
Proposed Development and Implementation of Bullying Intervention Program on Bullied Pupils

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How to cite this article: Sheryll S. Pulumbarit, Maed and Karen Katrina V. Trinidad (2024) Proposed Development and Implementation of Bullying Intervention Program on Bullied Pupils. *Library Progress International*, 44(3), 3795-3802.

ABSTRACT

School-based crisis intervention constitutes an iterative and dynamic process strategically designed to enhance the overall well-being of a school community following a crisis experience. It is an ongoing and evolving process that provides immediate support to trauma, promotes positive coping strategies, and prevents long-term psychological impairment. This research proposal endeavors to formulate and execute a comprehensive school crisis intervention program to address the well-being of bullied pupils. The primary objective is cultivating and implementing an empirically informed bullying intervention program seamlessly integrated into the school's responsive services network. Employing a program development research design incorporating qualitative and quantitative methodologies, data will be systematically collected from a cohort of 120 adolescent pupils ages 11 to 16 at schools within the De La Salle West Luzon Cluster. The outcomes of this investigation are poised to contribute significantly to establishing a standardized crisis intervention protocol in educational institutions with a specialized emphasis on addressing the pervasive issue of bullying.

Keywords: Adolescent Well-Being, Bullying, Program Development, School Crisis Bullying Intervention

INTRODUCTION

News on social media and television about school crises, whether from school violence such as fighting or bullying, is relevant for evidence-based research because schools face many challenges that can potentially disrupt the learning environment and adversely impact students' psychological well-being. The occurrence of crises, such as natural disasters, acts of violence, bullying incidents, or the sudden loss of a student or staff member, demands immediate attention and effective intervention strategies. As a result, school crisis intervention has emerged as a critical component of comprehensive support systems within educational settings.

School crisis intervention is a systematic approach aimed at preventing, responding to, and mitigating the adverse effects of crises on students, faculty, and the broader school community. It involves a multi-faceted framework encompassing proactive measures to prevent crisis, preparedness planning, immediate response protocols, and long-term recovery and support strategies. By implementing a comprehensive crisis intervention plan, educational institutions can foster resilience, promote healing, and restore a sense of safety and normalcy for all individuals affected by such events.

With the recent COVID-19 pandemic, Repo et al. (2022) explore the impact of remote schooling on victimized students in the context of bullying. This timely research investigates how the shift to virtual learning during the pandemic has influenced the dynamics of bullying and victimization. In response to this critical concern, this study aims to develop and implement an evidence-based bullying prevention program tailored to adolescents' unique needs and challenges in contemporary society.

The development and implementation of an evidence-based bullying prevention program for adolescents represents a critical step toward addressing the pervasive issue of bullying within the adolescent population. This program aims to empower pre-teens and teens with the skills and knowledge necessary to foster a safer and more inclusive environment

by incorporating a theoretical framework rooted in socio-ecological and social cognitive perspectives. Through rigorous evaluation, this study contributes to the growing knowledge surrounding effective bullying prevention strategies and ultimately enhancing adolescents' well-being in schools and communities.

I. Rationale and significance of the study

The school's ongoing crisis of bullying implies the need to create a program on bullying. There should be a need to follow a standard intervention bullying program, as this has been an ongoing crisis in schools. It is also important to advocate for the Republic Act no. 11036, otherwise known as the Mental Health Act, which is "an act establishing a national mental health policy to enhance the delivery of integrated mental health services, promote and protecting the rights of persons utilizing psychosocial health services, appropriating funds therefore and other purposes." In addition, as educators in the Philippines, teachers and school authorities are considered to have substitute parental authority over their students, according to Art. 349, par 2 of RA 386.

Given the gravity and complexity of school crises, school systems need to adopt evidence-based strategies that address the diverse needs of students and promote their overall well-being. Effective crisis intervention programs consider students' developmental stages, cultural considerations, and individual differences, ensuring that interventions are tailored to meet the individual and community's needs.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The primary objectives of this research are as follows:

1. To develop a comprehensive bullying prevention program tailored to adolescents, integrating evidence-based practices targeting traditional and cyberbullying dynamics.
2. To employ a socio-ecological and social cognitive framework in program development and its implementation, considering the multifaceted nature of bullying behaviors and the complex interplay of individual, interpersonal, and contextual factors.
3. To assess the program's effectiveness in reducing bullying incidents and related negative outcomes and its influence on their well-being.

