

Knowledge and Attitude of Secondary School Students Regarding Bullying

Eslam Ibrahim saber^{1,2}, Sharbat thabet hasaneen³, Ola Hussein Abo Elmaaty⁴

¹Master Student of Community Health Nursing, Faculty of Nursing, Fayoum University, Egypt.

²Nursing Teacher, Nursing Technical School, Fayoum , Egypt.

³Professor of Community Health Nursing, Faculty of Nursing, Fayoum University, Egypt.

⁴Assist professor of Community Health Nursing, Faculty of Nursing, Fayoum University, Egypt.

Corresponding author: Eslam Ibrahim saber

E-mail: elselmelsehly111@gmail.com

Abstract

Background: Bullying is a common issue in secondary schools, involving repeated harmful behaviors such as physical aggression, verbal abuse, or social exclusion. It can negatively effect on students' mental health, academic performance, and overall well-being. **Aim of study:** assessing the knowledge and attitude of secondary school student's regarding bullying. **Research design:** A cross-sectional descriptive design. **Sample:** convenience sample for all students at male school and female school at fayoum governorate. **Tool:** Self-Administered Questionnaire consisted of three parts. **Part I:** socio-demographic Questionnaire. **Part II:** student`s knowledge self-administered questionnaire. **Part III:** student attitude self-administered questionnaire form, divided into three parts. **Part (A)** to assess the attitude of bully **Part (B)** to assess the attitude of victim. **Part (C)** to assess the attitude of witness. **Results:** More than half of the students (54.0%) have average level of knowledge, while more than third of them (35.5%) exhibited good knowledge. However, (10.5%) of them had poor level of knowledge. The majority of students (80.5%) displayed appropriate attitudes toward bullying as a bully, while less than three quadrants (73.5%) of them as a victim and 39.5% as a witness exhibited risk-prone attitudes. **Conclusion:** The secondary school students demonstrated moderate to good levels of knowledge about bullying. Most of the students showed appropriate attitudes as bullies. However, victims and witnesses did not. **Recommendations:** Implement Comprehensive Anti-Bullying Programs that clearly define bullying, its types.

Keywords: knowledge, attitude, Secondary School Students, Bully.

Introduction

Bullying is a repeated aggressive behaviour, where one person or a group of people, intentionally harms, intimidates or controls another person who is perceived as weaker or unable to defend themselves. It can take many forms, including physical attacks, verbal insults, social exclusion or harassment through digital platforms. What makes bullying different from a simple disagreement or conflict is the imbalance of power, whether that power comes from physical strength, popularity or access to embarrassing information (**Bucur, 2022**).

There are several types of bullying that secondary school students may face. Physical bullying involves hurting someone's body or possessions, such as hitting, pushing, tripping or damaging personal belongings. Verbal bullying includes name-calling, teasing, threats or offensive comments meant to humiliate the victim. Both of these types are more visible, making them easier to notice by teachers or peers (**Markkanen et al., 2021**).

School nurses play an important role in identifying and addressing bullying. They are often the first to see physical signs of abuse, such as unexplained injuries or emotional signs like anxiety and frequent visits to the health office. Because they interact with students in a confidential setting, nurses can be a trusted adult for victims to confide in (**Celdrán-Navarro et al., 2023**).

Significance of the study:

Bullying remains a widespread issue among adolescents, with serious

implications for mental health, academic performance and overall well-being. According to the National Center for Education Statistics **NCES (2022)**, approximately 19.2% of students report being bullied at school, with middle school students experiencing higher rates (26.1%) than high school students (14.6%). These figures highlight which reflects one of two possibilities: a lack of reporting of bullying cases or high students perceiving to the bullying which create the need to extrapolate what they know about it, how they define it and how they respond to it (**National Center for Education Statistics. 2024**).

Students' attitudes toward bullying are equally critical, as they influence whether individuals intervene, ignore or perpetuate harmful behaviours. Alarmingly, 41.3% of bullied students believe the bullying will happen again and only 44.2% report incidents to a trusted adult, suggesting a lack of confidence in support systems. Understanding students' attitudes can help schools foster a culture of empathy, accountability and peer support. This study is significant because it provides data-driven insights that can inform anti-bullying policies, awareness campaigns and educational programs-ultimately aiming to reduce bullying prevalence and its long-term psychological effects (**National Center for Education Statistics, 2022**).

Aim of the Study:

The overall goal of the study is to assess the knowledge and attitude of

secondary school student`s regarding the bullying.

It will be achieved through:

- Assess the knowledge of the students.
- Assess the attitude of the students.

Research questions:

1. What is the knowledge of the secondary school student`s regarding the bullying?
2. What is the attitude of the secondary school student`s regarding the bullying?

Subjects and Method:

I. Technical Design:

Includes research design, setting of the study, subjects of the study and tools for data collection.

A. Research design:

A descriptive cross-sectional research design will be utilized in this study.

Setting:

There are seven secondary technical nursing schools at fayoum governorate two of them are male schools and five for female. The total number of students around 900 students. The current study was conducted at two schools; the study program is divided into three levels inside the school. Then the student has to complete the fourth and fifth level at fayoum technical institute for nurses. the first part of the sample was collected from the Secondary Technical School of female nurses which is containing of 112 female student which is located inside Sinnuris Central Hospital at Sinnuris town and the second part of the sample were collected from the Secondary Technical School of male nurses which is containing of 100 male student and located inside

Matertaris health unite at Matertaris Village.

Sample Size:

The sample consisted of 200 students, from both genders.

