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Bullying from the Victim's Perspective: A Psychosociological analysis of former experiences among Doctoral Students in Algeria

التنمّر من منظور الضحية: تحليل نفسي–اجتماعي للتجارب السابقة لدى طلاب الدكتوراه في الجزائر

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Abstract:

The research concentrated on examining doctoral students who faced bullying in their prior educational stages to analyze their coping mechanisms in response to the effects of bullying through psychosociological methodologies. A descriptive-analytical research methodology was employed to facilitate semi-structured interviews with three selected cases that fulfilled the criteria of "resilient victim." The process of analyzing the data used content-analysis methods. The research determined that bullying victims create defensive mental patterns which protect their self-worth while they use various resistance methods including enduring the situation and ignoring it and achieving success. The bullying experience depends on two main elements which include social context and physical health status and disabilities. The research discovered that bullying exists as a long-lasting problem which affects various environments so it recommended programs to support victims who build strength through their coping strategies.

Keywords: Bullying, Victim, Psychosociological Impact.

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An introduction:

Human beings exist within a structured social network which combines socialization institutions that include the family together with the school to create environments for personal growth and skill development. These educational institutions exist to provide learning environments which should function as secure spaces for development yet they sometimes transform into places where psychological and social conflicts occur. The environments which people create for themselves may transform into distress-inducing places that produce various behavioral issues that include symbolic and physical violence. Bullying stands out as the most common issue which creates major psychological and educational challenges for students.

The world faces bullying as a major psychological and social issue which has become more prevalent throughout the world and especially in Algeria. A study by Chitibi Fatima Zahra and Boutaf Ali (2014) showed that bullying behaviors in middle school are prevalent to a concerning degree within the school environment. The research conducted by (Zeroual, (2021)) showed that students who experience bullying during their primary education develop less psychological safety than students who do not experience bullying. The research conducted by (Boulahia, (2024)) found that high school students who experience bullying maintain average levels of psychological security and self-efficacy which show a direct connection between these two variables. The research conducted by (Kharkhash, (2024)) demonstrated that victims of bullying tend to develop moderate post-traumatic stress symptoms which shows the intense psychological impact that bullying creates during long-term effects.

The international research by **(Hendricks & Tanga (2019))** in South Africa shows that school bullying creates harmful effects on student mental health and academic performance. The behavior leads to increased anxiety and depression and low self-esteem which then results in self-destructive actions and missing school.

The research about bullying patterns and causes has developed into a vital field of study but the majority of studies examine victims through their negative effects while neglecting those who fought against bullying and achieved advanced educational success including doctoral degrees. The group known as "resistant victims" consists of people who developed coping skills to handle their traumatic experiences through mental processes which protect their psychological stability while enabling them to transform their victim status into personal empowerment.

These people serve as an excellent example for studying how people recover from traumatic events which include both physical and emotional harm.

The study focuses on "resistant victims" to develop a new bullying analysis method which examines doctoral students who experienced bullying before but managed to achieve personal growth and academic success. The research method aims to identify coping mechanisms which leads to the main research question:

- How do doctoral students—formerly victims of bullying—interpret their past experiences in light of their personal and social development?
- Psychological and social strategies did they employ to confront the effects of these experiences?

-Research Objective:

This study aims to examine the representations and experiences of doctoral students who experienced bullying in the earlier stages of their education, to comprehend the coping and resistance mechanisms they developed in response to the psychological and social effects of bullying from a psychosociological standpoint.

- **Significance of the Study:**
- **Theoretical Significance:**

The theoretical value of this research emerges from its establishment of a psychosociological framework to study bullying through direct accounts from victims who describe their experiences by connecting their past events and personal explanations of what happened. The orientation operates as a crucial component because it moves beyond standard explanatory frameworks which restrict victims to weak and inactive roles. The research presents a group of victims who managed to convert their pain into mental and social strength which they used to achieve academic and career success with doctoral students as the sample group.

The research adds to academic discussions which suggest bullying and victimhood need new interpretations while revealing defense mechanisms that escape detection through statistical methods and outside viewpoint analysis. The research provides new knowledge which helps scientists build theoretical models about how people experience symbolic violence over time through their social self.

-Practical Significance:

The study results enable researchers to build psychological and educational programs which handle victim experiences through individual perceptions and real-

life encounters while developing resistance and empowerment methods instead of protective or therapeutic approaches.

