with increases in aggression and reductions in victimization; however, these effects were moderated by pre intervention risk. In contrast, the selective intervention was associated with decreases in aggression but no changes in victimization.

These findings have important implications for researchers who want to develop effective violence prevention programs.
Fekkes, Pijpers, and Vanhorick (2006) evaluated the effects of an anti-bullyingschool intervention in elementary schools.

The sample comprised three thousand eight hundred sixteen children aged 9 to 12 years. From forty-seven elementary schools in the Netherlands.

To study the effect of an anti-bullying school program, the design included an intervention group and a control group (control group 1). For both groups, a baseline measurement (T0) and 2 follow-up measurements (T1 and T2) were obtained. In addition, another control group was added to the design (control group 2). This group was included in case the schools in control group 1 would start an anti-bullying school policy on their own during the first year as a result of the baseline measurement.

Two questions were asked about general bullying behavior: How often did other children bully you in recent months? How often did you bully other children in recent months? Questions were based on the Dutch version of the Olweus Bully-Victim Questionnaire.

To assess psychosomatic complaints, students were asked about a series of health symptoms (e.g., headache, sleeping problems, or abdominal pain) and for each symptom were asked to report whether in the last 4 weeks they had experienced the symptom never, sometimes, or often.

Depression was evaluated with the Short Depression Inventory for Children. The questionnaire contains 9 items, for example, “The last weeks I felt down.” For each item, respondents answered whether this was true or not true.

Delinquent behavior was measured with a 7-item scale. Each item addressed a different form of delinquent behavior, such as “Have you stolen something at school?”
Experience of school life was measured with 3 scales from the Dutch School Experience Questionnaire31: “satisfaction with contact with other students” (8 items, e.g., “I would rather be in a classroom with other children”), general satisfaction with school life (10 items), and satisfaction with contact with teachers (15 items).

Compliance with the components of the intervention was measured by teacher reports. A questionnaire with questions regarding anti-bullying activities performed during the school year was distributed among teachers in the participating classes at the end of the second and third years.

All questionnaires were filled out by the students at 3 times to obtain the following data: a baseline measurement, a first effect measurement at the end of the first year, and a second effect measurement at the end of the second year.

Multilevel logistic and linear regression analyses were used to calculate effects of the intervention at the end of the first and second years of the study. Three levels were included in the analyses: school, classroom, and individual.

During the first study year, an anti-bullying school program was implemented in the schools in the intervention group. It included teachers, bullied children, bullies, non-involved children, and parents in the efforts to lower the bullying behavior. A 2-day training session was provided to teachers to create awareness of bullying behavior, to assist them in applying anti-bullying measures, and to instruct them on how to deal with bullying incidents among children. Schools were supplied with the booklet *Bullying in School: How to Deal With It*, which describes how a school can develop an anti-bullying policy and undertake various measures. They were also supplied with the Bullying Test, a computerized questionnaire that children can complete anonymously in the classroom and that gives the teacher an insight into the bullying behavior of the students.
Results obtained showed that the number of bullied children decreased by 25% in the intervention group compared with the control group (relative risk, 0.75; 95% confidence interval, 0.57-0.98). The intervention group also showed a decline in the scale scores of victimization (−1.06 vs. 0.28; \( P\)-.01) and active bullying behaviors (−0.47 vs. 0.12, \( P\)-.05). Self-reported peer relationships improved in the intervention schools (0.48 vs. 0.11; \( P\)-.05), and there was a trend for a decrease in reported depression in the intervention schools (−0.33 vs. −0.10; \( P\)-.10). At follow-up, there were no differences between the intervention and control groups for the outcome measures. Schools had also lowered their anti-bullying activities during the second study year.

The study is promising in that it shows that an anti-bullying school policy can bring about reductions in bullying behavior. To keep bullying at a consistently low level, schools must continue anti-bullying measures every year. Continued counseling is effective and can help schools in their efforts to establish a lasting anti-bullying policy.

Hirschstein, Edstrom, Frey, Snell, and Mackenzie (2007) conducted a study to examine relationships between teacher implementation of a comprehensive bullying prevention program and student outcomes.

Implementation in third through sixth-grade classrooms (\( N\)=36) was measured by observation and teacher report. Student outcomes were measured by student surveys and teacher ratings of peer social skills (\( N\)=549) and observations of playground behaviors (\( n\)=298).

Multilevel modeling showed that teacher coaching of students involved in bullying was associated with less observed victimization and destructive bystander behavior among students engaged in these problems at pretest, and less observed aggression among fifth- and sixth-grade students. Support for skill generalization related to reductions in observed aggression and victimization among older students.
Adherence to lessons was associated with higher ratings of peer social skills. Quality of lesson instruction corresponded to greater self-reported victimization, as well as more perceived difficulty responding assertively to bullying.

The study showed that provision of ongoing support to teachers and examination of students’ knowledge about bullying (e.g., its frequency and different forms), as well as their perceptions about self-reporting bullying and victimization can provide advanced understanding and measurement of bullying-related phenomena, and consequently improve data-based decision-making and prevention efforts in schools.


The intervention model was based on Bandura’s theory that children learn to be aggressive by observing aggressive behaviors 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. A result of this learning of aggressive behavior is a belief on the part of children that those who are weaker or victimized deserve to be victims, resulting in “blaming the victim for being a victim.”
Four research questions were explored: (1) Does a psychoeducational intervention for middle school teachers affect teacher’s knowledge of bullying intervention skills? (2) Does a psychoeducational intervention for middle school teachers affect teacher’s use of bullying intervention skills? (3) Does a psychoeducational intervention for middle school teachers affect teacher’s self-efficacy? (4) Does a psychoeducational intervention for middle school teachers have an effect on the number of student discipline referrals?

Participants were 15 sixth, seventh, and eight grade middle school teachers employed in a public school district. Out of the 15, 5 were male and 10 were female.

The program comprised seven modules and was implemented in the form of a staff development training workshop. The components of the program included information pertaining to bullying and victimization, recommended interventions, prevention strategies, stress-management techniques as well as classroom activities.

Four instruments were utilized to address the research study’s questions: Teacher Inventory of Skills and Knowledge (TISK), Teacher Efficacy Scale (TES), Teacher Efficacy and Attribution Measure (TEAM), and Osiris School Administration System Activity Tracker (OAS). A quasi-experimental pretest – posttest control group design was implemented.

Results revealed that the bully prevention treatment program for middle school teachers was an effective intervention for increasing teacher’s knowledge of bullying intervention skills, use of bullying intervention skills, teacher’s personal self-efficacy and teacher’s self-efficacy related to working with specific types of children as well as reducing the amount of bullying in the classroom as measured by teacher disciplinary referrals.

