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Exploring the Impact of School Bullying on EFL Students' Academic Performance: A Case Study of Djeloul Mohamed Middle School, in Ain Tadeles (Mostaganem)

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Abstract

Many students in Algerian secondary schools enroll in school to pursue their academic ambitions. The educational journey is rich in goals, but it is also tough, with ups and downs in terms of bullying in the school environment. This dissertation to determine school bullying among middle school students, their perspectives , and how it negatively affects their academic performance, we believe that bullying is a very common issue among middle school students and it negatively impact their academic performance . Data was obtained from 64 participants using self-reported questionnaire and semi-structured   interviews. After analysing the student's responses to the questionnaire and the interview it was found that most students experience bullying in middle school and often do not tell anybody about it; many students regarded being a victim of school bullying as the most significant hindrance to learning, because anxiety, fear, and intimidation obstruct some students' academic progress and cause them to dislike , negatively perceive, and even drop out from school . The findings revealed that school bullying is a really serious problem that persists in the majority of schools and has a negative impact on students' academic performance and attendance. It was acknowledged that most students were bullied in their classes or on the school grounds; the social dilemma of bullying still occurs and continues to undermine the academic achievement of the majority of Algerian students. As a consequence to the study, it is recommended that schools should implement comprehensive anti-bullying policies, foster a positive and inclusive, provide education and training on bullying prevention for both students and staff, and involve parents, community members, and mental health professionals that can contribute to a more comprehensive and supportive approach to address the underlying causes and consequences of bullying in school.

Key words: Academic, Achievement, Bullying, EFL, Middle School Education Students.

List of abbreviations and acronyms

BMI: Body Mass Index

EFL: English as a Foreign language

FMRI: Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging

GPA: Grade Point Average

HPA: Hypothalamic Pituitary Adrenal

WWW2: World war 2

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General introduction

Bullying is a form of violent or aggressive behaviors, notably the use of force on others, whether emotional or physical, especially when the behavior is habitual and persistent, and frequently involves an imbalance in power. Students who are frequently exposed to bullying difficulties may experience and exhibit symptoms such as anxiety, losing self-confidence, and feeling excessively intimidated and stressed. This symptom may be accompanied by fear and anxiety about going to school or participating in school activities, which leads to a loss of interest in studying and a negative attitude toward school, eventually resulting in a negative remark in their cumulative records and more reported absence from school than other students, They may also struggle to concentrate and study properly, and they may engage in unusually risky behaviors. This study was carried out to investigate the topic of bullying among middle school students. This research work will provide an opportunity to determine the correlation between school bullying and academic performance, with the goal of assisting students and teachers in understanding the causes and the consequences of bullying, and, more importantly, to raise the awareness of students and teachers of the seriousness of this social issue that is school bullying, and eventually come up with useful strategies to overcome the debilitating repercussions of school bullying. The researcher aimed to shed light on school bullying and especially its impact on student's academic performance during this research project. As a result, the focus would be on revealing how school bullying affects the academic achievement of middle school students. School bullying constructs are negatively associated to academic performance; , there appears to be a negative association between school bullying and academic performance. When compared to students who are rarely or never bullied, those who are regularly or frequently bullied have a negative perception of school, a negative attitude toward academics, and poor academic performance.

This research seeks to answer the following research questions:

1) How wide spread is bullying in middle schools of Mostaganem, Algeria?
2) How does bullying impact Algerian student's academic achievement?

As an attempt to answer these questions, the following hypotheses were formulated:

1) Bullying is Widespread and very common issue among Algerian middle school students.

2) Bullying impact student's mental health and leads students to lose interest in learning and achieving their academic goals.

Data for this study will be acquired using a questionnaire and an interview with middle school students. This research paper is divided into three chapters. The first chapter is the literature review that deals with bullying, its historical basis, meaning, types, causes, its consequences on student's academic performance, and its signs. The second chapter is concerned with research methodology and design. The third chapter is devoted to discussing the findings of the questionnaire and interview, and implications and recommendations concerning the issue of school bullying with the goal of devising helpful and useful solutions to overcome the effects of this issue.

CHAPTER ONE: LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1Introduction

The first chapter involves a review of literature that I have read and evaluated, in order to better inform and accomplish this research study. The literature review gives an overview into how bullying began to be an interesting topic for researchers to conduct, and how its meaning changed drastically over time. It also provides insight into how bullying is defined, its types, its causes, traits of a bully, signs that someone is being a victim of bullying as well as the consequences of bullying on learners' academic achievement.

1.2Historical background of school bullying

2.1Studying the history of bullying makes it easier to understand and study the current issue to the fullest. All research show that bullying began to be publicly recognized in the 1970's, but that does not preclude that it was mentioned before in some literacy works even if rarely.

> "Very well then, let's roast him cried Flashman, and catches hold of Tom by collar, one or two hesitate, but the rest join in." (Hughes, 1857,s p.188)

This passage from Tom Brown's school days book was a famous example of school bullying in early Victorian era, even if it was not the focus of attention and it was little understood, and generally seen as limited to physical harassment related to death, serious injuries… etc. This is exactly what happened in the U.K when some students killed their twelve years old classmate as a result of bullying behaviours ,and school viewed this crime as a misadventure where this students did not even held accountable.

Over time, the meaning of bullying started to change from just « physical harassment » to psychological and verbal threatening thanks to many factors and incidents.

As cited in Hughes (1857).On the 6th of August 1862, the most famous newspaper The Times reported the first incident of a soldier that died because of bullying behaviours, "it is clear from the evidence that this unfortunate man, dreadfully as he retaliated upon his tormentors, was the victim of long, malignant, and systematic bullying." (The Times, 6th Aug. 1862, p.8), in which it disclosed about how bullying can have serious and dangerous consequences. This is how bullying and its dangerous consequences started to be somehow recognized, and became an interesting topic for researchers to conduct and tackle, especially Dan Olweus who delved in this topic, and greatly contributed in shedding light on the real meaning of this issue in the mid

1970's. This professor of psychology was the first who planned a comprehensive study on bullying among students by using his systematic research techniques. Moreover, he contributed in reducing bullying in schools by creating the OBPP (the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program).

Olweus methods of investigating bullying were widely used in different countries, and different schools in UK use the Olweus bullying prevention program to diminish bullying. In addition, the federal government created laws to prevent bullying similar to the OBPP; this kind of decisions proves the effectiveness and the strong impact of Olweus contribution in reducing school bullying.

Another factor that made the real meaning of bullying, and its impact the focus of attention of people is the Second World War. After the WW2 many aspects of human rights emerged, such as "anti-racism", and many other aspects that make people realize the importance of basic human rights that can be in danger because of bullying. It makes people curious to know more about this topic and how to deal with it in order to keep everyone safe from any issue that can affect their safety. According to the UN, in 1948, people should have the right to be safe from any issue that can pose a threat to their safety.

People started to know the real meaning of bullying, they realize how it can be dangerous, and have strong impact on the student, and on the whole society. Bullying becomes a serious issue, and it is not a joke or a neglected topic anymore even people from different careers became concerned about bullying; such as nurses, teachers, administrators, and the list is long.

All previously done researches were an endeavour to show a clear and brief overview of how bullying became a publicly recognized topic and how its meaning has changed overtime.

1.3 Definition of bullying

Despite decades of researchers' contributions and efforts done to know the real meaning of bullying, there is uncertainty and considerable differences in how the term bullying is defined and described, relating to the harm, the intent to hurt others repeatedly, and the power imbalance in episodes of bullying.

Bullying is an aggressive behaviour that many people struggle with. It happens when someone or group of people try to hurt another person where they have power disparity, and this action is

repeated many times. This behaviour has a serious and a negative impact and affect the victim's psychological, physical, social, and educational side (Gladden et al., 2014, p.7 as cited in Chang,2021). On the other hand, some bullying studies from the 1980s to the present illustrated a huge difference in how bullying is described and characterized. Slattery et al. (2019) found that 57 percent had an unspecified definition of bullying, while 32 percent required an imbalance of power between the bully and the victim, 25 percent addressed that the act of bullying happen more than once, moreover, 17 percent described it as an intentional behaviour, and the last 8 percent mentioned the phenomenon of cyberbullying.

We cannot talk about the definition of bullying without talking about the most accepted and publicly recognized definition of bullying by Olweus (1993) who described the act of bullying as a "person is being bullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other students." He indicates three core elements that distinguish bullying from other aggressive behaviour; which are the intent to hurt someone weaker "power disparity between the preparatory and the target, and repeating this act too many time. Similarly, some students described bullying as an intended act to hurt someone and making him feel unprotected by affecting him physically or mentally.(Waseem et al,2014)

In addition, Frey et al.(2005),Olweus(1993), as cited in Slattery et al (2019) stated that there is a thin line between bullying and other aggressive behaviour, which is the intent, the repetition of the behaviour, and the power imbalance. In addition, the American Psychological Association (APA) defined bullying as "a form of aggressive behaviours in which someone intentionally and repeatedly causes another person injury or discomfort, bullying can take the form of physical contact, words, or more subtle actions."

Even when researchers continue to attribute other meaning to the term bullying, which make it hard to know exactly the real meaning of the word, they all share one common idea or definition of bullying as a subcategory of aggressive behaviour and unacceptable act of hurting others with physical actions, or calling them with cruel words, which involves the intention to hurt someone and keep repeating this behaviour too many times, without forgetting the unequal power between the bully and the victim. Usually this act happens a lot in schools among students; it makes them feel unprotected even in their quiet and safe environment "schools". This is how it

affects their academic process. Thus, students should be given care, in order to save them from being victims of bullying.

1.4 Types of bullying

Bullying is a harmful practice that is recognized to happen more frequently in situations where there is an imbalance of power between the victim and the bully. Bullying can take many different forms at school, but it always occurs when a student or a group of students intentionally harm another student. Abuse like this can happen emotionally, psychologically, or physically. In schools, the last one happens most frequently, and parents are less likely to notice or recognize it. According to several in-depth research six prevalent forms or types of bullying has been distinguished:

1.4.1 Physical bullying

It is the use of physical actions that involve aggressive behaviours to hurt others, and make them feel threatened, unsafe, and unsecure. This behaviour is becoming common type of bullying in schools over time. According to National centre of education static in (2017), as cited in Positive action(2021), 67 percent of students were victims of physical bullying. Violence acts committed as a result of physical bullying frequently involves hitting, shoving, pinching, and other forms of force. On the other hand, physical bullying could take on indirect forms as well as direct ones, such as stealing someone's things or causing property damage his type of bullying is the most obvious and the easiest to spot(Lee,2004). Therefore, it is probably what people picture when they think of bullying. Moreover, besides the injuries and the possible damage to victim's body or possessions, this behaviour can also cause emotional distress; it makes the victim feel weak, helpless, and less confident, which results in emotions of humiliation, loneliness, and despair. Thus, they end up with damaged self-esteem and personality.

