THE STILL SMALL VOICE OF THE DISHEARTENED LEARNERS: AN ANECDOTE

The Still Small Voice of the Disheartened Learners: An Anecdote

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Abstract

This study described the experiences, analyzed the reasons for bullying, and described the lessons learned by the disheartened learners of a central elementary school. The study employed a qualitative narrative case study approach, with five learners as the participants. Semi-structured interview guide questions were formulated and divided into three parts: beginning, middle and ending stories. These questions were designed to gather rich, in-depth information about the learners' experiences and perspectives. The beginning stories revealed the following emergent themes: physical abuse, verbal abuse, poverty, upsetting, unmotivated, ashamed and doubted. The middle stories had the following emergent themes: bullying as revenge, haughty bullies, discrimination, afraid to retaliate, ignoring, skipping school, seeking justice, and call parent's attention. The ending stories had the following themes: perseverance, do not harm others, striving, calmness, faithful, and trust in the teacher's authority. This study sheds light on the often-overlooked voices of disheartened learners, emphasizing the need for educational systems worldwide to prioritize student well-being and provide support for those who may be struggling.

Keywords: *educational management, disheartened learners, anecdote, narrative study, philippines*

Introduction

"If bullies believe that somebody loves and believes in them, they will love themselves, become better people, and many will even become saviors to the bullied." – Dan Pearce

The above quotation explains that when bullies genuinely feel loved and supported, their self-perception and behavior can transform. Believing in the bullies and showing them unconditional love can enable them to develop self-love, leading them to become better individuals. Some bullies may even become protectors or advocates for those who have been bullied, using their newfound empathy and understanding to make a positive impact on the lives of others.

Globally speaking, bullied learners worldwide face various issues like physical and verbal abuse, social exclusion, and cyberbullying, causing emotional distress, low self-esteem, anxiety, depression, and suicidal thoughts. Bullying not only affects education but also creates a culture of fear, hindering a safe learning environment. Addressing this requires fostering empathy, implementing anti-bullying measures, and promoting inclusivity and respect (Abdelaziz & Abu-Snieneh, 2022; Calp, 2020; Hinduja & Patchin, 2019).

Moreover, bullying is a barrier to ensuring inclusive and quality education for everyone. If bullying happens, often, the victims gain more sympathy than the perpetrators. Bullying may devastate a victim's life by causing them great suffering and depression. As a result, bullies are often intensely disliked and dealt with harshly, as they should be. However, it is also crucial to comprehend the causes of bullying so that the bully will receive assistance. Although we are all aware of how critical it is to support bullied individuals, it is also crucial to help the bullies themselves; otherwise, they will likely continue to be miserable and bully others (Cretu & Morandau, 2024; Smith, 2019; Wang & Florian, 2019).

On the other hand, according to the most recent national statistics in the Philippines, nearly half of minors between the ages 13 and 17 are victims of cyberviolence. Of the cyberviolence that young Filipinos suffer, verbal abuse over the internet or mobile phone makes up one-third, while sexual texts make up the other four percent. Women receive text messages with a sexual theme or innuedo more frequently than men do. However, twice as many men as women stated that their sexual or naked bodies, whether real or fake, had been exposed online or on a mobile device (Adewoye & Du Plessis, 2021; Dendup, 2021; Morea & Calvete, 2022).

Unfortunately, as an elementary school teacher, the researcher has witnessed some students bully their classmates while teaching. It was disheartening to see this behavior among young learners, and it reinforced the need for a strong focus on promoting kindness and respect in the classroom. Witnessing bullying behavior among elementary school students was particularly concerning to her because the researcher know it could have long-lasting effects on both the victim and the bully. Her duty as a teacher is to make the classroom a secure and friendly place for all pupils to study. The researcher implemented various strategies to combat bullying, such as teaching social-emotional skills, fostering community, and supporting those affected. Through these efforts, the researcher hopes to positively impact and prevent further bullying in her classroom.

Moreover, bullying is a problem for parents, teachers, and Kawas Central Elementary School (KCES) students. Indeed, not only KCES but the global community has come to see bullying among teenagers as a significant issue. It is vital to understand the still-small voices of these disheartened learners to solve the severe bullying issues in KCES.