II. LITERATURE

I. School Crisis Intervention

The Philippine Ministry of Education of Culture Order No. 34s 1980 states that teachers and students can teach/attend classes. To quote, it says: "Any student, teacher, professor, officer or employee of a university, college or school who impedes, obstructs, prevents, or defeats the right and obligation of a teacher or professor to teach his subject or the right of a student to attend his classes, shall be subject to discipline without prejudice to the criminal liability of the offender". It means protecting students' rights to attend classes and teachers' teaching. Safe school space is essential to students and the school community, especially during a crisis.

As per Brock et al. (2023), a school crisis is an unexpected and disrupted event or situation that seriously threatens the safety, well-being, or normal functioning of students, staff, and the school community. Crisis can take various forms, including natural disasters, acts of violence, accidents, or emergencies requiring immediate attention and coordinated response. Effective crisis prevention and intervention involve comprehensive planning, training, and communication strategies to mitigate the impact of the crisis and facilitate a return to normalcy.

II. Bullying: A Comprehensive Examination

Bullying, a complex and pervasive social phenomenon, has been extensively studied by researchers and scholars across various disciplines. The term itself lacks a universally agreed-upon definition, but researchers commonly conceptualize bullying as repeated aggressive behavior that involves a power imbalance between the perpetrator and the victim (Olweus, 1993). Olweus, a pioneering figure in bullying research, defined bullying as "negative actions carried out repeatedly and over time in an intentional way to cause harm or discomfort to another person where there is an imbalance of power". This definition underscores the repetitive nature and power dynamics inherent in bullying, distinguishing it from isolated acts of aggression.

Bullying encompasses a range of aggressive behaviors intended to cause harm to another individual within a power imbalance. The widespread issue garnered significant attention from researchers, psychologists, and educators due to its detrimental effects on individuals and communities. Bullying is commonly defined as repetitive, intentional aggression that involves a power imbalance between the perpetrator and the victim. It can manifest in various forms and settings, including schools, workplaces, and online platforms.

III. Types of Bullying:

1. **Physical Bullying:** Physical bullying involves direct bodily harm and aggressive actions. This may include hitting, kicking, pushing, or any form of physical assault.

2. Verbal Bullying: Verbal bullying encompasses spoken or written words intended to harm the victim emotionally. Verbal bullying has been linked to emotional and psychological distress in victims (Smith et al., 2002)
3. Social Bullying (Relational Aggression): A subtle and insidious kind of bullying that goes unnoticed by parents and teachers. Relational aggression, often known as emotional or social bullying, is a form of social manipulation in which adolescents attempt to harm their peers or undermine their social status.
4. Cyberbullying: Cyberbullying is the term for when a tween or adolescent uses the internet, a smartphone, or other technology to harass, threaten, embarrass, or target another person. Cyber-harassment or cyberstalking is the term used when an adult is involved in the harassment.
5. Sexual Bullying: The act of repeatedly injuring, humiliating, and targeting someone sexually is known as sexual bullying. Crude remarks, impolite gestures, unwanted physical contact, sexual propositioning, and the use of pornographic materials are a few examples.
6. Prejudice-based Bullying: Teens and tweens' prejudices against individuals who identify as different racial, religious, or sexual orientations are the foundation of prejudiced bullying.

IV. BULLYING IN ADOLESCENTS (AGES 11-16)

Understanding bullying in adolescents requires a nuanced exploration of their developmental stage, considering cognitive, social, and emotional aspects. According to Piaget's theory of cognitive development, adolescents are in the concrete operational stage, where they begin to think logically but may struggle with abstract concepts. This cognitive growth influences their understanding of social interactions and power dynamics, contributing to bullying behaviors. Social development theories, such as Erickson's psychosocial stages, highlight the importance of peer relationships during pre-adolescence. These can both facilitate positive socialization and introduce challenges related to power and dominance.