Sample type:

Convenience sample including all (male - female) available in both school from Fayoum governorates

Tools of Data Collection:

Data will be collected though **self-administered questionnaire** was adopted by the researcher from **Olweus, (1994)** and **González et al. (2021)** then translated into Arabic language to suit the students' language. Divided into three parts by the following tools:

Part (I): Socio-Demographic Questionnaire Form consisted of 10 items such as personal characteristics; it included ten items as the students' age, gender, school grade, father education, father job & mother education and mother job, etc.

Part (II): Student's Knowledge Self-administered Questionnaire Form. It consisted of questions (16 items) related to knowledge of the students regarding bullying, as do you know what is bullying, in which grade bullying most common, Bullying involves a power imbalance where the bully wants to be the stronger one, the frequency of seeing bullying at school & most places of bullying in the school, etc. the student should choose agree 2 point, sometimes 1 point agree or disagree 0 point.

Scoring system:

Key Items

- **Good knowledge (85%- 100 %):**

- **Average knowledge** (75% - 84.9%)

- **Poor knowledge** (less than 75%)

Part III: Student Attitude Self-Administered Questionnaire Form;

include (36) items divided into three parts. **Part (A)** to assess the attitude of bully including of (13) item such as, It's okay to push another student out of the way as a joke, It's okay to bother someone if other students are doing it too, etc. **Part (B)** to assess the attitude of victim including of (14) item such as Mocking others is generally an inappropriate behavior, you wouldn't inform your parents if you were bullied at school, etc. and **Part (C)** to assess the attitude of witness including (9) item such: as I have seen a classmate being bullied at school multiple time, if you see a student bullying a classmate, you would advise the bully to stop, etc. The student should choose Agree 2 points, sometimes agree 1 point, or disagree 0 point.

Scoring system Part III:

Part (A) Students' attitude regarding **Bullying: (bully)**

Key Items

- **Appropriate** (85%-100 %).
- **Ambiguous** (70%- 84.9%).
- **Risk indicated** (less than 70%).

Part (B) Students' attitude regarding **Bullying: (victim)**

Key Items

- **Appropriate** (85%-100 %)
- **Ambiguous** (70%- 84.9%)
- **Risk indicated** (less than 70%)

Part (C) Students' attitude regarding **Bullying: (Witness)**

Key Items

- **Appropriate** (85%-100 %)
- **Ambiguous** (70%- 84.9%)

- **Risk indicated** (less than 70%)

B. Operational Design:

Includes preparatory phase, content validity, pilot study and field work.

a) The preparatory phase:

This phase starts prior to the development of the **self-administered structured questionnaire** by reviewing up-to-date literature from national and international resources (books, magazines, the internet, and research) related to the study. For data collection and to get acquainted with the various aspects of the research problem.

b) Content validity:

Revision of the tools was done by a panel of experts composed of (three professors) two professors of Community Health Nursing and one professor of psychiatric Health Nursing to measure the content validity of the tools and the necessary modifications were done accordingly.

c) Pilot study:

It was carried out on 10% (10) of older adults under the study to test the applicability, clarity, and efficiency of the tools. There were no modifications found after the pilot study. The pilot showed high levels of reliability. Alpha Cronbach Reliability Analysis of the Used Tool.

Field work:

The fieldwork of this study was executed over one month, the first and second week was at female school the study processed over five days and the third and fourth week was at male school the study processed over five days, all the data

was collected from the study subjects.

The investigator started by introducing himself to the students; the aim of the study and the components of the tools were explained to the students of every level inside the class at the beginning of data collection, and they were assured that the information collected would be treated confidentially and that it would be used only for the purpose of the study.

The investigator was available during the study day (8 a.m. – 2 p.m.).

To complete the questionnaire sheet, at first week the investigator visited the school and arranged with the administration and arranged the paper needed for the permission then during the second week the investigator collected all available students at first level at together at day one then students at second level was collected at day two then last day was for the third level. One questioner sheet provided to each student and give them 30 minutes to complete the sheet.

C. Administrative Design:

An oral permission for data collection was obtained from school managers and also from the hospital manger. Meetings and discussions were held between the researcher and the school manager personnel to make them aware of the aims and objectives of the research, as well as to get cooperation during the phases of the research.

Ethical considerations:

Prior the pilot study, Ethical approval was obtained from the Central Agency for Public Mobilization & Statistics then ethical approval obtained from Fayoum University Supreme Ethical Committee

for Scientific Research Ethics. Students. Oral approval was acquired after a full explanation of the aim of the study and its procedure. Students were given the opportunity to refuse participation and were informed that they could withdraw at any time during data collection. They were also assured that any information obtained would be confidential and used for research purposes only. The investigator assured the public that all collected data was kept anonymous and confidential.

D. Statistical Design:

The data was collected, coded and entered to a personal computer. It was analyzed with the program statistical package for social science (SPSS) version 20. The collected data were organized, revised, analysed and presented in numbers and percentage in tables, figures. Proper and suitable statistical tests were used to test the significance of results obtained.

The hypothesis that the row and column variables are independent, without indicating strength or direction of the relationship. Pearson chi-square and likelihood-ratio chi-square.

Spearman correlation coefficient:

The Spearman's rank coefficient of correlation is a nonparametric measure of rank correlation (statistical dependence of ranking between two variables) >0.05 non-significant, <0.05* significant, <0.001** high significant.

Results

In term of Socio – demographic characteristics of studied sample, **Table (1)** highlights the sociodemographic characteristics of the studied students. 38.5 were in

their third year of education. Regarding parental education, 67.5% of fathers and 64.5% of mothers had secondary education. Additionally, 58.0% of the fathers were employed, and 60.5% were housewives. Monthly income was sufficient for 77.5% of families.

Table (2) illustrates the distribution of students' responses regarding their knowledge of bullying. The data reveals that 88.0% of students correctly identified bullying as targeting a specific individual repeatedly, highlighting a generally high level of awareness. Moreover, 83.0% acknowledged that sending abusive messages via social media constitutes bullying. However, misconceptions persist, with only 15.0% identifying theft of belongings as bullying, and only 6.0% recognized that raising one's voice during a discussion does not constitute bullying.