Hence, conducting a study on bullied learners is of utmost urgency due to the profound and far-reaching impact bullying has on individuals and society as a whole. The prevalence of bullying not only jeopardizes the physical and emotional well-being of affected

individuals but also hinders their educational attainment and overall development. Understanding the underlying factors, consequences, and effective intervention strategies is essential for policymakers, educators, and communities to implement evidence-based solutions that create safe and supportive learning environments. By prioritizing research on bullied learners, we can work towards preventing and addressing this pervasive issue, fostering a brighter future for generations to come.

Thus, considering these various observations and concerns, the researcher was motivated to conduct this study to analyze, describe, and interpret the experiences of disheartened learners of Kawas Central Elementary School. The results of this study could help us understand how disheartened learners describe their experiences as victims of bullying.

Research Questions

This study aimed to analyze, describe, tell, and retell the experiences of the disheartened learners of Kawas Central Elementary School. Specifically, this study sought an answer to the statement:

1. How do disheartened learners describe their experiences as victims of bullying?

Methodology

This section presents the study's methodology, which includes the research design, role of the researcher, participants, data collection, data analysis, trustworthiness, and ethical considerations.

Research Design

The study employed a qualitative narrative research design. The technique of analyzing a social or human problem via the use of words to create a complex, comprehensive picture, relaying the specific opinions of informants, and doing research in an organic environment is known as qualitative research. Qualitative research is a type of study that gathers and uses non-numerical data with the intention of deriving meaning from it. It is utilized to comprehend how a person interprets and lends meaning to their social world. In addition, the information used in this kind of study is classified as non-numerical and can be text, audio, video, or photos. In-depth interviews, documentary analysis, diary entries, and other data collection methods can be used to gather the information mentioned above, which can then be examined using grounded theory or thematic analysis (Habib, 2021; Staller & Chen, 2022).

In addition, the qualitative method is correct when examining and comprehending the meaning that people or groups attribute to a social or human entity. Materialized questions and techniques, data typically acquired in the respondents' environments, the inductive building of particular to general themes in data analysis, and the researcher's interpretation of the data's meaning are all components of qualitative research. Qualitative researchers espouse an inductive method of inquiry, emphasize personal significance, and stress the significance of acknowledging the complexity of a given situation (Habib, 2021; Williams, 2019).

Moreover, qualitative research aims to comprehend social phenomena fully as they occur in the real world. Rather than focusing on the "what," it highlights the "why" behind societal occurrences. It interprets people's everyday experiences mostly via first-hand reports from the individuals themselves. Rather than using logical and statistical approaches, qualitative researchers use various inquiry systems, including ethnography, grounded theory, historical analysis, phenomenology, biography, and case studies. The study delved deeply into a carefully defined topic: the experiences of students who have been bullied (Staller & Chen, 2022; van Manen & ban Manen, 2021).

Further, in qualitative research, non-numerical data (such as text, video, or audio) are gathered and analyzed to understand concepts, beliefs, or experiences better. It can be used to discover intricate details about a problem or develop fresh research concepts. Quantitative research involves gathering and analyzing numerical data for statistical analysis, whereas qualitative research does not. Qualitative research is frequently employed in the humanities and social sciences in fields like anthropology, sociology, education, health sciences, and history (Habib, 2021).

Furthermore, numerous techniques can be used to collect qualitative data, and a single qualitative study may use several techniques at different points in the data collection phase. The social science disciplines of anthropology, sociology, and psychology are the foundation for qualitative research. In light of this, the qualitative research techniques enable detailed and additional probing and questioning of respondents. Additionally, the researcher or interviewer tries to comprehend their intentions and emotions. In order to conclude market research, it can be helpful to understand how one's audience decides (Habib, 2021; Williams, 2019).

On the other hand, narrative research is a qualitative method grounded in telling and analyzing stories. It is employed to delve deeper into people's social and cultural surroundings and investigate the complexity of the human experience. Narrative research is based on the belief that life can be understood through stories and that narrative forms of inquiry provide a unique way of understanding the complexities of human experience. Narrative research seeks to understand individuals' meanings and interpretations attached to their experiences (Greenier & Moodie, 2021; Surangi, 2022).