Pertaining to this specific study on bullying at ages 11-16 years, research focusing on the association between bullying and adolescents aged 11-16 takes precedence in the study "Association Between Bullying Victimization and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorders Among Chinese Adolescents: A Multiple Mediation Model" (Li et al., 2023). According to the study, this particular age group represents a critical developmental stage marked by heightened susceptibility to the detrimental effects of bullying. The investigation into the enduring psychological repercussions of bullying experiences, sheds light on the increased vulnerability of adolescents within this demographic to the long-term consequences, including the potential development of post-traumatic stress disorders.

Subsequently, studies like "Determinants for Bullying Victimization Among 11-16 Year Olds in 15 Low and Middle-Income Countries: A Multi-Level Study" (Wilson et al, 2013) further underscore the importance of comprehending the determinants and prevalence of bullying victimization in diverse socioeconomic contexts. Such knowledge is critical for tailoring interventions that address the distinct challenges faced by adolescents across global settings, contributing not only to academic understanding but also guiding evidence-based strategies aimed at mitigating the adverse effects of bullying on adolescent mental health and well-being.

V. SCHOOL AND FAMILY COLLABORATIONS

Collaboration between schools and families is pivotal in fostering a comprehensive approach to tackling bullying among young children. Levine and Tamburrino's (2014) journal article, "Bullying Among Young Children: Strategies for Prevention," emphasizes the importance of a coordinated effort between schools and families to implement effective prevention strategies. The authors highlight the significance of creating a supportive environment where educators and parents actively identify, address, and prevent bullying behaviors among young children. Moreover, research by Smith et al. (2002) in the journal "Cyberbullying: Its Nature and Impact in Secondary School Pupils" underscores the need for joint efforts between schools and families to combat cyberbullying, emphasizing the role of open communication and shared responsibility.

The collaborative efforts between schools and families in implementing effective bullying prevention programs emerge as crucial to fostering a safe and supportive educational environment. The journal article "Teacher and Staff Voices: Implementation of a Positive Behavior Bullying Prevention Program in an Urban School" by Letendre, et al. (2016) provides insights into the practicalities and experiences of educators in executing a positive behavior bullying prevention program. This study underscores the significance of teacher and staff voices in shaping and implementing such initiatives, highlighting the pivotal role that school personnel play in fostering a culture of respect and inclusion.

In bullying prevention, establishing a robust collaboration between schools and families is essential for fostering a supportive and protective environment for young children. Together, these studies underscore the interconnectedness of familial and educational environments, emphasizing the significance of collaborative frameworks for effective bullying prevention strategies.

VI. CULTURAL SENSITIVITY

Cultural sensitivity is pivotal to developing effective and inclusive bullying prevention programs within educational contexts. Smith et al. (2005) underscores the need for cultural relevance in designing and implementing anti-bullying

initiatives. Recognizing that interventions should consider diverse cultural backgrounds and contexts to ensure broad applicability and effectiveness. Furthering this perspective, the study by Chen et al. (2023) investigates the influence of cultural beliefs on adolescents' defending behaviors in the face of bullying, shedding light on the intricate interplay between cultural factors, self-efficacy, and moral responsibility.

Considering the psychometric evaluation by Xie et al. (2023) in "Psychometric Evaluation of the Self-Efficacy Questionnaire for Children (SEQ-C)," it becomes evident that cultural sensitivity extends to the assessment tools used in evaluating the efficacy of anti-bullying programs. Collectively, these studies emphasize the need for cultural sensitivity in all aspects of bullying prevention programs, from their design and implementation to assessing their impact, recognizing that cultural nuances significantly influence the effectiveness and acceptance of such interventions.

VII. EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE

Implementing evidence-based practices is paramount in developing effective and impactful bullying prevention programs within educational settings. Smith et al.'s (2005) seminal journal article, "Antibullying Interventions in Schools: Ingredients of Effective Programs," provides crucial insights into the key components contributing to the success of anti-bullying initiatives. The authors emphasize the importance of a comprehensive approach that includes preventive and responsive strategies, teacher training, and fostering a positive school climate. Identifying evidence-based practices is crucial, ensuring that interventions are grounded in research and have demonstrated efficacy.