Figure (1) summarizes the total scores of students' attitudes toward bullying (The Bully). The findings indicate that, 86.0% of students displayed appropriate attitudes, reflecting a general rejection of bullying behaviors. However, 14.0% of students exhibited inappropriate attitudes.

Figure (2) illustrates the total attitudes of students as a victim of bullying. Alarming, 92.0% exhibited inappropriate attitudes, suggesting significant challenges in coping with their experiences. Only 8.0% demonstrated appropriate attitudes.

Figure (3) examines the total attitudes of students toward bullying as a witness. 62.0% of students exhibited inappropriate attitudes. Only 38.0% of students demonstrated appropriate attitudes.

Table (3) examines the relationship between knowledge levels and

demographic characteristics. No statistically significant differences were found with gender, educational level, or parental education. However, students from families with higher monthly income tended to exhibit better knowledge, suggesting that socioeconomic factors may play a role in awareness levels. The table also showed a statistically significant difference between mother occupation and students level of knowledge with p-value < 0.05 .

Table (4) showed that there were no statistically significant differences between attitude and gender, educational level, or parental education. While there was a statistically significant difference were observed between family composition and attitudes ($p < 0.05$).

Table (5) explores that There were no statistically significant differences between student knowledge and their attitude as a bully and victim ($p > 0.05$), while There was a statistically significant difference between student knowledge and their attitude as a witness ($p < 0.05$).

Table (6) presents correlations between students' total knowledge and attitude scores. Significant positive association were observed between students' knowledge and their attitudes as a bully ($r = 0.221$, $p < 0.05$) and as a witness ($r = 0.198$, $p < 0.05$). Moreover, there was a significant positive association between students' knowledge and their total attitudes ($r = 0.224$, $p < 0.01$), which indicated that an increase in student knowledge will lead to an increase in student attitude.

Table (1): Numbers and percentage distribution of the studied students according to their socio-demographic characteristics (n=200)

Student's Characteristics	No.	%
Gender		
– Male	100	50.0
– Female	100	50.0
Educational level		
– First	52	26.0
– Second	71	35.5
– Third	77	38.5
Father education		
– Illiterate	7	3.5
– Secondary	135	67.5
– University	43	21.5
– Higher education	3	1.5
– Others	12	6.0
Father occupation		
– Not working	5	2.5
– Employer	116	58.0
– Farmer	6	3.0
– Other	73	36.5
Mother education		
– Illiterate	19	9.5
– Secondary	129	64.5
– University	41	20.5
– Higher education	6	3.0
– Others	5	2.5
Mother occupation		
– House wife		
– Employer	121	60.5
– Other	68	34.0
	11	5.5
Monthly income		
– Enough	155	77.5
– Not enough	24	12.0
– Enough and save	21	10.5
Number of brothers		
– 1	16	8.0
– 2	37	18.5
– 3	88	44.0
– >3	59	29.5
Residence place		
– Urban	96	48.0
– Rural	104	52.0
Family component		
– Father, mother and brothers	182	91.0
– Father and mother only	5	2.5
– Father only	4	2.0
– Mother only	9	4.5

Table (2): Distribution of the studied students' knowledge regarding bullying (n=200)

Items	Agree		Sometimes Agree		Not agree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
1. Do you know the difference between having a disagreement with someone and bullying them?	161	80.5	30	15.0	9	4.5
2. Bullying is targeting a specific person and harassing them repeatedly.	176	88.0	15	7.5	9	4.5
3. Does raising your voice during a discussion with a colleague not count as bullying?	12	6.0	45	22.5	143	71.5
4. Bullying involves a power imbalance where the bully wants to be the stronger one.	133	66.5	50	25.0	17	8.5
5. Bullying is not when your boss, teacher, friend, or parents reprimand you for something you shouldn't have done.	20	10.0	21	10.5	159	79.5
6. Bullying occurs when someone intentionally tries to hurt you by doing or saying something.	174	87.0	19	9.5	7	3.5
7. Sending abusive messages to a student or sharing inappropriate photos of them on social media is considered bullying.	166	83.0	23	11.5	11	5.5
8. Stealing a student's belongings considered bullying?	30	15.0	45	22.5	125	62.5
9. are bullies suffer from behavioral issues and have low self-esteem?	155	77.5	24	12.0	21	10.5
10. Have you ever received a lecture on bullying at any previous educational stage?	106	53.0	23	11.5	70	35.0
11. Do your parents and siblings often not raise their voices in front of you at home?	62	31.0	46	23.0	92	46.0
12. Bullying not only happens at school.	17	8.5	23	11.5	160	80.0
13. Bullying often occurs during the commute to and from school.	76	38.0	86	43.0	38	19.0
14. It usually happens during breaks time between classes.	91	45.5	84	42.0	25	12.5
15. Bullying often targets first-grade students or younger classes in school.	88	44.0	75	37.5	37	18.5