1.4.2 Verbal bullying

This type is considered as the most common type of bullying in school. Verbal bullying accounted for 70 percent of reported occurrences with an immediate impact. (Lee,2004; Coloroso,2008) as cited in Antiri(2016, p.132).

This form of bullying is simple to perpetrate on other children. It happens in the shortest length of time, yet its impact is more devastating in some ways than physical bullying because there are no physical scars.(Naidoo et al,2016)

A person engages in verbal bullying when they use words (insults, mocking…) to gain control over their peers. For instance, a peer who is not as athletically may be referred to as a nerd or a wimp.

By definition, verbal bullying may be extremely hurtful and may have long-term psychological repercussions on the victim. It typically happens when adults are not there to stop it, and its effects are subtle because words alone do have power and strong impact on the victim such as depression, anxiety, stress, and even suicidal thoughts. Verbal bullying occurs when the bully makes derogatory comments about the victim. It also refers to the act of using harsh, obscene language; examples of verbal bullying include calling the victim names like "fat" or "big" , threatening to hit or harm them, making jokes about them, and humiliating and embarrassing them in front of other people. This sort of bullying also includes making disparaging remarks about other people's appearance, speech, and movement.

1.4.3 Cyber bullying

Bullying committed online is known as cyberbullying. Social media, chat services, gaming platforms, and mobile devices are all potential venues. It is a consistent behaviour meant to frighten, infuriate, or shame individuals who are the target.

Sending disrespectful abusive or threatening texts, images, or videos via any rather chat services such as messenger. It also includes spreading misinformation about someone or sharing humiliating photos or videos of them on social media.

Face to face bullying or online bullying (cyberbullying) can frequently coexist, although the latter leaves a digital trait that might be used as crucial evidence to put an end to the abuse. According to the UNICEF, cyberbullying can make you feel unsafe even inside your home, which is supposed to be your safe zone. Cyberbullying may appear insignificant, knowledge of this form of bullying is expanding much too quickly due to the expansion of technology throughout the world and the youth's growing interest in the internet, which they can control

however they want. In the 21st century, cyberbullying is probably going to be very common. (Antiri, 2016, p.133).

1.4.4 Relational bullying

This type of bullying is also known as "social bullying". Unlike physical bullying, relational bullying can be difficult to spot; it is the act of doing harm to a person by destroying their friendships and feelings of group acceptance. This type can be challenging to describe because it is the most insidious type. It refers to actions that are far more hidden than other types of bullying and are frequently associated with friendship groups. For instance, refusing to participate in groups and social gatherings, or utilising friendships as a means of exchange.

According to Chester (2017) these more hidden habits have been the focus on university research that was recently published in the journal of school health; a representative sample was created using data from more than 5000 young people who participated in "The health behaviour in school-aged children" survey in England. In a class of thirty pupils, about five teenagers claimed to have experienced this type of bullying in the previous two months.

Within friendship circles, relational bullying is likely to occur. This type of bullying may be more distressing than physical or verbal bullying for young people as they enter adolescence because it calls into question the friendships they have grown to rely on most.

1.4.5 Psychological bullying

It is any form of deliberate and planned mental assault. Even while some people may feel as though they have been mistreated because of anything that emotionally affected them. Bullying is typically only defined as intentional behaviour, especially when it is done with malicious intent.

People who experience psychological bullying frequently experience emotional issues that may persist for many years after the assault. Personal attacks are one of the most popular strategies used during psychological bullying; when this occurs the bully could make comments about a person's frailty or physical imperfection. Making a big deal out of people's differences on purpose is another behaviour that bullies frequently engage in. For example, the bully can make fun of someone's race or religion. Typically, the bully will only use these strategies if he can identify a clear way in which the victim stands out from the majority of his classmates.

Physical bullying still occurs, but psychological bullying tends to be more prevalent; this is partially because as people become older, the punishments for physical assaults frequently grow much more severe, with jail being a possibility (Pearl Davies, 2016).

According to Cowie and Jennifer(2008);Coloroso(2008),Boulton and Underwood(1992), as cited in Antiri(2016), it is possible for schools, counsellors, and teachers to neglect this kind of bullying, because teachers and school administrators are more concerned about physical bullying than psychological; which include being shunned by classmates, and they view psychological bullying as less serious and disturbing to the victim. Victimization, sadness, anxiety, loneliness, and low self-esteem, all these feelings are associated with psychological bullying.

1.4.6 Spreading rumours

Teenagers are not the only ones who use gossip as a weapon, every age group and social class use it on a daily basis. It can destroy the target; it is sneaky, simple to start, and challenging to stop. Although we all hate gossip and realize its power from a young age, we have all engage in some form of it (Stade,2021).

Rumours are considered as the worst kind of school bullying, and girls tend to do it more often than boys do. Boys on the other hand prefer to use their physical strength and aggressive behaviours to bully others.

Spreading rumours is the act when a bully tells others or extends false and unreal information about someone; despite that this behaviour is not seen as a crime that is against the law, it can have legal repercussions. The propagation of rumours about someone can have very serious negative effects, including the victim losing their integrity and other's respect, losing their careers, even their social standing in the community, and being humiliated by others.

Typically, bullying that involves spreading rumours is difficult to identify, because there are no signs that point to it or to the perpetration the first place. Rumours can spread through cyberbullying as well.

1.5Causes of bullying

School bullying is a complex issue with multiple causes that are hard to be identified. Mugove's study(2017) showed that there are some common bullying causes as stated below.

1.5.1 Lack of strict school rules on bullying

According to the study, this is one of the main reasons while bullying occurs in schools. 84 percent of the members of the disciplinary committees, and the 97 percent of the students strongly concurred that bullying in schools was a result of lack of school rules. Potential bullies often start bullying when they learn that there are no strict rules against bullying, and other pupils often start bullying when they see that bullies get away with it. Bullying situations are less likely to recur if those who bully others are disciplined for their improper conduct and other students see the offenders receiving punishment. As cite in Mugove (2017)The findings accord with Walter's (2010) assertion that government school have standards that lead to the prevalence of bullying and other misbehaviours.

1.5.2 Bullies are attention seekers

The research findings from Mugove's study (2017) ,show that bullies engage in bullying practices in order to gain attention from adults in the school or fellow pupils. 40 percent of the students strongly agreed , and 45 percent felt that bullying was done for attention. 42 percent of the members of the disciplinary committee strongly agreed , and the same percentage believed that bullying was done to gain attention . This could be due to the bully's personality flaws or a lack of acknowledgment for academic achievement. By engaging in bullying practices, the bully attracts the attention of peers and is discussed by other students . Thus, bullying perpetrators bully other pupils in order to get attention and be recognized as heroes. These findings are consistent with the conclusions of bullying statistics which stated that if social acknowledgment can be obtained for bad acts rather than positive one, bullying can occur for the goal of gaining attention, as cited in Mugove(2017).

1.5.3 Bullies are influenced by films and movies they watch

Bullying behaviours can also be influenced by films and movies that bullies watch. According to the study findings(ibid),28 percent of the students strongly agreed , while 35 percent believed that films and movies influenced bullying behaviour among students , the results showed that

42 percent of members of the disciplinary committee highly agreed , while 25 percent believed that films and movies encouraged students bullying conduct. This is due to bullies learning bullying habits via movies and media. The findings support Rigby's (2010) contention that physical violence in the media may contribute to bullying, as cited in Mugove (2017).

1.5.4 Bullying as being inherited from parents

Mugove's survey also found out that that both disciplinary committee members and students were unsure whether bullying was passed down from parents . According to the survey, only 15 percent of the children agreed, whereas 33 percent were unsure whether bullying was inherited or not. Only 8 percent of members of the disciplinary committee strongly agreed that bullying was hereditary, while 8 percent agreed , and 58 percent were unsure. However, the findings contradict Hallam and Reeds (2005) contention that bullying is genetically inherited; a genetically inherited trait is passed down from parents to children. All of a person's qualities are determined and passed down from generation to generation through the transmission of genetic information. This demonstrates that members of the disciplinary committee and school children did not think bullying to be genetically carried from generation to generation, but rather a result of other circumstances.

1.5.5 Poor upbringing

According to Mugove(2017), 30% of students strongly agreed and 35% agreed that poor upbringing can be a cause of bullying at mission and government boarding schools. Members of the disciplinary committee agreed that inadequate upbringing could be a cause of bullying in mission and boarding schools, with 17 percent strongly agreeing and 42 percent agreeing. Poor upbringing is the result of broken homes in which children are raised by a single parent. Where the family is not completely intact, moral direction may be insufficient, resulting in bullying behaviours when the youngster enters boarding school. This is further reinforced by Rigby's (2008) findings which suggest that bullying can be driven by social variables such as dysfunctional homes with family or parental problems. Bullying is less prevalent among children who have positive ties with their parents or family.

In addition, we can briefly divide the causes of bullying into four main factors:

1.5.1 Environmental factors

According to bullying statistic as cited in Mugove(2017), schools can also contribute to bullying behaviours. If the school in which bullying takes place does not have high standards for the way people should treat each other, then bullying may be more likely and prevalent; in cases where the rules are not strictly enforced there is room that bullying will occur. Schools that have strict rules and close supervision of activities that children will be doing are likely to have fewer cases of bullying than where children left unattended for long periods of time . Thus, the school would have an influence on why children bully. Therefore, bullying can be more likely to occur in schools where there is a lack of adult supervision, a culture of violence, or a lack of support for victims, and sometimes what children watch on tv or what happens in the media has an impact on them, such as physical aggression or criminal activities. The environment in which children are raised and become accustomed to living determines whether or not those children will become bullies in the future. However, this can not be generalized to all children; because some children do witness physical violence, physical abuse , or acts of bullying, but they are unaffected by what they see. Whereas a lot of children are susceptible to being influenced by what happens in the media, as a result they exhibit a high degree of violence.

1.5.2 Social factors

This relates to the family environment, typically children who grow up in unstable homes with frequent arguments; where parents fight frequently and violently, it also relates to schools where there is a strong emphasis on popularity or where there is a lot of social pressure to conform. Consequently, children become more prone to become bullies; from violent and aggressive habits, and they eventually bully others as a way to express their repressed feelings of resentment, anger and contempt, and to cope with their own insecurities or problems. Adults are responsible for creating an environment that fosters bullying or putting a stop to it by being responsible and treating the problem of bullying in schools seriously without neglecting its consequences. Olweus (1994) stated that even teachers can engage in bullying in order to maintain classroom discipline by frightening and threatening their students.

1.5.3 Personal factors

Some scholars has been widely assumed that children who have witnessed violence between their parents are more inclined to aggress against others (Qiu,2021).What began as anecdotal evidence has grown into a substantial literature demonstrating this so called " cycle of violence" . Therefore, bullying often occurs when bullies have personality traits such as aggression, low empathy, and a need of power. They may also have experienced bullying themselves or come where aggression and abuse are tolerated. As Branstett stated "hurt people hurt people".