Exposing teachers to a bully prevention training program may be an efficient and effective means not only to reduce and prevent bullying but, more important, to create a safe learning environment for students and teachers.
Meraviglia, Becker, Rosenbluth, Sanchez, and Robertson (2003) developed the Expect Respect project, a violence prevention program, to reduce the incidence of bullying and sexual harassment by creating a positive school climate in which inappropriate behaviors are not tolerated and staff members respond consistently to incidents.

The project implemented an educational intervention for students, parents, and staff members on expecting respect in student relationships and strategies for responding to inappropriate student behaviors. Its design was based on Olweus’s research, which demonstrated significant reductions in bullying and improvements in school climate following a multilevel intervention program (Olweus et al., 1999). To achieve reductions in bullying and sexual harassment behaviors and improvement in school climate, the Expect Respect Project had five components: classroom curriculum, staff training, policy development, parent education, and support services.

Twelve weekly educational sessions, adapted from Bullyproof (Stein, Sjostrom, and Gaberman, 1996), were provided to all fifth-grade students in the intervention schools. The curriculum was selected because it focused on increasing the ability and willingness of bystanders to intervene and thus might reduce the social acceptance of bullying and sexual harassment.

School administrators, principals, counselors, and fifth grade teachers from the intervention schools attended a training session on implementing the curriculum. Two additional training sessions for staff members were given on bullying, sexual harassment, and domestic violence. Educational information included project activities, ideas for helping children with bullying problems, strategies for responding to bullying behavior, and information about relevant school and community resources.
Parents were invited to attend both an orientation to the project prior to student participation and evening parent education sessions. The education sessions provided information about the project; vocabulary used to discuss bullying and sexual harassment at school; strategies for helping children who are bullied, bully others, and witness bullying; and tips for preventing bullying among siblings and for responding to it. Each semester, parent newsletters were sent home with students in participating schools.

Based on the goals of the project, it was hypothesized that students and staff in the intervention schools, compared with those in the comparison schools, would demonstrate greater increases in their knowledge and awareness of behaviors that constitute bullying and sexual harassment. In addition, students and staff in the intervention schools would choose appropriate adult actions toward bullying and sexual harassment behaviors.

Findings from the project showed a significant increase in awareness of bullying following the educational intervention. Bullying was reported to have occurred in areas with less adult supervision such as the playground, cafeteria, hallway, and buses. Students thought staff would respond to inappropriate behaviors by telling students to ignore verbal bullying or sexual harassment. In contrast, staff at the elementary schools thought adults would respond to inappropriate behaviors by telling the bully to stop, calling his or her parents, or giving a specific punishment.

2.7 SOCIAL SKILLS TRAINING PROGRAMS

Stan & Beldean (2014) conducted a study to assess whether the constant support of the development of social and emotional skills and abilities of middle school students would determine their socio-emotional optimization and bring about a reduction in the frequency of bullying-type events. An anti-bullying program was developed based on the adaptation to the specifics of Romanian students in of the "Program Achieve. You Can Do It!" by Bernard (2008).
Two hypotheses were formulated. (1) Students from the school where the Anti-Bullying Program was implemented would be significantly less involved in bullying and aggressive acts and they would manifest more prosocial behaviors after the intervention, compared to students from the school where the program was not applied; (2) The socio-emotional status of well-being would improve significantly after the intervention for students at the school where the anti-bullying program was implemented, compared to the students from the school where the program was not applied.

The sample comprised 231 students (124 <53.8%> girls and 107 <46.2%> boys) of ages ranging between 10 and 14, from two middle schools.

While conducting the research, the following two work conditions were met: (a) First condition – conduction of the anti-bullying program with all its components. All students (N=117) from grades 5th - 6th and 7th - 8th from the school where the anti-bullying program was implemented were involved. Thus, the students from this school (school A) formed the experimental group; (b) Second condition - Control. Students (N=114) from grades 5th - 6th and 7th - 8th from the school where the anti-bullying program was not conducted formed the control group (school B).

For data collection, the Bullying Student Self-Report Questionnaire built by Stevens, De Bourdeaudhuij, and Oost (2000) for the Finnish population (included items belonging to Olweus’ Self-report Bullying Inventory and Arora’s Life in School Checklist) was translated and adapted into Romanian (Beldean-Galea & Jurcău, 2010). This survey consisted of three scales -bullying, victimization (which evaluates the frequency of bullying and victimization as well as the forms of bullying and victimization - social exclusion, verbal, physical, indirect) and positive behaviors during the three months preceding the survey. The scores for the answer choices on the survey items were: 0 - never; 1- rarely, 2 - sometimes; 3 -often; 4 - very often (several times
a week). The Student Social and Emotional Wellbeing Self-Report (filled out by students) - *(Bernard, Stephanou and Urbach, 2007)* was used to evaluate the social and emotional level of wellbeing.

Students from both schools (experimental and control group) responded to the questionnaires in the pre-test stage, post which, the anti-bullying program was applied to the experimental group. The program used was the "Program Achieve - You Can Do It!" which was translated into Romanian by Bernard *(2008)*. The program represented a part of the Australian program “Education. You can do!” whose main aim was to promote welfare and socio-emotional achievements of students. The objective of the program used in this study was to improve the educational environment via the development of social and emotional abilities in students. It comprised of a Tutor guide - a set of lessons (taught to the entire class by their tutor) from the program package. The program was based on the idea that there is a specific set of social and emotional skills that determine the extent of success that the students register on school activities, creating positive relationships and emotional wellbeing. A set of 19 lessons from 34 presented in “Tutor’s Guide” were taught by tutors and the religion teacher during tutor classes (12 hours) and religion classes (6 hours), to 5th-6th grades, as well as 7th – 8th grades in School A. The program had a cognitive component which taught students to use Habits of the Mind that support and nourish: Confidence, Persistence, Organization, Getting-Along and Resilience. Beside these, the program included activities created to inform the youth about the way they think (e.g. internal language), about how their thinking influences their feelings and behaviors and how to transform irrational, negative thoughts (which are illogical or untrue) into rational, positive thoughts (logical, true and useful) that can help them take responsibility not only for their own self, but also for the learning process.
Advertising material for parents and students were further added to the package. Flyers such as "Assertiveness as a middle way between aggressivity and passivity" were created for students with the purpose of informing them about aspects which describe aggressive, passive and assertive behavior; and which helped them understand the benefits of adopting an assertive behavior instead of a passive or aggressive behavior. A Parents Journal - was also conceived with the purpose of familiarizing parents with some information they should know (regarding ways of developing social and emotional abilities of the child) and which at the same time urged them to contribute in increasing the social and emotional level of their child. It comprised a self-evaluation for parents regarding their relationship with their child and a foothold for the parents who wish to develop the social and emotional abilities of their child. The material was sent to parents through their children at the beginning of the first class taught by tutors.