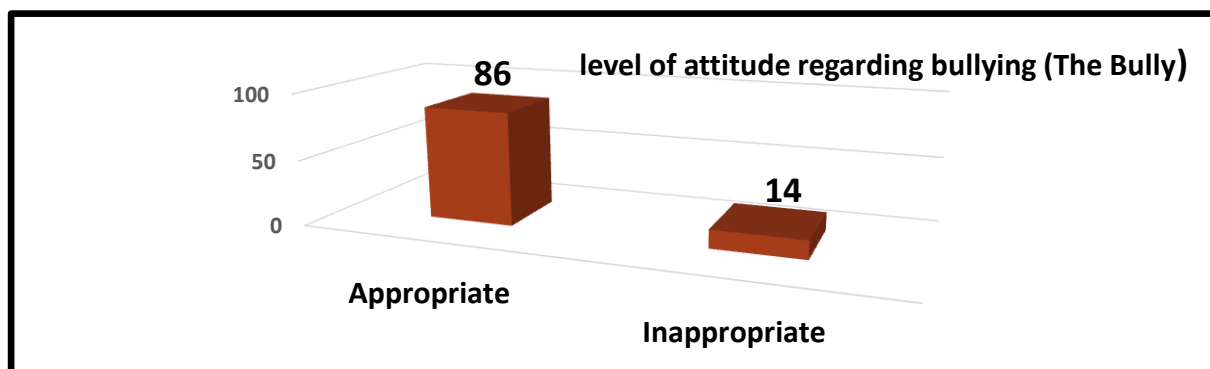


Figure (1) Distribution of studied student' attitude level regarding bullying (The Bully) (n=200)

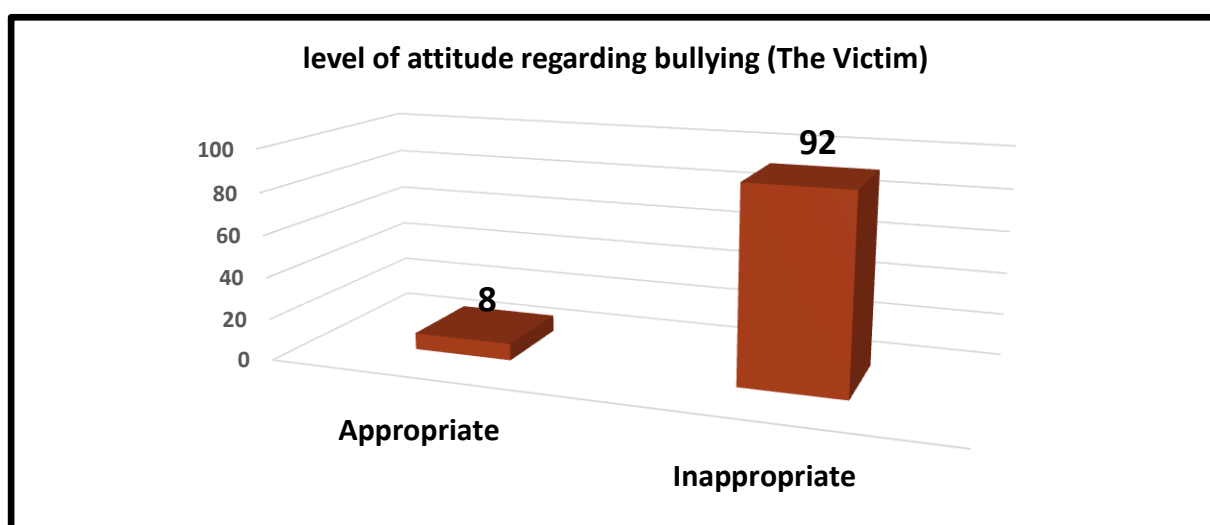


Figure (2) Distribution of studied student' attitude level regarding bullying (The Victim) (n=200)

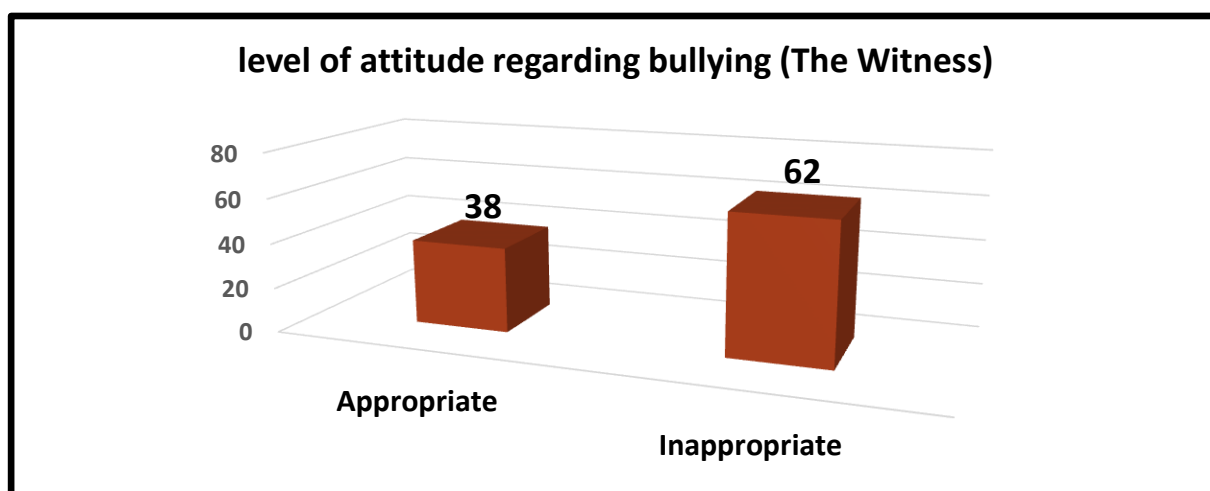


Figure (3) Distribution of studied student' attitude level regarding bullying (The Witness) (n=200)

Table (3): Relations between the studied student' attitude level regarding bullying and their characteristics (n=200)