1.6 Characteristics of a bully

Obviously, each child who bullies comes from a different background and has distinct motives for his or her behaviour. A bully has no single profile since each youngster who engages in this behaviour faces a unique set of challenges. However, there are many shared characteristics and experiences among bullies, and investigating them might be beneficial.

According to Bologna (2019), here are some characteristics that many bullies share:

1.6.1 Lack of empathy

Bullying children are frequently stunted in terms of self-awareness and emotional intelligence, particularly in terms of empathy. As the mental health counsellor Goodman as cited in Bologna (2019) said: "a lack of empathy means that they are not able to put themselves in another person's shoes and think, I wonder how I would feel if someone teased me." Though empathy and compassion may appear to be natural personality traits, the truth is that these are also skills that can be learned. Parents and educators can help avoid violence by constantly teaching, modelling, and practicing these behaviours.

1.6.2 Insecurity

Kersting asserted that "The trait that all bullies have in common is insecurity." they employ intimidation and harassment to keep others from seeing through them and seeing their insecurities. Tearing people down can be a maladaptive coping method for children with poor self-esteem. Bullies are sometimes envious of their victims. Bullying children are generally perceived as popular, with self-esteem ranging from average to high. Children who bully, on the other hand, have been discovered to have high degrees of shame and vulnerability, which means

they are worried that their flaws will be exposed, therefore bullying conduct serves to focus on others' flaws and divert what they are ashamed of. It's a little but significant distinction: Bullies may be safeguarding their self-esteem by projecting their humiliation onto others.

1.6.3 Need for control

According to Hafeez, as cited in Bologna (2019) many bullies strive to control everything and everyone because they believe their lives are out of control or that they will be harmed if they do not have complete control of a situation. They aim to dominate in order to ensure that no one can challenge them and harm them. Kids who feel hated and unsupported by their classmates frequently resort to bullying to acquire social control

1.6.4 Impulsivity

Bullies frequently have poor impulse control; they do not consider the effects of their actions on another person's physical or mental state. This impulsivity is not an indelible part of the child's nature; for example, a child's impulsivity may be the result of not having a good set of problem-solving abilities and thinking, "I don't know how to get what I want." Goodman said, as cited in Bologna (2019).

1.6.5 Desire for power and status

Many bullies have a craving for power and status in the social group; they lack or are ignorant of social skills and use bullying to achieve status and power since they do not have other options.(Mayer, ND)(ibid). Bullying can make children feel more powerful than their peers, especially if they are feeling inadequate in other ways.

Patel(ND)(ibid) stated that poor academic achievement can lead to children engaging in this conduct.; "some kids bully in response to academic stress. They might be jealous of kids who do well."

Nonetheless, some recent research have called into question traditional understanding concerning the social experiences and position of bullied children. Symington (ND)(ibid) cited research out of the University of California, Los Angeles, that revealed "cool" middle students were more prone to bully than their less popular peers. Symington added that: "It turns out that it is most often the popular kids who are doing the bullying and they perceive, which may or

may not be true, bullying behaviours as a way of expressing and maintaining their high social status."

Children who become famous because of the way they dress, their beauty, a particular talent, or parental affluence that provides them with material possessions that other children adore privately feel that if these things were taken away, no one would care about them.

1.7 Characteristics of a victim of bullying

There are a number of characteristics that may make someone more likely to be a victim of bullying. These characteristics include may be:

1.7.1 Having low self-esteem

Children with low self-esteem may be more likely to be bullied because they are seen as easy targets; They typically have low self-esteem, self-confidence, and do not value or view themselves positively; most of them typically have low self-esteem, self-confidence, and do not value or view themselves positively; they frequently regard themselves as failures and feel foolish and embarrassed.

1.7.2 Being introverted and shy

Introverted and shy children may be more likely to be bullied because they are less likely to stand up for themselves, most of them usually left alone, isolated, and abandoned by those around them at school; most of them have fewer friends and surroundings, if any, and sometimes not even a classmate to sit next to.

1.7.3 Being new to a school

Children who are new to a school or community may be more likely to be bullied because they are not yet established and may not have a support system in place. Typically, this type of victim is excluded from left out of groups, especially when they are playing games, eating lunch at the school restaurant, or during break time and while participating in sports. In addition, they may also be subjected to spreading lies and rumours about, they suffer from being hated and mistreated, and they are more vulnerable to hostility by bullies who control the school.

1.7.4 Being different from others

Victims of bullying are often different from their peers in some way, such as being overweight, underweight, having a physical disability, or being from a different culture. This type of victims are more likely to be a target of bullying behaviour than others.

1.7.5 Coming from a troubled family

Children who come from troubled families may be more likely to be bullied because they may be seen as vulnerable or different. Usually this type of victims are at high risk of being bullied.

1.8 Signs of bullying

Bullying is a serious problem, but it can be prevented by being aware of its signs; each student who has been bullied or who is bullying others will react and behave differently. A student's moods and actions can shift for a variety of reasons. However, and through various research certain signs that indicate a pupil is being bullied were highlighted

Signs a teacher may observe include if a student:

• Becomes frustrated and unreasonable.

• Begins to engage in fights.

• Refuses to discuss what is wrong.

• School grades start to decrease.

Less obvious signs could include if a student:

• Is frequently alone or ostracized from friendship groups at school.

• Is a popular target for teasing, mimicking, or ridicule.

•Their propensity to speak up in class changes.

•Withdraws from people and activities they formerly enjoyed.

• Appears insecure or terrified.

Signs a parent or a carer might notice include if their child:

•Does not want to attend school or engage in school activities.

•Changes their technique or route to school, or is afraid of walking there.

•Academic performance has dropped.

•Sleeping patterns have shifted.

•Patterns of eating have shifted.

•Has a lot of tears, anger, and mood swings.

•Steals money from home.

•Has bruises, wounds, and scratches that are not explained.

•Loses or carries damaged items or clothing home.

•Arrives home hungry.

Signs of prospective bullying online can be similar to signs of other types of bullying, but they also involve various behaviours with phones and computers, such as:

•Being hesitant to go online.

•Seeming nervous once an instant message, text message, or email appears.

•Being obviously disturbed after using a computer or cell phone, or abruptly avoiding it.

•When others enter the room, the screen is closed or the phone is hidden.

•Spending excessively long hours online in a more tense, pensive tone receiving dubious phone calls, emails or parcels.

1.9 Consequences of bullying

Bullying is a serious problem that can affect everyone; those who are bullied, those who bully, and even those who witness bullying (bystanders). Bullying has proven to have profound and lasting effects. Its repercussions extend far beyond the immediate act itself, permeating into various aspects of the individual's life and society as a whole. It is linked to many negative outcomes including impacts on mental health, physical health problems, victims are more likely to experience depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, they may also have difficulties sleeping, eating , and concentrating.

According to Rivara, F, and Menestrel, S.L(2016), consequences of bullying behaviour may include:

1.9.1 Being bullied makes young people incredibly insecure

When one is bullied, he/she may feel insecure and on guard all of the time. Even if he/she is not currently being bullied, he is aware that it could happen at any time. It has a significant psychological and emotional impact, he feels rejected, alone, furious, and withdrawn. He is always thinking how he can improve and avoid attracting the attention of a bully. He is also stunted as a result of the ongoing strain, and he may skip forging particular friendships or passing up opportunities that could benefit your development.

1.9.2 Physical health consequences

Bogart et al (2014) found that children who were bullied had poorer physical health than their non-bullied classmates. Among seventh-grade kids with the lowest physical health, 6.4 percent had never been bullied, 14.8 percent had only been bullied in the past, 23.9 percent had only been bullied in the present, and nearly a third (30.2%) had been bullied in both the past and the present. When pupils were in tenth grade, the impacts were not as strong. Physical health was judged by participants' views of their health-related quality of life rather than objectively defined physical symptoms, which was one of the study's limitations. It is crucial to recognize that this study, like others that look at correlations between behaviour and events, cannot conclude that the events caused the behaviour.

Baldwin et al (2015) discovered that children who had experienced chronic bullying had increased adiposity later on, but not at the time of victimization, in their research of 2,232 twins

reared together and separately as part of the Environmental Risk (E-Risk) Longitudinal Twin research. At the age of 18, these children had a higher BMI , and were at a higher chance of becoming overweight than their non-bullied peers.

The physical consequences of bullying cannot be overlooked. Acts of bullying can escalate to physical violence, resulting in bodily harm, injuries, or even life-threatening situations. Victims may endure physical pain, endure long recovery periods, and potentially require medical intervention. The physical scars of bullying serve as a constant reminder of the traumatic experiences, often compounding the emotional anguish already suffered.

1.9.3 Somatic symptoms

The majority of the existing information on the physical implications of bullying, particularly somatic complaints, is focused on the individual who is bullied. Bullying's emotional impacts can manifest as somatic disturbances, which, like somatization, are physical symptoms caused by stress or an emotional condition. Sleep disturbances, gastrointestinal issues, headaches, palpitations, and persistent pain are all common stress or anxiety symptoms. The link between peer victimization and sleep difficulties has been widely established (Hunter et al, 2014; Geel et al,2014).

For instance, Hunter et al. (2014) evaluated sleep issues (being too tired to accomplish things, having difficulty falling asleep, and having difficulty remaining asleep) in a sample of 5,420 Scottish adolescents. The researchers discovered that children who were bullied 95% and young who bullied were nearly twice as likely to develop sleep disturbances as adolescents who were not involved in bullying. One disadvantage of this study is that it relied on self-reports, which have been criticized for being prone to bias. Insomnia patients may overestimate the time it takes them to fall asleep (Harvey & Tang, 2012). Another disadvantage is that the study included adolescents at various stages of adolescence. Sleep patterns and sleep requirements change as adolescence progresses.

1.9.4 Neuroendocrinology of Stress

Bullying and other psychological and physical stressors activate the stress system centered on the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis (Dallman et al., 2003; McEwen and McEwen, 2015) as cited in Rivara et al (2016). HPA and other hormones have a role in adaptation and

survival, but chronically high hormone levels can cause issues. Stress has widespread impacts on physiology and the brain, affecting the levels of several hormones and other indicators and, ultimately, behaviour. As a result, both a general awareness of stress throughout early adolescence and specific linkages between stress and bullying, where known, can provide insight into the long-term impacts of bullying.