The qualitative analysis of doctoral students who resist victimization enables educational and professional settings to create psychological support methods and safe spaces for expression and listening.

The research findings serve two main purposes because they help educational and social policymakers develop lasting strategies to understand how bullying affects personal and social identity development and how institutions should support people during these stages.

-Procedural Terms:

- **Bullying:**

A person experiences ongoing aggressive behaviors which include verbal and social and symbolic forms from their peers and family members throughout their entire academic and professional and emotional and familial life span. People experience different levels of psychological and social distress from these behaviors. The semi-structured interview reveals bullying through respondents who describe explicit bullying events and through patterns of ongoing harm from identical sources and environments and through the appearance of bullying-related effects that occur at any time.

- **The Exposed Individual (Victim):**

The person who shared their experience in the semi-structured interview revealed that they faced ongoing bullying attacks throughout their academic years and social life which led to psychological and social consequences. The research defines someone as a victim when they deliver an accurate detailed account of their bullying experience which spans multiple life stages and social settings to show the bullying was not a single event.

-Literature Review:

1. Study by Rania Ben Zeroual (2021): The research titled "The Level of Psychological Security Among Students Who Are Victims of Bullying in Primary Education: A Comparative Study Between Bullying Victims and Ordinary Students" focuses on analyzing psychological security levels in primary school children who experience bullying. Two instruments were used: the School Bullying Victim Scale and the Psychological Security Scale. The researchers applied descriptive methods to their study which included 15 victims and 22 non-victims. The research findings demonstrate that students who experience bullying at school show decreased

psychological security and their psychological security abilities differ significantly from students who do not experience bullying.

2. Study by Mayada Boulehya (2024): The research named "Psychological Security and Self-Efficacy among Victims of School Bullying: A Field Study in Selected High Schools in the City of Barika" focused on measuring psychological security and self-efficacy levels in school bullying victims while studying how these two aspects connect with each other. The research investigated how gender and grade level affect the results. The sample consisted of 97 male and female students. The research used several assessment instruments which included the Bullying/Victimization Questionnaire by Dan Olweus and the Psychological Security Scale developed by Zineb Choukir and the Self-Efficacy Scale created by Ralf Schwarzer. The research used descriptive methods to show that students who face bullying at school develop moderate psychological security and self-efficacy levels which link together. The research findings show that male students along with third-year high school students demonstrated higher performance according to statistical analysis of gender and grade level data.

3. Study by Hendricks, Eleanor A. & Tanga, Pius T. (2019): The research named "The Effects of Bullying on the Psychological Performance of Victims" focused its investigation on how school bullying affects the mental performance of students who experience victimization. The sample consisted of 40 chosen participants who included 25 students and 5 teachers and 5 social workers and 5 community members. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and analyzed thematically. The research shows that school bullying produces two main negative effects on students which harm their mental state and their academic success. The process of emotional and cognitive development becomes impaired when children experience bullying which leads to increased anxiety and depression symptoms. The study showed that victims experience three major lasting effects which include low self-esteem and self-destructive thinking and severe behavioral problems. The research showed that students who experience harassment tend to skip school as a direct result of their mistreatment.

I. Theoretical Framework:

1- Definition of Bullying:

Olweus is among the first to have provided a scientific definition of bullying based on empirical research. The author described it as a widespread type of violence which occurs between children and teenagers through purposeful actions that cause

harm harm or irritation by one person or multiple people. The perpetrator uses direct and indirect methods to bully others. **(Al-Diyar (2012), p 30)**

The APA Dictionary defines it as repeated physically aggressive and threatening behavior, or verbal abuse directed toward others—particularly those who are younger, smaller, weaker, or in a position of relative vulnerability or deprivation. **(VandenBos (2015) p 149)**

The antisocial behavioral disorder of bullying includes aggressive and antisocial actions which continue beyond normal oppositional behavior and persist over time. Deviant behavior between children emerges most frequently during their peer interactions while it tends to show up more often at school than in the home environment. **(Al-Subhiyin & Al-Qudah(2013), p10)**

The definitions provide essential elements to identify bullying but they show certain weaknesses in their approach. The research papers mostly concentrate on visible aggressive actions which include physical violence and verbal threats but they fail to analyze the mental processes that drive bullying behavior and the way victims understand their experiences. The definitions of bullying which focus on children and teenagers fail to recognize that bullying behavior continues through late adolescence and into university and workplace settings. The research approach which depends on relative deprivation and power imbalance fails to recognize situations that develop between partners who appear equal but maintain secret forms of dominance and social exclusion.