	Total Attitude level								
	Appropriate (N=32)		Ambiguous (N=127)		Risk indicated (N=41)		Total	Chi-square	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	X ²	P-value
Gender									
Male	15	15.0	63	63.0	22	22.0	100	1.665	0.001
Female	20	20.0	64	64.0	16	16.0	100		
Educational level									
First	8	15.8	36	68.4	8	15.8	52	7.867	0.098
Second	11	15.5	38	53.5	22	31.0	71		
Third	14	18.1	52	67.5	11	14.2	77		
Father education									
Illiterate	0	0.0	6	85.7	1	14.3	7	7.395	0.495
Secondary	19	14.0	85	63.0	31	23.0	135		
University	11	25.6	25	58.1	7	16.3	43		
Higher education	0	0.0	2	66.7	1	33.3	3		
Others	2	16.7	9	75.0	1	8.3	12		
Father occupation									
Not working	0	0.0	4	80.0	1	20.0	5	1.500	0.960
Employer	20	17.2	71	61.2	25	21.6	116		
Farmer	1	16.7	4	66.6	1	16.7	6		
Other	11	15.1	48	65.7	14	19.2	73		
Mother education									
Illiterate	2	10.5	15	79.0	2	10.5	19	8.621	0.375
Secondary	21	16.3	83	64.3	25	19.4	129		
University	9	22.0	22	53.7	10	24.3	41		
Higher education	0	0.0	3	50.0	3	50.0	6		
Others	0	0.0	4	80.0	1	20.0	5		
Mother occupation									
House wife	19	15.7	82	67.8	20	16.5	121	6.172	0.187
Employer	12	17.6	40	58.8	16	23.4	68		
Other	1	9.0	5	45.5	5	45.5	11		
Monthly income									
Enough	28	18.1	99	63.8	28	18.1	155	4.387	0.356
Not enough	3	12.5	14	58.3	7	29.2	24		
Enough and save	1	4.8	14	66.7	6	28.5	21		
Number of brothers									
1	4	25.0	7	43.8	5	31.2	16	5.123	0.528
2	4	10.8	27	73.0	6	16.2	37		
3	16	18.2	53	60.2	19	21.6	88		
>3	8	13.6	40	67.8	11	18.6	59		
Residence place									
Urban	16	16.7	58	60.4	22	22.9	96	0.854	0.653
Rural	16	15.4	69	66.3	19	18.3	104		
Family component									
Father, mother and brothers	26	14.3	119	65.4	37	20.3	182	13.079	0.042*
Father, mother	3	60.0	2	40.0	0	0.0	5		
Father only	1	25.0	3	75.0	0	0.0	4		
Student only	2	22.2	3	33.4	4	44.4	9		

Table (4) Relations between the studied students' knowledge level regarding bullying and their characteristics. (n=200)

	Total Knowledge level								
	Good (N=70)		Average (N=108)		Poor (N=21)		Total	Chi-square	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	X ²	P-value
Gender									
Male	35	35.0	52	52.0	13	13.0	100	0.006	0.001
Female	35	35.0	58	58.0	7	7.0	100		
Educational level									
First	20	38.4	28	53.8	4	7.7	52	7.867	0.098
Second	11	15.5	38	53.5	22	31.0	71		
Third	13	16.8	52	67.5	12	15.5	77		
Father education									
Illiterate	2	28.6	5	71.4	0	0.0	7	9.553	0.298
Secondary	48	35.6	70	51.9	17	12.7	135		
University	14	32.6	28	65.1	1	2.3	43		
Higher education	1	33.3	1	33.3	1	33.4	3		
Others	6	50.0	4	33.3	2	16.7	12		
Father occupation									
Not working	1	20.0	4	80.0	0	0.0	5	1.914	0.927
Employer	43	37.1	61	52.6	12	10.3	116		
Farmer	2	33.3	3	50.0	1	16.7	6		
Other	25	34.2	40	54.8	8	11.0	73		
Mother education									
Illiterate	6	31.6	10	52.6	3	15.8	19	8.189	0.415
Secondary	45	34.9	73	56.6	11	8.5	129		
University	18	43.9	19	46.3	4	9.8	41		
Higher education	1	16.7	4	66.6	1	16.7	6		
Others	1	20.0	2	40.0	2	40.0	5		
Mother occupation									
House wife	40	33.1	70	57.8	11	9.1	121	9.831	0.043*
Employer	27	39.7	35	51.5	6	8.8	68		
Other	4	36.4	3	27.2	4	36.4	11		
Number of brothers									
1	5	31.3	9	56.3	2	12.4	16	3.852	0.697
2	9	24.4	22	59.4	6	16.2	37		
3	35	39.8	45	51.1	8	9.1	88		
>3	22	37.3	32	54.2	5	8.5	59		
Residence place									
Urban	31	32.3	53	55.2	12	12.5	96	1.289	0.525
Rural	40	38.5	55	52.8	9	8.7	104		

Table (5) Relations between the studied student' knowledge and attitude level regarding bullying (n=200)

Attitude level	Total Knowledge level						
	Satisfactory (N=119)		Unsatisfactory (N=81)		Total	Chi-square	
	N	%	N	%	N	X ²	P-value
The Bully							
Appropriate	107	62.2	65	37.8	172	3.742	0.053
Inappropriate	12	42.9	16	57.1	28		
The Victim							
Appropriate	10	62.5	6	37.5	16	0.065	0.799
Inappropriate	109	59.2	75	40.8	184		
The witness							
Appropriate	54	71.1	22	28.9	76	6.789	0.009
Inappropriate	65	52.4	59	47.6	124		

Table (6) Correlation between studied students' total level of knowledge and their level of attitude regarding bullying (n=200)

Attitude score	Total Knowledge score	
	r	P-value
The Bully	0.221	0.002**
The Victim	0.009	0.900
The witness	0.198	0.005**
Total attitude score	0.224	0.001**

Discussion:

The socio-demographic data of the studied students reveal that, while a large majority lived within nuclear family (both parents and siblings). More than half came from rural areas. These characteristics may influence their perceptions and experiences related to bullying this data aligned with (Demirbağ et al., 2017) who's reported 78.7% was living in a nuclear family, 99.2% has their parents alive, 54.5% has middle level of income, the mean number of siblings was $2.25 \pm .99$ and the mean

number of people living in the family was 4.69 ± 1.20 .