Bullying has been demonstrated to alter cortisol levels, with being bullied related with a reduced cortisol response (Knack et al., 2011). To the best of the committee's knowledge, no study has investigated bidirectional changes in cortisol, despite evidence that cortisol is frequently raised immediately following many types of stress and trauma but decreased after chronic stress (Judd et al., 2014) as cited in Rivara (2016). Kliewer (2006) discovered that cortisol levels increased from pre-task to post-task (viewing a video clip from the film Boyz 'n the Hood followed by a discussion) in harassed kids. Kliewer et al. (2012)(ibid) found that peer victimization was associated with greater sympathetic nervous system (fight or flight reaction) reactivity to a stress task in African American urban adolescents (measured using salivary a-amylase, an enzyme that increases in saliva when the sympathetic nervous system is activated). However, the immediate effect of bullying on stress reactivity was not investigated in these investigations. In contrast, Ouellet-Morin et al. (2011) and Knack and et all (2011) showed no increase in cortisol after a psychosocial stress test in bullied kids, but rather a muted pattern of response after the test . A longitudinal study of bullying chronicity and HPA axis regulation is required to test whether bullying causes an increase in cortisol in the short term but a blunted cortisol response in the long term (as seen with other types of psychosocial stressors; Judd et al., 2014). Regardless of the significance of this future research, there is evidence to support the hypothesis that when stress is protracted, the stress hormone system becomes hypofunctional, resulting in a dulled stress response (McEwen, 2014) as cited in Rivara (2016).

1.9.5 Brain function damage

Being bullied as a child or adolescent alters behaviour, and neuroscience research suggests that this experience may also alter the brain (Bradshaw et al., 2012; Vaillancourt et al., 2013a) as cited in Rivara(2016). Functional magnetic resonance imaging (FMRI)is the most often used technique for monitoring brain activity in humans. It works by monitoring blood flow to indirectly measure the functioning of thousands of brain cells over an area of the brain. This

technique has rarely been used on either the perpetrator or target of a bullying incident during this very specific social interaction, so little is known about whether the brain of a child who bullies or a child who has been bullied is different before or after these experiences.

Furthermore, two constraints must be considered when comprehending FMRI. First, one cannot scan a child's brain when they are bullying or being bullied. Instead, the investigator must rely on the youngster remaining completely motionless while attempting to simulate one or two components of the complex experience that occurs throughout this sophisticated behavioural interaction. For example, without the whole social and emotional context of the actual bullying process, the fMRI task employed during a brain imaging session may resemble social exclusion as one element of bullying. Although this is an important methodology, the results should be interpreted with caution at this time and should not be used directly as an accepted scientific interpretation of bullying. Therefore, the examples used to assess brain function below rely on monitoring components of behaviours that are anticipated to occur during a bullying incident rather than monitoring actual instances of bullying conduct.

Second, fMRI monitors a vast brain area consisting of numerous smaller brain areas, each of which is involved in a wide range of actions, many of which are still unknown. As a result, it is difficult to understand why the brain area under investigation changed, because that brain area is engaged in hundreds of other activities. As a result, the findings discussed below should be regarded as preliminary and should not be understood as explaining any part of the bullying experience. Rather, these preliminary findings emphasize the need of brain assessment before and after bullying encounters, including the development of monitorable tasks that more closely resemble the bullying experience while an immobile participant undergoes an fMRI brain scan. The value of neuroscience is that it allows for the investigation of brain systems that influence behaviour that are not obvious from behavioural analysis.

1.9.6 Internalizing problems

A substantial body of research shows that bullied kids frequently have low self-esteem and feel unhappy, worried, and lonely (Juvonen and Graham, 2014). Data from developmental psychopathology research show that stressful life events can cause the emergence and maintenance of depression, anxiety, and other psychiatric symptoms, and that bullying is a major

life stressor for many youth (Swearer and Hymel, 2015). Targets of bullying are despised by the broader peer group, according to sociometric nominations (Knack et al., 2012b).

Two meta-analyses indicated that internalizing emotional difficulties increases both the risk and the adverse repercussions of being bullied across multiple distinct longitudinal studies with various study populations (Cook et al., 2010; Reijntjes et al., 2010)as cited in Rivara(2016). Internalizing issues can thus be both the cause and the result of bullying (Reijntjes et al., 2010; Vaillancourt et al., 2013b)(ibid). Although most longitudinal studies and meta-analyses (Reijntjes et al., 2010; Ttofi et al., 2011) (ibid)support this directionality, there is some evidence that the temporal pattern begins with mental health problems for some youth (Kochel et al., 2012; Vaillancourt et al., 2013b)(ibid).

To date, most longitudinal studies have been conducted over a short period of time (less than two years) and have focused on a specific developmental stage, such as childhood or adolescence (McDougall and Vaillancourt, 2015). Nonetheless, some new research on the long-term adult consequences of childhood bullying have been published. These studies show that bullying has an effect on future mental health functioning, as shown in the following paragraphs.

The majority of long-term research on childhood bullying have focused on ties to adult internalizing disorders, with robust long-term impacts demonstrated. Bowes et al. (2015), for example, assessed depression in a large sample of participants who reported being bullied at age 13 and discovered greater rates of depression at age 18 compared to peers who had not been bullied. Specifically, they reported that 14.8 percent of participants who reported being frequently bullied in childhood at age 13 were clinically depressed at age 18, and that the population attributable fraction was 29.2 percent, suggesting that close to a third of the variance in depression could be explained by being bullied in childhood (Bowes et al., 2015).

These findings show that being bullied and suffering internalizing disorders like as depression are mutually reinforcing, with one raising the chance of the other in a damaging loop that adds to the high stability of being both bullied and experiencing other internalizing difficulties. These studies also imply that the long-term ramifications of bullying, which can last into adulthood, can be more severe than being maltreated by a caregiver as a child.

1.9.7 Externalizing Problems

Bullying as a child has been linked to alcohol and drug abuse and dependency (Radliff et al., 2012). A longitudinal research of adolescents indicated that those who reported being bullied were more likely to use alcohol, cigarettes, and inhalants 12 months later than those who did not report being bullied (Tharp-Taylor et al., 2009). More longitudinal research that follows children from childhood to adulthood is required to properly understand the link between bullying and substance misuse (see McDougall and Vaillancourt, 2015).

Several studies have found associations between bullying and violence or criminality, particularly among men (Gibb et al,2011). After controlling for externalizing symptoms at baseline, Reijntjes et al (2011) found that peer victimization—which included being the target of teasing, deliberate exclusion, and being the target of physical threats and malicious gossip—was associated over time with exhibiting externalizing problems such as aggression, truancy, and delinquency . This study also discovered that externalizing difficulties predicted changes in peer victimization over time , and concluded that peer victimization and externalizing problems have a bidirectional relationship.

Bully victims have both externalizing and internalizing problems; they have significantly negative attitudes and beliefs about others and about themselves, they have low social competence, and they are not only rejected and isolated by peers but are also negatively influenced by the peers with whom they interact. The results of Cook et al (2010) meta-analysis, cited in Stuart (2014), indicate that Bullying others (e.g., bullies and bully-victims) is associated with aggressive disruptive externalizing behaviour coupled with negative attitudes and beliefs about others. Furthermore, it is clear from the literature that bullying and victimization are phenomena that are influenced by the contextual attributes of the individual family, school, peer group, community, and society. The majority of longitudinal research published in the literature, however, have studied these associations in the short to medium term, i.e. within 15 years of youth. The study of the long-term impacts of bullying and victimization is a unique gap in the literature.

In addition, bullying can, and frequently does, harm the health and well-being of the young people involved (Rigby, 1999). The current study sought to determine the impact of bullying behaviours in childhood on externalizing and internalizing outcomes in late adulthood. the

consequences of bullying are far-reaching and severe, affecting the mental, emotional, and physical well-being of individuals, while also undermining the fabric of society. By acknowledging the gravity of this issue and taking concrete actions to combat bullying, we can cultivate an environment that fosters understanding, compassion, and respect, ensuring a brighter and more harmonious future for generations to come. Let us stand together to eradicate bullying and create a world where every individual is valued and celebrated for their unique contributions.

1.10 Bullying and academic achievement

It is crucial to shed light on an important and often overlooked aspect of bullying; its relationship with academic achievement. Bullying a pervasive issue that affects individual across various age groups, has a profound impact on academic success and educational journey of those who experience its torment. Understanding this relationship is crucial for fostering an environment that promotes learning, growth, and overall well- being.

As it is cited in Rivara,F, and Menestrel,S.L(2016), bullying has been linked to worse academic achievement since kindergarten (Kochenderfer & Ladd, 1996) and continues into high school (Espinoza et al., 2013; Glew et al., 2008). Espinoza et al. (2013)(ibid) found that on days when adolescents reported being bullied more than usual, they also reported more academic challenges, such as failing a quiz, test, or homework, and feeling less of a good student, in a 2-week daily diary study with ninth and tenth grade Latino students. Thus, even isolated incidents of bullying can impair a student's capacity to concentrate on any given day. In a cross-sectional study of more than 5,000 students in grades 7, 9, and 11, Glew et al. (2008)(ibid) found that for every 1-point increase in grade point average (GPA), the odds of being a child who was bullied (versus a bystander) decreased by 10 percent. However, due to the cross-sectional nature of this study, this association does not establish whether lower academic achievement among children who were bullied was a consequence of having been bullied. So one of the primary consequences of bullying is its detrimental effects on the academic performance of victims. The persistent fear, anxiety, and distress experienced those who are bullied can significantly hinder their ability to concentrate, engage in classroom activities, and effectively participate in learning environments.

In addition, Juvonen et al. (2011) investigated the relationship between victimization and academic achievement over the course of three middle school years. Academic adjustment was assessed using both year-end grades and teacher engagement evaluations. These researchers discovered that higher self-reported victimization was associated with decreased scholastic achievement from sixth to eighth grade. GPA fell by 0.3 point for every unit rise of victimization (on a scale of 1-4).

Similar findings were obtained in other short-term longitudinal investigations. For example, Nansel et al (2003) as cited in Rivara (2016) discovered that being bullied in a given year (grade 6 or 7) predicted lower academic achievement the next year, even after controlling for prior school adjustment and whether or not they had previously been targets of bullying. Similarly, Schwartz et al (2005) (ibid) discovered a negative relationship between victimization and achievement 1 year later in third and fourth grade students. Furthermore, Baly et al (2014) (ibid) discovered that being bullied for three years, from sixth to eighth grade, had a negative impact on GPA and standardized test scores.

The findings above approve Rigby's (2012) point of view in which he asserts that Bullying has a significant correlation with academic achievement, as indicated by the student's loss of concentration during lectures. Bullying makes schools and families unsafe, and it has an impact on a school-aged child's emotional, social, and physical well-being. Bullying is most widespread and practiced within the home and at school.

As it cited in Mbah (2020), the family is typically the first place in which learning occurs, and any type of bullying that occurs at home affects the child through anger, which is a threat to academic success in any learning institution. Other forms of bullying that a child can learn at home and apply at school include poor family cohesion, authoritarian parents, physical abuse, and confrontational actions. Abuse victims are typically disruptive, confrontational, and violent, endangering everyone in the school environment and making studying exceedingly tough. In addition students' exposure to violence in schools, localities, and families has a negative impact on their academic performance. Youths are subjected to violent exposure, experiencing violent occurrences in school or in the neighborhood, and the consequences for academic achievement. Bullying among teens can be explained by two theories: concentration effects and social

disorganization theory. The concentration of inner-city populations resulted in concentration effects.

