



**NEAR EAST UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF GUIDANCE AND PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELLING**

**EXAMINING THE IMPACT OF BULLYING ON THE SOCIAL
INTELLIGENCE AND PERCEIVED SOCIAL COMPETENCE OF
PAKISTANI ADOLESCENTS**

MASTER THESIS

Almas HUSSAIN

**Nicosia
February, 2024**

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MASTER THESIS

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Supervisor




Assist. Prof. Dr. Gizem ÖNERİ UZUN

Nicosia


February, 2024

Approval


We certify that we have read the thesis submitted by **Almas HUSSAIN** titled **“EXAMINING THE IMPACT OF BULLYING ON THE SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE AND PERCEIVED SOCIAL COMPETENCE OF PAKISTANI ADOLESCENTS”** and that in our combined opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Educational Sciences.

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Declaration

I hereby declare that all information, documents, analysis and results in this thesis have been collected and presented according to the academic rules and ethical guidelines of Institute of Graduate Studies, Near East University. I also declare that as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced information and data that are not original to this study.

Almas HUSSAIN

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Almas Hussain

Abstract

Examining the Impact of Bullying On the Social Intelligence and Perceived Social Competence of Pakistani Adolescents

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This research studies the impact of bullying on social intelligence and perceived social competence of adolescents. In this study both bullies and victims of bullying were studied. The purpose of this research was to investigate whether social intelligence and perceived social competence of bullies and victims are affected by the bullying behaviour among the adolescents in Pakistani institutions. This research utilized quantitative research design. Illinois bully scale, Tromso social intelligence scale and Perceived social competence scales were used in the study for data collection. 251 adolescents participated in the study. The sample was selected using convenient sampling technique. Results showed majorly negative relationship among all variables and victims of bullying, indicating that bullying behaviour was linked to lower levels of perceived social competence and social intelligence among victims. Relationship between bullies and perceived social competence was positive which indicates a nuanced relationship. Correlation coefficient between social intelligence and bully victim was statistically significant ($P < 0.05$). Regression analysis showed that both bullies and victims together possessed 3.3% predictive power for social intelligence and perceived social competence. This predictive power was small for perceived social competence which emphasizes that other factors influencing the perceived social competence need to be understood. The results also imply that bullying victims view themselves as less socially competent. Counsellors and therapists can help these individuals to enhance their social skills so they can lead through social situations positively. Counselling programs should focus on enhancing social skills and promoting activities which boost social intelligence, these programs have the potential to reduce bullying and help create a healthy and positive environment for adolescents in educational institutions. Future research needs to

investigate the subscales of these variables (social intelligence and perceived social competence) in relation to bullies and victims especially in Pakistani institutes because of limited research material.

Keywords: adolescents, bullying, good health and wellbeing, Pakistani, perceived social competence, quality education, social intelligence.

Özet

Zorbalığın Pakistanlı Ergenlerin Sosyal Zekası ve Algılanan Sosyal Yetkinliği Üzerindeki Etkisinin İncelenmesi

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Bu araştırma, zorbalığın ergenlerin sosyal zekası ve algılanan sosyal yeterliliği üzerindeki etkisini incelemektedir. Araştırmada hem zorbalar hem de zorbalık mağdurları incelenmiştir. Bu araştırmanın amacı, Pakistan okullarındaki ergenler arasında zorbalık davranışlarından zorbaların ve mağdurların sosyal zekasının ve algılanan sosyal yeterliliklerinin etkilenip etkilenmediğini araştırmaktır. Bu araştırmada nicel araştırma yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Araştırmada veri toplama aracı olarak Illinois Zorba Ölçeği, Tromso Sosyal Zeka Ölçeği ve Algılanan Sosyal Yeterlilik Ölçeği kullanılmıştır. Araştırmaya 251 ergen katılmıştır. Örneklem uygun örnekleme tekniği kullanılarak seçilmiştir. Sonuçlar, zorbalığın tüm değişkenleri ile mağdurları arasında büyük ölçüde olumsuz bir ilişki olduğunu; bunun da zorbalık davranışının, mağdurlar arasında algılanan sosyal yeterliliğin ve sosyal zekanın düşük düzeyleriyle bağlantılı olduğunu göstermiştir. Zorbalar ile algılanan sosyal yeterlilik arasındaki ilişki pozitifdir. Sosyal zeka ile zorba mağduru arasındaki korelasyon katsayısı istatistiksel olarak anlamlıdır ($P<0.05$). Regresyon analizi, hem zorbaların hem de mağdurların birlikte sosyal zeka ve algılanan sosyal yeterlilik için %3,3'lük tahmin gücüne sahip olduğunu göstermektedir. Bu öngörü, algılanan sosyal yeterlilik için küçüktür; bu da algılanan sosyal yeterliliği etkileyen diğer faktörlerin anlaşılması gerektiğini vurgulamaktadır. Sonuçlar ayrıca zorbalık mağdurlarının kendilerini sosyal açıdan daha az yetkin olarak gördüklerini de ima etmektedir. Danışmanlar ve terapistler bu bireylerin sosyal becerilerini geliştirmelerine yardımcı olabilir, böylece sosyal durumlar olumlu bir şekilde yönetilebilir. Danışmanlık programları, sosyal becerileri geliştirmeye ve sosyal zekayı artıran faaliyetleri teşvik etmeye odaklanmalıdır; bu programlar, zorbalığı azaltma ve eğitim kurumlarında ergenler için sağlıklı ve olumlu bir ortam yaratmaya yardımcı olma potansiyeline sahiptir.

Gelecekteki arařtırmaların, sınırlı arařtırma materyali nedeniyle özellikle Pakistan enstitülerinde zorbalara ve mađdurlarla iliřkili olarak bu deđiřkenlerin alt ölçeklerini (sosyal zeka ve algılanan sosyal yeterlilik) incelemesi önerilmektedir.

Anahtar kelimeler: algılanan sosyal yeterlilik, ergenlik, kaliteli eđitim, Pakistan, sađlık ve iyi oluř, sosyal zeka, zorbalık.

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List of Abbreviation

ANOVA: Analysis of variance

IBS: Illinois bully scale

PSC: Perceived social competence

PSCS: Perceived social competence scale

SI: Social Intelligence

TSIC: Tromso social intelligence scale

CHAPTER I

Introduction

This chapter includes the problems, aims, importance, limitations and related descriptions of the research.

Definition of Bullying

Teenage bullying and peer victimization are developing public health issues that have an impact on the mental health, social and academic functioning, and academic performance of victims (Nansel et al., 2001). Generally bullying can be described as an inappropriate, aggressive behaviour among children at school that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The act is repeated frequently or has a chance to occur again. Young people who bully others or who are bullied themselves may experience severe, long-lasting issues.

Bullying is intentional, repetitive aggression from an individual or group towards a vulnerable peer. Lasting weeks to years, bullying encompasses physical, verbal, relational, and indirect forms, including acts like punching, ridiculing, exclusion, and spreading rumours. All these actions are strictly prohibited (Olweus, 1993). Furthermore, bullying is characterized by sustained and coercive actions with the explicit intent to cause harm or discomfort. This forceful behaviour is targeted towards an individual who perceives an inability to defend themselves effectively against the aggressor. The persistent nature of these actions further contributes to the victim's sense of vulnerability (Smith, 2016).

The majority of prevalence, policy, and intervention studies have been undertaken in wealthy nations and economy, despite worries about this public health crisis in low- and middle-income countries. Unfortunately, despite its detrimental psychological and social effects, bullying has historically been socially tolerated as a "rite of passage" and a "developmentally appropriate" conduct among kids and teenagers (Flannery et al., 2016). Bullying is also widely accepted in the media and literature, which is detrimental (Milosevic, 2015). Bullying is more common in classrooms than in other areas of schools, regardless of the school's demographic features. The prevalence of victimization is either equal to or higher in classrooms compared to locations like hallways, lunchrooms, and playgrounds (Perkins et al., 2014). Most operational definitions of bullying behaviours do not view siblings or

romantic partners as the central pillars of the behaviour. Bullies aim to control people by using their emotional reactions to bullying or their lack of social support (Wolke & Lereya, 2015).