The current study revealed that, more than half of the studied students were urban and less than half were rural. This nearly equal ratio between urban and rural residence is a very interesting and significant. This finding can reflect on the level of knowledge and attitude of the students regarding the bullying. This results crossing with a study by Edet & Ikwunze, (2025), who emphasize that access to tertiary education has dramatically improved in rural areas

due to online learning, the establishment of regional universities, and better transportation infrastructure.

Level of students' knowledge regarding bullying:

The findings of current study referring that, the majority of the studied students have a good to average level of knowledge, specially the basic concepts of bullying, indicating high level of awareness. For example, the significant majority of the students agreed with, bullying is targeting a specific person and harassing them repeatedly. And also agreed with, bullying occurs when someone intentionally tries to hurt you by doing or saying something. Likewise, more than three quarters of the students agreed that online harassment, such as abusive messages or inappropriate photos, consider as bullying.

These findings were aligning with study by **(Smith et al., 2016)**, **Chan & Wong (2015)**. They mentioned that, a generally high level of awareness, especially on fundamental concepts to the studied students in their sample. The findings in the current study I agree with study by **Gonzales & Madrigal (2020)**, on high school students in Antique who revealed that, students had a generally high level of awareness regarding bullying, consistent across various demographic groups. From the researcher point of view, this awareness comes from the social medial effect and some campaign on

the television that becomes easy to reach by most of population.

The current study lighting that, a nearly two-thirds of the students disagree with stealing student's belongings considered bullying. Despite that there was big fraction disagreed with the idea that raising one's voice during a discussion consider as bullying—showing confusion about verbal aggression versus assertive communication. This reflects misunderstanding about the unclear concepts of bullying. This finding agreed with **(Volk et al., 2021)**, who refers in his study that Stealing belongings is a direct example of tangible resource control, yet students often misclassify it as bullying, failing to see the power dynamic and systematic harm. Their framework explains why such acts are core bullying but frequently overlooked.

In the current study, more than three quarters of the studied students understood that bullies might suffer from behavioral issues and low self-esteem. This aligning with the study by **(O'Moore & Kirkham 2001)**, which indicating that children of both primary and post-primary age who were involved in bullying as victims, bullies, or both had significantly lower global self-esteem than children who had neither bullied nor been bullied. This finding regarding the behavioral issue for the bullies also agreed with **Hellström & Beckman (2021)**, who reported that the students often rely on peer

norms to judge behavior. If shouting is common within a peer group or perceived as a normal way to "win" an argument, it is less likely to be considered as bullying, regardless of the target's distress or power imbalance. This normalization hinders recognition.

Attitude of the studied students regarding bullying (as the bully):

In the current study, regarding to student's attitudes toward bullying (as the bully), reveal a generally strong rejection of aggressive and harmful conduct among the majority of respondents. For example, in the current study, more than three-quarters of students disagreed with statements endorsing bullying behaviors such as mocking others, spreading rumors, or being mean to fit in with a group. This suggests a solid foundation of moral awareness and social responsibility. However, concerning levels of agreement still exist, particularly regarding normalized behaviors. These findings is supported by **(Pagara 2014)**, who found that, the majority of high school students in the Philippines demonstrated high awareness and disapproval of explicit bullying acts.

The current study reveals that, one-fifth of the students believed that, it was acceptable to push others as a joke, and nearly one-quarter viewed teasing within families as normal, highlighting areas where social boundaries may be misunderstood or minimized. Additionally, more than one-fifth of studied students showed

ambiguity by selecting "sometimes agree" for several bullying behaviors. This pattern of bullying is supported by **(Pagara 2014)**, who found that, however the majority of high school students demonstrated high awareness and disagreeing of direct bullying acts, they still showed ambiguity or partial acceptance toward indirect behaviors such as teasing or exclusion particularly when framed as humor or cultural norms.

These mixed attitudes indicate that while clear bullying is largely unaccepted, certain behaviors are still seen as acceptable under the cover of joking or group acceptance, that has appeared with a big proportion of the students. For example, one-fifth of the students agreed to push another student out of the way as a joke and more than one-fifth of the students sometimes agreed. This finding emphasizing the need for clearer guidance on what could be considered a bullying in all its forms. This finding supported by **(Pozzoli et al., 2022)** who mentioned that study done at seven countries, 68% of bystanders admitted not intervening in aggression reframed as "jokes," fearing social exclusion. This was highest in collectivist cultures (China: 73%; Japan: 77%).

From the researcher point of view this attitude under the cover of juke may be due to the student's desire to be member of group of friends, almost more than the ability to respect the moral aspect in this level of age.

Attitude of the studied students regarding bullying (as the victim):

In the current study, the attitudes of students who identify as victims of bullying reveal to a complex mix of awareness, emotional impact, and coping challenges. While a large majority of the studied students recognized that, mocking others is inappropriate behavior, there responses to other items suggesting emotional distress and unlike to seek help. Notably, half admitted to thoughts of revenge, and nearly half said they would not inform their parents if bullied, reflecting internalized stress and fear of speaking up. That's confirming the findings which mentions mixed attitude for the students as victim. These findings are agreed with study by **(Tenenbaum et al., 2011)**, which revealed that, victims' self-reported coping strategies did not always fit into the distinct categories of emotion-focused and problem-focused coping and that children often implemented multiple strategies simultaneously.

In the current study a significant portion nearly two-thirds of the students reported physical and verbal abuse. This finding is agreed with study by **(Onukwufor J. N. 2013)** in Obio/Akpor local government Area of Rivers State, the study was made up of 360 secondary school students drawn from three schools, their study showed that, the prevalence of verbal aggression among senior secondary school students was 56.7%.

