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Comparative Study

Perceptions of Bullying in Schools: A Comparative Study of Student and Teacher Perspectives

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ABSTRACT

Bullying in school environments has remained a concern since the establishment of educational institutions. Despite evidence to suggest the continued prevalence of bullying, studies of bullying in high school environments specifically in the Indian context remain rare. In an attempt to bridge the aforementioned gap, this paper aimed to understand the stark differences behind the perceptual identification of bullying, between teachers and students. The present study examined these differences with a random sample of 237 students and 43 teachers from the major areas in India. The present study utilised scales such as the Bullying Vignette Test, Victim Olweus Scale, and the Bullying Significance Test in order to establish significant differences between gender and grades for students. The present study also established significant differences between students and teachers on the Bullying Vignette test, along with the establishment of a positive correlation between Bullying Identification and Bullying Intervention for teachers. This particular study concludes not just the perceptual differences but recognizes the difference that factors such as age, teaching experience, gender and grades can make upon how bullying is perceived by teachers or students.

Keywords: *Bullying, Perceptual Differences, Students, Teachers, Bullying Intervention, Bullying Identification*

Bullying is the general problem found in school communities, and these problems are critical issues for academic organizations, learners, and the teaching team. Precisely, bullying may be referred to as any kind of repeated aggressive behavior aiming to harm someone else using imbalance power (Gredler, 2003; Martínez-Carrera et al., 2024).

Bullying has been termed as an unmistakable form of pugnacious behaviour denoted by three main characteristics: intent to harm, repetition in time, and an asymmetrical power dynamix between the bully and the victim (Gredler, 2003; Yoon & Kerber, 2003). Probably the most widely accepted definition defines bullying as an intention to hurt or intimidate the victim that is performed by an individual or a group having more power & control over the victim with minimal ability on the part of the latter to defend him or herself. This type of aggression is different since it becomes repetitive and includes social power, which distinguishes the other forms of conflict that may occur (Gredler, 2003; Duy, 2013).

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There are several documented forms of bullying mainly encompassing types such as that in the form of verbal, physical, relationship, cyberbullying etc. Physical bullying is related to overt acts such as kicking, hitting, and other forms of physical assault (Duy, 2013). Verbal bullying includes name-calling, insults, and rumors that can damage the victim's self-esteem and social standing (Yoon & Kerber, 2003). Relational bullying is typically more subtle and difficult to detect; however, it manipulates the social relationship to harm the victim, by employing tactics such as social exclusion or rumour spreading to inflict harm. Further, cyberbullying is a recent/new form of bullying, which occurs on platforms which are digital, and has its own specific challenges because it is very pervasive and persistent, which goes beyond the school context and into students' private lives (Paljakka, 2023). Due to its overt nature, physical bullying is often more noticed, leading to higher rates of reporting and intervention, unlike the less visible relational and cyberbullying, which operate more discreetly (Duy, 2013)

Tracing the History of Bullying

Bullying research began formally during the 1970s in Scandinavian countries. Pioneers of such work included Dan Olweus, a Norwegian who made much of the groundwork about the issue today (Stockdale et al., 2002; Duy, 2013). Olweus's work in Norway not only came up with a holistic definition of the bullying behavior but also kick-started the production of anti-bullying programs which call for combating bullying in social-ecological settings inside schools (Duy, 2013). Subsequently, there have been reports from continent to continent that bullying was a widespread, long-lasting problem and common among the majority of students in the majority of countries, in almost all types of educational institutions and schools (Paljakka, 2023).

The years passed by, and emphasis on bullying went from just the mere physical forms to verbal, relational, and cyberbullying. It shows a more holistic approach about how aggression might present itself within school environments as well as an appreciation of the fact that less obvious forms of bullying are destructive. International studies have proven that culture and social structures have molded behavior in bullying; thus, it is an issue with a strong social context and culturally altered interventions must be used in fighting the problem of bullying behavior (Duy, 2013).

Prevalence of Bullying

Bullying has remained a widespread phenomenon in schools everywhere. For instance, NCES data shows that in the 2021–2022 school year, students in grades 6 through 12, 19% experienced and reported bullying; a decade ago it was 28%. The findings of a study conducted in the United States show that over 30% of students in grades 6 through 10 are engaged in bullying dynamics, acting as either the bully or the victim (Duy, 2013). Prevalence rates are highly different based on the cultural and societal influence in each region. Indeed, some regions have a higher number of bullying cases due to the varying definitions and methods of measurement. For instance, in Japan and Turkey, bullying has been reported to be a problem in schools, but the terms "ijime" in Japan give different cultural meanings and experiences about bullying (Paljakka, 2023).

