

# Prevalence, Perception, Behavior and Attitude of Preparatory Schools Students Regarding Bullying in Port Said City

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**Abstract:** Bullying is now recognized as a widespread and often neglected problem in schools around the world, and one that has serious implications for children who are victimized by bullies and for those who perpetrate the bullying. **Aim:** this study aimed to assess prevalence, behaviors and attitudes of students regarding bullying at preparatory schools in Port Said city. **Research design:** A descriptive cross - sectional research design was used in this study. **Setting:** the study was conducted at five preparatory schools, selected randomly from all five districts of Port Said city; Egypt. **Sample:** All students from the four class's chosen randomly from each selected schools, with total number of 792 students. **Tools:** two tools were used for this study, First tool: Bullying Behavior sheet for the students (it includes four parts, personal data, prevalence, perception & behavior of bullying), second tool: Bullying Attitudes Questionnaire- Modified (BAQ-M). **Results:** the study results revealed that, 53.0% of them were females, 50.5% were in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, 21.0% of the students mentioned they saw bullying in their classroom & grade, moreover, 21.5% of students reported that bullying occur most common from a group of boys, 34.1% of the students said they always seeing bullying at school, where, classroom, playground were the most places of bullying in the school as reported by the students in (41.9% and 34.3% respectively), furthermore, 42.4% of the victims students said they were verbally bullied, while, 52.4% of the perpetrators students mentioned they were bullied others verbally. **Conclusion:** The results of this study concluded that, about one half of the studied students were victims of bullying & more than half of them were bullying others (act as perpetrators or bullies), boys were more exposed to & practice bullying than girls in general and in all types of bullying (verbal, emotional & physical). Furthermore, most of the studied students had mixed attitude of bullying, which mean that some bullying attitude is ok while some bullying attitude is wrong. **Recommendation:** Provide intervention training that defines bullying identifies the types of bullying and provides appropriate intervention strategies for reducing bullying in the schools, offer bullying prevention program that is specifically designed for students in grades from pre-kindergarten to secondary education.

**Keywords:** Attitude, behavior, bullying, perception, preparatory students.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

School is a place for children to gain knowledge and trust. It will lead to wrong perception if school teachers or personnel fail to promote safer environment. Bullying is defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as "any unwanted aggressive behaviors by another youth or group of youths who are not siblings or current dating partners that involves an observed or perceived power imbalance and is repeated multiple times or is highly likely to be repeated. Bullying may inflict harm or distress on the targeted youth including physical, psychological, social, or educational harm".<sup>(1)</sup>

Bullying is at the forefront of challenging behaviors in schools and society today, it is a widespread problem in the schools and communities and has a negative impact on school climate and on students' right to learn in a safe and secure environment without fear. Once thought of as a rite of passage or harmless behavior that helps build character, bullying is now known to have long-term academic, physical, and emotional effects on both the victim and the bystander<sup>(2)</sup>. School bullying happens at school or during school-sponsored activities when students or groups of students intentionally and/or repeatedly use power to hurt others. School bullying is a form of physical, verbal or social aggression.<sup>(3,4)</sup>

In recent years, the three types of bullying have been considered a significant social problem with potentially serious consequences for both the aggressor and victims. The three types of bullying are physical, verbal or social exclusion. Physical bullying includes physical contact such as hitting or punching. Verbal bullying includes attacks that are not physical in nature but rather the use of inappropriate language such as, threatening, and spreading malicious rumors. Social exclusion is the act of not including a person or group of people such as "cyber bullying".<sup>(5)</sup>

Solberg & Olweus proposed "The Bullying Circle", a model used to describe the roles children assume in bullying situations or scenarios. "Victims" are targeted by the bully, "Bullies" carry out the act of bullying and "Bystanders" may or may not assume an active role in bullying. The behavior of individual being bully or victim along with other factors also depends on school<sup>(6)</sup> According to Gendron, Williams, & Guerra, bullying also impact school and communities. They suggested some characteristics of schools which promote bullying. The students studying in such schools feel: a) unsafe; b) overt behavior; c) mistrusts; d) gang formation either formal or informal. They do all these to promote bullying or to protect the group from bullying. Actions are taken against such schools by parents and community to reduce poor educational climate.<sup>(2)</sup>

Finally, it is imperative to recognize that bullying thrives in a climate of silence. Given that children spend a considerable portion of each day in academic settings, there is impetus to develop and implement anti-bully curricula to foster a safe and healthy climate and culture in schools.<sup>(7)</sup>

School nurses can have a pivotal role in caring for students who are bullied because they have a rapport with students that is different compared to that of other employees. Because the school nurse is not a disciplinarian, students are more likely to confide in the nurse. As a result, nurses are often on the front lines of bullying, being the first adult the victim and the bully go to for help-which makes nursing the ideal profession to coordinate care for those involved in bullying episodes, the school nurse can play an important role by assessing, planning, and coordinating care for the victims and perpetrators of bullying. Moreover, school nurses can play a significant role in addressing bullying and its effects on children. School nurses can lead prevention efforts, contribute to school-wide or district-wide anti-bullying programs.<sup>(8,9)</sup>