Social competence, including traits like cooperation, empathy, and self-control, alongside factors like school-related stress and interactions with teachers, notably impact bullying behaviour among adolescents (Eldiorita & Layyinah, 2019). A meta-analysis of 80 research articles found that traditional bullying is prevalent worldwide at a rate of 35% (Modecki et al., 2014), which supports the assumption that bullying affects somewhat more than 1 in 3 students between the ages of 13 and 15 (Greene & Herzberg, 2010). The frequency of bullying behaviour was estimated to be over 41% in 2009, according to a nationally representative school-based health survey conducted in Pakistan, one of the world's poorest nations (Shaikh, 2013). The 2011 CDC Youth Risk Behaviour Survey, which calculated the prevalence of bullying among adolescents in the USA to be around 27%, demonstrates the discrepancy between these numbers and those reported in the industrialized world (Messias et al., 2014). One way to understand the social and emotional consequences of bullying, both on victims and bully, is to study bullying behaviour in context with the perceived social competence and social intelligence of the individuals.

Types of Bullying

Bullying is a multifaceted issue with various forms, including verbal, physical, social, and cyberbullying. These subgroups can occur independently or in combination. Verbal bullying employs harmful words to damage the victim's mental health, with name-calling, criticism, taunting, and threats as examples. Physical bullying involves attempts to physically harm or irritate the victim, ranging from minor actions to life-threatening behaviours. Social bullying isolates the victim from social networks, damaging their reputation and connections. Cyberbullying, a relatively recent phenomenon, occurs through digital means and can be challenging for victims to escape due to the pervasiveness of technology. It provides a higher degree of anonymity for perpetrators, encompassing activities like catfishing, hacking, abusive social media posts, and creating fake accounts about the victim (The four main types of bullying, 2017).

In the bullying cycle, three distinct roles are evident: the bully, the victim, and bystanders. The bully, often the strongest peer with a pronounced desire for

power, employs bullying behaviours to diminish the victim's social standing and personal security, enhancing their own self-esteem. Bullying incidents commonly occur in the presence of bystanders, who may either encourage the bully, support the victim, or passively observe. Bystanders, though not directly involved, play a crucial role in the dynamics of the bullying situation (Stratford, 1996).

Definitions of Perceived Social Competence

Social competence, defined as the capacity for meaningful communication, is a crucial skill subject to interventions. An ability that helps in formation of strong social ties and teamwork. Social interactions are very important in today's globally connected world where social communication is very important and this requires set of skills called social competence (Stichter et al., 2011).

Previously social competence was defined as an individual's perceptions of his own capabilities to manage social interactions successfully (Anderson & Messick, 1974). Social competence can also act as a protective factor for one's mental health (Alduncin et al., 2014). The idea of perceived social competence in psychology majorly refers to a person's belief about his social communication skills. Their belief about their social interaction is crucial to both their social and personal development (Harter, 1982). More research is required to understand all aspects of social competence and develop an effective definition of the phenomenon.

Three Functional Domains of Social Competence

Social Cognition

Social cognition refers to using the social clues like feelings and internal motives to make correct decisions. Socially skilled individuals can understand other's behaviours accurately and behave accordingly. They have the vast knowledge of culturally diverse norms which allows them to behave appropriately (Meltzoff & Decety, 2003).

Emotional Regulation

Emotional regulation involves expressing yourself in an appropriate manner, displaying awareness of your surroundings. Socially adept individuals effectively handle pressure, annoyance, and disappointment by adjusting their emotional responses to the circumstances at hand (Eisenberg & Spinrad, 2004).

Social skills

These are a broad category of qualities that allow people to communicate effectively with others. The verbal and nonverbal forms of communication, active listening, empathy, perspective-taking, cooperation, conflict resolution, and problem-solving are among these abilities. People that are socially adept can strike up discussions, keep connections, and handle social situations with ease (Gresham & Elliott, 2008).

These social competency functional domains are interrelated and essential for fulfilling social interactions and connections throughout a person's lifetime. For healthy emotional and social growth as well as general wellbeing, social competence development is crucial.

Definitions of Social Intelligence

Social intelligence comprises the array of social skills facilitating smooth and enjoyable interpersonal exchanges. Improved communication skills contribute to enhanced social cognition. It involves self-awareness and an understanding of one's relational dynamics in social contexts, marked by active engagement and attentive listening. In academic discourse, social awareness, akin to street smarts or common sense, is contextualized within the framework of social intelligence (Kihlstrom & Cantor, 2000). The American psychologist Edward Thorndike initially popularized the idea of social intelligence. His definition of intelligence includes three core components. These pertain to the ability to comprehend and control abstract concepts (intellect), physical objects (mechanical intelligence), and humans (Thorndike, 1920).

More detailed description of social intelligence is “the ability to get along with people in general, social technique or ease in society, knowledge of social matters, susceptibility to stimuli from other members of a group, as well as insight into the temporary moods or underlying personality traits of strangers” (Vernon, 1933). Furthermore, Social intelligence entails the adept understanding and effective navigation of social situations, encompassing skills such as empathy, communication and the interpretation of social cues. As a critical facet of emotional intelligence, it correlates with positive outcomes, including enhanced relationships, improved mental health, and heightened workplace success (Goleman, 2006).

Alternative definition of social intelligence, comprising two primary elements. The first, social awareness, spans the spectrum from promptly discerning others' inner states to grasping their emotions, thoughts, and navigating intricate social situations. The second element, social facility, pertains to the adeptness in engaging with others naturally and effectively. Core components include synchrony, self-presentation, influence, and concern, reflecting sensitivity to others' needs and appropriate action (Jessica, 2023).

Social intelligence, which includes a wide range of components, is supported by a number of empirical researches. Research on mirror neurons, for instance, has revealed evidence for primitive empathy, or that instinctive, natural response you have when you are able to detect another person's emotion. When a person performs a certain motor activity and witnesses the same or a related act being performed by another person, mirror neurons become active (Kilner & Lemon, 2013).

Key Components of Social Intelligence

Emotional Intelligence (EI) is a key facet of social intelligence, involving the understanding and management of both personal and others' emotions. It encompasses skills like emotional awareness, empathy, emotional control, and effective interpersonal communication (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Socially intelligent individuals excel in recognizing non-verbal cues, such as body language and facial expressions, to comprehend emotional states. They exhibit strong communication skills, social influence, and collaborative abilities, fostering positive group dynamics and resolving conflicts constructively (Mayer et al., 2008)

Purpose of the Study

A carefree childhood and a wiser adult life begin at the age of adolescence. Nothing seems insurmountable to work toward, so why is the prevalence of bullying among adolescents rising? This research aims to investigate the pervasive issue of bullying in educational institutions, a concern shared by nations globally. The specific focus is on the concerning rise of bullying in Pakistani educational institutions to examine the impact of bullying on bullies' and victim's social intelligence and perceived social competence. The study also endeavours to gain insights into the bully/victim issue by examining it from both behavioural and

cognitive perspectives, with the ultimate goal of formulating effective preventive measures.

Problem Statement

Bullying is a global concern, significantly contributing to the rise in adolescent suicide rates, which stands as the fourth leading cause of death, particularly prevalent in low- and middle-income countries (Bao et al., 2023). Understanding bullying through foundational principles is imperative due to its diverse perspectives, hindering the development of effective preventative measures. The majority of previous research has predominantly focused on the negative consequences of bullying, with limited exploration of cognitive and behavioural aspects, such as social intelligence and perceived social competence. An investigation into the applicability of these ideas in contemporary contexts and whether bullies exhibit social deficits forms the basis of this inquiry.

Significance of the Study

Adolescence, a critical developmental phase, marks the transition from childhood to maturity, involving significant physical, emotional, and cognitive changes as individuals strive for independence and identity formation. The pursuit of peer acceptance and social standing during this period exposes adolescents to the dynamics of bullying, impacting victims, perpetrators, and bystanders. Identifying risk factors for bullying onset is essential for early intervention and prevention strategies. Adolescents, venturing into the practical world, require optimal social intelligence and competence for success. Given the prevalence of bullying among adolescents, studying its effects on their social intelligence and perceived competence is crucial. This study aims to provide pertinent information for the development of effective preventive measures.