Bullying has also been reported in regions with other forms of education, such as Europe and North America, due to the existence of various anti-bullying programs and policies. However, bullying remains prevalent at disturbing levels within both primary and secondary educational environments despite all these interventions (Duy, 2013). Research studies also indicate that while the number of cases of direct bullying (physical and verbal) may decline

with age, forms of bullying that are less overt, including cyberbullying and social exclusion may remain the same or even rise with time (Martínez-Carrera et al., 2024).

The Scope of Bullying in the Indian Education System

India's large and diverse student population poses special challenges to its education system in terms of dealing with bullying. India has one of the largest education sectors with over 260 million students studying in its educational institutions. The sector cuts across the urban, suburban, and rural setting with varying access to resources and infrastructure. Over the last few years, bullying has been a key concern within Indian schools since it coincided with widespread digital devices, which paved the way for cyberbullying to become a pertinent problem (Martínez-Carrera et al., 2024).

While Indian school policies generally take bullying seriously, practices regarding awareness and intervention efforts are still in their developmental stages. Other educators may not classify certain acts as bullying because those are relational or cyberbullying, largely due to the cultural practices prevailing around these forms of aggression. The majority of schools in India have failed to develop formal anti-bullying programs or policies, which makes the job of controlling and preventing bullying very challenging for teachers. However, there is increasing recognition that calls for customized education for teachers and other school staff to further build the school climate safe and more responsive to the needs of each student.

Indian students' perceptions regarding bullying, particularly cyberbullying, reflect a highly alarming comparison of awareness and response. In West Bengal, students report cyberbullying occurs regularly, and almost 42% students admitted to having been cyberbullied at least once in their lifetime due to some form of appearance or social standing. Teachers also report the existence of cyberbullying but believe the problem is not as serious and not as intense as it really is (Roy, 2018). This might lead to neglecting the targeted students, despite the fact that the case might have its effects in the school despite the fact that the case took place online. Secondly, Indian teachers are not prepared on how to intervene in cyberbullying as most come from a different academic background hence weakening their side. The lack of stringent anti-bullying legislation in India further complicates responses to bullying, and such instances rest mostly on the administration and teachers at school to address them with only a handful of legal guidelines (Roy, 2018).

Perceptions of Bullying

Perceptions from the students as well as from their teachers determine whether effective resolution of this problem would or would not work. Student perceptions reveal bullying is responsible for all types of social as well as emotional damages while most consider bullying as the most grave matter concerning themselves in a school. Many students declare that teachers appear ignorant about the prevalence of such occurrences of bullying or pay less attention than the self-experiences made by those very students themselves. Since a student may not report it, inconsistency exists between bullying occurrence and recognition in school, mainly because of teacher relational bullying (Yoon & Kerber, 2003; Martínez-Carrera et al., 2024). For instance, bullying forms such as those that are verbal in nature or physical in nature are more probable to be recognized by the teacher in comparison to relational kinds which are more intangible, and mostly described by both parties as minor social conflicts rather than definite aggressive acts (Paljakka, 2023).

Teachers' perceptions are determined by their personal beliefs, experiences, and the training received on bullying prevention and intervention. Some studies have indicated that teachers may perceive certain types of bullying, such as social exclusion, as not very serious, which means their responses may be inconsistent, and sometimes they fail to intervene appropriately (Duy, 2013). This therefore calls for improved training and awareness programs to help the teachers identify and handle various bullying behaviors in an appropriate manner (Yoon & Kerber, 2003).

Bullying is a multidimensional social problem that comes with numerous manifestations and affects different categories of students and instructors from all over the globe. The prevalence of bullying in educational settings underscores the absolute necessity for effective prevention and intervention strategies. The solution in India would thus be to address the bullying phenomenon in the unique educational setup with a multiple pronged approach consisting of creating awareness, providing training and formulating policies and programs that work to alleviate the negative effects and factors on the wellbeing, especially psychological wellbeing, of students. From the review defining bullying and types and student perceptions is key to developing schools into safe havens that ensure students thrive.