Post intervention, a post test stage was conducted wherein students from both schools (experimental and control) filled out the same questionnaires from the pretest stage.

For analysis, the 't' test (between sample pairs) along with Cohen's "d" subscript and r2 coefficient of determination were used.

Results obtained confirmed the hypotheses which stated that alongside the development of social and emotional skills, the students' socio-emotional well-being would also improve, which would result in less frequent manifestations of bullying-type events, victimization and increased frequency of prosocial behavior among middle school students. It was found that the socio-emotional well-being status improved for students that received the intervention especially from an emotional point of view compared to students from the school where the program was not applied. This increment was found to be significantly influenced by the development of personal factors, namely:
A significantly higher level of resistance and ability to adjust to stress, respectively rational attitudes for emotional adjustment and behavioral control regarding anger, depression, frustration resistance, excessive concern, procrastination; and,

A significantly higher level of social skills - the spirit of cooperation (empathy, conflict resolution, the ability to make friends and values (honesty, integrity, fairness, tolerance of others, sense of responsibility, courtesy, respect for commitment, doing his best) greater confidence, perseverance and organization during work.

The increase in the level of social and emotional well-being, in the post-test stage in the experimental school was found to be influenced by the "school" (class masters) external factor that were significantly involved in activities aimed at the development of social and emotional skills of students.

No significant involvement of the "family"(parents) external factor was observed in the development of the social and emotional skills of their children. Some reasons for this could be: low socio-cultural level of the parents and their absence from home for a longer or shorter period of time. It was found that even the simple distribution of the booklet – the Parent Journal, did not influence them to engage more than usual in their relation with their child.

An unexpected result that was achieved by the study was the decline in well-being in terms of education post intervention both in the experimental group as well as the control group. The researchers explained that this could be due to two reasons – the experimental intervention was conducted over too short a period of time, and thereby failed to fully achieve the purpose for which it was developed. Another explanation may be that given by Cowie & Olafsson (2000) who claim that when these interventions are implemented, bullying-type behavior seems to grow due to an increased awareness even if, in reality, there has been no actual propagation of these behaviors.
The study has important implications. It points out the need and importance of having a school counselor, who can provide students with a medium to handle their emotional needs and concerns. It also points out the need for school administrators and teachers to provide students, via training, with a practical model for intervention that will help them improve the quality of their interpersonal relations and the school’s educational climate in general.

Koiv (2012) developed a Social Skills Training (SST) Program for targeted pupils - bullies and victims. The program was a combination of social-learning and cognitive-behavioral techniques, used to help children build social skills and positive relationships with peers. It comprised a highly structured group intervention with a number of sessions containing scripts and activities to undertake. The overarching goals were to build basic behavioral and cognitive social skills, reinforce prosocial attitudes and behavior, and build adaptive coping strategies for social problems of bullying.

A sample consists of total of 488 (244 girls and 244 boys) students in grades 5 through 9 (ages 10 - 18 years) from two different mainstream schools form Estonia. The sample was evenly distributed across the sexes (50% boys, 50% girls) with a mean age of 15.3 years (SD=1.67).

A Peer Nomination Inventory was used to assess the prevalence of school bullying via peer nominations, at two time points over the course of an academic year - at the beginning and end, with a nine-month gap between the two time points. The pretest and follow-up evaluation was used to evaluate the impact of SST program.

Intervention sessions for students focused on teaching skill modules using brief didactic instruction, behavioral modeling, role playing, and behavioral rehearsal. Multiple target social skills were modeled, role played, and coached to promote acquisition and generalization of skills. Six modules were covered during trainings: (1) cooperation and other alternatives to
aggression, (2) problem solving, (3) recognizing and controlling anger, (4) conversations, (5) dealing with frustration and stress, dealing with being left out and accusation, responding to persuasion; and (6) moral education.

Results revealed that 10.30% of 5-9 grades students were connected with bullying: 6.65% were victims (N = 32), 4.10% were bullies (N = 20), and 89.7% of students (N = 436) reported as not involved in bullying behavior. From the total of 488 students 52 were found to be involved in bullying: out of which 32 bullies and 20 victims (no bully-victims were identified), formed the target group of the anti-bullying intervention.

Post intervention analysis revealed that the implementation of the SST program affected student involvement in bullying behavior. Pretest and follow up measures showed improvements among participants of group training – the frequency of bully-victim problems decreased by 50 percent and more in nine-month following period, whereby the whole-school ratings of bullying behavior improved, but not significantly.

The results gave empirical support to the long-lasting positive impact of the SST program, as participant students changed their actual behaviors to an extent that was observable by their peers.

The study per se reveals that while SST may be a necessary component in bringing about positive real life changes for bullies and victims, it may not always be sufficient. This emphasizes attempts that focus on improving whole-school and class level contextual factors in order to bring long-lasting positive changes. Intervention is unlikely to be effective, unless it is part of a wider, whole school, anti-bullying program, and this studies result is parallel with this suggestion. There is a need to integrate strategies at individual, peer and whole-school level to maintain positive long-term changes in the area of school bullying.
2.8 SECOND STEP VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAM (SSVPP)

Espelage, Polanin, and Low (2014) conducted a two-year cluster-randomized clinical trial of Second Step Middle School Program (Committee for Children, 2008) with the aim of reducing aggression and victimization.

The SS-SSTP middle school program (Committee for Children, 2008) is a comprehensive classroom-based program that addresses risk and protective factors underlying multiple forms of violence, aggression, bullying, sexual harassment, and other problematic behaviors among children and adolescents (Hamby & Grych, 2013; Merrell, 2010).

In the current study, the authors present analyses that was built on the first-year results that were published previously (Espelage et al., 2013) where they found a significant intervention effect for physical aggression outcome; individuals in intervention schools were 42% less likely to self-report physical aggression than students in control schools. No significant intervention effects were found for verbal/relational bully perpetration, peer victimization, homophobic teasing, and sexual violence. These data were published after the first year with the aim of determining the extent to which the SSTP program made a difference in reducing violence after 15 weeks.

The same primary, main outcomes were assessed in the current study, including bullying, peer victimization, physical aggression, homophobic name-calling victimization/perpetration, and sexual harassment victimization/perpetration. The researchers suspected that as the curriculum was expanded to include more lessons on bullying and sexual harassment, a change may be obtained in outcomes other than physical aggression.

Participants consisted of 3658 students from 36 schools.
With the objective of testing the efficacy of the program on student behavior outcomes, a longitudinal nested-cohort design was utilized, in which matched pairs of schools were randomly assigned to intervention or control conditions. In Wave 1, the researchers targeted 6th grade students within 36 Midwestern schools that agreed to participate. Intervention condition (i.e., implementation of Second Step; Committee for Children, 2008) was assigned to one school within each match pair using a random number generator and the other school in the pair was assigned to a control condition that received only minimal intervention programming (“Stories of Us”; Faull, Jimerson, Swearer, and Espelage, 2008).