Moreover, bullying has as an impact on students' academic success because it makes them feel uncomfortable and causes them to avoid school. Bullied youngsters are weak, shy, and anxious, and they avoid school as a result of their victimization, and their victimization experiences contribute to poor academic achievement (Rose,2011) as cited in Mbah(2020).

Bullying is connected with feelings of unsafety in schools, loneliness, a lack of belonging, and missing school to avoid victimization. Because of the effects on kids, bullying and victimization are related with poor academic attainment in schools.(Kokkinos,2012)(ibid). Students do not feel safe and lose interest in attending school as a result of peer harassment. Victimization is related with low academic achievement in both males and females, as either may avoid school due to bully threats or will be extremely depressed to learn in an environment where they feel unsafe.

Bullying and victimization may be associated to psychological maladjustment, school participation, and peer acceptance, as well as other characteristics that may mediate these acts of bullying and victimization (Wang,2011)(ibid).

According to Nakamoto (2010) (ibid), bullying victims are frequently subjected to issues such as emotional, behavioural, and psychiatric disorders, as well as poor or reduced academic performance; Bullying victims experience despair, insomnia, feelings of loneliness, hopelessness, low self-esteem, suicide ideation, and suicidal attempt. It is important to remember that the negative consequences of bullying do not usually end with the occurrence itself, but can last into adulthood and have a severe impact on the individual's life. Because bullying is a life-changing experience, physical violence can generate violent conduct, which can be passed on to classmates and teachers in the classroom and the learning environment at large. All of the repercussions of bullying frequently result in low academic achievement in schools.

A study by Juvonen (2011) as cited in Mbah (2020)showed that boys had lower numerical scores of physical victimizations, whereas girls' ratings were affected by all types of bullying. When students engage in aggressive behaviour, issues such as poor academic achievement, delinquent

behaviour, and early school dropout develop. Orpinas (2015)(ibid) found that the act of exclusion from other school activities is a social or delinquent conduct that exists in school and is well-known by students, teachers, and parents. Similarly, José (2017) found that peer victimization is a hotspot for sadness, anxiety, and low self-esteem. Peer victimization has a negative impact on academic performance because it causes youngsters to avoid school and makes them fear school socialization, This has a negative impact on school involvement and academic success.

In conclusion, bullying can create an atmosphere of fear and unease among students, inhibiting their ability to focus on their studies. The prevalence of bullying can lead to a toxic school culture, where students are more concerned about their safety and well-being than their academic pursuit. Consequently, this negative environment undermines the educational experience and hampers the achievement of all students involved.

11. Conclusion

School bullying is a pervasive and a serious issue that poses significant challenges to the well-being and development of students. This problem stems from a variety of causes and manifests itself in different types, leading to severe consequences for both the victims and the perpetrators involved. School bullying can take several forms including physical, verbal, relational, cyberbullying, and spreading rumours. In addition, the causes of bullying are multifaceted and can be attributed to various factors; these factors can be environmental, social, or personal, that can indirectly contribute to the prevalence of bullying in schools and lead to serious consequences; these consequences can have detrimental effects on the victims, perpetrators, and the overall school environment which can be severely impacted, resulting in decreased academic performance, reduced school attendance, and a decline in overall student well-being.

CHAPTER TWO
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

1.2Introduction

The methodology employed in the study, with a focus on the research approach and design, and discussion on mixed explanatory designs, is provided in this chapter. This study uses qualitative data gathered through an in-depth interview with students to support quantitative data from a questionnaire that was directed to students as well. The chapter also presents sampling procedures, data collection methods, and data analysis of the study.

The context of this study extends to the nature of school bullying, the perception of students about school bullying, their experience with bullying, and how it impacts their academic performance.

2.2 Research method

A mixed research approach was used in the study. A mixed methods research approach is one that combines or associates both qualitative and quantitative modes of inquiry. It entails philosophical assumptions, the use of qualitative and quantitative methodologies, and the combination of both in a study. Thus, it entails more than just gathering and analysing both types of data; it also entails using both methodologies concurrently so that the overall strength of a study is larger than either qualitative or quantitative research(Creswell, Clark,2007) as cited in Creswell (p.23). Furthermore, a mixed research method lays emphasis on the in-depth probing of people's understanding, opinions, assumptions, beliefs, actions and customs by using qualitative (in-depth interviews), and quantitative (questionnaire) data.

According to Hesse-Bibber(2010), mixed-method research attempts to get in between two approaches (quantitative and qualitative) seeking to respect each by using both in research study. As cited in Pardede (2018, p.231),Creswell and Clark (2007) describe mixed method as "a procedure for collecting, analyzing, and mixing both quantitative and qualitative methods in a single study or a series of studies to understand a research problem" (p.5) stipulates that a mixed research is a theoretical and practical approach that employs several approaches, perspectives, people's attitudes, and ideas to address the problem under investigation.

Mixed-method research can provide a more complete picture than a standalone quantitative or qualitative study as it integrates benefits of both methods and looks at various viewpoints of individuals that include questionnaires, interview, observations(data collection), experiments,

ethnography (method of research), and related philosophical issues of ontology. As such, a mixed research method was appropriate for the study to examine and explore middle school students' opinions of school bullying and its impact on academic achievement.

Moreover, mixed research method was appropriate for data collecting by utilising several sources such as questionnaires and interviews to get detailed information to answer research questions.

2.2 Research design

An explanatory research design was used in the study. It is a two-phase research design whereby quantitative data are collected in the first phase, and qualitative data are obtained during the second phase. In addition, an explanatory design is utilised to provide detailed information using qualitative data that describe the finding after the quantitative results.(Creswell and Clark,2001); as such, an explanatory design was adopted in the study, which aided in correlating the quantitative findings with the qualitative results.

Moreover, an explanatory design was effective and useful in the study since it helped in providing detailed answers to the research questions.

2.3 Context and sampling procedures

The sampling procedures were done in this study by using a random sampling technique. the grade of the participants was not taken into consideration, the sampling strategy is used when it is assumed that all persons have the ability to participate as a study sample. Participants in this technique have an equal probability of participating in the study which decreases selection bias throughout the selection process(Taherdoost,2016). The study took place from May to Juin 2023

As such middle school students, were chosen at random to participate in both the questionnaire and the interview; Students were given the choice of accepting or declining participation.

2.4 Role of the researcher

In the study, the researcher was used as a data collection instrument; Rather of employing machinery, the researcher is used as an instrument to acquire the necessary data. An example is during questionnaire, where the research takes part in collecting data from the students using surveys or questionnaires.

The researcher's function in this study was to collect data from students, Through questionnaires and interviews, the researcher gathered data to try to understand students' perceptions and experiences. As a result, the researcher was concerned about being objective and overcoming any bias in information provided by students. The researcher concentrated on data collection through questionnaires and interviews, attempting to express solely what the data revealed and what participants had to say. The researcher is responsible for collecting primary or secondary data for the research project. They develop data collection tools, such as surveys, interviews, or observation protocols. The researcher ensures the accuracy, reliability, and validity of the data by following established protocols and ethical guidelines.

Moreover, the researcher plays a central role in designing the research study. They select an appropriate research design, methodology, and sampling techniques based on the research objectives. The researcher ensures that the chosen methods align with the research questions and facilitate the collection of relevant data. He/she also analyzes the collected data using appropriate analytical techniques. This involves organizing, cleaning, and transforming the data into a suitable format for analysis. The researcher interprets the results, identifies patterns, and draws meaningful conclusions based on the data analysis.

2.5 Data collection methods

The choice of data collection methods depends on the nature of the research questions, the type of data required, and the resources available. Thus, the mixed-method approach was used in the study, both quantitative and qualitative data collection approaches were utilised In collecting the data where it was gathered through a questionnaire and interviews.

2.5.1 Questionnaire

Questionnaires enable researchers to collect data efficiently and objectively. By using standardized questions, researchers can ensure consistency in data collection across participants, which facilitates the analysis and interpretation of results.

During data collection, 64 participants completed a questionnaire. The questionnaire was carried out from middle schools students; the participants were asked to answer the questions in the questionnaire and were told not to write their names or any identifiable information on the questionnaire forms; this was done to protect their identity, allowing them to respond to questions and answering freely without any inducement. Questionnaires can be designed to maintain the anonymity and privacy of participants, encouraging them to provide honest and unbiased responses. This is especially important when addressing sensitive or personal topics.

The questionnaire contains twelve questions; all of which are concerning bullying, how it impacts students, those questions were provided with several responses that guided the participants to choose or tick one that suited them. Based on the responses provided, each responder had the option of answering or not answering the questions . The purpose of the questionnaire is to gather data about the prevalence of bullying in Algerian schools and how it affects and obstructs the student's academic progress.

2.5.2 Interview

The interviews were carried out with five students. The interviews were semi-structured with open ended questions to enable freedom of participants to discuss further on what they know and expound on the questions to provide adequate information to describe the problem under investigation, as suggested by Creswell(2012).

Interviews were used in this study to allow participants to provide detailed, qualitative responses, offering deeper insights into their thoughts and experiences. According to Merriam (2009,pp.88), interviews are required to investigate feelings, behaviors, or how people interpret the environment around them.

Moreover, semi-structured interviews are required to obtain information on a respondent's psychological and social world (Smith, and Osborn,2003,pp.59). Interviews also allow respondents to express themselves in their own words.(Brenner,2006).

Thus, using semi-structured interviews as data collection tools allowed the researcher to be more objective while allowing participants to express themselves in the way that they desired.

During interviews, extremely important themes may arise from specific structured questions posed by the researcher to respondents (Legards et all,2003,pp.140).As such, interviews with five students provided a deep detailed insight into what they know about school bullying and what they encounter on a daily basis due to their observations.

The interviews supplied the researcher with a wealth of information about school bullying and academic performance acquired from students. The examples detailed whether the students were bullied, whether it affected their academic performance, and how they dealt with the situation; each interview lasted approximately 30-40 minutes. After the interviews that occurred on different dates and times, the responses were written down and then saved in word documents; with asking the participants if the transcriptions depicted what they intended to say or they needed any changes or updates.

After contacting five interested students and determining the best time and place for them to participate, the interviews had to commence by establishing a friendly relationship with the students in order to gain their trust and make them feel at ease, as well as conveying the major premise and objectives of the study. Participants were informed that their real names will be hidden behind pseudonyms.