#### **Significance of the study:**

Egyptian children are no exception to their peers worldwide in facing bullying; it can have negative effects on children's physical and psychological health and can even escalate to the tragedy of suicide.<sup>(11)</sup>

A study carried in Morocco, Tunisia and Libya, showed that one-third of students reported being bullied in the past month, another study conducted in Egypt, indicated that, the rate of bullying in Egypt was 60.3%, which is about twice as high from the previous study.<sup>(12)</sup> Concerning the bullying problem in Egypt, Microsoft conducted a study on online bullying and it was found that 27% of children aged 8-17 in Egypt had been subjected to online bullying compared with a 25 countries that have average of 37%, while 63% were bullied offline<sup>(13)</sup>.

However, bullying has been poorly researched in Egypt. The community should take attention for fighting this phenomenon among student especially adolescent due to the bad effect of bullying on the personality and life and in the future make the person unable to have an effective role in the community. Therefore, the purpose of the present study was to assess prevalence, perceptions, behaviors and attitudes of students regarding bullying in preparatory schools in Port Said city.

#### **Operational definition of bullying:**

One of the first predominant definitions of bullying that continues to be used in the literature and in the legal arena is as follows: "A student is being bullied or victimized when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more students"<sup>(10)</sup>

**AIM OF THE STUDY:**

This study aimed to assess prevalence, perceptions, behaviors and attitudes of preparatory schools students regarding bullying in Port Said city.

**The Objectives of this study are to:**

1. Determine prevalence of bullying among preparatory schools students in Port Said city.
2. Identify perceptions of preparatory schools students regarding bullying in Port Said city.
3. Detect behaviors of preparatory schools students regarding bullying in Port Said city.
4. Evaluate attitudes of preparatory schools students regarding bullying in Port Said city

**Research questions:**

1. What is the prevalence of bullying at preparatory schools in Port Said city?
2. What are the perceptions of preparatory schools students regarding bullying in Port Said city?
3. What are the behaviors of preparatory schools students regarding bullying in Port Said city?
4. What are the attitudes of preparatory schools students regarding bullying in Port Said city?

**II. SUBJECTS & METHOD****Research Design:**

A descriptive cross - sectional research design was used in this study.

**Setting:**

Five schools were selected randomly from all five districts in Port Said City. One school was selected from each district. The selected schools namely, Gamal Abd El Nasser preparatory schools for girls, Almasged Al Aqsa preparatory school for girls, El-Zohour preparatory school for girls, El-Obour preparatory school for boys and Preparatory El-Canal school for boys.

**Target population:**

The population targets were the students of the preparatory schools in Port Said city

**Sample size:**

The sample of the present study was all students from the four classes chosen randomly from each selected school in the previous mentioned study settings, two classes from first grade and two classes from second grade (the director of Port Said educational administration permitted researchers to carry research only in first & second grade ) with total number of 792 students.

**Sampling:**

Multistage sampling technique was used in this study, as follow: Port Said city is divided into five districts, which are: El Manakh district, EL Arab district, El Shark district, El Zohor district and El Dawahy district, a sampling frame was developed that included a list of all preparatory schools in the five districts, then one preparatory school from each district was chosen randomly, four class from each school randomly picked up, two from the first grade & two from second grade. All students in the selected classes were included in the study.

**Tools for data Collection:**

*The data were collected through using the following two tools:*

**Tool I: Bullying Behavior sheet for the students:**

It developed by Olweus, (1994) <sup>(14)</sup> in English language, and translated to Arabic language by researcher to suit the students' language. It consists of 18 questions aimed to acquire bullying prevalence, behavior & perception of the students. This tool was divided into four parts:

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**First part:** Personal characteristics, it included four items as the students' age, gender, school grade, father education & mother education.

**Second part:** it included two items about prevalence of bullying among preparatory students, as victims & as bullies or perpetrators.

**Third part:** It included four questions related to perception of the students regarding bullying, as in which grade bullying most common, the bullying most common from whom, the frequency of seeing bullying at school & most places of bullying in the school.

**Fourth part:** It included seven questions related to students' behavior of bullying, as types of bullying behavior (verbally, emotionally & physically) exposed to as victim, or practice it against others as perpetrator, actions taken by students when bullied by others.

**Validity:**

The tool was reviewed and tested by a five expertise in nursing, content validity was established through a .95 percentage agreement among experts in the field that the items measured the domain in question.

**Reliability:**

Tool were tested for reliability using Cronbach's Alpha test for the Bullying Behavior sheet for the students which was = 0.86, which indicates that excellent scale reliability.