Accordingly, the researcher defines bullying as follows:

Bullying exists as a persistent form of aggressive conduct which manifests through direct and indirect means in verbal and physical and symbolic ways between people who maintain unequal relationships based on real or perceived power differences. Its aim is to inflict psychological or social harm on the individual. The behavior exists as more than a personal choice because it operates as a social process which emerges from cultural and institutional systems that support discrimination and exclusion while demonstrating how power structures within groups become unbalanced in their recognition of members.

2- Forms of Bullying:

Keith and Martin (2005) classify bullying behavior into the following categories:

-Physical Bullying: This is the most visible form of bullying and occurs when an individual (the victim) is physically harmed. It includes hitting, kicking, pushing

, and destroying personal property.

- **Non-Physical Bullying:** Sometimes referred to as social aggression, it is divided into two types:

2.1- Verbal Non-Physical Bullying:

This includes obscene phone calls, extortion of money, threats, teasing, harsh remarks, and the spread of false or harmful rumors about others.

2.2- Non-Verbal Non-Physical Bullying:

This takes three forms:

- **Direct Non-Verbal Non-Physical Bullying:** Such as winking, sneering, and making rude gestures.
- **Indirect Non-Verbal Non-Physical Bullying:** Such as excluding the victim from group activities, deliberate ignoring, and instilling hostility toward the victim among peers.
- **Property-Damage Bullying:** Such as tearing the victim's clothing, damaging their books or school supplies, and stealing personal belongings **(Al-Desouki (2016), pp. 21-22)**

Keith and Martin (2005) and other researchers acknowledge cyberbullying as a distinct bullying form which operates through contemporary communication technology systems.

Bullying exists in multiple forms which do not follow a single pattern of behavior. The classification of bullying depends on the specific methods and elements which create distinct categories including verbal and physical bullying. Sexual bullying stands as a highly dangerous form because it produces both psychological damage and enduring social discrimination.

Bullying behavior develops different categories when we study the social settings which lead to its occurrence. School bullying occurs when children and teenagers get bullied at their educational facilities; university students face bullying from their fellow students and academic staff members; workplace bullying emerges through organizational structures which harm both employee work output and mental health.

The different types of bullying together with their various settings demonstrate the intricate characteristics of this issue which requires knowledge about its multiple social and cultural and psychological elements.

3. Social Roles in Bullying Behavior:

3.1. Bystanders:

These are the observers of the bullying incident, and they are divided into several types:

- **Reinforcers:** Those who provide support to the bully due to their friendship with them, thus becoming active participants in the aggression.
- **Defenders (Protectors):** Those who empathize with the victim and offer assistance.
- **Outsiders:** Neutral individuals who do not side with either party **(Shteibi & Boutaf, (2014), p 77).**

3.2. The Bully:

The main person who performs bullying selects targets because of personal reasons which drive their bullying behavior. Most bullies exploit the victim's fear, maintaining control through the state of intimidation they impose. Bullies fall into two main categories:

- Aggressive bullies: These are the most well-known type. People who show these characteristics exhibit self-confidence through sudden harsh and forceful actions which sometimes turn into violent behavior. They think aggression stands as their only option to protect their power and settle their disagreements.

- Passive bullies: These individuals reinforce the behavior of aggressive bullies. They begin to participate actively after bullying occurs and rarely initiate aggressive acts on their own. They are extremely loyal and devoted to the main bully **(Halhait(2023), p117)**.

- Some researchers also refer to another pattern of bullies: individuals who were previously exposed to bullying as victims and later became bullies themselves. The cycle of violence reproduction occurs when people repeat aggressive behavior because they want to regain control or power which they lost during their time as victims.

- The traditional binary classification between victim and bully becomes more complex through this model which shows that role changes in bullying require expanded knowledge about psychological and social elements that drive these transitions.