Furthermore, a narrative research design is a type of research method that involves collecting and analyzing data about a person, group, or event through interviews, observations, and documents. This unique approach allows researchers to understand a particular

individual, group, or event deeply. It is based on a story-telling approach. The researcher typically collects data through interviews, observations, and documents and then synthesizes the information to construct a narrative. This narrative provides insight into the individual, group, or event. It can help to uncover patterns and relationships that may need to be apparent through traditional research methods (Asenahabi, 2019).

In addition, the narrative research design process begins with identifying a research question, which should be specific and well-defined. Once this question has been identified, the researcher should begin collecting data through interviews, observations, and documents. This data should be carefully analyzed and organized, and then the information should be synthesized to construct a narrative.

It should provide an in-depth account of the individual, group, or event. It should be detailed and thorough, and the researcher should include all relevant information. Additionally, the narrative should provide an analysis and interpretation of the data and identify patterns and relationships (Abkhezr et al., 2020; Varnaseri & Alhaei, 2022).

Narrative research design is used to understand better how research participants create stories and narratives from their own experiences. The research subjects first use narrative to analyze their own lives. The researcher then analyzes how that narrative was put together. The use of narratives in narrative research can be derived from journals, letters, conversations, autobiographies, in-depth interview transcripts, focus group transcripts, or other forms of narrative qualitative research (Greenier & Moodie, 2021; Surangi, 2022).

Participants

The participants of this study were the five (5) elementary learners of Kawas Central Elementary School who underwent an In-Depth Interview (IDI). To fulfill the purpose of the study, the researcher purposively chose the participants, considering that they have experienced bullying phenomenon and have an outstanding record of bullying in their anecdotal records from the guidance counselor of Kawas Central Elementary School during the school year 2022-2023.

The three participants were selected using purposeful sampling, which is the deliberate selection of participants according to their capacity to clarify a specific subject, concept, or phenomenon (Campbell et al., 2020).

The researcher established specific inclusion criteria for selecting participants, irrespective of gender, religion, or ethnicity. The researcher focused on learners 10 to 12 years old who were then currently enrolled in Kawas Central Elementary School as Grade 6 students and who were victims of bullying.

Conversely, certain groups were excluded from participation, such as learners aged nine and below or 13 and those unwilling or unable to consent or cooperate during data collection.

Participants were assured they could exit the study anytime, knowing their choice would not harm their connection with the school or program. Furthermore, steps were taken to handle any discomfort, distress, or emotional unease felt by participants during the study, ensuring their well-being was always the primary concern during the research.

Participants were assured they could leave the study at any time without worrying about negative consequences on their relationship with the school or program. This guarantee aimed to protect the autonomy and comfort of participants, promoting an atmosphere of trust and respect. Additionally, proactive steps were taken to promptly handle any discomfort, distress, or emotional unease experienced by participants during their participation in the study. This dedication to prioritizing participants' well-being highlighted the researchers' ethical duty and ensured that the research process maintained its ethical and compassionate nature.

Data Collection

The method I used to collect data was consistent Before gathering the data, the researcher asked permission from the Ethical Review Committee and the Graduate School of Ramon Magsaysay Memorial Colleges. Upon approval, the researcher asked permission from the School Division Superintendent in Sarangani. Then, the researcher asked the school head of Kawas Central Elementary School through a letter request to conduct the study in their school. When the request was granted, the same letter was presented to the guidance counselor to ask permission to access the anecdotal records of their pupils. From there, the study participants were chosen.

Once approved, the researcher conducted a short orientation among the study's participants. Furthermore, the investigator elucidated the rationale behind the research, and the participants were apprised—through a preapproval cover letter—that they were subjected to the bullying problem inside their educational institution. They were also informed that their participation was strictly voluntary only, and there would be no adverse effects for choosing not to participate in the study. Furthermore, only pseudonyms were used to ensure confidentiality when reporting the study findings (Velmonte, 2020).

Afterward, the researcher interviewed the selected participants of the study. Before the interview, the researcher prepared for the logistical requirements, which included the venue and audio/voice recorder used during the interview with the participants. The researcher informed the participants that taking down notes and voice recording their responses would be done. The researcher then interviewed the participants individually. At the beginning of the interview, the researcher read the participants' informed consent loud

and clear to validate their participation in the study. After the participants had affirmed their participation, the researcher explained the interview procedure thoroughly and catered to any queries from the participants regarding the interview process. They were also informed again that their participation was purely voluntary. They could so anytime if they wished not to continue participating in the interview.