In the current study more than one-third of the students acknowledging psychosomatic symptoms like headaches or stomach-aches. This agrees with study by **(Bjereld et al., 2023)** of 213 students, which revealed that, 42.7% were involved in bullying as victims; the study also mentioned a consistent positive association between victimization and somatic complaints. The most common physical symptoms reported by victims included headache 60.7%, chest pain 35.7%, stomach pain 33.9%, weakness (30.4%), and pain in arms and legs 19.6%.

This finding also agreed with study by **(Miskimon et al., 2023)** included 676 secondary school students from the Southeast region of the USA which indicated that the significant indirect effect of academic performance on the association between traditional and cyber victimization and mental health. Additionally, **(Galal et al., 2019)** in their study Prevalence and Correlates of Bullying and Victimization Among School Students in Rural Egypt confirmed that, bullying victims often suffer from psychosomatic complaints such as headaches and abdominal pain, and experience emotional effects including anxiety, depression, and social withdrawal. These students also report reduced school engagement and academic underperformance.

From the researcher point of view, this finding regarding the psychosomatic symptom highlighting

the great harms that can be happen to the students whose have been bullied and the emphasize on the vital role to school health nurse through assessment of the victim after exposure to bullying.

Attitude of the studied students regarding bullying (as the witness):

The attitudes of students who witness bullying suggest a mix of awareness, empathy, and concern, yet also highlight significant gaps in safety perception and institutional trust.

In the current study a high proportion of students reported witnessing bullying multiple times. This finding not align with the study done in Ethiopia by **Eijigu T. D & Teketel S. Z. (2021)**, for 612 students aged 12–16 years attending five primary schools in grades 7 and 8 and five general secondary schools in grades 9 and 10, the study showed that Out of 511 participants who reported witnessing a single bullying incident The current study revealed that, a strong majority agreed that physical assault, even as a joke is wrong and that it bothers them to see such incidents. Encouragingly, many also expressed a willingness to intervene—for example around two-thirds of the students said they would step in when witnessing bullying and mor than three-quarters of the students would advise the bully to stop. However, less than half believed their school effectively addresses bullying.

This finding completely agreed with by **Eijigu T. D & Teketel, S. Z.**

(2021) who revealed that a larger proportion of students remained passive upon witnessing school bullying. Fifty-five percent of bystanders were involved in passive bystanding behavior, and 38% of them involved in defending behavior. From the researcher point of view, this behavior of the witness depends on many factors such as self-stem, feeling of power balance with bully and the strength moral aspects.

However, in the current study more than one-quarter felt safe from bullying in their school environment, still nearly half of the student still doesn't see the school as safe environment and more than quarter of the students feeling doubt about safety of the environment that`s suggesting institutional efforts may be falling short. These results agreed with study by **(Fredrick et al., 2021)** in a sample of 313 students. There were 109 males 35% and 189 females 60% which reported that Overall, findings indicated that male and female boarding students who perceived high levels of bullying at their school felt less emotionally and physically safe.

The overall distribution of students' attitudes toward bullying, across the roles of bully, victim, and witness, reveals significant contrasts in perception and response. The majority showed appropriate attitudes in the role of the bully, indicating a strong general disapproval of engaging in bullying behavior.

However, attitudes were far less constructive in the roles of victim and witness. Alarming, only a small minority of students exhibited appropriate attitudes as victims, with nearly three-quarters indicating risk-prone attitudes—suggesting emotional distress, negative coping strategies, or reluctance to seek help. Witnesses fared slightly better, with just over one-quarter showing appropriate attitudes, but nearly two-fifths still fell into the risk category, reflecting a troubling tendency toward passivity or tolerance of bullying which is aligne with **Cohane S. K & Schneider B. H. (2024)** who reported that Only 24–28% of witnesses consistently supported victims.

Relations between the studied students' knowledge level regarding bullying and their characteristics.

The relationship between students' knowledge levels regarding bullying and their sociodemographic characteristics shows no statistically significant differences across the student gender and father occupation. This finding not agrees with (**Smith et al., 2019**). Study consistently finds that girls tend to perceive relational and verbal bullying (e.g., social exclusion, gossip, verbal threats) as more severe and harmful than boys do. Boys, on the other hand, often perceive physical bullying as more serious.

In the current study there was no significant relation between the

family income and the student's knowledge these findings not agreed with the study by **Gonzales and Madrigal (2020)** on high school students in Antique, Philippines, with many students coming from families with stable, enough income backgrounds and traditional structures, which influenced their awareness and experiences of bullying.

From the researcher point of view regarding to the level of family income was just enough to Majority of the sample indicate that most of fathers may spend a lot of their time out of home for work which is make the mother is the first factor that can effect on the student knowledge

Regarding to place of residence in relation to the student's knowledge, the study reveal that, no significant differences suggested. The findings was agreed with (**Badarch J., 2022**), who found that, no significant rural-urban difference in bullying prevalence after controlling for school climate factors. On the other hand the finding in current study not agreed with study by (**Stockdale et al., 2002**), which included 739 students from 7 schools participated in the study and reported a high prevalence of bullying in the rural public schools.

From the researcher point of view, the knowledge about bullying in our Arabic communities' desire some of religious and moral perception which defer form place to place inside the same community.

However, a statistically significant relationship was found with the mother's occupation, suggesting that students whose mothers are employed may have higher knowledge levels, possibly due to increased exposure to external information sources or open discussions at home. This finding is agreed with study by (Galal et al., 2019), conducted a study in rural Egypt and found that higher maternal education was a significant predictor for lower involvement in bullying behaviors. This suggests that not only education but also the broader involvement and exposure of mothers to external social settings may enhance children's social awareness and knowledge, including issues like bullying.