2.6 Data collection procedures

Data collection is the process of gathering data for research, analysis, or decision-making purposes. The specific procedure for data collection can vary depending on the nature of the study, the type of data required, and the resources available. In the study ,the same questionnaire questions were used for all students, while some interviews question were not chronological and changed with each student based on how the interview unfolded. Additionally, throughout the questionnaires and interviews , students were informed that if they felt uncomfortable about continuing to answer the questions , they were free to leave. Participants were asked about their experiences with bullying and how it affected their daily school activities and academic performance.

2.7 Data analysis procedures

The most important step in the research methodology is data analysis. It plays a critical role in research across various disciplines. It helps researchers make sense of the data they have collected, derive meaningful conclusions, and support or refute hypotheses .Since both quantitative and qualitative data were obtained, descriptive and thematic analyses were carried out. For quantitative data, descriptive analysis was used, and this analysis method is mostly utilised to determine differences in group relationships. The method quantitatively analyses data to aid in comparing how different variables affect one another (Kaliyadan and Kulkarni,2019); it focuses on summarizing and describing the main characteristics, patterns, and trends in a dataset. It plays a crucial role in research by providing a comprehensive overview of the collected data and forming the basis for further analysis and interpretation.

As a such, descriptive analysis was utilized to investigate how bullying affects academic performance of middle school students. The qualitative data was also analysed using theme analysis, also known as thematic analysis. It is used to identify and analyze patterns, themes, and meanings within textual or qualitative data. It involves systematically organizing and interpreting data to identify Before seeking underlying themes or patterns that emerge from the data. Theme analysis is commonly used in fields such as social sciences, psychology, anthropology, and literature studies. for interpretations, student interview transcripts were compared. Each interview was examined for insights and meanings that may be utilised to identify common phrases for theme development.

2.8 Trustworthiness

Strategies to promote trustworthiness and check data accuracy have been introduced in the study. Creswell (2012) outlines three procedures to ensure the reliability of qualitative research findings: triangulation, member checking, and external auditing.

Creswell(2012) defines triangulation as the process of gathering evidence from various individuals or sources of data, or using several methods of data collection. Triangulation, in which several methods of data gathering were used in this study, aided in ensuring the trustworthiness of the collected data the credibility of the researcher conducting the study is essential. The researcher should have relevant expertise, knowledge, and qualifications in the

field of study. Their credibility can be enhanced by having a track record of conducting rigorous and ethical research, being transparent about their biases and potential conflicts of interest, and maintaining a high standard of professionalism. Both a questionnaire and student interviews were used to collect data. As participants were shown transcribed word documents, member checking was utilised to guarantee the data was accurate. They were asked to check the transcription for accuracy, and all participants were satisfied with the results.

The final step used was external auditing, which involves requesting someone outside the research to undertake a thorough evaluation and report back; it involves independent evaluation of the research study by individuals or organizations that are not directly involved in the research project. This independence ensures an unbiased and objective assessment of the research process and findings. The supervisor played the role of an external auditor. Moreover, external research auditing is a key technique for ensuring accountability, openness, and adherence to specified norms and rules. It increases public trust in the research process by assisting in the preservation of the integrity of research studies, increasing the reliability of research findings, and enhancing the reliability of research findings.

CHAPTER THREE

DATA ANALYSIS, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION

3.1 Introduction

The chapter presents the findings that were established from the analysis of primary data obtained from 64 Algerian student sampled from public schools. The study sought to determine the impact of bullying on student's academic performance in public schools of Algeria. The purpose of the study was to shed light on the notion of bullying in schools as it relates to student academic performance and to determine the extent to which bullying affects students' academic performance. The descriptive features of the study variables under consideration were determined using descriptive analysis. Furthermore, thematic analyses were carried out to ascertain students' perceptions.

The first section of the chapter provides the participants' response rate. The quantitative descriptive results established are presented in the second portion of the chapter. The final section discusses the qualitative findings derived from the thematic analysis of student interviews. Finally, a chapter summary is provided.

3.2 Results and discussion

This section of chapter three provides the results obtained from data analysis of the research tools as well as a discussion.

3.2.1 Student's response rate

64 students volunteered to take part in the survey investigation. The participants completed a questionnaire that the researcher distributed to the sampled students. The questionnaires that were returned were reviewed for completeness and mistakes. The majority of participants in the study completed and resubmitted the questionnaires to the researcher. The response rate was sufficient for the researcher to work with the data collected and produce relevant results.

Figure 3.1: Student's gender.

1.Gender
64 responses

59.4%

40.6%

● Male
● Female
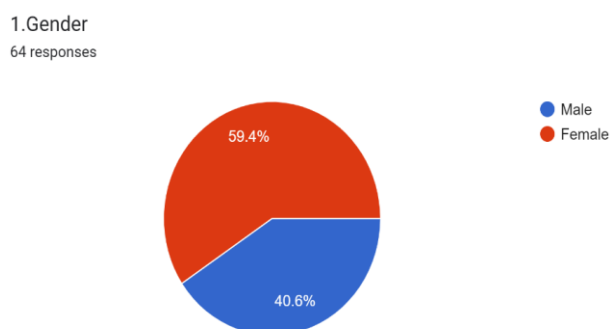
3.2.2 Bullying in schools

The student participants were asked if they had ever been bullied at school. 60.9 percent of the students who responded to the question indicated that they had experienced bullying in school, while 39.1 percent said they had not experienced any sort of bullying in school. According to the findings, bullying is a widespread problem in Algerian schools. The descriptive results obtained are shown in the table below.

Table: 3.1 Student's bullying experience (N=64).

Variables	Frequency	Percentage%
Have you ever experienced bullying in your school?		
Yes	**39**	**60.9**
No	**25**	**39.1**
Total	64	100.0

Students were also asked to identify the type of bullying they had endured or witnessed. The majority of students (54.9%) said they were bullied verbally, while 19.6% indicated that they witnessed rumours spread, and 17.6% said they were bullied physically, while only 7.8% said they were bullied relationally. According to the findings, the most common forms of bullying experienced by the majority of Algerian pupils in public schools are verbal bullying and rumors spreading**.** The descriptive results established are presented intable 3 below

Table: 3.2 Types of bullying that students have endured (N=51)

Variables	Frequency	Percentage %
What kind of bullying have you endured?		
Physical bullying	9	17.6
Verbal bullying	28	54.9
Relational bullying	4	7.8
Rumours spreading	10	19.6
Total	51	100.0

3.2.3 Frequency of bullying

Participants were asked how frequently bullying occurs in their school. According to the descriptive analysis results, 34.4% of students claimed bullying occurred sometimes, while 28.1% indicated it occurs all the time(always). Unlike 6.3% of students who claimed it never happened, 21.9% said it happened often, and 9.4% said it happened rarely. The result show that bullying is a common issue in Algerian schools. The descriptive results established are presented in the chart below.

Figure 3.2: Frequency of bullying in school

4.How often does bullying happen in your school?
64 responses

- always
- often
- sometimes
- rarely
- never
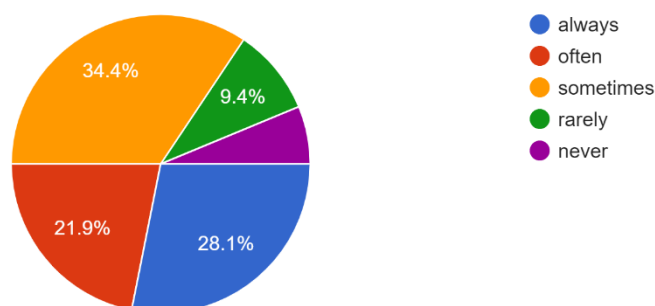
3.2.4 Effect of bullying on student's academic performance

Students were asked if bullying had an impact on their academic achievement .According to the findings bullying had no effect on 60.3% of the pupil's academic performance, while bullying had an effect on 39.7% of the students' academic performance as it is shown on the chart below

Figure 3.3: Effect of bullying on student's academic performance

5. Did bullying affect your academic performance?
63 responses
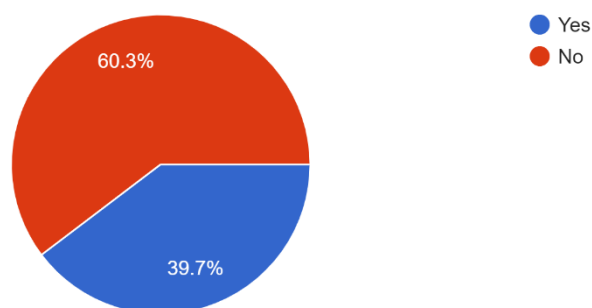
To explore more the impact of bullying on student's learning achievement. The study investigated how did bullying affect their academic performance. 13.3% of the participants said bullying had a negative impact and somewhat decreased their grades. Unlike 44.4% of students who claimed it had no effect on their results, while 13.3% of students indicated that bullying improved their grades, and 28.9% said it greatly diminished their motivation. The results show that bullying in Algerian public schools does not affect the majority of students who are victims of the vice, but it does affect some of them by enhancing or decreasing their grades and motivation. The descriptive results established are presented in the table below

Table: 3.3 The effect of bullying on student's academic performance (N=45)

Variables	Frequency	Percentage%
How did bullying affect your academic performance?		
It somewhat decreased my grades	6	13.3
It did not affect my grades	20	44.4
It improved my grades	6	13.3

It significantly decreased my motivation	13	28.9
Total	45	100.0

students were also asked to indicate whether t bullying affects their motivation to learn. 61.3% of the participants indicated that bullying did not affect their motivation to learn, while 38.7% indicated that bullying affect their motivation to learn as it is shown on the chart below.

Figure 3.4: The effect of bullying on student's motivation to learn

7. Did bullying affected your motivation to learn?
62 responses

- Yes
- No

61.3%
38.7%
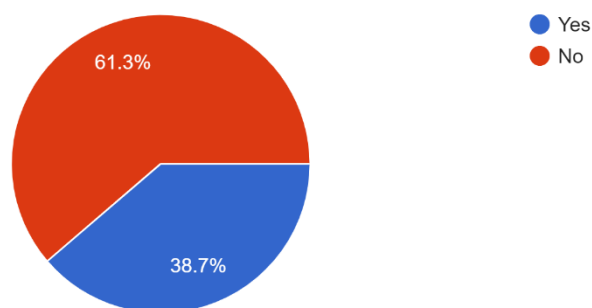
Another question was asked for participants who said that bullying affected their motivation to learn, which is "how did bullying affect your motivation to learn?".

According to responses, 31% of the students indicated that bullying somewhat decreased their motivation, while 33.3% indicated that it did not affect their motivation. Moreover, 19% of the participants said that bullying improved their motivation, while 16.7% indicated that it significantly decreased their grades. The findings suggest that most of the students consider bullying as a reason to improve their motivation, while some of the students bullying did not affect their motivation at all, on the other hand it decreased some of the students grades or their motivation. The descriptive results established are presented in the table below.

Table:3.4 The effect of bullying on student's motivation(N=42).