A previously published study by the researchers Espelage, Low, Polanin, and Brown (2013) investigated the impact of the program after one year of program implementation (i.e., the 6th grade curriculum consisting of 15 lessons); This study however focuses on the analyses of intervention effects after two years of implementation (i.e., 13 additional lessons in the 7th grade curriculum); that is, on outcomes from the third wave of panel data.

The Second Step program is composed of 15 lessons at grade 6 and 13 lessons at grade 7. In grade 6, five lessons focus on empathy and communication (e.g., working in groups, disagreeing respectfully, being assertive), two lessons on bullying, three lessons on emotion regulation (e.g., coping with stress), two lessons on problem-solving, and four lessons on substance abuse prevention. In grade 7, four lessons focus on empathy and communication, three lessons on bullying (e.g., cyber bullying, sexual harassment), two lessons on emotion regulation, two lessons on problem-solving, and three lessons on substance abuse prevention.

Lessons were delivered in one 50-minute or two 25-minute classroom sessions, taught weekly or semi-weekly throughout the school year. Teachers implemented the lessons in this study. Teachers completed a 3-hour training session that covered not only the curriculum and
its delivery, but also an introduction to child developmental stages as related to targeted skills and a background on bullying research.

Control schools were provided with one copy of the P3: Stories of Us — Bullying program (Faull et al., 2008). P3 is composed of two films and educational resources for supporting students, educators and the broader community in addressing the problem of bullying in schools.

Parents of all 6th grade students enrolled in all participating schools were sent letters informing them about the purpose of the study. Several meetings were held to inform parents of the study in each community.

The nine-item Illinois Bully Scale (Espelage & Holt, 2001) was used to assess the frequency of bullying at school. Students were asked how often in the past 30 days they did the following to other students at school: teased other students, upset other students for the fun of it, excluded others from their group of friends, helped harass other students, and threatened to hit or hurt another student. Response options included Never, 1 or 2 times, 3 or 4 times, 5 or 6 times, or 7 or more times. The four-item University of Illinois Victimization Scale (Espelage & Holt, 2001) was used to assess victimization from peers. Students were asked how often the following have happened to them in the past 30 days: Other students called me names, other students made fun of me, other students picked on me, I got hit and pushed by other students. “Other students called me names;” “Other students made fun of me;” “Other students picked on me;” and “I got hit and pushed by other students.” Responses options were Never, 1 or 2 times, 3 or 4 times, 5 or 6 times, or 7 or more times. The four-item, University of Illinois Fighting Scale – UIFS (Espelage & Holt, 2001) was used to assess physical fighting behavior (e.g., I got in a physical fight; I fought students I could easily beat) the respondent engaged in over the past 30
days. Response options include Never, 1 or 2 times, 3 or 4 times, 5 or 6 times, or 7 or more times.

Data analysis revealed that changes in attitudes, norms and peer behaviors are proposed mediators of reductions in aggression.

The SS-SSTP appears to have reduced the likelihood of being a victim of homophobic name-calling, as well as the likelihood of engaging in sexual harassment. No reductions were found in bullying behavior, physical aggression and victimization. Across sites, and conditions, bullying behavior, physical aggression, and victimization were found to be occurring at high levels (e.g., physical aggression, 33–51%), and notably increased from 6th to 7th grade, but the increase was not as marked as gender- or sexual-based violence.

Behaviors like bullying and aggression are likely established and elaborated upon prior to middle school and in this study were not sensitive to the intervention. However, homophobic name-calling and sexual harassment are far less prevalent in elementary school than middle school, so the intervention seems to have impacted those behaviors that are first emerging in middle school.

These findings are critical given the recent research demonstrating that homophobic name-calling and sexual violence are emerging as significant public health concerns and are precursors to teen dating violence (Espelage et al, 2014; Miller et al, 2013). About half of the students in 7th through 12th grades were the victims of sexual harassment at school during the 2010–11 school year, with 56% of females and 40% of males experiencing sexual harassment in person or online. Further, in a middle school study including over 1200 students, 20% of females and 34% of males reported directing homophobic epithets toward other peers in the last month (Espelage, Basile, De La Rue and Hamburger, 2015). As most of the programming for the prevention of sexual violence is directed at high school and college samples, this study
addresses a significant gap in the growing body of prevention science focused on reducing sexual violence among middle school youth.

**Holsen, Smith and Frey (2008)** investigate the outcomes of the universal social competence promotion program *Second Step* among Norwegian students in grades 5 and 6.

Although the program was originally American, *Second Step* was translated and adapted for the Norwegian setting and renamed *Steg for Steg*.

1,153 fifth and sixth grade students (11 schools, 55 classrooms) participated in the study. There were 338 students in grade 5 (age 10 at baseline), 405 in grade 6 (age 11) and 389 in grade 7 (age 12) (21 students did not report grade level).

The 34-item student version of the Social Skills Rating System (SSRS) by **Gresham & Elliot (1990)** was used in the study. The items were translated into Norwegian and tested. It is a multi-source instrument with strong reliability and validity reflecting the behavioral concept of social skills. It is intervention linked (**Demaray et al, 1995**) and its items map well onto the primary goals of the *Second Step* program. The scale reflects the domains cooperation, assertiveness, empathy and self-control. Cooperation addresses behaviors such as helping others, sharing materials and complying with rules and directions. Assertiveness assesses skills like asking others for information, introducing oneself and responding to others, e.g. peer pressure or insults. Empathy focuses on behavior that shows concern for other’s feelings and point of views. Self-control measures skills required in situations that require taking turns and compromising (**Gresham & Elliott, 1990**).

Student reports of problem behaviors were obtained with the student version of the Problem Behavior Scale by **Gresham & Elliot (1990)**. The scale consists of 13 items measuring internalizing problem behavior, externalizing problem behavior, and hyperactivity.
In the initial analyses, the researchers examined the mean follow-up outcome measures for each cohort in order to track changes over time. In the second set of analyses, they used age equivalent comparison groups to answer the following research questions:

1. Are there differences in mean scores in social competence and internalizing and externalizing problem behavior between intervention and comparison groups after one year of intervention?

2. Do program effects differ by gender?

3. Do program effects differ across classrooms?

The intention of the study was to evaluate the program’s effects in as close to a 'real world' implementation as possible. The only interaction between the research team and the schools and teachers delivering the program were letters of invitation to be part of the study, follow-up letters regarding parental consent and questionnaires and administration of student surveys. No attempts were made to change program delivery from how it would otherwise have been carried out.