3-3. The Victim:

A victim is a person who endures ongoing negative treatment from one or more individuals across multiple time periods:

- Passive victims: These constitute the vast majority of victims. The people in this group show extreme fear and nervousness while they stay alert to all dangers. The victims stay away from others yet they fail to protect themselves and they respond to attacks through crying and submission.
- Provocative victims: These are fewer in number compared to passive victims. They are quick-tempered, inquisitive, and display high levels of anxiety. They retaliate when attacked **(Halhait, (2023), p 118)**.
- Some researchers propose adding a third category known as resistant victims—those who do not merely endure harm but actively respond by defending themselves directly, whether verbally, physically, by seeking help, or even through indifference in cases of verbal bullying, without necessarily becoming bullies themselves. The victim displays a moderate willingness to fight back which places them between total submission and active retaliation.

4. Characteristics of Bullying Victims:

The characteristics and effects associated with victims of bullying constitute an important indicator for understanding the psychological and social dynamics that accompany an individual's exposure to such experiences. Through this analysis of characteristics researchers can identify different types of suffering which affect victims across their behavior and mental health and social connections. The most essential traits include:

- They do not possess clearly manifested abilities.
- They tend to be socially isolated.
- They often have a weak physical build.
- They do not engage in sports.
- They cry easily and are easily provoked.
- They lack a sense of security or tend to be shy.
- They are more attached to adults than to peers.
- They experience fear and discomfort.
- The child may be unwilling to go to school and create excuses (school phobia).
- They may suffer from nightmares or bedwetting.
- He experiences involuntary reactions such as insomnia and anxiety.
- Loss or damage of personal belongings.
- Theft or loss of his allowance.

- Becomes moody or irritable; may act aggressively toward siblings or, conversely, become quiet or withdrawn.
- Neglect of school assignments.
- Increased vulnerability to depression, isolation, low self-esteem, discomfort, and suicidal ideation.
- Has no friends.
- Decline in academic performance.
- Passivity and lack of participation in school activities.
- Steals money from home to give to the bully.
- Emergence of stuttering in speech.
- Eating disorders, including cessation of eating.
- Increased nightmares and attempts or threats of suicide.
- Appearance of bruises, wounds, and scratches on the body **(Al-Diyar(2012), p51)**.

Abu Al-Diyar described various traits of bullying victims through his work but he restricted his study to school environments without examining what happens in settings beyond educational institutions. The author included multiple characteristics which contained duplicate items and unclear classification. The speaker maintained a single viewpoint throughout the presentation which showed victims as powerless individuals while ignoring the existence of other victim types who fight back through defensive actions without turning into bullies.

5. Causes of Bullying from the Victims' Perspective:

The reasons victims identify serve as a starting point for learning about how people see their own experiences of bullying. The victim's self-perception emerges from social and psychological elements which determine their understanding of bullying. The victims identified the following elements as the primary causes:

- Constant silence and not speaking to anyone.
- Obeying everything the teacher says and following their instructions and directives.
- Arrogance.
- Distinctive clothing and appearance.
- Poverty.
- Being exceptionally attractive.
- The teacher's fondness for me.
- Talking excessively and interfering in matters that do not concern me.
- Bringing a large amount of money to school.
- Being related to the principal or the teacher **(Al-Subhiyin & Al-Qudah, (2013), pp 47-48).**

6. Reasons for Submitting to the Bully:

- **Biological factors**: The victim might be younger or weaker than the bully.
- **Psychological factors**: encompass shyness, anxiety, and an inability to confront others. People who have been hurt often pull away from others, have low self-esteem, and use avoidance to solve problems.
- **Cognitive factors:** The victim cultivates a detrimental self-image and adverse beliefs regarding their capabilities. Olweus says that bullying victims' cognitive schemas include negative thoughts about themselves.
- **Family factors:** For instance, overprotecting the child or making them believe they can't take care of themselves or act on their own.
- **Social factors**: include multiple elements which consist of social skill deficits and restricted peer connections and diminished social standing that result in social isolation and withdrawal and passive behavior. People who struggle with communication abilities form another group in this category. The situation becomes more dangerous when children develop limited verbal abilities according to Hazler because they cannot defend themselves through words when facing bullying situations **(Shteibi & Boutaf (2014), p 76)**.

II- Methodological Framework:

1. Method:

The research needed the descriptive–analytical method because it allowed researchers to present first-hand participant experiences and study their psychological and social elements through their own words and personal statements.