Research Questions

1. Is there any correlation between bullies and victims' social intelligence and perceived social competence?
2. What is the extent of the impact of bullying behaviour on the social competence and perceived social intelligence of adolescents?

3. Do bullying behaviours exert a detrimental influence on the social intelligence and perceived social competence of both bullies and victims?

CHAPTER II

Literature Review

This chapter includes the theoretical background of all the variables and highlights the previous existing literature on the topic.

Theoretical Linkages to Bullying

The topic of bullying in schools has gained significant relevance among educators. Anti-bullying initiatives have had only a minor amount of success. Some theories associated with bullying are discussed as below:

Dominance Theory

Social dominance theory was introduced in 1999 and was later reinforced in 2007 (Pellegrini et al., 2007). Bullying behaviour is identified as a means to attain social status, access resources, and achieve popularity. Instances may include students displaying bossy behaviour in classrooms, seeking veneration and forming alliances with bullies. Such groups may then engage in bullying against less powerful individuals. Leadership traits, charisma, and skills are sometimes leveraged by individuals to dominate and gain social status, using bullying as a tool for establishing dominance (Salmivalli, 2014).

Developmental Theory

The developmental theory underscores the cognitive processes in a child's growth, emphasizing that bullying originates in early years as individuals assert themselves to establish social dominance (Hawley, 1999). Initially, efforts to exert control are less socially appropriate, often involving verbal and indirect forms of bullying rather than physical aggression. The pattern suggests a progression from verbal and indirect bullying to more overt forms, with individuals using their initial strength to assert dominance in social interactions during early development. Smith & Sharp's perspective contends that physical bullying peaks in early childhood, diminishing as children mature (Bauman & Del Rio, 2006).

Criticized for its limited explanatory scope, this view neglects the role of the social environment in bullying dynamics. Nevertheless, the developmental standpoint proves beneficial in addressing bullying concerns, especially in

elucidating how older children may positively respond to nuanced problem-solving methods, recognizing the range of possibilities available to them (Rigby & Griffiths, 2018).

Humiliation Theory

Humiliation, an act of underestimating or insulting someone, occurs when a powerful individual publicly highlights the inadequacy of a weaker person. Understanding humiliation is crucial as it directly impacts both the victim and their surroundings negatively, leading to depression, reduced social coherence, and a detrimental atmosphere in educational institutions. Humiliation, powerful enough to endanger others, violates the foundational human rights principle of individuals' dignity and honour (Lindner, 2005)

Social Capital Theory

One resource that can be used to honour the children's welfare both now and in the future is social capital (Coleman, 1988). Youngsters with reciprocal advantages and increased social capital are prone to regular engagement in bullying or supportive bystander roles. The role of pro-social bystanders is pivotal for mitigating school bullying, and employing social capital strategies can contribute to its reduction. Jenkins and Fredrick's study establishes a positive correlation between pro-social bystanders and access to social capital (Jenkins & Fredrick, 2017).

Social Cognition Theory

Individuals are not presumed to naturally become bullies; there are underlying causes or risk factors in their lives. Youngsters acquire behaviours by observing and imitating others. According to Albert, violent behaviour that goes unpunished and is rewarded is more likely to be imitated, while aggression is less likely to be emulated if it is punished. Human actions are shaped by the interplay of environmental, behavioural, and personal factors. The social cognitive theory of bullying, based on learning through observation, emphasizes the importance of these reciprocal relationships (Bandura et al., 1960).

Organization Cultural Theory

Consensus exists that the majority of bullying behaviours are learned from one's environment, be it school or society, rather than being inherited. It is widely accepted that bullying becomes ingrained in school culture, influencing bidirectional characteristics that either encourage or deter such actions. Bullying behaviours are perceived to have deeply impacted the school environment, leading parents and students to be less inclined to mediate. The notion prevails that attempting to address bullying within a classroom without altering the school culture is nearly impossible (Evans et al., 2014).

Theory of Response to Group and Peer Pressure

Bullying, when viewed through the lens of peer pressure, gains clearer understanding within the societal context. This approach broadens the social context by encompassing the behaviours and perspectives of the entire school community, serving as a social framework. Perceptions, including those of teachers and support workers, influence students and align with aspects such as school policy, teacher support, behaviour, and overall student well-being (Soutter & McKenzie, 2000).

Theory of Restorative Justice

Restorative justice, a doctrine in criminal justice, prioritizes repairing the harm caused by criminal activities. This approach emphasizes the reunification of criminals with their victims and the community for restoration. It underscores the view that societal crime extends beyond legal breaches, aiming to facilitate communication among victims, bullies, and stakeholders to find a solution that satisfies everyone. In this process, bullies are held accountable to various parties, including teachers, parents, and the larger community (Gavrielides & Coker, 2005).

The majority of studies support the academic appraisal of restorative justice theory. It assists criminals in a way that makes them less likely to commit crimes again. Of all the methods of justice, it has the highest rate of offender culpability and victim satisfaction (Sherman & Strang, 2012). Unlike strategies centered solely on victims, restorative justice aims to help offenders adopt new lifestyles rather than stigmatizing or humiliating them. Despite its merits, critics argue that it may exhibit leniency towards offenders, potentially superseding law enforcement and legal authority, thereby posing a risk to legal rights (Daly, 2017). The developmental

perspective is helpful in offering recommendations for how bully/victim issues can be addressed. For instance, it has been suggested that older kids are more likely to respond favourably to problem-solving techniques that call for a more comprehensive understanding of their options (Stevens et al., 2000).

Theoretical Perspectives of Social Intelligence

Edward Thorndike's Social Intelligence Theory

Social intelligence is a set of abilities that allow people to comprehend and effectively handle social circumstances. Understanding people, comprehending social situations, and comprehending oneself are the three main components of social intelligence. People with strong social intelligence are more likely to succeed in social circumstances. It is made through our experiences (Thorndike, 1920).

Daniel Goleman's Social Intelligence Theory

Social intelligence theory of Daniel Goleman is globally popular and it focuses on two aspects of our lives: personal competence and social competence. Personal competence refers to one's perception of his own self including his values, morals, strength and weaknesses. Social competence refers to being socially skilled, knowing about your surroundings and understanding other's opinions. According to this theory healthy relationships are highly dependent on social skills and social awareness (Goleman, 2006). Social intelligence is very important for success in personal and professional lives. Researches show that social intelligence is positively correlated with general happiness and job performance (Mayer et al., 2008).

Theoretical Perspectives of Perceived Social Competence

Several theories have been devised to explain how perceived social competence is developed and regulated.

Social Learning Theory

Social cognitive theory is one of the very famous theories and it suggests that several variables like self-efficacy, social support and observational learning, have a profound effect on perceived social competence (Locke, 1987).

Social Information Processing Theory

This theory proposes that individual's ability to process and interpret social cues and accurately plan a socially acceptable response influences their level of social competence. A person's ability to understand societal indicators and then behave according to the social situation influences their perceived social competence (Crick & Dodge, 1994).

The Attachment Theory

According to this theory an individual's primary interactions with their caregivers has a profound effect on their later relationships. It will also determine the success of their social relations. Individuals who had secure attachment are more likely to be socially successful, whereas individuals with insecure attachments have difficulty in forming social ties (Jones & Bowlby, 1970). Researchers have also looked into the influence of personality traits, attachment preferences, and cultural influences on the growth of perceived social competence in addition to these ideas (Li et al., 2015).

Literature Review

Among fifth-graders (79 boys, 62 girls, aged 11-12), social intelligence was negatively associated with victimization but positively correlated with learning skills. Bullying was linked to higher self-concept, particularly affecting boys. Children with learning disabilities had a higher prevalence of bullying. Victimization did not show a correlation with learning disabilities (Kaukiainen et al., 2002). Bullying behaviour among youngsters has also been linked to somatic symptomatology and academic underachievement (Gini, 2008). Bullying victims were more prone to experience sadness, suicidal thoughts, anxiety, sleep issues, social isolation, and loneliness (Tharp-Taylor et al., 2009). In most nations, boys were more likely than girls to report being bullied, and bullying was less common as people got older. More bullied students than non-bullied students reported experiencing feelings of melancholy and hopelessness, loneliness, insomnia, and suicidal thoughts. Students who had been bullied also reported greater rates of tobacco, alcohol, drug, and sexual activity usage (Fleming & Jacobsen, 2009).