**Tool II: The Bullying Attitudes Questionnaire-Modified (BAQ-M):**

It was developed by Craig, Henderson, & Murphy (2000)<sup>(16)</sup> in English language, modified by Yoon and Kerber (2003)<sup>(15)</sup> and translated into Arabic language by researcher to assess students' attitudes toward bullying. It included 19 items related to attitudes toward bullying, such as It is OK to push other kids if they get in your way, it is fun to watch other kids get teased, it is wrong to start a fight with someone, etc..

**Score system:** The responses uses Likert format; responses are made from among four different response options, (4 = I agree a lot, 3 = I agree a little, 2 = I disagree a little, 1 = I disagree a lot). Each respondent receives one score; higher scores represent attitudes more supportive of bullying. The possible range of scores was 19 to 76, where higher scores indicate attitudes more approving of bullying. A score of 19 (all items scored 1) represents an attitude that is completely disapproving of bullying; a score of 76 (all items scored 4) represents an attitude completely approving of bullying. A score of 47.5 (midpoint) indicates an average score of 2.5 for each item and represents an attitude that is mixed (some bullying attitude is ok while some bullying attitude is wrong).

**Validity:**

The tool was reviewed and tested by a five expertise in nursing, content validity was established through a .97 percentage agreement among experts in the field that the items measured the domain in question.

**Reliability:**

Tool were tested for reliability using Cronbach's Alpha test which Arabic version of the Bullying Behavior questionnaire for the students was = 0.88 which indicate that the Arabic version demonstrated excellent scale reliability.

**Field work:**

Data collection occurred in schools beginning from October 2018 to the end of December 2018, school administrators and teachers determined the optimal times and locations for measures to be completed, based on the school schedule as well as number of students whose parents gave consent. The researchers started data collection by introducing themselves to the students and explained the aim of the study and its importance. The students were assured that the information collected would be treated confidentially and would be used only for the purpose of the study. The tool was explained to the students, the tool was self-administered by the students during school time. Students from each school completed all study tools, the period for complete the tools took in most students between 30 and 45 minutes, instructions, and opportunity for students to ask questions.

**Administrative Design:**

Permission was obtained by submission of an official letter issued from the Dean of Faculty of Nursing at Port Said University, forward to the director of Port Said educational administration including the aim of the study to obtain the permission to visit each school and conduct the study. Each school director was informed about the study.

**Ethical Considerations:**

Permission has been obtained orally from each student to participate in the study. Before data collection, students were informed about the aim of the study and what would be done with the results. They were given an opportunity to refuse participation on the study and they were notified that they could withdraw at any time from the research. Also, they were assured that the information would remain confidential and used for the research purpose only. Ethics, values, culture and beliefs were respected.

**Statistical analysis:**

Data were fed to the computer and analyzed using SPSS software package version 23.0. Qualitative data were described using number and percent. Quantitative data were described using mean and standard deviation. Comparison between different groups regarding categorical variables was tested using Chi-square test. Significance of the obtained results was judged at the 5% level.

### III. RESULTS

As regard to the personal characteristics, the present study was included 792 students, their age ranges between 12 to 14 years old with mean ages  $\pm$ SD  $13.06 \pm 0.99$  years, less than two thirds of students were in age group 12-< 13 years old (63.9%), more than half of them were females (53.0%), 49.5% of them were the 1<sup>st</sup> grade. Regarding the father education of the studied students, it was noted that 24.5% of them had university and post-graduate studies level of education, 24.1% of them had primary level of education while 14.9% cannot read and write. It is also observed that less than one quarter of the studied students' mothers had basic education (24.0%). Moreover, it was noted that 29.1% of them cannot read and write while, only 12.0% had university and post-graduate studies level of education.

**Figure 1:** Illustrated the prevalence of bullying against studied students, data revealed that, 46.7% of the total studied students were generally a victim of bullying, male students were more exposed to bullying than females in 25.0%, 21.7% respectively, a statistical significant differences between males & females were found, where  $p < 0.001^*$ .

**Figure 2:** Illustrated the prevalence of bullies or perpetrators students, data revealed that, 57.6% the total studied students were bullies or perpetrators students, male students were more act as bullies (30.1%) than female (27.5%), a statistical significant differences between males & females were found, where  $p < 0.001^*$ .

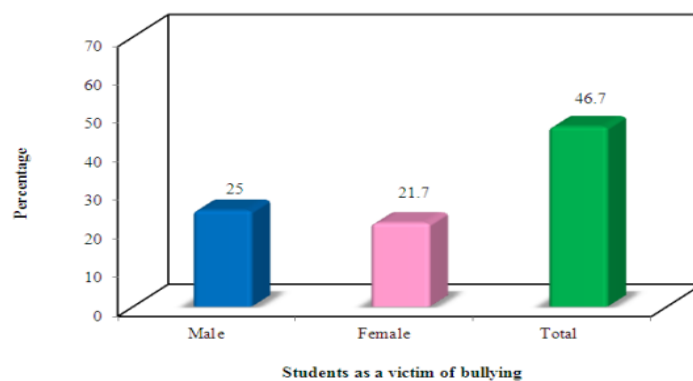
**Table 1:** displays that more one quarter of students mentioned they saw bullying in a higher grade (27.0%), while 21.0% mention they saw it in their classroom & grade, moreover, 21.0% of students reported that bullying occur most common from a group of boys, 14.9% said it occur from both boys & girls, 34.1% of the students said they always seeing bullying at school, classroom & playground are most places of bullying in the school as reported by the students in (41.9%, 34.3) respectively.