Variables	Frequency	Percentage %
How did bullying affect your motivation to learn?		
It somewhat decreased my motivation	**13**	**31.0**
It did not affect my motivation	**14**	**33.3**
It improved my motivation	8	19.0
It significantly decreased my grades	**7**	**16.7**
Total	**42**	**100.0**

To explore more about the impact of bullying on student's academic performance. The study investigated how many days have students missed of school because they felt unsafe to show up due to bullying. More than half of the participants representing 79% has never missed school. Unlike 11.3% of students who said that they missed of school once or twice a week, while 4.8% of the participants indicated that they missed of school once or twice a month, similarly 4.8% indicated that they missed of school once or twice in three months. The results show that most of the students did not miss of school because of bullying as it is shown on the chart below

Table: 3.5 Number of days students have missed of school because of bullying(N=62).

Variables	Frequency	Percentage %
how many days have you missed of school because felt unsafe to show up due to bullying ?		
Never	**49**	**79.0**
Once or twice a week	**7**	**11.3**
Once or twice a month	**3**	**4.8**
Once or twice in three months	**3**	**4.8**
Total	**62**	**100.0**

Students were lastly asked to indicate what would they do if they witness someone else being bullied at school. Based on the findings obtained; most of the participants would support the person being threatened representing 55.6 % of the study respondents. However 23 % of the students indicated that would ignore it, while 14.3% said that they would call the teacher, On the other hand 6.3% of the participants indicated that they would support the bully. The results show that most of the students are aware of the issue of bullying and they will take a step and support the victim of bullying. the descriptive results are established in the chart below.

Figure 3.5:Response rate arranged by respondents reaction when witnessing someone else being bullied at school

12. What would you do if you witness someone else being bullied at school ?
63 responses
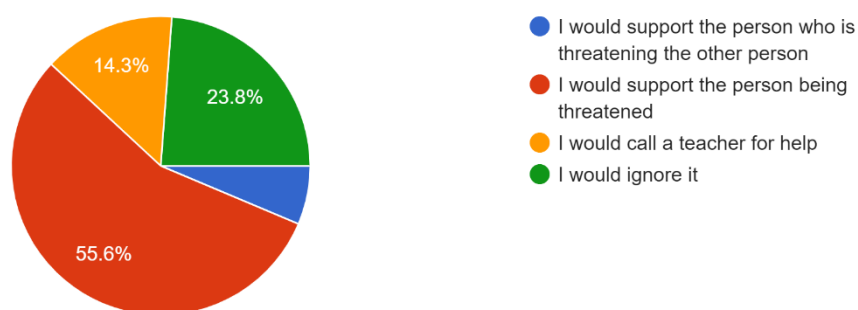
3.2.5 Qualitative analysis on student's perspective on bullying

Data gathered from student interviews was utilized to generate and explore deeper into themes that reflect the research question.

The study's findings are given in the form of themes in this section. The topics are formed using data gathered from student interviews. The themes obtained are: Frequency and types of bullying, location of bullying, causes of bullying, impact of bullying on the students and his academic performance, strategies to reduce bullying.

Codes were used to generate the theme of frequency and types of bullying were : verbal bullying, physical bullying, cyberbullying, and number of times being bullied as indicated in Appendix C.

The coding process for bullying location was completed, and the specific codes that yielded the theme were: Bullying mainly occurs on the school yard, Bullying occurs in class +

after the teacher left, Bullying occurs on way home or school as indicated in Appendix D. Theme three on causes of bullying was identified from the coding process based on the following codes: Showing of physical strength and power, Seeking attention, exposed to violence and aggressive habits as indicated in Appendix E. The theme of impact of bullying which include Decreased academic performance, Psychological issue, School dropout in Appendix F. Coding process was done and codes that yielded the theme of strategies to reduce bullying were: Disciplinary actions, Rules as indicated in Appendix G.

3.2.6 Types and frequency of bullying

Thematic analysis was performed on the data gathered through interviews. The data was analyzed, and a theme of the forms and frequency of bullying was formed. During the analysis, manual coding was used, which aided in the generation of the theme. Five students shared their perception on the types and frequency of bullying they have endured and witnessed. the patterns that form the theme of types and frequency of bullying are verbal bullying, physical bullying, cyberbullying, and number of times being bullied as presented in Appendix C.

Appendix C lists the codes used to generate the theme of types and frequency of bullying base d on student perception. All five students shared their perspectives on the types and frequency of bullying. The majority of the responses supplied by pupils. Students in middle school are frequently subjected to or witness verbal, physical, and cyberbullying.

Participants mentioned that they witnessed and endured verbal bullying which is one of the most common types of bullying including name calling, teasing, and taunting…etc. They also witnessed verbal bullying such as hitting, pushing, or taking someone's school supplies…etc.

Furthermore, examples of cyberbullying that students mostly endure is spreading rumours, or sending insulting and threatening messages via Facebook or Instagram…etc. Students indicate that the bullying activities occur almost on a daily basis, for instance students 1 said that " I

witness and even endure both of verbal(name calling, teasing) and physical(kicking, taking someone's school tools) bullying too many times, it occurs almost on daily basis."

Similarly student 2 said that that " The most common type of bullying in my school is verbal and physical bullying … It occurs almost every day, especially when my teachers left the class." Students 3 said that "" Physical bullying is also common issue in my school (hitting, punching, kicking, pushing, taking someone's thing… In a year, I witness a lot of cases ;I was physically bullied by a senior student in my class. He took my copy book with the use of force and took my textbook…I get bullied physically at least once a month."

Moreover, student 4 shared that " I was verbally and physically bullied by a senior students in my class, he took my copy book with the use of force. I was bullied at least twice a month.", Also student 5 mentioned that ""verbal bullying such as (name calling, teasing), occurs almost every day, without forgetting cyberbullying that I endure last year where they used to send me threatening messages and spread rumours on me via Facebook too many times."

From the student's perceptions, verbal and physical bullying practices are frequent in schools, occur at various times, and are primarily practiced by students.

3.2.7 Location of bullying

manual coding was done on student's responses and the theme of location of bullying was identified. codes that formed the theme are : Bullying mainly occurs on the school yard, .Bullying occurs in class after the teacher left, Bullying occurs on way home or to school as presented in Appendix D. The participants shared the locations where bullying occurs. According to the responses, bullying occurs either during school or when pupils are on their way home or school. For instance students 1 mentioned that "Bullying is very common in the classroom, where students make fun of each other special when someone try to read out loud or respond to a question, some of my classmates get bullied while they were reading a text and others were imitating and laughing at them ." Also, student and 2 maintained similar responses and shared that " It often happens in class especially when the teacher is absent." Students shared that they get bullied in classroom when teacher left the class and other get bullied in the school yard. For instance student 3 said that "Bullying is commonly occurs in the school yard, where we see perpetrators kick or hit their victims, I personally get bullied in the school yard when I

was playing and someone kick me and I fall down." Similarly student 4 mentioned that " It mostly occurs in the school yard , where seniors use force to take someone's else bag or lunch box or anything that the victim have. student 5 further explained that bullying also may occurs on their way home or school "I get bullied too many times, sometimes on my way to school and sometimes on my way home.

3.2.8 Causes of bullying

students were asked to share their perceptions on causes of bullying. codes that formed the theme are : Showing of physical strength and power, Seeking attention, exposed to violence and aggressive habits as presented in appendix E. students shared their perspectives on the causes of bullying. According to the comments discovered, one of the causes of bullying is for kids to demonstrate their power and physical strength. For example, participants shared their perspectives on the causes of bullying. According to their responses , one of the causes of bullying is for students to demonstrate their power and physical strength. As an instance, student 1 said that "We often get bullied by someone older or bigger than us, just because they want to show us that they are stronger and we are weaker." Same for student 2 who mentioned that "Most of the bullies in my school are physically bigger and stronger , and they use bullying as a way to show off power and physical strength." Another cause that leads to bullying is attention; means that bullies are attention seekers, for instance student 3 mentioned that "I see that all of the bullies have a weak personality and are attention seekers, and they bully others just because they want attention and they want to be seen." Moreover student 4 mentioned another cause of bullying " Children who are abused and exposed to violence are more likely to become bullies as a way to express their repressed feelings, that is what my bully friend told me once. Also, student 5 maintained similar responses and said " Children who are exposed to violence or grow up in an aggressive environment are the one who always bully."

3.2.9 Impact of bullying

Participants were asked to share their perception on impact of bullying on their academic performance. Codes that formed the theme are : Decreased academic performance, Psychological issues, School dropout as presented in Appendix F. All five students shared their thoughts and views and presented valuable information that were used in developing

appropriate theme. Manual coding process was done, and the theme was generated from participant's responses.

Participants presented their perception on bullying and its impact. From the responses found, students indicated that bullying reduces their academic performance , for instance student 1 shared that "Bullying makes the classroom an uncomfortable environment where I can't focus nor assimilate what I have been taught , and this make me avoid to engage or perform." Similarly, student 2 said that "Because of bullying I went from an excellent student who always engage in class and perform and achieve good grades to a student who is even afraid to talk and get average grades." Participant also share that bullying impact their mental health and leads them to have low self-esteem and self-confidence and that's what leads them to have psychological issues, as an instance student 3 mentioned that ""Bullying makes me lose my self-esteem and confidence and I become unsecure, thus it changes my study habits and affect my academic performance." Same for student 4 who said that "Bullying destroy mental health and makes me hate school and study, thus it makes me drop out and skip school sometimes."

Furthermore student 5 mentioned that "I changed my whole school to run from bullying, and this caused me to repeat one class." It is evident that bullying is a serious issue that leads to really serious consequences .

3.2.10 Strategies to reduce bullying

the theme of strategies your school use to reduce bullying was generated from the responses presented by students. these responses were analyzed and codes were accorded to similar phrases, which led to generation of the theme strategies to reduce bullying. codes that were used to generate the main theme are : Disciplinary actions, and rules as presented in Appendix G. Students were asked to discuss the measures put in place by school officials to help reduce the number of bullies and improve academic performance. participants indicate that school did put some rules or disciplinary measures to decrease bullying phenomena but those rules ae not really harsh or severe enough to diminish this issue, for instance student 1 said that "" School neglect the real danger of this issue, and there is no harsh disciplinary actions to punish bullies; they just talk with the bully not to do that again or they talk with his parents sometimes." Similarly student 2 mentioned that "Sometimes when it comes to physical bullying the school administration just handed them a few hours of punishment or call them for disciplinary

council." They also mentioned that both of school authorities and teachers neglect the real danger of verbal bullying they only focus on physical bullying since it is visible, as an instance student 3 said that "There are some rules and disciplinary actions, but only for physical bullying, when it is visible, but when it comes to verbal they do not even consider it as a serious issue." Also student 4 maintained similar responses and shared that "I once get verbally bullied in front of the teacher, she did not even try to know more about the issue , she just yelled at him and asked him not do that again, no rules and no punishment."