Upon applying Linear Mixed Modeling, the results from the age cohort design with comparison groups showed that the program had significant positive effects on social competence for boys and girls in grade 5 and for girls in grade 6. Boys in grade 6 reported lower levels of externalizing problem behavior compared to control students. There were no effects in regard to internalizing problem behavior. The analysis also revealed that the results varied between classrooms. These results may be considered to add weight to the evidence in support of a wider implementation of the Second Step program.
Frey, Nolen, Edstrom and Hirschstein (2005) examined the effects of the Second Step social–emotional learning program and addressed the relations between social cognitions and prosocial and antisocial behavior.

As of such, the first goal of the study was to evaluate the impact of the Second Step program (Committee for Children, 1992, 1997), a universal social–emotional intervention, on students’ behavior, social cognitions, and affect. The second goal of the study was to test the conceptual basis of the program by examining relations among behavior and motivational constructs.

The SSVPP program is based on the understanding that behaviors are influenced by goals, beliefs, and emotions, as well as information processing and performance skills (Crick & Dodge, 1994; Lemerise & Arsenio, 2000). The Second Step program is designed to both decrease aggressive behavior and increase empathic, socially responsible behavior by (a) fostering children’s cognitive, emotional, and behavioral skills; (b) reducing maladaptive beliefs about aggression (Slaby & Guerra, 1988); and (c) promoting positive social goals and values. The basic methodology has been translated into a developmentally sequenced set of activities for preschool through middle school.

The researchers adopted a multilevel, multi-informant approach to assessing the effect of the intervention. They measured behavior with teacher reports, self-reports, and direct observations, the first two focusing on individual behavior, the last one on dyadic behavior. Measurement of social cognitions and affect were done via hypothetical vignettes and in-the-moment interviews during structured conflicts.

The study anticipated that posttest comparisons between the intervention and control groups would show benefits of the program with regard to behavior, cognitions, and affect. The researchers hypothesized relationships among social cognitions, behaviors, and satisfaction.
a. Prosocial goals would predict less aggression, more cooperative behavior, and more satisfaction in the observed conflict situations.

b. A positive relationship between situation-specific prosocial goals and subsequent satisfaction.

c. Children with hostile beliefs would be more antisocial and less socially competent, as rated by teachers; have more aggressive intentions in response to a hypothetical provocation; and display more aggression during behavior observations.

d. Pairs who shared prosocial goals or less hostile attributions would exhibit more cooperative and less aggressive behavior than pairs who shared self-interested goals or largely hostile attributions

The sample comprised fifteen elementary schools (seven K-5th grade and eight K-6th grade) from three cities. Participants were between the ages of seven and eleven. A total of 1253 students participated and were roughly evenly divided by sex (48.2% female) and grade level (54.6% in second grade) with proportions equivalent in the two groups. There were 620 participants in the intervention group, and 615 in the control group.

Schools in the area had ready access to research-based programs, and early school contacts revealed that schools were reluctant to agree to a wait-list control design. Therefore, schools assigned to both intervention and control groups received program materials, teacher training, and substitute teachers during training, albeit for different grades. However, control schools received these benefits only for classrooms that were not in the study.

Merrell (1993) developed the School Social Behavior Scale (SSBS) which was used to ask teachers to report how frequently students engage in each of 32 antisocial and 33 socially competent behaviors. The SSBS has been shown to discriminate between the behavior
adjustment of children classified as emotionally–behaviorally disordered, learning disabled, average, and gifted-talented. Scores on the SBSS correlate highly with other rating scales of school-based social behavior. Scales were used in analyses if no more than one item was missing per subscale. In such cases, subscale means were substituted for the missing item.

Surveys administered to students in their classrooms assessed attributions of hostile goals from hypothetical vignettes of ambiguous provocations. Four vignettes were adapted from items developed by Dodge (1980). After hearing themselves described as suffering harm from a peer, students indicated whether the peer’s actions (which were ambiguous) were (a) due to unknown or benign intent; (b) “kind of mean”; or (c) “really mean on purpose”. Ratings were summed across the four vignettes to create a measure of hostile beliefs. After rating the intentions of the vignette characters, students rated how likely they were to respond with physical aggression, verbal aggression, and socially competent behavior on a five-point scale. Students also evaluated responses to two additional vignettes in which the intent of the peer was unambiguous (teasing or bullying behaviors). Two forms of the survey, each having four ambiguous and two unambiguous vignettes were counterbalanced across schools. At each school, forms were alternated with administration (e.g., A, B, A).

Four same-sex, same-grade children from two different classes were randomly selected and escorted to an unused room on the school grounds. Experimenters explained to each pair of children that they would earn money for their class party while the other pair of children earned money for their own class party (provided by experimenters at the end of the year). For each of eight trials, each pair would choose either a cooperative or exclusively self-interested strategy. When both pairs had made their decisions, they revealed their choices on the experimenter’s cue by simultaneously holding up a color-coded card.
Prior to the eight decision trials, children were audio taped as they indicated their first and second preferences among the four possible outcomes and explained why they preferred their first choice to their second. With the first two outcomes covered, children ranked the remaining two outcomes. These two measures were later combined to form the prosocial goal variable.

To form the four expected satisfaction variables, children rated the satisfaction they expected with each of the four outcomes on a five-point scale that ranged from 1 (DISAPPOINTED!) to 5 (PLEASED!).

The decision-making process of each pair was audio recorded as they jointly selected a cooperative or self-interested strategy on each of eight trials. After completing the eight trials and hearing the amounts of money earned for their class and the other pair’s class, children rated their overall satisfaction on a five-point scale (DISAPPOINTED! To PLEASED!). They were then asked to explain why they were pleased or disappointed with the outcome.

In a second, more naturalistic task, each pair of children was offered four “thank-you gifts” that varied in attractiveness (a magnetic travel game, a stylish pop-a-point pencil, a “happy face” eraser, and an undistinguished paper sticker). The children were told they could divide them any way they liked, as long as both children in the pair agreed. Negotiations were audio taped. Experimenters did not comment unless the negotiations stalled with the pair unable to resolve conflict over the division. In that case, experimenters intervened in a set sequence, starting with a single open-ended question, “Any other ideas?” and becoming progressively more directive if negotiations did not resume. After the prize negotiation, students rated their satisfaction with the outcome on a five-point scale. They were then escorted back to their classrooms.
Results revealed that participation in the Second Step program was associated with significant benefits in student behavior, goals, and social reasoning for the sample as whole, and for the smaller, randomly-assigned sub-sample. The specific effects of the intervention varied according to the type of measurement and analysis. Consistent differences across analyses and sample were found in aggression and the need for adult intervention during prize division, and in motivational constructs such as goals, expected satisfaction, and reasoning about satisfaction. Group differences in teacher-reported behavior were robust for the first, but not second, year of intervention. Program effects on higher-level negotiation strategies were limited to intervention girls, and group differences in post-task satisfaction varied by analysis. No group differences were found for the survey measures, attributions and behavioral intentions, or for joint cooperative choices in the prisoner's dilemma game.