METHODOLOGY

Aim

The aim of the study is to investigate the differences in perception of bullying between teachers and students towards different forms of bullying and to identify the difference in response to the incidents of bullying.

Objectives

Considering the main purpose of the research, the study seeks to address the following threads:

1. To understand the differences in perceptions of bullying between middle school adolescents (of classes 7, 8, 9) and high school adolescents (of classes 10, 11, 12)
2. To explore the difference in perceptions of bullying among male and female students.
3. To analyse the relationship between the student and the teacher's response to the bullying experiences.

Hypothesis

Student Survey:

- H1 = There will be a significant difference between gender on Bullying Vignette Test
- H2 = There will be a significant difference between grades on the Bullying Vignette Test
- H3 = There will be a significant difference between gender on the Victim Olweus Scale
- H4 = There will be a significant difference between grades on the Victim Olweus Scale
- H5 = There will be a significant difference between gender on the Bullying Significance Test
- H6 = There will be a significant difference between grades on the Bullying Significance Test

Comparison between Teacher & Student Survey:
H7 = There will be a significant difference between students and teachers on the Bullying Vignette test including its subscales:

a. Seriousness subscale
b. Sympathy subscale
c. Likelihood of intervention subscale

Teacher Survey:

- H8 = There will be significant differences between the different age groups on the Bullying Vignette Test
- H9 = There will be significant differences between the different years of teaching experience on the Bullying Vignette Test
- H10 = There will be significant differences between the different age groups for Bullying Identification.
- H11 = There will be significant differences between the different years of teaching experience for Bullying Identification.
- H12 = There will be significant differences between the different age groups for Bullying Intervention
- H13 = There will be significant differences between the different years of teaching experience for Bullying Intervention.
- H14 = There will be a positive correlation between Bullying Identification and Bullying Intervention.

Participants

This study included a sample of 237 students and 43 teachers. Participants were required to be fluent in English. Both the student sample population and the teacher sample population were a mixture of students from different schools within Northern India. The student sample population was classified on the basis of their gender and grades while the teacher sample population was classified on the basis of their age and years of teaching experience.

Research Design

The present paper utilised a research design that was quantitative in nature. Via the utilisation of statistical software called DataTab, in depth analysis of the patterns, differences in perceptions of bullying were provided. Analytical methods such as those of descriptive statistics to summarise the prevalent rates and inferential statistics such as t-tests ANOVA and correlation to explore differences between groups and multiple categories were utilised.

Instrumentation

Data was collected via the survey method. In order to get accurate results and be able to analyse/compare the results received, there were two surveys (i.e. one for students and the other for teachers, in order to compare the same) that were created utilising certain tested, reliable and valid questionnaires.

Both surveys utilised the scale & questionnaire provided by *Yoon & Kerber (2003)*. The present study utilised this questionnaire to assess students' and teachers' perceived seriousness of bullying, their empathy towards victims, and their likelihood of intervention. In the following questionnaire, the participants were provided six different vignettes (two for verbal, two for social exclusion and two for physical). They were then asked 3 questions,

how likely they would be to intervene, how empathetic they would feel in this sort of a situation, and how serious they believe the situation to be, for each vignettes, each respondent had to choose from a likert scale of 1 to 5; 1 being the lowest, and 5 being the highest for the propensity of the same. In the present study, this questionnaire was used to assess teachers' perceived seriousness of bullying, their likelihood of intervention, their empathy toward victims, and the types of intervention strategy they would employ. In this questionnaire the participants were presented with six vignettes (two physical, two verbal, and two social exclusion).

In addition to the questionnaire provided in Yoon & Kerber (2003), the *Student Survey* also utilized the following scales and questionnaires:

- *Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire (Olweus, 1996):* This questionnaire contained two versions out of which the present study utilised the Brazilian, Portuguese version of the Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire (OBVQ), with special emphasis on the victim scale, consisting of 23 items. These items were measured on a 1-4 likert scale, with 1 akin to never & 4 akin to several times a week. In the present study, the original item no 16 "I was sexually harassed" was rephrased as "I have experienced inappropriate touch/behaviour/comments which has caused discomfort" upon feedback from the school authorities. Overall the scale reported an internal consistency of .80-.90.
- *Student School Survey (D8) (Hamburger et al, 2011):* The present study utilised this questionnaire to understand how students perceive certain bullying situations in terms of its magnitude/extent of the given situation. The participants were given a certain scenario and were asked either to pass or to select whether it was a huge problem, a pretty big problem, sort of a problem or not at all a problem. Hamburger et al. (2011) contained several questionnaires, however the present study focused only on section D8, with special emphasis with only the "How big a problem" questionnaire.