Bullying is also linked to externalizing symptoms like violence, absence from school, and crime (Reijntjes et al., 2010). Bullying has also been linked to

detrimental physical, mental, and academic outcomes in kids and teenagers (Owusu et al., 2011).

Victimization was negatively correlated with overall self-efficacy, and both bullying and victimization were predicted by factors such as gender, trait emotional intelligence, and specific empathy components (Kokkinos & Kipritsi, 2011). Pupils who engaged in bullying behaviours -whether as bullies or as victims were more likely to score higher on the overall SCARED scale than bullies and other pupils (Isolan et al., 2013). Bullies who bullied continuously had the lowest levels of SI, and their level stayed low. Bullying victims may enter a detrimental cycle as low self-esteem, developed as a result of prior victimization, predicts future victimization (Pabian & Vandebosch, 2014).

In a Greek study, boys reported higher rates of victimization and engagement in bullying actions compared to girls. Bullying showed negative correlations with overall self-efficacy, trait emotional intelligence, and empathy dimensions, including affective and cognitive empathy (Hong et al., 2014). Bullying among adolescents correlates with somatic symptoms and academic underachievement, highlighting its detrimental effects on well-being and education. This underscores the importance of addressing bullying comprehensively to mitigate its impact on youths' psychological and academic development (Baly et al., 2014). Emotional intelligence and pro-victim views significantly influence adolescent bullying and victimization. Higher Emotional Understanding, reduced Emotional Management, male gender, and weaker Pro-Victim Attitudes predict bullying. Lower emotional control and higher pro-victim attitudes independently contribute to victimization. Pro-social behaviours correlate with the female gender and increased emotional understanding (Schokman et al., 2014).

More than 89% of the young respondents in a recent survey of a sample of Pakistani youngsters reported one or more instances of victimization, and more than 75% reported one or more acts of perpetration (McFarlane et al., 2017). Another study showed that Hunger, absences from school, seeing disputes between the father and another male, and patriarchal beliefs were all found to be substantially correlated with a high prevalence of bullying behaviour among Pakistani youth (Karmaliani et al., 2017).

Bullying of students in schools has unquestionably grown significantly, and violence in schools has emerged as a global issue. A survey by the United Nations

Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization found that bullying has affected over one-third of pupils worldwide (UNESCO, 2017). The issue of bullying also has a negative impact on the bullied students in many ways, such as making them feel ashamed and have a bad attitude toward school, causing them to get bad grades (Walters & Espelage, 2018). Run away from home, leave school early, and causing them to have low self-esteem or lack of confidence (Sivaraman et al., 2019). Classroom bullying detrimentally affects students' mental health and academic performance, inducing anxiety and depressive symptoms. The enduring consequences for victims encompass reduced self-esteem, contemplation of self-harm, and severe behavioural issues. Victims frequently choose to skip school due to the fear associated with bullying (Tanga & Hendricks, 2019).

Longitudinal research indicates that adolescents experiencing bullying may develop maladaptive traits, such as low self-esteem, heightening their susceptibility to future victimization. Low self-esteem significantly forecasts subsequent victimization, forming a distinct longitudinal pattern. Intriguingly, bullying does not predict future bullying or subsequent low self-esteem after accounting for prior experiences. This highlights a specific cycle wherein victims, affected by low self-esteem, perpetuate continued victimization (Espejo-Siles et al., 2020). In a study out of 1,408 potential studies, 23 samples from 22 longitudinal studies were selected, revealing a significant correlation between bullying victimization and perpetration. The cross-lagged longitudinal association indicates a reciprocal relationship, suggesting that one can lead to the other. The findings are explained by various theoretical models, including the cycle of violence, general strain, social cognitive theories, and lifestyle theories (Walters, 2020).

A study of 219 Taiwanese teenagers with high-functioning ASD revealed that self-reported perpetrator-victims and pure victims experienced more severe depression and anxiety than neutrals. Parent-reported bullying involvement showed no significant differences among groups in terms of depression, suicidality, anxiety, or self-esteem (Chou et al., 2020). A study highlighted that the relationship between low self-esteem and subsequent victimization is significant, forming a distinct longitudinal pattern. Bullying fails to predict later victimization or subsequent low self-esteem after accounting for past experiences. This suggests a specific cycle where victims, influenced by low self-esteem, may perpetuate a pattern of continued victimization (Choi & Park, 2021).

Bullying has lasting impacts, affecting victims' psychosocial and academic well-being for up to 8 years. This review of 28 studies highlights heightened anxiety, depression, peer rejection, and academic struggles among victims, with females experiencing more severe consequences, In anxiety, depression, and suicidal thoughts (Halliday et al., 2021).

Related Literature

Perceptions from three distinct sources that victims possess inadequate social skills hold significant implications for interventions aimed at providing support to individuals experiencing bullying (Fox & Boulton, 2011). Involvement in bullying remained a highly significant predictor of subsequent anti-social behaviour and contact with the police or courts (Renda et al., 2011). Students in Pakistan face significant challenges in mental health, with poorer mental health outcomes and limited access to mental health therapies. A study revealed higher rates of suicidal ideation and bullying among Pakistani university students. Recognizing these issues within the cultural context is crucial for developing effective remedies to enhance the mental well-being of Pakistani students (Le et al., 2016). Significant interrelations were found between perceived social competence, cyberbullying, and self-efficacy. Hierarchical Regression Analysis further revealed that loneliness acted as a partial mediator in the connection between perceived social competence and school burnout (Sariciam et al., 2016).

The study investigated the link between social competence and bullying roles, revealing that victims demonstrated higher prosocial behaviour and normative adjustment but lower social adjustment and social efficacy. Bullies and victims exhibited inferior normative adjustment and less developed cognitive reappraisal, while maintaining equivalent social adjustment and social efficacy. This understanding shed light on the social behaviours of bullies and victims in practical life (Gómez-Ortiz et al., 2017). In a study of 299 sixth- to eighth-grade students, gender differences, social skills, and the bystander intervention model were examined. Girls displayed higher cooperation and empathy, noticing and intervening in bullying events more than boys. The structural equation model highlighted the significance of both empathy and cooperation, with positive path coefficients linking empathy to bystander intervention. Assertiveness positively correlated with

intervention knowledge, while cooperation had a negative association (Jenkins & Nickerson, 2017).

A study found that individuals involved in bullying and cyberbullying demonstrated deficient social and emotional skills, particularly in social awareness and prosocial behaviour. These deficits persisted even when considering age and gender. Being a bully-victim and a cyberbully-victim were associated with impaired decision-making. The results highlight the importance of robust social and emotional skills as protective factors against bullying and cyberbullying (Zych et al., 2018). Engagement in bullying, either as a victim or bully, is associated with an increased risk of suicidal thoughts and feelings of sadness. Among students who identify as American Indian, the likelihood of experiencing mental health issues related to bullying is higher (Gloppen et al., 2018). Adolescents facing peer victimization exhibit shortcomings in both face-to-face and online social competence. Path analysis demonstrated that the link between peer victimization and self-worth is mediated by deficiencies in offline social skills. Additionally, there exists a moderate correlation between indicators of offline and online social skills, indicating that they are distinct and have varied associations with self-worth (Resnik & Bellmore, 2018). Cyberbullying is inversely correlated with social skills. According to a regression analysis, university students who score highly in social skills will encounter less cyberbullying, and the opposite is also true. As a result, it showed up as a very strong negative predictor of online bullying among university students (Hanif & Hafsa, 2018).