Larinouna explains that the descriptive method requires scientists to watch events and phenomena by using exact description and observation and follow-up methods which can be quantitative or qualitative during specific time frames **(Larinouna (2015), p 29).**

The research team applied the descriptive–analytical method through a qualitative research framework to study bullying experiences through detailed case study analysis. The study aims to examine the psychological and social elements which victims experience instead of producing statistical results that apply to general populations.

2. Tools:

The study used semi-structured interviews as its main data collection method to investigate how students remember bullying from their early school years. The researchers applied content analysis to uncover the psychological and social elements which emerged from participant stories while they examined how people interacted with their new circumstances.

2.1 The Semi-Structured Interview

Larinouna demonstrates that interviews function as essential tools which help researchers gather vital information. A researcher develops a set of questions and items which they use to interview subjects before recording their answers for subsequent analysis and interpretation. **(Larinouna (2015), p 50)** The research employed semi-structured interviews which included pre-designed main questions together with specific follow-up questions that emerged from interviewee responses and the natural progression of the interview. The tool enables users to conduct spontaneous conversations which boosts comprehension by allowing participants to remember their experiences in an unforced way.

2.2- Content Analysis

The analysis of content or themes requires researchers to answer pre-existing questions which help describe and organize text elements so they reveal hidden connections between them. **(Larinouna (2015), p. 31)** Content analysis was selected as an appropriate methodological tool for analyzing the textual material extracted from participants' narratives. The tool allows users to move past basic descriptions to study the actual meaning behind spoken words which helps discover patterns and psychological and social symbols and mental and emotional reactions in each case.

3. Research Cases

The research sample consisted of three doctoral students who were selected through purposeful sampling because they experienced social bullying during their educational years starting from primary school through university. The study included participants between 25 and 31 years of age who came from various academic backgrounds. The study maintained consistent demographic factors between the three cases because all participants shared single marital status and middle economic status and high social status and lived in urban areas.

The research used purposive sampling because the study subject requires qualitative analysis to understand how people experience the phenomenon through their personal social and psychological perspectives.

The chosen cases function as proper analysis units which enable the study of this phenomenon through psychosociological methods because they reveal how victims form personal beliefs and how their experiences impact their mental state and social behavior and their methods of opposing abuse in various environments. Data were collected after providing a comprehensive explanation of the research objectives, while respecting conditions of confidentiality, voluntary consent, and the privacy of each participant's personal identity.

III-Applied Framework:

1. Case Presentation:

Case 1:

- **Gender and age:** Male, 25 years old.
- **Family order:** The second-to-last child in a family of six children.
- **Level of bullying:** Moderate to recurrent, first appearing in secondary school and continuing partially in the professional context.
- **Types of bullying:** Mocking verbal bullying related to health condition and appearance (eyeglasses).
- **Social environment:** Positive relationships with neighbors and friends.
- **Coping strategies:** Direct confrontation, talking to close acquaintances, focusing on academic success, religious and literary expression, using avoidance, and seeking support.
- **Analytical notes:** He demonstrated psychological resilience and a tendency to transform bullying into a motivation for achievement, along with a cognitive understanding of bullying as a form of social ignorance.

Case 2:

- **Gender and Age:** Female, 26 years old.
- **Family Order:** Middle daughter among three siblings.
- **Level of Bullying:** Severe and recurrent, from primary school through higher education.
- **Types of Bullying:** Familial, verbal, social, and discrimination based on illness and ambition.
- **Social Environment:** Tense and limited relationships; loss of a close person.
- **Coping Strategies:** Suppression, withdrawal, crying, compensation through academic work, participation in cultural activities, distinction in media and sports, partial avoidance.
- **Analytical Notes:** The case was deeply affected psychologically, yet she relied on achievement to rebuild her sense of self. The effects of psychological trauma remain evident.

Case 3:

- **Gender and Age:** Female, 31 years old.
- **Family Order:** Sister to five brothers.
- **Level of Bullying:** Moderate; began in middle school and reappeared later at more advanced stages.
- **Types of Bullying:** Appearance-based bullying in middle school; symbolic bullying later due to her academic excellence.