The teacher survey:

- *Bullying Identification & Intervention Survey (Farahat, 2019)*: The present study utilised this questionnaire in order to gain twofold understanding as to whether teachers are able to identify bullying and analyse how likely teachers would be to intervene in bullying situations via certain items. These items were measured on a 1-4 likert scale, with 1= strongly agree & 4 = strongly disagree. In the present study only questionnaires for "Bullying Identification" & "Bullying Intervention" from Appendix D, have been incorporated into the survey.

Data Collection Procedure

The study used an online and offline method for data collection. For the online method, the study utilised Google forms, an online medium of a questionnaire that can be shared with a larger crowd with ease. The offline method required visiting classrooms, and getting responses through physical questionnaires. The survey includes a detailed explanation of the study and instructions for completing the questionnaire.

Ethical Considerations

There were certain ethical considerations taken into account whilst conducting this survey. Considering the fact that the survey was created for both teachers and students and thus had some subjectively sensitive questions, there were different considerations taken up for both

parties. One of the first ethical considerations was that of *confidentiality;* all responses were considered anonymous, and no information that is identifiable would be utilised beyond research purposes. The second consideration taken up was *voluntary participation;* participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the survey at any point of time or choose not to partake in the same either, they were not only informed prior to the survey being shared with them but the same right was also shared in writing with the participant within the very survey. The third consideration taken up was that of *teacher guardianship;* considering that the survey took place in a school setup, the teachers were treated as guardians for the student participants, ensuring that no additional distress was placed on the students while partaking in the survey. The last consideration was that of *result usage;* wherein the findings were only shared and used exclusively for academic purposes.

RESULTS

Student Survey - Results

SECTION I - Bullying Vignette Test

Table 1 shows the t test scores for gender on bullying vignette test for students

		n	M	SD	t	df	p	Cohen's d
Bullying vignette	Male	123	59.89	15.44				
					-2.2	234	.029	0.29
	Female	113	63.9	12.32				

Table 1 revealed significant mean differences on the Bullying Vignette Test with *t = -2.2, p < 0.05 (p=0.29)*. Findings showed that females exhibit higher scores on the Bullying Vignette Test *(M = 63.9, SD = 12.32)* than male respondents *(M = 59.89, SD = 15.44)*. The value of Cohen's d was *0.29* which indicates a small effect size. Thus, H1 which states that there will be a significant difference between gender on the Bullying Vignette Test is *accepted*.

Table 2 displays the t test scores for grades on bullying vignette test for students

		n	M	SD	t	df	p	Cohen's d
Bullying vignette	Grades 10, 11, 12	93	66.57	12.21				
					4.25	235	<.001	0.56
	Grades 7, 8, 9	144	58.85	14.54				

According to Table 2, there is a significant difference in mean on the Bullying Vignette Test with *t = 4.25, p <0.001*. Findings presented that Grades 10, 11 & 12, have higher scores on the Bullying Vignette Test *(M = 66.57, SD = 12.21)* than respondents in Grades 7, 8, & 9 (M = 58.85, SD = 14.54). The value of Cohen's d was 0.56, which indicates a moderate effect size. Thus, H2 which states that there will be a significant difference between grades on the Bullying Vignette Test is *accepted*.

SECTION II - Victim Olweus Scale

Table 3 shows the t test scores for gender on the Victim Olweus Scale for students

		n	M	SD	t	df	p	Cohen's d
Victim Olweus scale	Male	123	37.37	14.03				
					0.05	234	.964	0.01
	Female	113	37.29	13.65				

Table 3 delineates no significant difference in mean on the Victim Olweus Scale with t = 0.25, p = 0.964. Findings presented that both males (M = 37.37, SD = 14.03) and females (M = 37.29, SD = 13.65) have similar scores on the Victim Olweus Scale. The value of Cohen's d was 0.01, which indicates a negligible effect size. Thus, H3 which states that there will be a significant difference between gender on the Victim Olweus Scale is *rejected*.