Building on this foundation, a study by Bradshaw, et al., (2014) in "Measuring the Climate for Bullying and Safety in Schools" highlights the role of school climate assessments as an evidence-based practice. Understanding the school climate is essential for tailoring interventions to address the specific needs of the school community. Furthermore, the work of Espelage et al. (2013) in "Clinical Trial of Second Step Middle School Program: Impact on Bullying, Cyberbullying, Homophobic Teasing, and Sexual Harassment Perpetration" supports the idea of evidence-based practices by conducting clinical trials to assess the impact on anti-bullying programs, ensuring that interventions are rigorously evaluated for their effectiveness.

VIII. INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

Intervention strategies in bullying prevention programs are essential for creating safe and supportive environments for children. Levine and Tamburrino (2014) offer valuable insights into evidence-based intervention strategies for addressing bullying among the youngest demographic. Their work emphasizes the importance of a comprehensive approach, including educational initiatives, fostering a positive school climate, and implementing structured anti-bullying programs. Coyle (2008) delves into the significance of school culture in successfully implementing bullying prevention programs. He underscores the need for schools to establish benchmarks that align with their unique cultural contexts, emphasizing the role of school culture as both a bridge and potential barrier to program success.

Chow et al. (2022) focus on identifying early indicators that may contribute to the joint trajectories of being both a victim and a perpetrator. Understanding these risk factors is crucial for developing targeted intervention strategies that address the root causes of bullying behaviors. These studies highlight the importance of multi-faceted and culturally sensitive intervention strategies, encompassing educational, environmental, and individual factors, in fostering effective bullying prevention programs. Such strategies aim to mitigate current incidents and address the underlying risk factors contributing to perpetuating bullying dynamics.

VIX Psychological Well-Being During Adolescence

The multifaceted concept of well-being is integral, extending beyond the realm of health to encompass the broader domain of human development. Well-being is intricately linked to both individual factors and environmental influences, with the latter assuming particular significance during the formative stages of childhood and adolescence (Ben Arieh, 2005; Diener, 2009). The dynamic interplay between individual attributes and the surrounding environment underscores the complexity inherent in understanding and fostering well-being during these critical developmental periods.

The well-being of adolescents within bullying programs is a critical aspect that encompasses psychological, emotional, and social dimensions. Chen et al.'s (2023) study on "Belief in a Just World and Bullying Defending Behavior Among Adolescents" sheds light on the intricate relationship between adolescents' belief in a just world, self-efficacy, responsibility, and their defending behaviors against bullying. Understanding these factors is crucial for identifying protective mechanisms contributing to adolescents' well-being within the bullying context.

IV. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The following research objectives will attempt to develop and implement a crisis management bullying intervention program for the well-being of adolescent pupils.

Phase 1: Development of Intervention Program for Bullied Pupils

1. To determine the composition of the bullying intervention program for the well-being of adolescent pupils based on the following:

1.1 Review of the Extensive Literature

- 1.2. Needs assessment through psychological tests
- 1.3. Interviews and Focus Group Discussion with Bullied Pupils, Bullied Pupils' Teachers, and Bullied Pupils' Parents
- 1.4 Pilot program design
- 1.5. Expert Validation
- 1.6. Pilot Study
- 1.7 Finalization of Bullying Intervention Program

Phase 2: Implementation and Testing the Efficacy of the Intervention Program for Bullied Pupils

1. To determine Pre-test and post-test mean scores and standard deviation values of Bullied Pupils regarding Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire and Adolescent Well-Being Scale when grouped according to experimental and control groups.
2. To determine if there is a significant difference between the Pre-test and the Post-test mean scores of Bullied Pupils in the experimental and control groups in terms of the following:

2.1. Level of Strengths and Difficulties

2.2. Level of Psychological Well-being

3. To determine if there is a significant difference between the post-test means scores of the experimental and control groups.
4. To determine the extent of the efficacy of the Bullying Intervention Program in enhancing psychological well-being and reducing the level of difficulties of bullied pupils.