- **Social Environment:** Good relationships with family and neighbors; strong educational support from teachers.
- **Coping Strategies:** Ignoring, writing, emotional release through creative expression, continued academic excellence, limited help-seeking.
- **Analytical Notes:** Demonstrated emotional regulation skills and flexibility in dealing with negative experiences, along with a critical awareness of bullying as a sign of weakness in the perpetrator.

2. General Analysis of the Cases

2.1 Level of Bullying Among the Cases

The research examined three distinct reports which revealed varied amounts of bullying that individuals faced. The second case demonstrated severe bullying that persisted throughout all schooling years which caused multiple psychological traumas to occur.

Both the first and third investigations documented average bullying which originated in secondary or middle school and persisted to create various professional and emotional consequences.

These findings demonstrate that bullying magnitude does not solely depend on age or developmental stage because it also reflects individual personal and social characteristics.

2.2 Types of Bullying Experienced by the Cases:

The patterns of bullying varied across the cases, reflecting the multiplicity of forms of both symbolic and actual harm.

The cases received non-stop verbal bullying because their peers together with their family members and social contacts used words to abuse them. Social bullying occurred through multiple methods which involved both social exclusion and group-based mockery and social exclusion tactics.

The second and third cases showed instances of symbolic and emotional bullying which mainly appeared during emotional relationships like engagements. People experience bullying in different ways because of their gender identity as shown by the bullying that these girls encountered.

The different patterns show that bullying exists in various forms because its characteristics depend on the situation and developmental stage and existing relationships.

2.3 The Social Environment and Its Role in the Bullying Experience:

The three cases showed different kinds of social support networks, which had a big effect on how they dealt with bullying and how they reacted to it.

The first case had a good social circle of friends, neighbors, and family that helped lessen the effects of bullying and stop it from getting worse. The second case, on the other hand, was bullied by family members because of the mother's health problems and didn't have any friends. The combination of these factors created a situation which left her defenseless while increasing her chances of developing long-term mental health issues. The third case was raised in a family that was only somewhat supportive, but some teachers stepped in to help stop bullying at certain times.

The social environment holds critical importance because it creates protective conditions for people or exposes them to potential risks. The support level from others determines how victims handle their situation and what psychological effects they will experience.

Research conducted by **(Estévez-García, Cañas, & Estévez, (2025)** demonstrates that a positive social environment at home or school combined with the victim's ability to share their experience leads to reduced suicidal thoughts in adolescents who face school bullying.

The research by **(Barcaccia, et al., (2018))** confirmed that having a close friend serves as an extra protective factor which helps reduce the negative effects of bullying on mental health.

The research results demonstrate how social factors influence bullying effects and protect against extreme psychological harm that bullying causes.

2.4 Factors that Encourage Bullying Behavior:

Data analysis shows that physical and health-related differences between people make them more vulnerable to bullying.

- People with illnesses and their symptoms became targets for bullying behavior which led to their social isolation.

-The third case involved ridicule centered on physical appearance (body shape), especially during middle school.

-People who show physical differences become victims of stigma-based physical bullying because others perceive them as abnormal. The way people look or their health status should never serve as a justification for bullying behavior. The bully uses this as a defense to justify their behavior when they create an environment that isolates others.

2.5 Bullying as a Social Phenomenon Extending Across Contexts:

The three cases demonstrate that bullying continues to exist past the typical developmental stage of childhood alone. The behavior exists throughout time while

showing different patterns in various settings which include schools and homes and personal connections between people.

The case study illustrates the intricate nature of bullying behavior. The behavior exists as a single action and as a social practice which receives backing from psychological and social systems that uphold bullying behavior across all social levels.

2.6 Victims' Representations of Bullying:

The research found all participants shared a single mental framework about bullying because they viewed it as a result of personal shortcomings or lack of knowledge. This is a defensive cognitive stance which helps the victim see the situation in a new perspective that maintains their mental stability while creating emotional distance from the event to reduce their feelings of guilt and self-doubt.

The victim demonstrates cognitive and critical analysis of the event through this depiction which shows their ability to transform the experience into a cognitive strength that defeats the bully's mental control and builds their self-confidence.

(Adawy (2014)) developed an assertiveness training program for school bullying victims through his research. The research demonstrated that this mental system exists as a vital component for cognitive processes. The research demonstrated that the program enabled victims to alter their self-view which resulted in better self-assurance.