Table 4 shows the t test scores for grades on the Victim Olweus Scale for students

		n	M	SD	t	df	p	Cohen's d
Victim Olweus scale	Grades 10, 11, 12	93	32.41	9.02				
					-4.6	235	<.001	0.61
	Grades 7, 8, 9	144	40.51	15.35				

According to Table 4, a significant difference is present in the mean of the Victim Olweus Scale with t = -4.6, p <0.001. Findings presented that Grades 7, 8 & 9, have higher scores on the Victim Olweus Scale (M = 40.51, SD = 15.35) than respondents in Grades 10, 11, & 12 (M = 32.41, SD = 9.02). The value of Cohen's d was 0.61, which indicates a medium/large effect size. Thus, H4 which states that there will be a significant difference between grades on the Victim Olweus Scale is *accepted.*

Section III - Bullying Significance Test

Table 5 shows the t test scores for gender on the Bullying Significance Test for students

		n	M	SD	t	df	p	Cohen's d
Bullying Significance	Male	123	17.17	5.39				
					-1.75	234	.082	0.23
	Female	113	37.29	13.65				

Table 5, depicts no significant difference in mean on the Bullying Significance Test with t = -1.75, p = 0.082. Findings presented that females have higher scores on the Bullying Significance Test (M = 37.29, SD = 13.65) than male respondents (M = 17.17, SD = 5.39). The value of Cohen's d was 0.23, which indicates a small effect size. Thus, H5 which states that there will be a significant difference between gender on the Bullying Significance Test is *rejected.*

Table 6 shows the t test scores for grades on the Bullying Significance Test for students

		n	M	SD	t	df	p	Cohen's d
Bullying Significance	Grades 10, 11, 12	93	19.27	3.34				
					3.9	235	<.001	0.52
	Grades 7, 8, 9	144	16.72	5.7				

Table 6, portrays a significant difference in mean on the Bullying Significance Test with t = 3.9, p <.001. Findings presented that Grades 10, 11, & 12 have higher scores on the Bullying Significance Test (M = 19.27, SD = 3.34) than Grades 7, 8, & 9 (M = 16.72, SD = 5.7). The value of Cohen's d was 0.52, which indicates a medium effect size. Thus, H6 which states that there will be a significant difference between grades on the Bullying Significance Test is *accepted*.

Comparison between Teacher & Student survey - results

Table 7 shows the t test scores between teachers and students on the seriousness subscale in the Bullying Vignette Test

		n	M	SD	t	df	p	Cohen's d
Seriousness-subscale	Student	237	21.86	4.83				
					-2.52	278	.012	0.41
	Teacher	43	23.88	4.71				

Table 7 revealed no significant mean differences on the Bullying Vignette Test for the subscale seriousness with t = -2.5233, p = 0.012. Findings showed that teachers exhibit higher scores on the subscale for seriousness with respect to bullying (M = 23.8837, SD = 4.7168) than student respondents (M = 21.8692, SD = 4.8341). The value of Cohen's d was 0.4183 which indicates a medium to small effect size. Thus, H7(a) which states that there will be a significant difference between students and teachers on the Bullying Vignette test for the seriousness subscale is *accepted*.

Table 8 shows the t test scores between teachers and students on the sympathy subscale in the Bullying Vignette Test

		n	M	SD	t	df	p	Cohen's d
Sympathy Subscale	Student	237	21.4135	5.3983				
					-2.53	278	.012	0.421
	Teacher	43	23.6512	4.825				

Table 8 revealed no significant mean differences on the Bullying Vignette Test for the subscale sympathy with t = -2.53, p = 0.12. Findings showed that teachers exhibit higher scores on the subscale for seriousness with respect to bullying (M = 23.6512, SD = 4.825) than student respondents (M = 21.4135, SD = 5.3983). The value of Cohen's d was 0.421 which indicates a medium effect size. Thus, H7(b) which states that there will be a significant difference between students and teachers on the Bullying Vignette test for the sympathy subscale is *accepted*.