The research indicates that while pure bullies may not suffer severe consequences with family and school support, pure-victims and bully-victims remain vulnerable. Boys are more frequently involved in both bullying and victimization than girls (Nozaki, 2019). Factors like grade repetition, school punishment, and disliking school are linked to increased bullying. Ethnic identity emerges as a factor, connecting harassment to poor socio-economic conditions and cultural levels, fostering depressive tendencies and drug consumption among the ethnic harassed. Overall, bullying has negative physical and psychological effects on victims (Cabrera et al., 2019). In a study on university students in Pakistan, findings revealed that Pakistani students experienced poorer mental health, limited access to mental health services, higher rates of recent suicidal thoughts, and increased incidents of bullying. These problems need to be dealt immediately and it is important to understand these

issues in the cultural context of Pakistan. This will allow to devise useful means to improve general mental health of the students in the country (Bibi et al., 2019). Relationship between victimization and suicidal thoughts is moderated by social support, other factors may also influence this relationship. This buffering effect indicates that supportive relationships can ease suicidal ideation especially for victims with low social support (Eze et al., 2019). A moderate negative correlation of ($r = -0.42, p < 0.01$) between behavioural problems and social competence was found in a research. There were no statistically significant differences in different types of behaviours and social competence. A noteworthy difference emerged based on the respondent type; the correlation was significantly higher when reported by the same respondent (teacher or parent) compared to a parent-teacher dyad (Hukkelberg et al., 2019).

The odds of suicidal ideation are significantly increased for adolescents experiencing both school bullying and cyberbullying victimization (Baiden & Tadeo, 2020). Children undergoing chronic victimization may face developmental disadvantages compared to those reporting minimal or decreasing peer victimization over time (Sukhawathanakul & Leadbeater, 2020). A study showed that having better emotional intelligence and social skills was linked to less bullying. This suggests that teaching emotional intelligence in schools could help reduce bullying (Trigueros et al., 2020). Preventive counselling programs hold the potential to enhance social intelligence, reduce bullying behaviours among lower secondary school students, and prevent further instances of violence in schools (Jueajinda et al., 2021). Childhood bullying, a pervasive public health concern, yields lasting negative impacts in health, social, and academic realms for bullies, victims, and bully-victims. Primarily triggered by appearance-related factors, youth bullying affects one in three globally. Consequences encompass childhood education, health issues, and prolonged adversities into adulthood. Severity and frequency of bullying correlate with the seriousness of health consequences, while cyberbullying often coexists with traditional bullying, compounding effects (Armitage, 2021). A study showed that non-bullying middle schoolers had better social skills, but victims of bullying weren't protected by the same skills. Instead, aggressive responses to bullying were linked to similar competencies. Therefore, the paper suggests school programs to improve these skills and reduce bullying (Coelho & Sousa, 2018).

The research highlights a correlation between bullying involvement and suicidal ideation, with higher percentages reported by victims, bullies, and bully-victims compared to those not involved (Husky et al., 2022). Bullies and followers demonstrated negative relationships with both affective and cognitive empathy but showed no correlation with Theory of Mind (ToM). In contrast, defending behaviour exhibited positive associations with all four facets of social-emotional intelligence. These findings suggest that an effective antibullying intervention should involve motivating individuals with bullying tendencies to develop empathy and encouraging their peers to enhance perspective-taking skills to support those in need (Imuta et al., 2022).

In another study, bullying victimization correlated significantly with aggressive behaviour, perceived social support, and mental health outcomes, including anxiety, depression, and subjective well-being. Bullying victimization not only directly predicted reduced mental health but also had indirect effects through three pathways: separate mediation via aggressive behaviour, separate mediation through perceived social support, and sequential mediation involving both (Guo et al., 2022). Social intelligence greatly influences the chances of being involved in bullying, whether as a bully or a victim. Barceló and colleagues discovered that having good social understanding helps protect against bullying, while having difficulties with executive functions raises the risk of being bullied (Barceló et al., 2022). A study compared social competence between children with High Intellectual Ability (HIA) and average intelligence, focusing on protective factors against digital technology misuse. Results show HIA participants exhibit significantly higher social skills, particularly in Responsibility, Cooperation, and Self-Control, with lower behavioral difficulties. This underscores the importance of social skills in navigating the digital age and mitigating cyberbullying (Sharma & Chatterjee, 2023). A study explored how group norms influence bullying behavior among secondary school students. It identifies four types of bullying norms and finds that normative adjustment and norm types affect aggression and victim defense. In groups with pro-bullying norms, normative adjustment strongly influences both aggression and defense, while pro-social skills correlate with aggression. These findings underscore the need to address moral and social factors to improve school climate (Carmona-Rojas et al., 2023).

A study explored the link between emotional intelligence and bullying rates, and proposes effective prevention methods. Interviews with eight teachers and two psychologists, conducted via Zoom, revealed varied awareness of emotional intelligence. However, all agreed on its role in reducing bullying. Prioritizing emotional intelligence development is vital for comprehensive bullying prevention in schools (Jikia et al., 2023). Negative associations between social skills and behaviour problems, and positive correlations with academic competence were found. Diagnosis and behaviour problems negatively predicted social skills, emphasizing the importance of interventions for social skill development (Silva & Elias, 2023). Cyberbullying is a pervasive issue among students globally. Teaching social and emotional skills in schools, particularly by competent teachers, is effective in preventing and reducing cyberbullying. It's suggested to prioritize teacher training in these skills rather than relying solely on punitive measures (Chu, 2024). Student-level protective factors influenced both forms of victimization, while school racial composition predominantly impacted race-based bullying. Specifically, minority-majority schools demonstrated lower levels of race-based victimization compared to racially diverse school (Low et al., 2024).

A study in China investigated the impact of economic stress on adolescent bullying victimization, mediated by self-esteem and moderated by student-student relationships. Higher economic stress correlated with increased bullying victimization, mediated by self-esteem. Student-student relationships moderated these associations. Gender did not influence the results. These findings have implications for interventions targeting bullying risk and adolescent well-being (Wang & Wang, 2024). Three types of anti-bullying interventions: social support, social skills training, and school-based programs. These interventions involve educational activities, counseling, and training to prevent bullying. Adolescent-focused interventions consider both physical and psychological aspects, aiming to support their developmental stages. To address the impact of trauma on victims, collaborative efforts among health providers, parents, and adolescents are essential in forming a supportive system against bullying (Hikmat et al., 2024).

CHAPTER III

Methodology

This chapter provides information about the research design, sample, data collection and analysis procedures as well as how the findings are analyzed.

Research Design

This study adopted a quantitative study approach, chosen for its effectiveness in identifying patterns, trends, and causal relationships within a clearly defined and measurable scope. Data collection involved using survey questionnaires administered to the selected sample, allowing for systematic collection and statistical analysis to draw meaningful conclusions.

Sample

The participants in this study were reached through an online survey questionnaire distributed on social media platforms and shared in various online groups of high school students in Pakistan. The sample was determined using a convenient sampling technique, a method where respondents are chosen based on their accessibility, convenience of access, and proximity to the researcher. This approach simplifies data collection, requiring less time and being more cost-effective. The study involved a total of 251 participants (Table 1).

Table 1.

Sociodemographic Characteristics of Participants

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Gender				
Male	111	44.2	44.2	44.2
Female	140	55.8	55.8	100.0
Total	251	100.0	100.0	
Age in Years				
12-16	85	33.9	33.9	33.9
17-19	166	66.1	66.1	100.0
Total	251	100.0	100.0	
Level of Education				
Secondary school	37	14.7	14.7	14.7
High school	101	40.2	40.2	55.0
Bachelors	113	45.0	45.0	100.0
Total	251	100.0	100.0	

The table illustrates that out of the total 251 participants, 111 were male and 140 were female. Regarding age distribution, 85 participants were in the 12-16 age range, while a larger group of 166 individuals belonged to the 17-19 age category. In terms of education, 37 participants had a secondary school background (14.7%), 101 had completed high school (40.2%), and the majority, 113 individuals (45.0%), held a bachelor's degree.

The demographic analysis of the study sample reveals a balanced representation in terms of gender, with 44.2% male and 55.8% female participants. Age group of 17-19 (66.1%) was notably represented in the sample. Education levels showed 45.0% bachelor degree holders. These results give a general characteristic of the participants and provide important starting point for the investigation of research variables linked to bullying, social intelligence and perceived social competence.

Data Collection Tools

The survey used three scales which are as follows: The Illinois Bully Scale (IBS), Perceived Social Competence Scale (PSCS) and Tromso Social Intelligence Scale (TSIS) to evaluate social intelligence and perceived social competence of adolescents involved in bullying and adolescents who have been victim of bullying.