V. RESEARCH DESIGN

The program development research design for a crisis management intervention program for adolescent bullied pupils will use quantitative and qualitative methods that will be a comprehensive and systematic procedure. It will integrate insights from existing literature, thorough needs assessments, incorporate theoretical frameworks, guide faithful program implementation, and rigorously evaluate the program's impact.

By employing this research design, researchers and practitioners can develop and implement evidence-based interventions that will effectively address the unique challenges faced by adolescent pupils dealing with bullying. Likewise, by employing program development and implementation in the study of school crisis intervention, insights into the underlying mechanisms, interrelationships, and potential causal factors that contribute to effective crisis intervention strategies will be gained.

VI. RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS AND STUDY SITE

The research participants for this dissertation paper will focus on developing and implementing a bullying intervention program for adolescent pupils aged 11 to 16 years. The study will be conducted with 120 participants across multiple educational institutions affiliated with De La Salle Philippines in the West Luzon Cluster. These include De La Salle Araneta University, St. Jaime Hilario School De La Salle Bataan, De La Salle University Laguna Campus, and De La Salle Santiago Zobel. However, due to the focus on adolescent participants aged 11-16, De La Salle Health and Science Institute and De La Salle Dasmariñas, primarily catering to Senior High School and College students, will be excluded from the data-gathering process. The exclusion is aligned with the targeted age group for the intervention.

This study intends to develop, implement, and evaluate the effect of the intervention program on students' well-being. Purposive sampling will be used for this research study as participants are selected to provide insight into a particular experience (Smith, 2015). Morrow (2005) emphasized that qualitative sampling is always purposeful and criterion-based, meaning that participants are carefully selected to provide data as informative as possible based on specific criteria related to the research questions. Thus, a set of inclusion criteria is considered to ensure a reasonable group of pupils who could illuminate their crisis experience.

VII. RESEARCH INSTRUMENTATION

Two instruments that hold the potential for assessing various aspects of student well-being and mental health in the context of bullying intervention are the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) and the Adolescent Well-Being Scale.

I. Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ)

The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) is a concise behavioral screening instrument designed to evaluate individuals aged 2 to 17. Developed to cater to the diverse requirements of researchers, clinicians, and educationalists, the SDQ manifests in multiple versions, each uniquely tailored to its specific user base. A common structure emerges within these versions, encompassing one to three key components (Goodman, R., 1997).

A pivotal facet across all iterations of the SDQ involves incorporating 25 items focused on psychological attributes.

These items traverse a spectrum of positive and negative attributes, forming the foundation for a comprehensive evaluation. The 25 items are systematically distributed among five (5) distinct scales, each designed to capture specific dimensions of behavioral and emotional well-being (Goodman, R., 1997).

1. Emotional Symptoms (5 items): This scale encompasses queries related to emotional well-being, with five items dedicated to gauging the presence and extent of emotional symptoms.
2. Conduct Problems (5 items): Addressing behavioral concerns, this scale comprises five items tailored to assess the occurrence and severity of conduct problems.
3. Hyperactivity/Inattention (5 items): Focused on attention-related aspects, this scale delves into hyperactivity and inattention through a set of five items.
4. Peer Relationship Problems (5 items): Exploring interpersonal dynamics, this scale appraises difficulties in peer relationships, utilizing five specific items for evaluation.
5. Prosocial Behavior (5 items): Unlike the aforementioned scales, this component is oriented towards positive attributes, encompassing items that probe into prosocial behaviors.

II. ADOLESCENT WELL-BEING SCALE

The adolescent well-being scale is an adaptation from the Depression Self-Rating Scale for Children, designed to evaluate depressive symptoms and well-being in children and adolescents comprehensively. This instrument comprises distinct subscales and employs a range of sample items to capture the diverse facets of emotional experience in the target population. The Stepping Up theme associated with this measure aligns with Health and Wellness, specifically focusing on fostering a sense of mental well-being among youth. The intended recipients of this assessment tool are youth aged 11 to 16 years (Birleson, 1981).