3.3 Implications and recommendations

3.1 Implications

The study sought to ascertain the impact of bullying on students' academic performance in Algerian schools. The findings of this study have the first practical implication in that they provide the necessary empirical information on bullying behaviors in schools and their significant impact on student performance. As a result, the information enables school administration to be aware of the real danger of this dilemma, and to establish appropriate plans and actions to aid in the prevention of bullying in schools. Furthermore, the findings of the current study would enable for the revision of school rules and policies to assist students in adhering to them and refraining from bullying actions and know to deal with this issue. Furthermore, because the study is exploratory, it gives detailed information that allows students to understand the effects of bullying on school and academic achievement. Furthermore , the study leads to the identification of various types of bullying that occur in schools. Thus school administration would pay attention and take into consideration each of those types.

3.2 Recommendations

To address school bullying and its impact effectively is crucial to adopt a multi-faceted approach that involves stakeholders. The study's findings lay the groundwork for schools to urge that all students and teachers follow a set of rules and regulations in order to decrease bullying. According to the findings of the study, teachers should serve as role models for their students in terms of following the rules in order to avoid occurrences of bullying. This advice is based on the fact that bullying affects the vast majority of children. Assuring adherence to school rules and policies regarding bullying may thus aid in the prevention of bullying occurrences. Schools

should implement comprehensive anti-bullying policies, foster a positive and inclusive school climate provides education and training on bullying prevention for both students and staff, and establish clear reporting mechanism. Additionally, involving parents, community members, and mental health professionals can contribute to a more comprehensive and supportive approach to address the underlying causes and consequences of school bullying; by taking collective action to address the causes, types and consequences of school bullying, one can work towards creating safe and nurturing environments where all students can thrive, free from the damaging effects of bullying. Furthermore, Because the study was limited to just middle school of Algeria, it provides a foundation for future research in other schools to improve the study's quality and reliability. Furthermore, because only students share their perspectives on incidents of bullying in their school, more study is required to investigate the perspectives of teachers and policymakers on acceptable solutions that may be implemented in schools to reduce cases of bullying.

3.4 Conclusion

Chapter three was devoted to data analysis, discussion of the results, as well as some pedagogical implications and recommendations. The data analysis and coding process reveal useful themes that highlight bullying in Algerian middle schools. Bullying, according to students, is frequent in schools and is practiced by students towards others. They believed that bullying primarily occurred in school settings such as classrooms, especially after the teacher has left, school yards, and on their way home or to school. Bullying in school has been demonstrated to reduce student academic performance, cause psychological concerns, and even force some students to drop out or change schools. Pupils consider school policies as ineffective because they are not severe enough, and bullying incidences continue to rise. Students believed that bullies who were penalized or suspended in school continued to bully others.

General conclusion

In conclusion, the present study focuses on bullying in schools and its impacts . The study aims to investigate how widespread is bullying in middle school, and its impact on student's academic achievement. Data was obtained using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, including both of questionnaire and follow-up interviews with students. The study's findings show that bullying can have serious consequences for students' mental health and well-being, it is hard for victims of bullying to be psychologically healthy, bullying-free, and having a normal school life free of bullying issues. Due to the large number of students in schools, school employees are less likely to see and report bullying events, causing pupils to be more anxious, scared, intimidated, and living in continual terror for their lives and for them school that should be their comfort zone becomes unsafe environment for them. Some of the effects are more obvious, more observable, and more serious, such as experiencing anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem, which can make it difficult to focus on schoolwork. Thus, they may avoid school or miss classes altogether, which can lead to falling behind academical when a student loses interest in studying and becomes introverted, lacking self-confidence, and perceiving oneself as a failure who exists for nothing. Other effects may cause the victim to lose their reputation, social status, and eventually start to have a negative attitude towards studying and perceiving school negatively, eventually leaving or changing schools in order to rid oneself of it. The results of the study provide recommendations for teachers and the whole school staff and important insight into how bullying negatively impact students and their academic achievement. It is crucial to be aware of the danger of this social issue, and implement and develop appropriate strategies and measures that would help in reducing bullying cases in schools.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Questionnaire for students

This questionnaire is part of my MA dissertation which explores the effects of bullying on middle school pupils' academic achievement. Please, take some time to answer the following questions by ticking the box(es) that best represent your response.

1. Gender

    ☐ Male

    ☐ Female

2.Have you ever experienced bullying at school?

    ☐ Yes

    ☐ No

3. If yes, how often have you experienced bullying ?

    ☐ Often

    ☐ Sometimes

    ☐ Rarely

4.How often does bullying happen in your school?

☐ Always

☐ Often

☐ Sometimes

☐ Rarely

☐ Never

5. Did bullying affect your academic performance?

☐ Yes

☐ No

6. If yes, how did bullying affect your academic performance?

☐ It significantly decreased my motivation

☐ It somewhat decreased my grades

☐ It has not affected my grades

☐ It improved my grades

7. Did bullying affect your motivation to learn?

☐ Yes

☐ No

8. If yes, how did bullying affect your motivation to learn

☐ It significantly decreased my grades

☐ It somewhat decreased my motivation

☐ It did not affect my motivation

☐ It improved my motivation

9. During your entire school years how many days have you missed of school because felt unsafe to show up due to bullying ?

☐ Never

☐ Once or twice a week

☐ Once or twice a month

☐ Once or twice in three months

10. Overall, to what extent has bullying impact your learning achievement ?

☐ Significantly impacted

☐ Somewhat impacted

☐ Not impacted

☐ It improved my learning achievement

11. What kind of bullying have you endured ?

☐ Physical

☐ Verbal

☐ Relational

☐ Rumors spreading

12. What would you do if you witness someone else being bullied at school ?

☐ I would support the person who is threatening the other person

☐ I would support the person being threatened

☐ I would call a teacher for help

☐ I would ignore it

Appendix B: Follow-Up Interviews with Students

1.Have you ever endured or witnessed bullying?

2.Can you tell me a bit about being bullied and how did the bullying happen?

3.Where did it occur and how often did you get bullied?

4.What type of bullying is common in your school?

5.Why do you think that people bully others?

6.Can you tell me about others being bullied and do they get bullied often?

7.Where do they get bullied and how do you think that being bullied affected them?

8.How often do you experience bullying and how does it affect you?

9.Have you ever skipped class, felt unsafe, uncomfortable, or nervous on your way to and from

10.class because of a school bully? If so, can you tell me more about that?

11.Have you ever think about leaving or changing your school because of bullying?

12. Do you feel you have ever performed badly in any subject caused by a bully thus

misrepresenting your true ability in that subject? If so, can you tell me more about that?

13. Have you ever witnessed anyone being bullied in school throughout your student life?

14.If so, Can you tell me more about it?

15. Do you feel there are adequate strategies and regulations to discourage school bullying in

your institutions?

16.What do you think can be done to stop bullying at school?

17.Have you ever reported any case of bullying to your school authorities and what did they do?

18.Who did you report the bullying to, and did you see any result from reporting the bullying?

Appendix C: Coding process for types of bullying and frequency from interviews

Table 1.

Coding process for theme 1

Codes	**Interview evidence**	**Theme**
1.Verbal bullying. **2.Physical bullying.** **3.Cyberbullying.** **4.Number of times being bullied.**	"verbal and physical bullying are very common in our school, I witness and even endure both of types too many times, it occurs almost on daily basis."	Frequency of bullying and its types
	" Physical bullying is also common issue in my school (hitting, punching, kicking, pushing, taking someone's thing… In a year, I witness a lot of cases ;I was physically bullied by a senior student in my class. He took my copy book with the use of force and took my textbook…I get bullied physically at least once a month."	
	"verbal bullying such as (name calling, teasing), occurs almost every day, without forgetting cyberbullying that I endure last year where they used to send me threatening messages and spread rumours on me via Facebook too many times."	
	"The most common type of bullying in my school is	

verbal bullying… It occurs
almost every day, especially
when my teachers left the
class."

Appendix D: Coding process for location of bullying

Table 2.
Coding process for theme two

Codes	Interview evidence	Theme
1.Bullying mainly occurs on the school yard. 2. Bullying occurs in class after the teacher left. 3. Bullying occurs on way home or to school.	"Bullying is commonly occurs in the school yard, where we see perpetrators kick or hit their victims, I personally get bullied in the school yard when I was playing and someone kick me and I fall down." "Bullying is very common in the classroom, where students make fun of each other special when someone try to read out loud or respond to a question, some of my classmates get bullied while they were reading a text and others were imitating and laughing at them ." "It mostly occurs in the classroom when the teacher left." "I get bullied too many times on my way to school or home."	Location of bullying

Appendix E Coding process for causes of bullying
Table3.
Coding process for theme 3

Codes	Interview evidence	Theme
1. Showing off physical strength and power. **2.Seeking attention.** **3.exposed to violence and aggressive habits.**	"We often get bullied by someone older or bigger than us, just because they want to show us that they are stronger and we are weaker." "Most of the bullies in my school are physically bigger and stronger , and they see bullying as a way to show off their strength." "I see that all of the bullies have a weak personality and are attention seekers, and they bully others just because they want attention and they want to be seen." " Children who are exposed to violence or grow up in an aggressive environment are the one who always bully." "Children who are abused and exposed to violence are more likely to become bullies as a way to express their repressed feelings."	Causes of bullying

Appendix F Coding process for impact of bullying

Table4.

Coding process for theme 4

Codes	Interview evidence	Theme
1.Decreased academic performance **2.Psychological issues** **3.School dropout**	"Bullying makes the classroom an uncomfortable environment where I can't focus nor assimilate what I have been taught , and this make me avoid to engage or perform." "Because of bullying I went from an excellent student who always engage in class and perform and achieve good grades to a student who is even afraid to talk and get average grades." "Bullying makes me lose my self-esteem and confidence and I become unsecure, thus it changes my study habits and affect my academic performance." "Bullying destroy mental health and makes me hate school and study, thus it makes me drop out and skip school sometimes." "I changed my whole school to run from bullying, and this caused me to repeat one class."	Effects of bullying

Appendix G Coding process for strategies to reduce bullying

Table 5.

Coding process for theme 5

Codes	Interview evidence	Theme
1.Disciplinary actions **2.Rules**	" School neglect the real danger of this issue, and there is no harsh disciplinary actions to punish bullies; they just talk with the bully not to do that again or they talk with his parents sometimes." " There are some rules and disciplinary actions, but only for physical bullying, when it is visible, but when it comes to verbal they do not even consider it as a serious issue." "I once get verbally bullied in front of the teacher, she did not even try to know more about the issue , she just yelled at him and asked him not do that again, no rules and no punishment." "Sometimes when it comes to physical bullying the school administration just handed them a few hours of punishment or call them for disciplinary council."	Strategies to reduce bullying