Table 9 shows the t test scores between teachers and students on the likelihood of intervention subscale in the Bullying Vignette Test

		n	M	SD	t	df	p	Cohen's d
Likelihood of Intervention - Subscale	Student	237	18.594	5.649				
					-5.79	278	<.001	0.9612
	Teacher	43	23.907	4.775				

Table 9 revealed significant mean differences on the Bullying Vignette Test for the subscale likelihood of intervention with t = -5.79, p <.001. Findings showed that teachers exhibit higher scores on the subscale for likelihood of intervention with respect to bullying (M = 23.907, SD = 4.775) than student respondents (M = 18.594, SD = 5.649). The value of Cohen's d was 0.9612 which indicates a large effect size. Thus, H7(c) which states that there will be a significant difference between students and teachers on the Bullying Vignette test for the likelihood of intervention subscale is *accepted.*

Table 10 shows the t test scores between teachers and students on the Bullying Vignette Test

		n	M	SD	t	df	p	Cohen's d
Bullying Vignette Test	Student	237	61.87	14.15				
					-4.1001	278	<.001	0.67
	Teacher	43	71.44	13.59				

Table 10 revealed significant mean differences on the Bullying Vignette Test with t = -4.1001, p <.001. Findings showed that teachers exhibit higher scores on the Bullying Vignette Test (M = 71.4419, SD = 13.5915) than student respondents (M = 61.8776, SD = 14.1567). The value of Cohen's d was 0.6796 which indicates a large effect size. Thus, H7 which states that there will be a significant difference between students and teachers on the Bullying Vignette test is *accepted.*

Teacher Survey - Results

SECTION I - Bullying Vignette Test

Table 11 shows the results of a one-way ANOVA, on the basis of age for the Bullying Vignette Test

	Sum of Squares	df	M^2	F	p	η2
Age	555.2167	3	185.0722	1.002	.402	0.0716
Residual	7203.3879	39	184.7023			
Total	7758.6047	42				

Table 11 shows the results of a one way ANOVA to assess whether age affects scores on the Bullying Vignette test. The analysis revealed that the effect of age was not statistically significant, F(3, 39) = 1.002, p = .402, η2 (η2)= 0.0716. This suggests that differences in age did not contribute significantly to variance in test scores. The effect size (η2 = 0.0716) indicates a moderate effect. Thus H8, which states that there will be significant differences between the different age groups on the Bullying Vignette Test, stands *rejected.*

Table 12 shows the results of a one-way ANOVA, on the basis of teaching experience for the Bullying Vignette Test

	Sum of squares	df	M^2	F	p	η2
Teaching Experience	832.18	3	277.39	1.56	.214	0.107
Residual	6926.42	39	177.6006			
Total	7758.604	42				

Table 12 shows the results of a one way ANOVA to assess whether teaching experience affects scores on the Bullying Vignette test. The analysis revealed that the effect of teaching

experience was not statistically significant, F(3, 39) = 1.56, p = .214, η2 = 0.1073. This suggests that differences in teaching experience did not contribute significantly to variance in test scores. The effect size (η2 = 0.1073) indicates a small to moderate effect. Thus H9, which states that there will be significant differences between different years of teaching experience on the Bullying Vignette Test, is *rejected*.

SECTION II - Bullying Identification

Table 13 shows the results of a one-way ANOVA, on the basis of age for Bullying Identification

	Sum of Squares	**df**	**M^2**	**F**	**p**	**η2**
Age	21.3984	3	7.1328	0.6862	.566	0.0501
Residual	405.3923	39	10.3947			
Total	426.7907	42				

Table 13 shows the results of a one way ANOVA to assess whether age affects scores for Bullying Identification. The analysis revealed that the effect of age was not statistically significant, F(3, 39) = 0.68, p = .566, η2 = 0.0501. This suggests that differences in age did not contribute significantly to variance in test scores. The effect size (η2 = 0.0501) indicates a small to moderate effect. Thus H10, which states that there will be significant differences between the different age groups for Bullying Identification is *rejected*

Table 14 shows the results of a one-way ANOVA, on the basis of teaching experience for Bullying Identification

	Sum of Squares	**df**	**M^2**	**F**	**p**	**η2**
Teaching Experience	1.2518	3	0.4173	0.0382	.99	0.0029
Residual	425.5389	39	10.9113			
Total	426.7907	42				

Table 14 shows the results of a one way ANOVA to assess whether teaching experience affects scores for Bullying Identification. The analysis revealed that the effect of teaching experience was not statistically significant, F(3, 39) = 0.038, p = .99, η2 = 0.0029. This suggests that differences in teaching experience did not contribute significantly to variance in test scores. The effect size (η2 = 0.0029) indicates a very small effect. Thus H11, which states that there will be significant differences between the different years of teaching experience for Bullying Identification is *rejected.*

SECTION III - Bullying Intervention

Table 15 shows the results of a one-way ANOVA, on the basis of age for Bullying Intervention