The current study used multi-informant outcome measures to examine observable and phenomenological aspects of prosocial and antisocial behavior. Positive goals and beliefs, in combination with skills (e.g., perspective-taking, emotion regulation) may be viewed as protective characteristics. In order to act in socially responsible ways, children must possess both the relevant skills and the motivation to use those skills. The concordance found between behavior, satisfaction, and cognitions is consistent with social-cognitive models of aggression and social competence (e.g., Crick & Dodge, 1994; Huesman, 1988) that provide much of the conceptual foundation of the Second Step program. Goals and hostile attributions were independently predictive of a wide range of outcome variables, including the use of prosocial behaviors during conflict. Interventions that foster positive motivation and multiple social cognitive, emotional, and behavior skills are likely to be more successful than single component approaches.
Universal programs like the SSVPP are beneficial in the sense that for a relatively low cost, it may strengthen the resilience of “at-risk” children without stigmatizing individuals (Greenberg et al, 2001). Although a universal program that attempts change only in school is unlikely to change strongly maladaptive behavior patterns, it can provide a stable social base for more intensive interventions by providing consistent school expectations, a shared vocabulary, and complementary behavioral repertoires. Equally important, universal programs can provide benefits to children not identified as “at risk” (Durlak, 1995) by reducing classroom disruption and building skills that help children meet life’s challenges.

2.9 RESEARCH STUDIES IN INDIA

Basu, Aundhakar, Kirdi, Patil, and Galgali (2014) conducted a retrospective study to estimate the incidence of bullying and to determine the link between bullying and common health symptoms in school children.

The sample comprised 400 children (200 boys and 200 girls) between the age group of 8-14 years and studying in an English medium school.

A semi-structured health interview proforma based on the Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire was prepared to be filled out by the students. Initially the students were given an explanation about bullying in detail. Following which, students were interviewed, either alone or in the presence of a caretaker, about their experience in the past one year. A student was considered a victim if he or she reported being bullied “a few times a month” or more frequently. Items to measure health symptoms and anxiety were based on items from the KIVPA, a Dutch instrument to measure psychosocial problems among children. Children were asked if they experienced any health symptom and to report the frequency of the symptoms. Somatic symptoms like headache, pain in abdomen and body ache were reported as a problem only if experienced once a week or more often.
For data analysis, the SPSS/PC- Chi-square and Fisher’s exact test were used to analyze statistical differences between groups.

Results revealed that out of 400 children included in the study from various age groups a total of 136 children were bullied, out of which 77 were boys and 59 girls. The incidence of bullying obtained in the study was 34 %. Bullying was found to be most prevalent in the age group of 14-15 years (46 %) followed by the age group of 12-13 year (40.5 %). Boys (19 %) reported a higher incidence of bullying than girls (14 %). Overall direct physical aggression such as being physically hurt was most common (60%) followed by keeping names, abusing by using bad words and spreading rumors. Boys were found to be largely engaged in direct physical aggression (78%). However, no significant difference between sexes was observed (p= 0.9). Girls reported a higher incidence of indirect bullying such as keeping names (59 %) but the sex difference was not statistically significant (p= 0.07 ). The least used technique of bullying reported by the sample was threatening (5.8 %) which is a form of direct verbal aggression.

Common health symptoms reported among bullied students were pain in abdomen (24 %), depression (23 %), headache (20 %) and frequently absent from school (18 %). Headache (23%) was the most common symptoms observed in boys but the sex difference between the boys and girls was not statistically significant. (p=0.5). Depression was most commonly reported by girls (32 %), however, the difference was not statistically significant.

Out of the 136 children who reported being bullied, only 33 (24 %) told their teacher or parent that bullying took place. Girls (55 %) reported such incidents more frequently than boys (45 %). Based on the data from the 33 children who reported bullying, it was found that bullying was stopped by the teacher or parent in 25 of them and bullying continued in 8 of the cases in spite of reporting.
The findings of this study confirm that bullying is prevalent in Indian schools and is considerably high amongst male school going children. Further, based on the results obtained, it can be stated that the incidence of bullying increases with age. The most common type of bullying reported by boys was direct physical aggression whereas girls reported being more subjected to indirect bullying. As adolescence is a period of changes and challenges especially concerning physical states, control over behavior, psychological orientation and social interaction, it is strongly influenced by relations to parents and family, and as they grow older to an increasing extent by peer relationships, their acceptance and positive feedback. This developmental period therefore places adolescents at risk for the health effects of negative social interactions. Exposure to and any experience of bullying at this stage may influence health through a variety of pathways. The study reports a causal relation between bullying and health symptoms. It is therefore vital that both school authorities and medical health professionals seriously undertake suitable intervention measures so that a reduction can be brought about in bullying problems in schools and related behavioral problems. As the researchers mention, “it is primarily a question of changing attitudes, behavior and routines in school life.”

Sharma, Fatima, Thakur and Parven (2014) conducted a non-experimental descriptive survey to assess the pattern and impact of bullying behavior among school children.

The sample comprised 50 school children aged 10-14 years who were selected through convenience sampling technique. A structured interview schedule was used to obtain data from students. Variables under study included 4 predictors: types of bullying, places of being bullied, impact of bullying and measures taken by teachers and parents toward bullying.
Results obtained post data analysis revealed that, 74% of students had been called names (e.g., , , , , etc.), 66% had been made fun of, 62% had been robbed, 62% had been pushed or shoved, and 58% had been slapped. 82% children had mild impact of bullying such as: feeling sick, 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, while 10% had moderate impact and 8% had severe impact of bullying.

Commonly reported places of bullying were: the school premises before and after the school timings. The children reported that they had informed about the bullying incidents to their school teachers and parents, however, it did not benefit them.

Vyas (2014) carried out a study in 2014 to find out the percentage of bully and bullied students in the selected samples, to study the impact of bully on society, and to suggest a suitable program to reduce the problem of bullying in schools.

The sample comprised 48 students in class 6 who were selected using the random sampling method. The students were both boys and girls (57% boys’ students and 43% girls’ students) between the ages of 12 and 14, with 43% students of age 12, 55% of age 13 and 2% of age 14.

A specific set of questionnaires were used to assess the indulgence of students, type, place of bullying etc. the responses obtained were consolidated and analyzed.