**Table 2:** Indicated that, 42.4% of the victim students were verbally bullied, 35.4% were emotionally bullied, while 37.6% were exposed to physical bullying. Regarding actions taken when students exposed to bullying from others, 32.2% of them tell the teacher (22.7% of males and 43.0% of females), 23.5% of victims students hit them (30.3% of males and 15.7% of females) as the actions taken after exposed to bullying, as seen in the table, males more exposed to bullying than females in all types of bullying (physical, emotional and verbal), a statistical significant differences between males & females were detected, where  $p < 0.001^*$

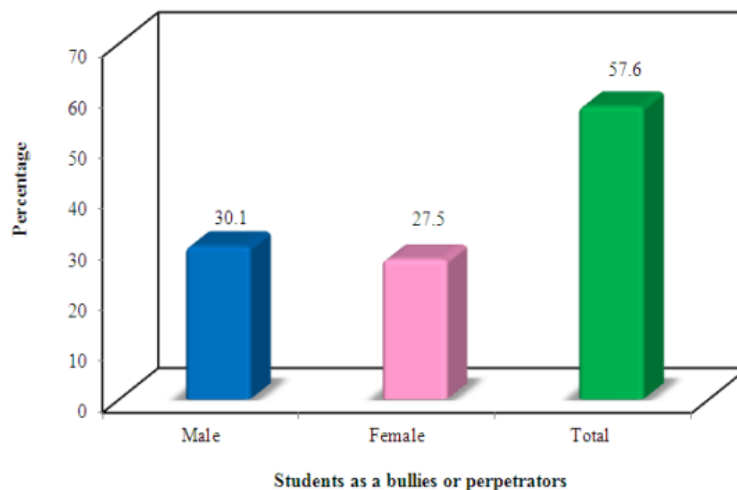
**Table 3:** Revealed that, 52.4% of the perpetrators or bullies students were bullied others verbally, while 45.4% were bullied others emotionally, moreover 36.2% were bullied others physically, table also showed that, a statistical significant differences between males & females (males were more act as bullies or perpetrators than females in all types of bullying), where  $p < 0.001^*$

**Table 4:** Illustrated that 31.3% agree a lot that, some kids deserve to be picked on, 57.6% said they were not bother to see kids get picked on, 69.9% of the students disagree a lot to push other kids if they get in their way, 57.6% disagree to watch other kids get teased, 55.3% of the students disagree a lot to call someone names if they do not like the person, while 64.9% reported they disagree a lot in spreading rumors about someone is a good way to get back at them, moreover 71.7% of them disagree about pushing other kids around as a way to get respect, finally, 35.9% agree a lot that, it is wrong to hit other kids.

**Table 5:** Revealed that 91.7% of the students had mixed attitude of bullying, which mean that some bullying attitude is ok while some bullying attitude is wrong, while 7.6 % of them had approving attitude toward bullying, a statistical significant differences between males& females, where  $p < 0.001^*$ .



**Figure (1):** Distribution studied students' prevalence as a victim of bullying according to gender



**Figure (2):** Prevalence of studied students as bullies or perpetrators

**Table (1):** Distribution studied students' perceptions of bullying according to gender

| Variables                                | Male<br>n=372 |      | Female<br>n=420 |      | Total<br>n=792 |      | $\chi^2$ | p       |
|--|---------------|------|-----------------|------|----------------|------|----------|---------|
|  | No.           | %    | No.             | %    | No.            | %    |          |         |
| <b>Bullying most common in</b>           |               |      |                 |      |                |      | 49.590*  | <0.001* |
| In my classroom & grade                  | 112           | 30.1 | 54              | 12.8 | 166            | 21.0 |          |         |
| In the same grade but in different class | 52            | 14.0 | 94              | 22.4 | 146            | 18.4 |          |         |
| In a low grade                           | 14            | 3.8  | 34              | 8.1  | 48             | 6.1  |          |         |
| In a higher grade                        | 110           | 29.6 | 104             | 24.8 | 214            | 27.0 |          |         |
| Do not know                              | 84            | 22.5 | 134             | 31.9 | 218            | 27.5 |          |         |