	Sum of Squares	**df**	**M^2**	**F**	**p**	**η2**
Age	24.0911	3	8.0304	0.8832	.458	0.0636
Residual	354.6066	39	9.0925			
Total	378.6977	42				

Table 15 shows the results of a one way ANOVA to assess whether age affects scores for Bullying Intervention. The analysis revealed that the effect of age was not statistically significant, $F(3, 39) = 0.88$, $p = .458$, $\eta 2 = 0.0636$. This suggests that differences in age did not contribute significantly to variance in test scores. The effect size ($\eta 2 = 0.0636$) indicates a moderate effect. Thus H12, which states that there will be significant differences between the different age groups for Bullying Intervention is *rejected.*

Table 16 shows the results of a one-way ANOVA, on the basis of teaching experience for Bullying Intervention

	Sum of Squares	**df**	**M^2**	**F**	**p**	**η2**
Teaching Experience	35.0977	3	11.6992	1.3279	.279	0.0927
Residual	343.6	39	8.8103			
Total	378.6977	42				

Table 16 shows the results of a one way ANOVA to assess whether teaching experience affects scores for Bullying Intervention. The analysis revealed that the effect of teaching experience was not statistically significant, $F(3, 39) = 1.3279$, $p = .279$, $\eta 2 = 0.0927$. This suggests that differences in teaching experience did not contribute significantly to variance in test scores. The effect size ($\eta 2 = 0.0927$) indicates a moderate effect. Thus H13, which states that there will be significant differences between the different years of teaching experience for Bullying Intervention is *rejected.*

SECTION IV - Correlation

Table 17 shows the results of correlation between Bullying Identification & Intervention

	r	p
Bullying Identification & Bullying Intervention	0.3025	.049

Table 17 shows correlation between bullying identification and bullying intervention among teachers. The r value = 0.302 and p = 0.49 indicate a moderate positive significant correlation. This indicates that when bullying identification increases, bullying intervention increases as well, and vice versa. Thus H14, which states that there will be a positive correlation between Bullying Identification and Bullying Intervention, is *accepted.*

DISCUSSION

The present study sought to distinguish between the perception of students and the perception of teachers on matters of bullying in Indian society. The current research indeed concluded a significant difference between the community of teachers and the community of students. In order to understand this difference, the present study first evaluated the differences among students when it came to bullying perception and later on, assessed the differences in teachers on bullying perception, intervention and identification. Finally, a comparison between the different perceptions of students and teachers was conducted.

Findings from the current research revealed a distinct variance between female students versus male students in matters of perception of bullying in the bullying vignette test. This is

supported by Wimmer (2009) who reported that women experienced more verbal bullying while men experienced more physical bullying. Lindawati & Riskinanti (2019) held that female students in comparison to male students have a better ability to perceive bullying. Furthermore, the study by Tulloch (1995) states that there are variations in gender found in the type of bullying along with the targeting of a certain gender types, including differences in nature of reports between bullies and victims, contrasted between cross gender and same gender bullying, further corroborating the findings of the present study. When assessing for gender differences in the Olweus victim scale, the present study found no significant differences to report. However, previous research provides evidence for contradictory findings, with Kyriakides et al. (2006) reporting that boys differ in their bullying experiences from girls, and also in the form of bullying they experience and engage in. Solberg et al. (2006) also found gender differences in the Olweus scale when it was administered to girls and boys, with there being a greater number of male students in the bully-victim groups in comparison to female students. Moreover, whilst assessing the significance of bullying, the present study revealed findings that there seemed to be no difference in perception of significance of bullying between male students and female students.

In the present study, it was revealed that there is a prominent difference between students of grades 10, 11, 12 & grades 7, 8, 9 in their perception of bullying in the bullying vignette test and in their perception of identifying the significance of bullying in a particular situation. This is supported in a study by Langdon & Preble (2008) wherein it was revealed that 9th and 10th graders, and non-college bound students' perception of bullying was significantly higher than the levels of adult and peer respect compared to other groups. Moreover, the study by Salmon et al. (2018), presented higher chances of victimization between grade 8 to grade 12 in comparison to grade 7. When assessing for grade differences in the Olweus victim scale, the present study found significant differences to report. The study by Hilarski et al. (2004) found that across several grade levels, females reported significantly more persistent exposure to threatening and physical bullying victimization compared to males. The study by Salmon et al. (2018), also corroborated the findings of significant victimization across several grades, with its own findings of the quantities in which girls between the grades of 7 and 12, face victimization.