Illinois Bully Victim Scale

Illinois Bully Victim Scale was prepared by Espelage and Holt from University of Illinois to assess bully victim behaviours (Appendix C). The scale is applicable to children and adolescents. It consists of 18 items and evaluates three categories bullying, victim and fighting. Participants respond to a four-point Likert scale to indicate their engagement in a particular behaviour over the past few months. This scale has a good reliability and validity, it is also globally used to assess bully victim behaviours in the adolescents (Espelage & Holt, 2001).

The Tromsø Social Intelligence Scale

Silvera and her colleagues created Tromso Social Intelligence Scale which consists of 21 items (Appendix D). The scale items are divided into three categories: social information processing, social skills, and social awareness. Participants express the extent to which each statement relates to their characteristics using a seven-point Likert scale. Some items on the scale are as follows, "I can predict other

people's behaviour," and "I often feel uncertain around new people who I don't know." The scale intends to understand a person's ability to grasp social cues, interpersonal skills, and social awareness (Silvera et al., 2001).

Perceived Social Competence Scale

The Perceived Social Competence Scale (Appendix E), was developed by Anderson-Butcher. It was created to assess after school youth development programs. The scale consists of six-items. These were developed by extensive study of literature, available social competence scales, and speaking with social workers and youth development leaders. The scale items are as follows, "I am good at making friends" and "I help other people." Participants responded to a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "Not at All" [1] to "Very Much" [5]. The scale focuses on understand prosocial behaviours and positive social communications. Possible score range for the scale is between 6-30. The scale focuses on understand prosocial behaviours and positive social communications (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2007).

Procedure and Ethics

Research approval was obtained from the Near East University Ethics Committee (Appendix A) to investigate variables related to bullying. Data was collected over a period of two and half months. Initially an online survey using Google Forms was created and distributed to high school students in Pakistan. In second phase of data collection questionnaires were distributed to the adolescents in educational institutions in several cities of Pakistan.

Data Analysis

Data analysis for this study was conducted using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics were employed to analyse the demographic information, providing frequencies and percentages. Inferential statistics, specifically correlation results and regression analysis, were utilized to examine relationships and predictive factors in the dataset. To address research question one, correlation analysis was conducted. For research question two and three, multiple regression analysis was employed to explore how bullies' and victims' social intelligence and perceived social competence influence outcomes.

CHAPTER IV

Findings and Discussion

This chapter will elucidate the analysis of data obtained from study participants, presenting key findings in tabular format. Initially, the focus was on exploring correlations between bullying behaviours in adolescents and their social intelligence and perceived social competence. Subsequently, the investigation delved into assessing whether there exists a deleterious impact of bullying on the social intelligence and perceived social competence of both perpetrators and victims. Lastly, the chapter scrutinized the magnitude of the impact of bullying behaviours on the social competence and perceived social intelligence of adolescents.

The study employed SPSS for data analysis, utilizing Pearson's correlation to examine connections among variables (bullies, victims, social intelligence, and perceived social competence). Regression analysis was conducted to assess impact of bullying and victimization on adolescents' social intelligence and perceived social competence. The findings are presented in two sections: descriptive analysis and inferential analysis. Tables and graphs are used to explain the results. The sample comprised of 44.2% males and 55.8% females.

Correlation Between Elevated Bullying Behaviours in Adolescents and Lower Levels of Social Intelligence and Perceived Social Competence

The first research question of this study is “Is there any correlation between elevated bullying behaviours in adolescents and lower levels of social intelligence and perceived social competence?” The findings of the first research question are given in Table 2.

Table 2.

Correlations for Study Variables

	Bully	Victim	SI	PSC
Bully	1			
Victim	.463**	1		
SI	-.095	-.181**	1	
PSC	.020	-.019	.415**	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 2 shows that the correlation coefficient (r) between social intelligence (SI) and being a victim of bullying indicates negative and small, inverse relationship. This relationship is statistically significant ($p < 0.01$). The correlation between bullying victims and perceived social competence is a weak and inverse association. For bullies, the correlation with social intelligence signifies negative association, indicating that increased bullying behaviour is linked to decreased social intelligence. Additionally, the correlation between perceived social competence (PSC) of bullies is indicating a weak positive association.

The p-value being less than 0.01 indicates that this correlation is statistically significant for social intelligence. and victim of bullying. This means that the observed correlation is unlikely to have occurred by chance alone. The negative correlation, combined with the low p-value, suggests that there is a meaningful and reliable association between being a victim of bullying and lower social intelligence in the studied sample.

These correlations highlight relationships between bullying, victimization, social intelligence, and perceived social competence. The negative correlation between social intelligence and bullying victimization suggests that greater the individuals are victims of bully, lower is their social intelligence. Additionally, the positive correlation between perceived social competence and bullying implies that individuals who bully tend to perceive themselves as socially competent.

The Impact of Bullying Behavior On Adolescents' Social Competence and Perceived Social Intelligence

The second research question of this study is “What is the extent of the impact of bullying behaviour on the social competence and perceived social intelligence of adolescents?” The findings of the second research question are given in Table 3-6.

Table 3.

Regression Results: Impact of Bullying and Victimization on Social Intelligence

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R	
			Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.181a	.033	.025	13.135

As shown in Table 3, the R-square value is 0.033, indicating that the independent variables, bullying behaviour, and victimization collectively account for 3.3% of the variance in the dependent variable, social intelligence. This regression analysis indicates that approximately 3.3% of the variability in the dependent variable (social intelligence) can be explained by the independent variables (bullies and victims). The R-square value represents the proportion of the variance in the dependent variable that is explained by the independent variables. In this case, about 3.3% of the variability in social intelligence scores can be attributed to the influence of being a bully or victim.

Small Effect Size: An R-square of 0.033 is considered a small effect size. It suggests that the relationship between being a bully or victim and social intelligence is not weak but is also not extremely strong. Other factors not included in the model may contribute to the remaining variability in social intelligence.

Predictive Power: The model, with bullies and victims as predictors, has a low ability to predict social intelligence. It also implies that there are other factors beyond being a bully or victim that influence social intelligence. R-square value of 0.033 suggests a low level of explanatory power, indicating that being a bully or victim contributes to some portion, but not all, of the variability observed in social intelligence scores.

Table 4

ANOVA Results

		Sum of				
Model		Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1451.084	2	725.542	4.205	.016b
	Residual	42788.087	248	172.533		
	Total	44239.171	250			

a. Dependent Variable: Social Intelligence

b. Predictors: Constant, Victims, Bullies

In Table 4, the ANOVA results reveal that social intelligence of both victims and bullies can be influenced by bullying behaviour ($F(2, 248) = 4.20, p < 0.05$). It is concluded that there is a significant relationship between our independent variables (bullies and victims) and the dependent variable (social intelligence).

Table 5

Regression Analysis: Impact of bullying/victimization on Perceived Social Competence

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R	
			Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.038a	.001	-.007	5.433

a. Predictors: Constant, Victim, Bullies

An R-square value of 0.001 in regression analysis with bullies and victims as independent variables and perceived social competence as the dependent variable indicates that only a very small proportion (0.1%) of the variance in perceived social competence can be explained by the variation in the bullying behaviours of bullies and victims. In other words, the independent variables (bullies and victims) have very little predictive power or influence on the dependent variable (perceived social competence) based on the model used.

Table 6

ANOVA Results

Model		Sum of	Mean		F	Sig.
		Squares	df	Square		
1	Regression	10.458	2	5.229	.177	.838b
	Residual	7321.582	248	29.523		
	Total	7332.040	250			

a. Dependent Variable: PSC

b. Predictors: Constant, Victim, Bullies

Table 6 shows that a significance value of $p > 0.05$ and $(F(2, 248) = 0.17)$ in the ANOVA table, where bullies and victims are independent variables and perceived social competence is the dependent variable, suggests that there is no statistically significant difference in the means of perceived social competence among different groups defined by the levels of bullies and victims. In other words, the variation in bullying behaviours among bullies and victims does not significantly contribute to differences in perceived social competence in the analysed context.

The Impact of Bullying Behaviors On the Social Intelligence and Perceived Social Competence of Bullies and Victims

The third research question of this study is “Do bullying behaviours exert a detrimental influence on the social intelligence and perceived social competence of both bullies and victims?” The findings of the third research question are given in Table 7 and 8.

Table 7.