|   |     |      |     |      |     |      |          |         |  |
|---|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|----------|---------|--|
| <b>Bullying most common from</b>              |     |      |     |      |     |      |          |         |  |
| Both boys& girls                              | 8   | 2.2  | 110 | 26.2 | 118 | 14.9 | 222.818* | <0.001* |  |
| A group of boys                               | 142 | 38.2 | 28  | 6.7  | 170 | 21.5 |          |         |  |
| Specific boy                                  | 108 | 29.0 | 84  | 20.0 | 192 | 24.2 |          |         |  |
| A group of girls                              | 8   | 2.2  | 54  | 12.8 | 62  | 7.8  |          |         |  |
| Specific girl                                 | 10  | 2.6  | 46  | 11.0 | 56  | 7.1  |          |         |  |
| Do not know                                   | 96  | 25.8 | 98  | 23.3 | 194 | 24.5 |          |         |  |
| <b>You see bullying at school (frequency)</b> |     |      |     |      |     |      | 5.341    | 0.254   |  |
| Always  | 124 | 33.3 | 146 | 34.8 | 270 | 34.1 |          |         |  |
| Often   | 72  | 19.4 | 74  | 17.6 | 146 | 18.4 |          |         |  |
| Sometimes                                     | 66  | 17.7 | 84  | 20.0 | 150 | 18.9 |          |         |  |
| Rarely  | 38  | 10.2 | 26  | 6.2  | 64  | 8.1  |          |         |  |
| Never   | 72  | 19.4 | 90  | 21.4 | 162 | 20.5 |          |         |  |
| <b>Most places of bullying in your school</b> |     |      |     |      |     |      | 26.179*  | <0.001* |  |
| Classroom                                     | 152 | 40.9 | 180 | 42.9 | 332 | 41.9 |          |         |  |
| Hallways                                      | 22  | 5.9  | 58  | 13.8 | 80  | 10.1 |          |         |  |
| Bathroom                                      | 34  | 9.1  | 52  | 12.4 | 86  | 10.9 |          |         |  |
| Cafeteria                                     | 16  | 4.3  | 6   | 1.4  | 22  | 2.8  |          |         |  |
| Playground                                    | 148 | 39.8 | 124 | 29.5 | 272 | 34.3 |          |         |  |

$\chi^2$ : Chi square test

p: p value for associating between different categories

\*: Statistically significant at  $p \leq 0.05$

Table (2): Distribution studied students' behaviors as a victim of bullying according to gender

| Variable   | Male<br>n=198 |      | Female<br>n=172 |      | Total<br>n=370 |      | $\chi^2$ | p       |
|--|---------------|------|-----------------|------|----------------|------|----------|---------|
|  | No            | %    | No              | %    | No             | %    |          |         |
| • <b>Verbally bullied</b> as said mean things to you, teased you, called you names | 90            | 45.5 | 67              | 39.0 | 157            | 42.4 | 17.627   | <0.001* |
| • <b>Emotionally bullied</b> as tried to hurt your feelings                        | 85            | 42.9 | 46              | 26.7 | 131            | 35.4 | 7.161    | 0.007*  |
| • <b>Physically bullied</b> as tried to hurt you physically                        | 110           | 55.6 | 29              | 16.9 | 139            | 37.6 | 56.991   | <0.001* |
| <b>Actions taken after exposed to bullying from others:</b>                        |               |      |                 |      |                |      | 87.756*  | <0.001* |
| Hit them   | 60            | 30.3 | 27              | 15.7 | 87             | 23.5 |          |         |
| Tell teacher   | 45            | 22.7 | 74              | 43.0 | 119            | 32.2 |          |         |
| Walk a way   | 26            | 13.1 | 39              | 22.7 | 65             | 17.6 |          |         |
| Cry  | 5             | 2.5  | 28              | 16.3 | 33             | 8.9  |          |         |
| Ask them to stop   | 28            | 14.1 | 17              | 9.9  | 45             | 12.2 |          |         |
| Bully back   | 8             | 4.0  | 13              | 7.6  | 21             | 5.7  |          |         |

• Multiple answer

$\chi^2$ : Chi square test

p: p value for associating between different categories

\*: Statistically significant at  $p \leq 0.05$

Table (3): Behaviors of the studied students (perpetrators or Bullies) in bullying others (n=456)

| Variables   | Male<br>n=238 |      | Female<br>n=218 |      | Total<br>n=456 |      | $\chi^2$ | p       |
|---|---------------|------|-----------------|------|----------------|------|----------|---------|
|   | No            | %    | No              | %    | No             | %    |          |         |
| • <b>Verbally bullying others</b> as said mean things to them, teased them, called them names | 125           | 52.5 | 115             | 52.7 | 239            | 52.4 | 8.632*   | 0.003*  |
| • <b>Emotionally bullying others</b> as tried to hurt their feelings                          | 110           | 46.2 | 98              | 45.0 | 207            | 45.4 | 10.730*  | 0.001*  |
| • <b>Physically bullying others</b> as tried to hurt them physically                          | 91            | 38.2 | 74              | 33.9 | 165            | 36.2 | 12.307*  | <0.001* |