Results obtained revealed that as many as 80% of students have been bullied once or many times whereas 65% of students have indulged in bullying other students. The disparity between these two sets of numbers allows the interpretation that a bully often does not perceive his/her actions as bullying.
With regards to type of bullying, it was found that various types of bullying were prevalent amongst the students with “teasing” and “hitting” being the most used type of bullying. Physical abuse like hitting, biting or pushing was reported by 37% of students. This confirms the presence of physical bullying amongst male children.

It was further found that, 79% of bullying took place at various locations within the school ranging from toilets, playground, and corridors to between class lessons when teachers were not present. The highest reported bullying however was outside the school campus and while students travelled from their homes to school.

Mostly same aged students are involved in bullying others in comparison to younger or older students; and, mostly boys are engaged in bullying in comparison to girls.

3% students reported not telling anyone about being bullied – this could be due to fear or shame. 60% students did share about their experience of being bullied with their friends, but only 26% told their parents or someone at home. An even lesser percentage of students, 11%, reported being bullied to their teachers. This finding clearly shows student discomfort in sharing with their adults and their ease with a more peer level confiding.

With regards to environment responses to bullying, it was found that in more than 80% of cases, teachers, parents and friends listen and provide support to the victim student of bullying. Interestingly, and in keeping with the previous finding, 94% of student’s report that listening and support came from their friends. The remaining 18% reported that teachers did not listen and were not supportive. Teachers may therefore lack empathy and skill required to handle bullying.
The survey result showed that 60% students feel angry when they get bullied and 40% students feel sad. When asked how students felt on their way to school, results showed that most of the students (94%) feel frustrated which indicate that their internal feeling is that they are not able to respond to the students who bully them.

Students who bully (90%) stated that they feel bad or sad when they bully others which shows that these students are aware of their actions. 10% of them however reported feeling good while bullying.

The findings obtained from this study point out the need and urgency for schools to take measure and provide students with a safe learning environment. A climate needs to be created where students understand and accept the fact that bullying is completely unacceptable. Various policies and systems can be created to ensure the same. Physical punishments should be stopped as it sends out the message that violence is acceptable. Workshops that aim at teaching student’s various skills of interaction and communication can be provided. Counseling and support services need to be put in place. Lastly, both parents and teachers need to take on a more active role in curbing bullying – this involves both participating in the child’s life as well as being good role models and helping them be more aware of themselves and their actions.

Srisiva, Thirumoorthi and Sujatha (2013) conducted a study to understand the extent of the problem of bullying among school children in urban centers as well as to explore the opinion of the stakeholders including the students and teachers with regards to what effective preventive strategies can be adopted.

In the study, only government run middle schools, high schools and higher secondary schools were taken up for consideration. The area was divided into four zones, namely, North Zone, South Zone and East Zone and Central Zone. One school from all four zones were selected. A total of 300 respondents were chosen - From each of the school’s, 75 students were
drawn with 25 respondents each from three different age group, viz., 11-13 age group (6th – 8th class students or middle school students), 14-16 age group (9th – 10th class students or high school students), 17-18 (11th & 12th class students or higher secondary students). The students were selected randomly.

Data was collected via a structured questionnaire from the student respondents, apart from conducting Focused Group Discussions (FGD).

Analysis revealed that a vast majority of the respondent students (68%) acknowledged actions that hurt their feelings, lowered their morale and made them feel like a comedian in the eyes of their fellow students. Another significant number of respondents, who constituted 1/4th of the total respondents (25%), stated that the physical or verbal abuse ultimately resulted in bodily injury or lowering of their self-esteem. It was further found that 56% of the respondents had been bullied by their own peer’s / class mates and another 37% had been bullied by both class mates as well as the senior students.

When asked, nearly 84% of the respondents informed that they had been subjected to multiple acts of bullying. Majority of the respondents (59%) reported that they had been subjected to more than three forms - Teasing, Intimidating, Exclusion from group & Rumors/lies. This was followed by Exclusion from group and Ganging up (14%), and Ganging up & Striking, pushing and punching (11%). Only a handful of respondents (9%) stated that they had experienced bullying in the form of Wounding SMS received from their bullies. The verbal abuse by bullies was mostly reported both within the school campus (86%) and outside the school campus (73%). Students further reported verbal abuse to occur both within the class room during a lecture / demonstration is in progress (36%) and after class hour (59%). Only 11% of the victims reported that physical abuse / man handling was the mode through which they were bullied.
With regards to bystander behavior and peer support, the study found that only a meager number of the respondents (17%) had stated that their peers reacted to this inhumane and unjustifiable act of bullying done on them. Another significant number of respondents stated that their peers / classmates enjoyed the events (34%) or remained mere spectators without any reaction on their faces (29%). A vast majority of the respondents believed that they were bullied by the dominant students in the class rooms because they wanted to establish their dominance (34%), prove their physical might (22%), to show that they are the heroes of the class room (16%), due to past quarrels (12%), for petty issues crop up then and there (9%). When asked how they felt about being bullied, a majority of the respondents stated that they had multiple effects due to school bullying which include poor concentration in education (56%), felt their self-esteem was damaged, were tearful (41%), and dint want to live (27%). However, a significant number of respondents tried to retaliate by teasing the bullies back.

With regards to reason for being bullied, the researchers found that namely appearance and skin color / complexion (79%) was the most reported reason followed by poor performance in studies (67%). It is also understood from their responses that the bullies have seized the opportunity to bully their victims based on their poor performance. Further, it was also stated by the respondents that the prominence and importance given to bright and intelligent students by the class teacher and fellow students make the victims feel weak and inferior. Out of the total respondents, who stated that they had been bullied by their peers because of their poor performance in studies, a vast majority (79%) informed that their chance for being bullied is very high whenever they were pulled up by their teachers for the same reason.

Teacher knowledge and response were explored. Findings revealed that nearly 2/3 of the respondents (61%) stated that they never took up this matter to their class teacher level since they felt that these are petty matters to be solved at their level itself (42%) or fearing that they will be found faulty (19%) since the given prominence and power of the bullies. However,
another 32% have stated that they have reported the event to their teachers. About 70% of the respondents who reported that they had been bullied and taken up the matter with their respective class teachers (32%) had stated that their teachers were positive in hearing their grievances and warned the reported bullies. But the remaining respondent students were not positive about their class teachers who were reportedly lenient towards those who involved in bullying activities.

This study has important implications in that it shows us that a majority of school children face the threat of being bullied not only by their peer but also by their seniors. The study revealed that most students lacked the necessary social and communication skills due to which they either live in a shell without any friends or abuse whatever role or power they enjoy in their social circles. It was also found that students need to be sensitized about racial and appearance related differences and how they can be empathic towards those differences. Another important finding was that most victims of bullying never take the matters to their teachers notice fearing that these are petty issues over which the teachers might not give proper attention to sort out the problem.