2.7 Psychological and Social Coping Strategies:

The three cases showed different bullying coping methods because each person developed their own approach based on their personality traits and family background and the number of times they faced bullying.

The male participant from Case 1: used direct confrontation when needed and also talked to his family and friends while drawing strength from his social connections and his academic and religious achievements. The person adopted two main methods to handle the situation by choosing to ignore it and reaching out for assistance.

- The second case (female) used emotional suppression to handle bullying while she cried and retreated into herself. The woman managed to restore her equilibrium through her commitment to academic success and media involvement and artistic pursuits which demonstrated her secret inner defiance although her mental health problems stayed present.

-The third case showed a person who used writing as emotional expression and academic dedication while teachers stopped her from telling her family about the

situation. The three cases demonstrate active self-driven coping mechanisms which include ignoring and indirect expression through writing or achievement and support-seeking behaviors. People develop various methods to convert their pain into personal drive because they receive no professional mental health support from institutions.

2.8 Bullies and the "Third Party"

In all cases, there was a "third party" present during the bullying, which was usually a bystander who was either quiet or laughing. This illustrates notions such as the bystander effect and the communal validation of detrimental conduct when confronted with apathy or amusement.

Thus, the dynamics of bullying cannot be comprehended exclusively through a dyadic relationship (victim/bully), but rather within a more expansive framework that encompasses the social context and the influence of the surrounding environment in either perpetuating or opposing the behavior, frequently maintained through silence or implicit collective complicity.

2.9 Models of Resistance and Psychological Responses

The coping methods used by each individual fall into distinct patterns of resistance based on how they handle their situations.

- The first case shows the "direct resister" model because the person actively fights bullying through direct actions and by discussing the issue while using social support and academic success to build self-assurance.
- The second case shows a person who became a "resister with traumatic impact" through her experiences. She achieved success but continued to experience nightmares which she fought against by achieving success in front of others while concealing her inner struggles. This aligns with the findings of the study by **(Kharkhash, (2024))**, which showed that bullying victims often experience moderate levels of post-traumatic stress symptoms.
- The third case shows the "quiet internal resister" because she chose to ignore bullying through writing while maintaining her academic performance and avoiding direct confrontation.

The different coping methods people use stem from their individual mental and behavioral adjustment methods which result from their current psychological and social environment.

The results of this study show different results than **(Widiharto, Suminar, & Hendriani, (2020))** because their research identified that bullying victims in their study

felt helpless and powerless which differs from the critical self-understanding shown by the current cases.

The difference between these results stems from the distinct age groups and social environments of the participants. The participants in this research study represent doctoral students who developed mental strength and academic success through their life experiences which helped them view their bullying experiences differently. The sample in (Widiharto, Suminar, & Hendriani, 2020) research included primary school children and people who lived in environments with less support which made their self-worth more vulnerable to developing feelings of helplessness.

-Conclusion:

The research findings show that bullying experiences extend beyond the actual event because the victim's individual and social memory continues to store these experiences while their understanding of the event develops through different interpretations and life circumstances. The analysis of three doctoral students who faced bullying during their past revealed that victims of bullying do not always stay in a position of weakness. People who experience trauma develop different psychological and social defense mechanisms which include purposeful avoidance and silent endurance and achievement as a form of compensation and mental reframing that maintains self-balance and transforms their position from victim to empowered individual.

The research shows that social and family elements which influence bullying experiences and coping strategies need to be studied alongside physical and health-related characteristics which determine who becomes a bullying victim.

The study shows that schools do not provide any institutional support to help victims manage their experiences or receive psychological and educational assistance throughout their academic years and after graduation. The lack of support systems makes individuals handle adaptation and resistance on their own which highlights the weak structure of educational and social systems that fail to protect bullying victims.

Study Recommendations:

1) The prevention of bullying needs educational programs which should teach students about bullying and simultaneously prepare teachers to identify bullying in its early stages.

2) The educational institutions need to create psychological support areas which help students deal with their traumatic experiences through appropriate recovery methods.
3) The positive influence of resistant victims becomes active when they join awareness programs which teach people to develop resilient behaviors and constructive coping methods.
4) The protection of victims depends on schools and families to create institutional systems which allow for reporting and intervention.
5) Research and policy development should focus on the psychosociological aspects of this phenomenon through studies which examine individual elements together with family systems and educational institutions.

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