• Multiple answer

$\chi^2$ : Chi square test

p: p value for associating between different categories

\*: Statistically significant at  $p \leq 0.05$

**Table (4): Attitude of studied students regarding bullying (no = 792)**

| Students attitude  | I disagree a lot |      | I disagree a little |      | I agree a little |      | I agree a lot |      |
|--|------------------|------|---------------------|------|------------------|------|---------------|------|
|  | No               | %    | No                  | %    | No               | %    | No            | %    |
| It is OK to push other kids if they get in your way.                                     | 554              | 69.9 | 194                 | 24.5 | 28               | 3.5  | 16            | 2.0  |
| Making fun of other students is just part of school.                                     | 508              | 64.1 | 214                 | 27.0 | 40               | 5.1  | 30            | 3.8  |
| It bothers me to see kids get picked on.   | 456              | 57.6 | 208                 | 26.3 | 50               | 6.3  | 78            | 9.8  |
| It is fun to watch other kids get teased.  | 492              | 62.1 | 208                 | 26.3 | 34               | 4.3  | 58            | 7.3  |
| It is OK to keep other kids from joining a group.  | 466              | 58.8 | 238                 | 30.1 | 32               | 4.0  | 56            | 7.1  |
| It's OK to tease kids who are not your friends.  | 460              | 58.1 | 262                 | 33.1 | 28               | 3.5  | 42            | 5.3  |
| It is important to be part of a group even if it means you have to be mean to some kids. | 434              | 54.8 | 230                 | 29.0 | 84               | 10.6 | 44            | 5.6  |
| It's OK to call someone names if you do not like the person                              | 438              | 55.3 | 226                 | 28.5 | 56               | 7.1  | 72            | 9.1  |
| It's not a big deal to make fun of someone   | 298              | 37.6 | 150                 | 18.9 | 114              | 14.4 | 230           | 29.0 |
| It is OK to tease other kids about the way they talk or look.                            | 450              | 56.8 | 200                 | 25.3 | 76               | 9.6  | 66            | 8.3  |
| It is wrong to start a fight with someone.   | 280              | 35.4 | 166                 | 21.0 | 128              | 16.2 | 218           | 27.5 |
| Some kids deserve to be picked on.   | 232              | 29.3 | 134                 | 16.9 | 178              | 22.5 | 248           | 31.3 |
| It bothers me if other kids get beat up.   | 300              | 37.9 | 128                 | 16.2 | 118              | 14.9 | 246           | 31.1 |
| It is OK to tease someone if other kids are also doing it.                               | 438              | 55.3 | 200                 | 25.3 | 70               | 8.8  | 84            | 10.6 |
| It bothers me when other kids are teased.  | 300              | 37.9 | 130                 | 16.4 | 102              | 12.9 | 260           | 32.8 |
| Spreading rumors about someone is a good way to get back at them.                        | 514              | 64.9 | 148                 | 18.7 | 48               | 6.1  | 82            | 10.4 |
| It is wrong to hit other kids.   | 284              | 35.9 | 110                 | 13.9 | 114              | 14.4 | 284           | 35.9 |
| Pushing other kids around is a way to get respect.                                       | 568              | 71.7 | 132                 | 16.7 | 38               | 4.8  | 54            | 6.8  |
| Total Score  |                  |      |                     |      |                  |      |               |      |
| Min. – Max.  | 19.0 – 76.0      |      |                     |      |                  |      |               |      |
| Mean ± SD.   | 59.29 ± 9.72     |      |                     |      |                  |      |               |      |
| Percent Score  |                  |      |                     |      |                  |      |               |      |
| Min. – Max.  | 0.0 – 100.0      |      |                     |      |                  |      |               |      |
| Mean ± SD.   | 70.69 ± 17.05    |      |                     |      |                  |      |               |      |

$\chi^2$ : Chi square test

p: p value for associating between different categories

\*: Statistically significant at  $p \leq 0.05$

**Table (5): Relation between total score of the studied students attitudes toward bullying & gender (n=792)**

| Bullying Attitudes    | Male n=372 |      | Female n=420 |      | Total n=792 |      | $\chi^2$ | p     |
|-----------------------|------------|------|--------------|------|-------------|------|----------|-------|
|                       | No.        | %    | No.          | %    | No.         | %    |          |       |
| Disapproving attitude | 2          | 0.3  | 4            | 0.5  | 6           | 0.8  | 1.417    | 0.484 |
| Mixed attitude        | 338        | 42.7 | 388          | 49.0 | 726         | 91.7 |          |       |
| Approving attitude    | 32         | 4.1  | 28           | 3.5  | 60          | 7.6  |          |       |

$\chi^2$ : Chi square test

p: p value for associating between different categories

\*: Statistically significant at  $p \leq 0.05$

#### IV. DISCUSSION

Bullying in schools is an international and prevalent problem that has negative consequences for school climate and the rights of students to learn in a safe environment<sup>(17)</sup>.