The instrument comprises of 18 items. Responses are recorded on a scale ranging from 0 (most of the time) to 2 (never), with scores subsequently summed. A score exceeding 13 is suggested as indicative of potential depressive disorder. The measure is administered through a self-report. The Depression of Self-Rating Scale for Children, from which this measure is derived, was developed by Birleson P. in 1981.

By incorporating these instruments into research methodologies, this study can gather reliable and comprehensive data, enabling them to better understand the impact of crises on young individuals and inform the development of evidence-based interventions.

VIII. DATA GATHERING PROCEDURE

The research objectives are structured in two phases: (1) the development of the intervention program and (2) the implementation and testing of its efficacy. The data-gathering procedure employs a program development research design, integrating a multifaceted approach encompassing a literature review and needs assessment through psychological tests, interviews, pilot programs, expert validation, and quantitative assessments.

This comprehensive data-gathering procedure employs a rigorous program development research design, integrating literature review, needs assessment, stakeholder input, expert validation, pilot testing, and quantitative assessments.

III. ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

Ethical considerations are paramount when conducting research involving vulnerable populations, such as 11-16-year-olds, especially in studies addressing sensitive topics like bullying and mental health. For this research, the study will emphasize ethical considerations emphasizing parental consent, participants' assent, voluntary participation, privacy and confidentiality and other pertinent ethical safeguards. Open and transparent communication will also be essential to build trust among participants, parents, teachers, and the researcher.

This research will undergo an ethics review under the Ethics Committee in the accredited Ethics Review Board in the Philippines. Human ethics guidelines follow institutional guidelines on interviews, surveys, administering questionnaires, and observing human behavior. The researchers must secure a certificate from the review ethics committee before gathering data. Questionnaires that will be used must be validated once ethics certification is received and data collection is started.

The ethical considerations in this study underscore the commitment to safeguarding the well-being, autonomy, and privacy of the 11-16-year-old participants. The research aims to conduct a responsible and respectful investigation into developing and implementing a school crisis management program for bullied pupils.

VII. DATA ANALYSIS

A Convergent Mixed Methods Design will be used, where both quantitative and qualitative data will be gathered, analyzed separately, and then cross-referenced to validate or refute each other's findings. Both qualitative and quantitative data will be collected and analyzed for this research, and the results will be presented in a manner that either starts with the quantitative statistical results or the qualitative findings.

In Phase 1, the qualitative strand explores stakeholders' experiences and perspectives through interviews, focus group discussions, and document analysis (Smith, 2018; Jones & Brown, 2020). Thematic analysis will extract key themes and insights, contributing to the nuanced understanding of the intervention program's developmental stage.

Simultaneously, the quantitative strand involves collecting and analyzing data regarding the psychometric properties of various program components, utilizing standardized measures to ensure the program's theoretical foundation is robust and empirically supported (Johnson, 2019; Williams, 2021). To ensure trustworthiness in data analysis, interpretation, and presentation, interpretation adequacy will be critical. This will be achieved through member checking. Credibility can be achieved by prolonging engagement with the participants by resending participants' interview transcripts for validation and doing follow-up interviews as needed.

In Phase 2, the convergent design allows for a seamless integration of qualitative and quantitative data to evaluate the efficacy of the implemented bullying intervention program. Qualitative data gathered through participant interviews and focus groups during the implementation phase will be analyzed using thematic analysis to identify emergent patterns and perceptions (Brown & Davis, 2022). Quantitative measures will complement This qualitative insight by assessing changes in participants' well-being and the program's overall impact through statistical analyses such as t-tests and ANOVA (Thomas & Harris, 2017; Rodriguez, 2020). The convergence of these methods facilitates a comprehensive understanding of the development and implementation phases, ensuring a robust and triangulated interpretation of the research findings

VIII. FUNDING

No funds have been received for this article.

IX. DATA AVAILABILITY

No new data is analyzed and applicable to this study.

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