Coefficients Table (I)

		Unstandardized		Standardized		
		Coefficients		Coefficients		
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig
1	(Constant)	92.841	1.336		69.516	.000
	Bullies	-.034	.173	-.014	-.199	.842
	Victim	-.680	.275	-.174	-2.473	.014

a. Dependent variable: Social Intelligence

The beta value for bullies is close to zero (-0.014), indicating a very weak relationship between being a bully and social intelligence. The negative sign suggests a small negative effect, but since the value is close to zero, this effect is minimal. On the other hand, the beta value for victims is larger and negative (-0.174), indicating a more substantial relationship between being a victim and lower social intelligence. The negative sign suggests that being a victim is associated with lower social intelligence.

The beta for victims is significantly larger in magnitude compared to the beta for bullies, implying that being a victim has a stronger impact on social intelligence than being a bully. Results indicate that both beta values are relatively small in magnitude. As standardized coefficients, they indicate the change in standard deviations, and the effects may not be practically significant. A significant p-value for victims indicate that the relationship is unlikely due to random chance.

The standardized coefficients suggest that being a victim has a more pronounced negative impact on social intelligence compared to being a bully, but both effects are relatively small in magnitude. Based on the provided information, the influence of bullies on social intelligence is statistically non-significant and has a very small effect size. Even though statistical significance is not observed for

involvement in bullying behaviour, it's essential to consider the practical significance and the context of the study. The lack of statistical significance does not necessarily mean there is no relationship; it might just be too small to detect with the given sample size.

Table 8.

Coefficients Table (II)

Model		Unstandardized		Standardized	
		Coefficients		Coefficients	
		B	Std. Error Beta	t	Sig
1	(Constant)	21.802	.552	39.464	.000
	Bully	.037	.071	.037	.609
	Victim	-.058	.114	-.036	.613

a. Dependent Variable: Perceived Social Competence

In the coefficients table of the regression analysis, the beta values for bully and victims are noted as 0.037 and -0.036, respectively. Beta values represented in the table show standardized coefficients, indicating the magnitude and direction of the relationship between bullies and victims (independent variables) and perceived social competence (dependent variable). There is a weak positive relationship of bullying with perceived social competence as indicated by the positive beta value (0.037). Negative weak relationship of victims with perceived social competence was observed as indicated by the beta value in the table (-0.036). These relationships are comparatively weak and their impact on perceived social competence is small.

CHAPTER V

Discussion

This section aims to explain the data presented in Chapter Five, concentrating on demographics and examining the effects of bullying on social intelligence and perceived social competence of both bullies and victims. The main purpose of this research is to understand the complex relationship between the variables like bullies, victims, social intelligence and perceived social competence. Studying the results of this research in relation to the previous existing literature, this chapter aims to present thorough insights into the correlations and impact among the variables.

Table 1 represents the demographics of the study, indicating that age group of 17-19 was prevalent the most. Female participants were greater than male respondents and significant number of participants were from bachelor's degree. The analysis shows 44.2% males and 55.8% females. 17-19 age group made 66.1% of the sample. Analysis of educational background showed that 45.0% respondents were from bachelor's degrees. These findings provide important key characteristics of participants which are important for examining the research variables on bullying, social intelligence and perceived social competence.

Table 2 shows relationship between social intelligence (SI) and perceived social competence (PSC) in participants involved in bullying behaviour and victims of bullying. Negative relationship between bullying behaviour and perceived social competence was found. There was a positive correlation between bullies and perceived social competence. This finding is interesting as it suggests that higher the involvement in bullying, more socially competent that individual perceives himself. These findings are aligned with previous literature which suggests importance of addressing social skills in anti-bullying programs (Arash et al., 2018). Previous studies have shown a negative relation between bullying behaviour and social intelligence (Coelho & Sousa, 2018). It is also suggested that bully's social information processing allows them some level of social competence (Guy et al., 2019).

Table 3 shows the extent to which being a bully or victim of bullying impact one's social intelligence. Regression analysis indicate a moderate impact (R -square=0.033). the relationship between bullying roles and social intelligence is significant. The results also suggest that variability in social intelligence score is only

partly explained by bully or being victim of bullying, there can be other potential contributors which have not been explored. Bully-victim as predictors show limited capacity to predict social intelligence. This suggests that factors other than bullies and victims contribute to the social intelligence. Bullying influences social intelligence and competence of adolescents also shows deficits in their social and emotional intelligence (Song & Kim, 2022).

Bullying victimization is linked to deficiencies in social information processing (SIP), particularly in recognizing and interpreting social cues (Kellij et al., 2022). Victims often concentrate on negative social cues and harbour a more pessimistic perception of their peers (D'Urso et al., 2022). They also tend to make more negative situational attributions (María et al., 2018). In contrast, there is conflicting evidence regarding the social intelligence of bullies. Some studies propose that bullies may exhibit superior SIP abilities, while others find no clear associations between bullying and early SIP (Guy et al., 2017). It is essential to acknowledge that these findings may vary based on the specific characteristics of the sample and the measures employed to evaluate social intelligence.

Table 4 illustrates the significance of the aforementioned impact. The p-value is 0.016, which is less than 0.05, indicating that the relationship and impact of the independent variables (bullies and victims) on the dependent variable (social intelligence) are statistically significant. There is a significant link between social skills and self-esteem in bullying victims. Those with higher social skills reported increased self-esteem, especially when they hadn't experienced bullying (Dou et al., 2022). Victimization is tied to a negative social-cognitive style, involving a pessimistic view of peers and negative situational attribution (Kellij et al., 2022).

Table 5 and 6 show coefficients value where Beta value represents the impact power of both being a victim of bully and bullies on social intelligence. The Beta coefficient for victims is considerably greater in magnitude than the Beta coefficient for bullies, suggesting that being a victim exerts a more pronounced influence on social intelligence than being a bully. The findings reveal that both Beta values are relatively modest in magnitude. As standardized coefficients, they signify the change in standard deviations, and their effects may lack practical significance. The noteworthy p-value for victims suggests that the observed relationship is improbable due to random chance. Bullying victims often struggle in social interactions, resulting in increased isolation (Fajriana et al., 2022). Ability emotional intelligence

(AEI) plays a pivotal role in bullying behaviours, as higher AEI scores in students are associated with lower levels of bullying and victimization (Alvarado et al., 2020). Bullies and victims exhibit a reduced ability to understand anger, predominantly perceiving it as a behavioural condition rather than a mental state (Pedditzi et al., 2022).

Tables 7 and 8 display the outcomes of the regression analysis, with perceived competence as the dependent variable and bullies and victims of bullying as independent variables. Surprisingly, bullies exhibit a positive association with perceived social competence (PSC), while victims show a negative relationship. These relationships are not statistically significant, and the impact of these variables on PSC is minimal. Bullying's impact on social intelligence and perceived social competence has been explored in various studies.

One investigation revealed that both victims and bullies experienced lower social adjustment and efficacy (Coelho & Marchante, 2021). Another study focused on cyberbullying's emotional impact, highlighting the moderating role of perceived emotional intelligence in the relationship between cyber victimization and emotional consequences (Elipe et al., 2015). There was a minimal impact (0.1%) on perceived social competence of bullies and victims, suggesting that bullies and victims have limited ability to predict perceived social competence. Factors that may have contributed to this low impact are small sample size and social desirability. The aim of the study was also to analyze if bullies have lower perceived social competence than victims. Contrary to the expectations, the research findings are consistent with Olweus' results which suggest that bullies show better social skills than victims (Sutton et al., 1999). Bullies possess higher social skills and have the ability to strategize their behaviour to manipulate their organizational and social environments successfully, leading to higher performance ratings (Kusumaningsih & Febriani, 2022). The results show that bullying can adversely affect social intelligence and perceived social competence, emotional intelligence and social support can also influence these results.

CHAPTER VI

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

This study has highlighted the phenomenon of bullying in relation to its cognitive (social intelligence) and behavioural (perceived social competence) aspects of both the victims and bullies. Negative relationship between increased bullying involvement and lower levels of social intelligence and perceived social competence indicate the impact these behaviours can have on socio-emotional wellbeing of the individuals. The study highlighted the detrimental effect of bullying on both the bullies and victims.