The data of the present study indicated that, about two third of the students aged 12 – <13, slightly more than one half of them were females, moreover, about one half of them were in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade.



Regarding the perceptions of the studied students regarding bullying, data revealed that, about one quarter of the students mentioned they saw bullying in a higher grade, while nearly one fifth mentioned they saw it in their classroom and grade, moreover, about one fifth of them reported that bullying occur most common from a group of boys, also about one fifth reported that bullying occur most common from a specific boy, less than one fifth said it occur from both boys and girls, more than one third said they always seeing bullying at school, classroom and playground are most places of bullying in the school as reported by nearly of two third of them, this finding is agreement with Kohm<sup>(18)</sup>, who reported in a study conducted in United States that males in United States were more likely to be involved in bullying than females. In regard to grade level, the research indicated that seventh graders were more involved in bullying than eighth graders. They also found, that both males and females tend to target victims of the same gender.

The results of the present study in somewhat in the line with Guillory in a study carried in Massachusetts, USA<sup>(19)</sup>, found that, 64.0% of the students reported that a student in the same or higher grade bullied them compared to less than 3.0% by a student in a lower grade, 55.0% reported they would tell a teacher if there were bullied, followed by 18.0% of students reporting they would just walk away. Only 6.0% of students responded that they would bully the student who bullied them or confront them by asking them to stop, student responses to “who does the most bullying”? Boys had the highest with 20.0%, while girls had only 8.0%. Overall, the students responded that 33.1% of boys and girls engaged in bullying.

Landstedt & Persson<sup>(20)</sup>, in Sweden, studied the frequency and location of bullying, they found that, the most common locations for being bullied was the playground, the school cafeteria and the classroom. Roughly, 11.0% of the elementary school students believed that gender played a role in bullying.

Results of the present study showed that, the prevalence of bullying against the studied students (victims), nearly half of the total studied students were generally a victim of bullying, while more than two fifth of them were verbally bullied, about one third were emotionally bullied and also more than one third were exposed to physical bullying, about one third of them tell the teacher, as the action taken by them when exposed to bullying from others, males more exposed to bullying than females in all types of bullying (physical, emotional and verbal), a statistical significant differences between males and females were detected, according to Robers & Persson<sup>(21)</sup>, rates for bullying among school-age youth range from 10.0 % to 30.0 % internationally with a notable increase during the middle school years.

Turner, Finkelhor, Hamby, Shattuck, & Ormrod<sup>(22)</sup>, found that, in the US, between 15.0% and 23.0 % of elementary students and 20–28 % of secondary school students report being bullied within a 6-month to 1-year period (Also, approximately nine to eleven percent of youth report being called hate-related words having to do with their race, religion, ethnic background, and/or sexual orientation,

The result is in the same line with Espelage, Low, Rao, Hong and Little<sup>(23)</sup>, in their study conducted in USA, and reported that, boys are more likely to engage in physical bullying than girls. Moreover, Hymel, McClure, Miller, Shumka, Trach, in a study carried in Pakistan, and found that, verbal bullying was seen more frequent compare to physical bullying, furthermore, there is no significant differences in the prevalence of bullying between male and female students but there is a significant difference on the prevalence between verbal bullying and physical bullying.

In a study of 4,263 middle school students in a suburban area in Maryland, USA, Haynie et al.<sup>(25)</sup>, found that, 7.4 % of students reported bullying others three or more times over the previous year while 24.1% of students reported bullying at least one time. Almost 31.0% of students reported being the victim of bullying at least three times, while 44.6% reported being victimized at least one time in the past year.

Ttofi, Farrington, Lösel and Loeber<sup>(26)</sup>, indicating that victims of bullying report significant psychosomatic problems and report depression later in life, also Copeland, Angold & Costello<sup>(27)</sup>, in U.S. Great Smoky Mountain study; reported that, children and youth who self-reported involvement in bullying were more likely than uninvolved youth to be diagnosed with disruptive and substance use disorders. In disagreement with our results, Guillory<sup>(19)</sup>, in a study carried in Massachusetts, USA, found that, there was no significant differences between gender and the types of bullying.

Regarding prevalence and behaviors of the students as bullies or perpetrators, results revealed that, more than half of the total studied students were bullies or perpetrators students, moreover about half of them were bullied others verbally, less than half of them bullied others emotionally, while more than one third were bullied others physically, boys were more act as bullies than girls, a statistical significant differences between males and females were detected, this might be due to,

that, students' need for attention and the desire to be perceived as brave and confident can cause them to bully, also may due to that, bullying permeates popular culture in the form of reality TV and violent video games. Moreover, students who experience issues at home, such as abuse and neglect or a divorce, may cause them to bully others due to despair, anger, or jealousy, also it might be due to, increase numbers of students in the class results of the teacher responses are that they are in denial about bullying in their own classrooms.