It is therefore important that appropriate assessment and identification of the extent of the problem be undertaken by the school administrators, followed by the implementation of a school wide comprehensive anti-bullying prevention program. It is vital that clear cut anti-bullying policies and procedures be formulated and training be provided to teachers in anti-bullying activities,

Kshirsagar, Agarwal and Bavdekar (2007) conducted a study in Mumbai (North India) to determine the prevalence of bullying amongst school children and to examine its association with common symptoms in childhood.
A prospective survey was conducted. The researchers used a pre-tested questionnaire, based on previously validated tool by Olweus, for conducting a semi-structured health interview. Three public and private schools were randomly selected. The sample comprised 500 children aged 8-12 years and their parents. The students were studying in 3rd – 7th grade. Another pre-tested semi structured questionnaire was used to interview parents. In addition, information about health-related symptoms was also elicited from respondents. The prevalence of bullying, its frequency and prevalent types were determined. Symptoms were enumerated in the population of children bullied and others.

Chi-square test was applied for determining association of health related symptoms with bullying.

Results obtained showed that one hundred and fifty seven (31.4% 68 boys and 89 girls) children out of the 500 participating children (188 boys, 312 girls; aged 8-12yrs) reported being bullied. Though not significantly different, girls reported a prevalence of 28.5% as compared to 36.2% amongst boys (p>0.05). The prevalence of bullying was 34% amongst 200 students interviewed from English medium schools.

It was found that prevalence of bulling varied from 13.4% in children studying in class 3 to 45.94% in those studying in class 6. Commonest types of bullying reported were teasing (128 children) and keeping names (101 children). Other forms of bullying reported included use of bad words (53), spreading rumors (9) threatening (8) and isolation (2). Causing physical hurt was reported by 25 students (16%). Most victims of bullying do not report the incidents to parents thereby taking away an important source of support. Prevalence calculated on the basis of parental/ guardians’ interview was much lower at 24%, indicating thereby that most bullied students did not report these incidents to their parents.
With regards to health symptoms, it was found that vomiting, disturbance in sleep and fear of going to school were reported by victims more commonly than non-bullied children.

This study has shown that bullying is very much prevalent in Indian schools. Health issues linked to bullying warrant the need for doctors to be more aware of the same so that they are able to offer the necessary help to children and avoid unnecessary diagnosis. It is important that pediatricians and general physicians ask about bullying when children and adolescents present with unexplained psychosomatic and behavioral concerns.

In view of a high prevalence of bullying there is a need for the teachers and school administrators to determine the high-risk factors for bullying and to identify characteristics of victims. This should, of course, be accompanied by implementation of appropriate preventive and remedial measures.

Munni & Malhi (2006) conducted an exploratory study to investigate the prevalence and demographic characteristics of witnesses, victims and perpetrators of violence and to see if any gender difference existed. The researchers also examined the impact of violence on psychosocial adjustments.

The sample comprised 1500 students from classes VIII to XII of 10 government schools, all of which were coeducational except for two, which were exclusively for girls. Their mean age was 15 years (SD 1.67 years).

A cross-sectional survey design using an anonymous self-report questionnaire was employed. This questionnaire elicited demographic details and data regarding different aspects of violence exposure: witness, victim and perpetrator. Recent exposure to violence was measured by directly asking the children to report violence they had experienced or witnessed personally over the past year. Exposure to verbal abuse was enquired. The settings in which the violence occurred were probed e.g. school, house and neighborhood. Media exposure was
studied by asking them about the duration of television viewing per day and their preference of shows and movies.

Violence committed by the adolescents was measured by asking them to self-report along a five point scale during the past one year. The nature of violence was enquired as threatening others, slapping, hitting or punching someone before or after the other person hit them and beating one up or attacking someone with an object. Pre-Adolescent Adjustment Scale (PAAS) was used to assess the psychosocial adjustments of the students towards home, school, teachers, peers and general issues.

SPSS 11.0 software was used for analysis and descriptive statistics and chi square tests were calculated. Predictors of violence exposure were studied using logistic regression analysis.

Results revealed that sixty nine percent of students had witnessed violence in real life and 28% were of serious nature. Media violence exposure was universal. The prevalence of victims and perpetrators was 27% and 13% respectively. Bullying was prevalent. 13% students self-reported violent behaviors and 60% were engaged in physical fights at a frequency of more than once per week. Maximum fights occurred at school (74%) followed by neighborhood and lastly at home. Violence was committed in the form of slaps, punches and kicks in 82% cases. The perpetrators used objects like hockey sticks, chains, knives and number locks for inflicting injury in 7% of cases. The perpetrators were generally those who enjoyed seeing more action and violence oriented programs in television and movies and for a longer duration of time ($P < 0.001$).

Males were significantly associated with a heightened risk of exposure to violence as witnesses as well as perpetrators whereas females were primarily victims. Socioeconomic status had significant bearing on violence exposure. Low maternal education and belonging to a nuclear family were the other factors related to witnessing violence.
Victims were predominantly females. Those having exposure to violence had poorer school performance and adjustment scores ($P < 0.05$). Corporal punishment was received by 22% and 40% of them frequently.

This study has important implications as it reports the situation of adolescents in a relatively peaceful urban Indian setting. Violence exposure is prevalent even in the lives of Indian adolescents and gender differences do exist. The impact of bullying on an individual's psychosocial adjustments is detrimental. Early identification and corrective interventions of these adolescents is therefore vital.

2.10 Summary:

In India, various studies have been conducted that both point out the need and urgency of providing students in school with a safe and secure learning environment. Students need to be made aware of what bullying comprises and they need to understand that it is absolutely unacceptable. Physical punishments should be stopped as it sends out the message that violence is acceptable.

In the past, studies have been conducted to determine the incidence of bullying and to understand its effect on medical health and psychosocial adjustment. Studies have also been conducted to understand the patterns of bullying, demographic characteristics of bullies, victims and bystanders, and, its effect on not only the individuals involved but the whole society.

With regards to anti-bullying intervention programs – studies have identified the bullying scenario in schools and then suggested suitable programs to reduce bullying therein. Some studies have even explored how parents and teachers could be productive in implementing preventive strategies.
A few studies alone have implemented an in-school anti-bullying program; however, no study has undertaken a multi-component anti-bullying social skill training program – inclusive of not only the target students – but also the teachers and parents.

The current study attempts to not only explore the nature and extent of the bullying scenario in schools, but also sets out to provide information and training to teachers and parents as they form such an integral part of any anti-bullying plan. It studies various demographic factors and its links to bullying – which makes for earlier and easier identification and management. It aims at helping teachers, parents and students be sensitive to those involved in bullying and aids better management of a bullying situation.

Finally, the study also evaluates the effectiveness of a social skills training program in reducing bullying. Further, it promotes the application of healthy social skills by students.