Findings from the current study reveal there to be a significant difference in the perception of bullying between teachers and students according to the bullying vignette test. Yet the study by Almaraz et al. (2015) delineates the findings that students perceive bullying as a frequent and extremely serious problem while teachers perceive it as uncommon and of low intensity, thereby contradicting the finding of this paper. Perhaps such a contradiction arises due to differences in the location and cultural background. The study by Maunder (2010), on the other hand corroborates the findings of the present study, with its own findings of teachers and support staff having a definition of bullying which is broader than that of the students, and viewing it as more serious in comparison to students.

The present study revealed no consequential disparity in perception of bullying in the bullying vignette, on neither the criterion of age nor the criterion of years of teaching experience, for teachers. The study by Hua et al. (2024) however rebutted the finding, with its own finding where teacher age and teaching experience moderated the relation between training, self-efficacy and in turn the responses to school bullying. The present study also revealed no significant contradistinction in bullying identification irrespective of age or teaching experience for teachers. Studies by Berbén et al. (2006) & Bottós et al. (2021) both

confirmed the findings of the present study, with its own conclusion, of how age or teaching experience is not a requisite or a factor that affects the identification of bullying. The current research also delineated that for teachers, there is no incongruity in the process of bullying intervention, irrespective of age or teaching experience. The research study by Begotti et al. (2017) depicted that teachers' intervention in school bullying differs based on their self-confidence and experience, not their age or teaching experience. Yet the research study by Duong et al. (2013) slightly contradicts the present study's findings by revealing the findings that a teachers' likelihood of intervening in bullying situations depends on their perceived threat and efficacy, which may vary by years of experience.

Last but not the least, the results indicated a moderate positive correlation when comparing bullying identification with bullying intervention. This is further supported by the study, Paez et al. (2021), which concluded that those school resource officers, who were able to identify cases of bullying, had a greater probability of intervention to halt the bullying regardless of any personal characteristics.

CONCLUSION

In summary, it was established that there exists a significant difference in how students versus teachers perceive an act or a conglomeration of acts of bullying. Moreover, it was found that when it comes to perception of bullying, it is not just the students and teachers that differ in their approach to perceiving and responding to bullying but there seems to exist differences within each group (students and teachers) itself. Within the student group, a student's ability to perceive bullying seems to differ on the basis of gender and the grades in which they study/belong to. However, there was no such significant difference that could be identified for the teacher group, specifically factors such as age and teaching experience seem to make no difference in how teachers would perceive acts of bullying. Last but not the least, the present paper established a positive correlation between bullying identification and bullying intervention.

The present paper, through the aforementioned findings, depicts the significant challenges faced in India with relation to perceptual identification of bullying especially between teachers and students. This study brings focus on what kind of differences exist within this perceptual identification of bullying. By identifying these key differences not just between teachers and students but also amongst students, a path to resolving these differences can be found. Once such differences are resolved, it would lead to better identification of bullying. As established through the finding of a positive correlation between bullying identification and bullying intervention, upon better identification of bullying it would lead to better intervention of bullying. Ultimately better intervention of bullying may allow high schools in India to become a region of growth for students rather than a region of constant peer pressure, torment and tyranny by other students/teachers.

Limitations of the study:

1. Although the present paper utilised a sizable random sample size of 237 students, the teacher sample was of 43 teachers, far lesser than that of the student sample. Thus, the margin of error was far greater for teachers than for students, due to an unequal sample size.
2. Often surveys which follow a self report system may lead to exaggerations or inaccuracies.
3. Lack of methodological triangulation was also a limitation to the study, since the present study only utilised surveys as an approach, disabling more in depth responses

from both faculty and students regarding their understanding, and perception of bullying

Future Recommendations:

1. One such recommendation would be to increase sample size populations, especially the teacher sample size in order to decrease the margin of error and improve generalizability of findings.
2. Yet another recommendation could be to expand the geographic scope, allowing for comparisons to also take place in case of regional differences.
3. Methodology triangulation could be employed by conducting interviews alongside surveys, in order to improve the validity of findings.
4. The same issue could also be evaluated through different frameworks, in order to gain an even deeper understanding.
5. Based on the findings of this paper, intervention strategies should be developed by schools to match the identified case of bullying.

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Conflict of Interest

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