Cheng, Chen, Liu and Chen<sup>(28)</sup>, Guerra, Williams, & Sadek<sup>(29)</sup>, revealed that, while boys typically engage in direct bullying methods (i.e. physical), girls are more apt to utilize more subtle indirect methods (i.e. verbal and social exclusion), such as spreading rumors and enforcing social isolation. Whether the bullying is direct or indirect, the key component of bullying is that the physical or psychological intimidation occurs repeatedly over time to create an ongoing pattern of harassment and abuse<sup>(30)</sup>.

Quinn, Fitzpatrick, Bussey, Hides and Chan<sup>(31)</sup>, reported that, children who bully are often believed to be insecure, aggressive, and lacking empathy. Although this is true for some bullies, all bullies do not fit this profile. Some bullies have high self-esteem, good social skills, and are considered popular among their peers; they may use bullying as a strategy to attain social dominance. Other children who bully may be involved in high-risk behaviors such as drug use, demonstrate behavioral problems such as defiance, attention deficit disorder, or conduct disorder, and may be less engaged in school.

In a 2011 meta-analysis, bullying perpetration at age 14 led to higher violent conviction rates between ages 15–20, lower job status at age 18, increased drug use from ages 27–32, and relationship problems by age 48<sup>(26)</sup>. Furthermore, Hemphill, Tollit & Herrenkohl<sup>(32)</sup>, found that greater bullying perpetration among Australian youth in Year 7 of school was associated with a two-fold increase in binge drinking and marijuana use when these students were in Year 10 of school, they added that, risk factors for child engagement in bullying perpetration include poor parent-child involvement and communication, use of corporal punishment in the home, family conflict, and exposure to violence in the home in the form of child abuse/neglect or domestic violence<sup>(33,34)</sup>.

The finding is in-agreement with Bradshaw<sup>(35)</sup>, who found that, boys were more often victims and in particular perpetrators of direct bullying. From the US-based Raising Healthy Children project, childhood bullying in grade 5 was associated with heavy drinking and marijuana use at age 21<sup>(36)</sup>.

Data of the present study, indicated that, most of the studied students had mixed attitude of bullying, which mean that some bullying attitude is ok while some bullying attitude is wrong, while a few percent of them had approving attitude toward bullying, a statistical significant differences between males & females were detected. This might be due to, increase the violence in media in recent years and the studied students may had the concept from the media, that, the more you violate or bullying others the more you are powerful & respectable from others.

The finding is disagreement with, Guillory<sup>(19)</sup>, who indicated that the students were in-agreement about bullying. Also, Wang, Swearer, Lembeck, Collins, & Berry<sup>(37)</sup>, reported that most children disapprove of bullying. Jeffrey<sup>(38)</sup>, found that, the majority of children in the class do not actively participate in bullying, but they may behave in ways which they make bullying possible.

Quinn, Fitzpatrick, Bussey, Hides, Chan<sup>(31)</sup>, revealed that, bullying incident, and the victim may be interpreted as approval of such behaviors, particularly by the bully. Moreover, Jeffrey & Craven<sup>(38)</sup>, found that, boys reported more aggressive attitudes compared to girls, in contrast with our finding, Guillory<sup>(19)</sup>, reported that, gender does not impact attitudes toward three types of bullying.

## V. CONCLUSION

The results of this study concluded that, about one half of the studied students were victims of bullying, moreover, more than half of them were bullying others (act as perpetrators or bullies), boys were more exposed to & practice bullying than girls in general and in all types of bullying (verbal, emotional and physical), a statistical significant differences between males and females were found, Furthermore, most of the studied students had mixed attitude of bullying, which mean that some bullying attitude is ok while some bullying attitude is wrong, a statistical significant differences between males & females were detected in their attitudes.

## VI. RECOMMENDATION

1. Provide intervention training (i.e. workshops, anti-bullying curriculums, professional development trainings, seminars and parent education, etc.) that defines bullying identifies the types of bullying and provides appropriate intervention strategies for reducing bullying in the schools.
2. Offer bullying prevention program that is specifically designed for students in grades from pre-kindergarten to secondary education.
3. Provide program assumes understanding and dealing with emotions, expressing emotions in socially acceptable ways and learning pro-social behaviors through practice.
4. Curriculum of the school should include units about empathy, emotional management and problem solving, positive peer interaction skills, social competence.
5. Bullying prevention programs for students & teachers can significantly reduce attitudes and perceptions supportive of bullying; and create sustainable and meaningful behavior change
6. Provide support groups & specialized support staff person for the students. The purposes of a bullying support group and staff, include overcoming bullying, recognizing bullying behaviors, recognizing fears and misconceptions about bullying and identifying intervention strategies to help one-self and others overcome bullying.
7. The need for more comprehensive services for the school age populations. Specifically, implications exist for school psychologist and school counselors to work conjointly to design prevention and intervention campaigns for bullying.
8. Teacher training on bullying prevention specific to school populations.

*Further researches* to be carried out on the students in all levels of education in the country to determine causes, risk factors, risky groups of bullying, the results can help in resolving the problem.

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