Examining the extent of impact of bullying on social intelligence revealed that both bullies and victims exert small 3.3% influence on social intelligence. The impact on the perceived social competence was relatively low (0.01%). Many factors may have contributed to this low level of impact such as a smaller sample size, social desirability and potential memory distortion. An interesting finding of the research was that bullies did not show greater social deficits in comparison to the victims, instead bullies perceived themselves socially competent which adds to the complexity of social dynamics related to bullying. It is important to consider subjective perceptions of those involved in bullying, a unique perspective that questions acceptable beliefs.

This study contributes to ongoing debate on bullying and highlights the need for studying bullying behaviour and its impact on social and emotional aspects of adolescents. The results of this study can provide some ground to counsellors for developing effective preventive bullying programs. Focusing on social skills to foster more social support and navigate through negative outcomes of bullying.

Implications

The results of this research highlight complex relationship between social intelligence and perceived social competence of both, victims and bullies. The results showed negative correlations except for the positive relationship between bullies and perceived social competence (PSC). These results suggest that particular counselling programs should be developed in Pakistani high schools which should focus on improving social skills of the bullying victims and activities that can enhance

adolescent's social intelligence should be introduced. These measures can play a role to decrease bullying behaviour to some extent and create a positive school environment. There is also a need to do more research on the topic by examining the subscales of these variables for better understanding of the bullying problem among youth.

Suggestions for Counsellors

- Counsellors and school can work together to raise awareness about negative aspects of bullying behaviour on individual's social life and cognitive capacities. Respect for different cultural and sensitivity towards differences can help students build positive school environment.
- Targeted preventive bullying behaviour programmed should be developed by the counsellors focusing on promoting social skills among both, victims and bullies. Involving bullies and victims in such programs can decrease social void between the two and create a positive interaction environment.
- Special groups for victims can be created to help them heal from the bullying trauma, social support as well as activities to boost victim's perceived social competence can be provided.
- Workshops, group exercises, and skill-building activities can be incorporated into counselling sessions to improve social awareness, empathy, and interpersonal skills. Strengthening social intelligence can contribute to healthier social interactions.
- Counsellors can leverage the findings of this research to inform their practices and interventions. By addressing bullying behaviours and their impact on social intelligence and perceived social competence, counsellors can play a proactive role in shaping positive outcomes for adolescents and fostering a socially healthy society.

Suggestions for New Researchers

- It is recommended that new researchers should use a larger sample size for adequate understanding of the relationship between bullying and perceived social competence and social intelligence. Larger dataset will also allow the researchers to draw broader dataset which will result in reliable conclusions.

- Future research can also fill the literature gap by studying bullying behaviour relationship with subscales of both perceived social competence and social intelligence. This will give insight into the variables in more detail.
- Qualitative research design can be opted for pursuing research on these variables. A structured or semi structured Interviews can give more details of the impact and relationship among these variables.
- Cross cultural study of bullying in relation to social intelligence and social competence will help to identify key factors contributing to bullying behaviours and will allow us to understand a generalized relationship among these variables.

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Appendices

Appendix A Ethical Report


NEAR EAST UNIVERSITY
SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Wind
Wind

09.06.2023

Dear Almas Hussain

Your application titled **“Examining the Impact of Bullying On the Social Intelligence and Perceived Social Competence of Pakistani Adolescents”** with the application number NEU/ES/2023/1010 has been evaluated by the Scientific Research Ethics Committee and granted approval. You can start your research on the condition that you will abide by the information provided in your application form.



Prof. Dr. Aşkın KIRAZ
The Coordinator of the Scientific Research Ethics Committee

Appendix B
Participants Informed Consent Form

Dear Participant,

I am currently conducting research for my Master's degree in Counselling and Guidance under supervision of Dr. Gizem Oneri. If you are in age 14-19 then you are requested to fill this questionnaire honestly. The information you will share with us in this study will be kept completely confidential to the full extent of the law and will be used ONLY for research purpose. The results of the project may be published, but you are assured of the complete confidentiality of data gathered in this investigation. This study has been reviewed and approved by the Near East University Human Ethics. If you can help, this would be greatly appreciated. Also, please email me with any questions you may have.

Thank you

By signing below, you agree to take part in the study.

Signature.....

Appendix C

Data Collection Tool

Demographics

Gender:

Age:

Education Level:

Illinois Bully Victim Scale (Sample Items)

Please answer the following questions thinking of what actually happened to you during the last 7 days. For each question, indicate how many times another student did something to you during the last 7 days. Point values are assigned as follows:

Never = 0

1 or 2 times = 1

3 or 4 times = 2

5 or 6 times = 3

7 or more times = 4

1. I upset other students for the fun of it.
2. In a group I teased other students.
3. I fought students I could easily beat.

Tromso Social Intelligence Scale (Sample Items)

For each item, indicate how well it describes you on a scale from: 1 (describes me extremely poorly) to 7 (describes me extremely well).

1. I can predict other people's behaviour.
2. I often feel that it is difficult to understand others' choices.
3. I know how my actions will make others feel. 4. I often feel uncertain around new people who I don't know.

Perceived Social Competence Scale (Sample items)

Responses to the items are on a 5-point Likert-type scale (Not at All [1], A Little [2], Some [3], A Lot [4] and Very Much [5]).

- (1) I am good at making friends
- (2) I help other people
- (3) I share what I have with others

Appendix C

Turnitin Similarity Report

EXAMINING THE IMPACT OF BULLYING ON THE SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE AND PERCEIVED SOCIAL COMPETENCE OF PAKISTANI ADOLESCENTS			
ORJİNALLIK RAPORU			
% 12	% 7	% 5	% 5
BENZERLİK ENDEKSİ	İNTERNET KAYNAKLARI	YAYINLAR	ÖĞRENCİ ÖDEVLERİ
BİRİNCİL KAYNAKLAR			
1	docs.neu.edu.tr İnternet Kaynağı	% 1	
2	Submitted to XLRI Jamshedpur Öğrenci Ödevi	<% 1	
3	fastercapital.com İnternet Kaynağı	<% 1	
4	Submitted to St. Xavier's College Öğrenci Ödevi	<% 1	
5	Submitted to Fiji National University Öğrenci Ödevi	<% 1	
6	Submitted to Visayas State University Öğrenci Ödevi	<% 1	
7	Lyndsay N. Jenkins, Amanda B. Nickerson. "Bystander Intervention in Bullying: Role of Social Skills and Gender", The Journal of Early Adolescence, 2017 Yayın	<% 1	

CV

Personal Data

Name: Almas Hussain

Date of Birth: 15 April, 1996

Sex: Female

Contact Number: +923018098127

Education

Near East University/ Postgraduate Student (Guidance and Psychological Counseling)

Bahauddin Zakariya University / Bachelor in Applied Psychology

Bloomfield hall Uppers School/ A-levels

Career Objectives

Seeking to become a compassionate and skilled counselor, dedicated to helping individuals overcome personal challenges and achieve emotional well-being. I aim to specialize in areas such as trauma counseling or career counseling, leveraging my expertise to make a positive impact on the lives of clients. Through internships and practical experience, I seek to refine my counseling techniques and gain valuable insights into diverse client populations. Ultimately, I aspire to become a licensed professional counselor committed to providing ethical, evidence-based counseling services and advocating for mental health awareness and accessibility.

Work Experience

Rotaract Club, BZU Disease Prevention Committee Head

- Coordinate mental health workshops and training.
- Provide counseling services for individuals and communities.
- Collaborate with schools to address student needs.
- Lead fundraising efforts and media relations.

Nishtar Hospital Psychology Internee

- Conduct comprehensive assessments by gathering medical, psychological, social, and family histories.

- Utilize reference materials to identify symptoms, make diagnoses, and devise treatment plans.
- Implement various treatment methods such as psychotherapy, behavior modification, and stress reduction therapy.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of counseling or treatments and adjust plans and diagnoses as needed.

Spring Hospital Therapist

- Obtain informed consent from patients prior to implementing interventions, ensuring they understand the proposed treatments, risks, and benefits.
- Evaluate treatment progress at different stages and adjust interventions as necessary to optimize outcomes.
- Conduct research and integrate research findings into clinical practice to enhance treatment efficacy.
- Provide counseling services to individuals, groups, and families, assisting them in understanding problems, managing crises, setting goals, and developing action plans.