From the researcher point of view, mother education and occupation highlights the potential influence of maternal engagement outside the home on children's awareness and understanding of social issues like bullying, emphasizing the role of family dynamics and parental involvement in shaping students' perceptions. It also indicates more effort to improve the perception of non-working mothers regarding the bullying.

Relations between the studied student's attitude level regarding bullying and their characteristics.

The analysis of students' attitudes toward bullying in relation to their sociodemographic characteristics reveals a different finding across the variables as:

In the current study there was ambiguous student attitude in relation with parental education, both parental occupation indicates the vast effect to the community involvement and social participation on the parents influence on the student attitude. This finding also partially consistent with the literature by (Magklara et al., 2012), they found that, among Greek students, bullying victims are significantly more likely to have unemployed mothers. This highlights the potential role of family dynamics and stability in shaping students' emotional responses and coping strategies when confronted with bullying, emphasizing the importance of supportive home environments in reinforcing positive behavioral attitudes.

In the current study, there was significant relation between the number of siblings inside the family and the attitude, revealing to around two-thirds of students whose have more than three brothers had ambiguous attitude. This finding partially consistent with study by (Guo et al., 2024), which emphasized that, the role of relational environments (home and school) in shaping adolescents' psychosocial responses to bullying, reinforcing the idea that supportive family dynamics are crucial in fostering resilience and appropriate behavioral attitudes among youth.

From the researcher point of view, the relationship with the family component, indicating those students'

living arrangements may influence their attitudes toward bullying. Specifically, those living with both parents and siblings were more likely to exhibit appropriate attitudes, while those from single parent or non-traditional family structures showed higher rates of risk-indicated or ambiguous attitudes.

Regarding the place of residence, the current study did not show statistically significant associations with attitude levels. These suggestions not aligned with multiple studies. For example, **Xie et al., (2022)** who reported how bullying manifests within rural communities less than urban communities. From the researcher point of view, the rural area still has a lot of moral aspect, which transfer from generation to generation by direct communication through the family and neighbor and effect on the students' perception and attitude regarding the bullying.

In the current study, there was no significant difference between the three levels of school and the knowledge level. This finding not aligning with the study done at one of the Russian sites by **(Rychkova et al., 2021)**, included 307 urban schoolchildren aged 11 years and revealed that Young adolescents, suffering from school bullying. The current study also not agree with study by **(Malta et al., 2019)**, who reported that, possibly older adolescents were less likely to be victims of bullying in his study. From the researcher point of view, this may

be due to low self-esteem or low life experience and sometimes low power balance.

Relations between the studied students' knowledge and attitude level regarding bullying:

The relationship between students' knowledge and attitude levels toward bullying reveals varied patterns across the roles of bully, victim, and witness. While the association between knowledge and attitudes as bullies approached statistical significance, it was not definitive, suggesting a possible trend where higher knowledge may correspond with more appropriate attitudes. In contrast, no significant relationship was found between knowledge and victim-related attitudes, indicating that being informed about bullying does not necessarily influence how victims cope or respond emotionally.

However, a statistically significant relationship was identified in the witness role, where students with satisfactory knowledge were more likely to display appropriate attitudes when observing bullying. This finding underscores the importance of increasing students' knowledge, as it appears to empower witness to take a more proactive and supportive stance. Educational interventions, therefore, may be particularly effective in enhancing the role of witnesses in bullying prevention and response.

This analysis is agreed with **Fernández-Gutiérrez & Mosteiro-Díaz (2021)** whose emphasized that, bullying in educational settings is a

systemic issue, and that interventions, including awareness and education, can reduce its incidence and severity. Their integrative review advocates for educational programs to strengthen students' capacity to act as informed witnesses and reduce tolerance toward bullying behaviors

In this study the correlation analysis between students' total knowledge and attitude scores regarding bullying reveals statistically significant positive associations in most areas. A moderate but meaningful correlation was found between knowledge and attitudes as a bully and as a witness, indicating that higher knowledge levels are associated with more appropriate, informed attitudes in these roles. Additionally, the total attitude score showed a similar significant correlation with knowledge, reinforcing the overall importance of knowledge in shaping constructive views toward bullying. Interestingly, no significant correlation was observed between knowledge and attitudes in the victim role.

The researcher suggesting that, victims' responses may be more influenced by emotional experiences or psychological distress rather than knowledge alone. These findings emphasize the critical role of education in empowering students—especially potential bullies and witnesses—to adopt more empathetic and responsible behaviors, while highlighting the need for emotional

and psychological support for victims.

The correlation analysis between students' total knowledge and attitude scores toward bullying, as presented in the current study, can be strongly agreed by findings of study (**Chen et al., 2023**) demonstrated that adolescents' competitive game motivation and trait aggression are mediated by cognitive and emotional factors, emphasizing the impact of internalized knowledge structures on behavior. They confirmed through the General Aggression Model that higher awareness (knowledge) could shape less aggressive (more appropriate) behavioral patterns, which parallels the observed association in your study between increased knowledge and better attitudes in the roles of bully and witness.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study revealed that while a majority of secondary school students demonstrated moderate to good levels of knowledge about bullying, their attitudes varied significantly depending on their role as bullies, victims, or witnesses. Most students showed appropriate attitudes as bullies, indicating a general disapproval of aggressive behaviors. However, attitudes were less constructive among victims and witnesses, with a large proportion displaying risk-prone or ambiguous responses. A significant correlation between knowledge and attitudes was observed in the roles of bullies and

witnesses, underscoring the positive impact of awareness on behaviour.

Recommendations:

- Implement comprehensive anti-bullying programs.
- Strengthen the role of school counselors and nurses.
- Conduct regular awareness campaigns.

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