The researcher read the questions twice to the participants and more if needed during the interview. The researcher read the questions loudly and clearly to make sure everything is clear regarding the questions. The participants were given enough time to think about their answers. Moreover, the researcher verbally summarized the participants' answers to each question to ensure the participants' answers were understood. Throughout the interview, the researcher called the participants based on their given codenames or fake names, such as Participant 1 and Participant 2, to observe confidentiality (Velmonte, 2020).

The whole interview process was recorded on a smartphone. After the interview, the researcher transcribed the audio recordings and showed the participants the transcript to ensure their ideas were reflected appropriately. Participants were allowed to edit the transcript. All questions included in the interview guide led to the analysis, description, and interpretation of the experiences of the three elementary school pupils who experienced the bullying phenomenon in school.

When the interview was done, the researcher transcribed the audio recordings. After transcribing the audio recordings, the researcher presented the participant's interview transcript. They had the right to edit the transcript or remove anything from it. If the transcribed data were good enough, the researcher used the Colaizzi Method to analyze the data to generate themes. These were done between December 2022 to February 2023.

Data Analysis

The researcher addressed the study's key research topics through thematic analysis of the transcript data. Thematic analysis is the most popular type of analysis used in qualitative research. It emphasizes finding, evaluating, and deciphering patterns of meaning.

The data analysis in this research involved summarizing, collecting, and presenting the most significant features. It utilized a semi-structured interview to facilitate an in-depth understanding of the participants' experiences. The planned interview guide ensured that each participant provided the same information. After that, a face-to-face interview took place. The study's participants were encouraged to talk freely and tell their stories in their own words. The researcher asked for the consent of the participants to allow the recording of the in-depth interview to make it more reliable (Mölder et al., 2021).

The stages below represent the Colaizzi Method for phenomenological data analysis, used to analyze, describe, and interpret the experiences, reasons, and lessons learned in bullying. Each transcript was read and reread in the first phase. The second step was extracting significant testimonials from the transcript that pertain to the phenomenon under study. On a separate sheet, statements were recorded, noting their pages and line numbers. The third step involved formulating meanings from these significant statements. The fourth step was sorting the formulated meanings into categories, clusters of themes, and themes. In addition, the fifth step was integrating the findings of a detailed description of the phenomenon under research. A descriptive presentation of the complete explanation was presented as a narrative account. The researcher incorporated the emergent themes and theme clusters and formulated meanings into the description to create the overall structure and to ensure that the study contained the elements of experience. The sixth step was describing the fundamental structure of the phenomenon. Finally, validation of the findings was pursued by the research participants to compare the researcher's descriptive outcomes with their experiences, reasons, and lessons learned in bullying (Northall, 2020).

Ethical Considerations

For this qualitative study, a critical ethical factor has specific ramifications. These problems and worries mainly result from the approach used in this study. The RMMC Ethics and Review Committee's requirements for ethical consideration were adhered to in this study, especially when it came to the population and data, including but not limited to:

Voluntary Participation. The participants were free to participate without fear of consequences, loss of benefits, or compensation plans. Therefore, the participant's rights to contribute to the body of knowledge were carefully considered and anticipated when the study's objective and advantages were explained to the participant. The participants in this study were not coerced into taking part. Individuals who became uncomfortable while doing the survey could end their participation.

Privacy and confidentiality. Participants' privacy rights shall not be violated without their informed agreement under the current Data Privacy Act of 2012, which safeguards this fundamental human right. Allowing participants to omit their names from the interview guide is one technique to maintain privacy and confidentiality in this quantitative study. In addition, confidentiality and privacy were preserved by withholding the informants' personal information, such as their age, gender, occupation, and health conditions. As a result, their identity was kept private for security reasons. Their answers to the interview guide were kept confidential and treated as such.

Informed consent process. Given the investigation's limitations, the potential research volunteers were adequately informed about the study's goals, procedures, and advantages. The participants' affirmative response demonstrates that the request for their involvement was voluntary. The informed consent form required participants to sign to indicate that they freely chose to participate in the study.

The participants' identities were not listed on the survey form, and their responses were kept private. The participants knew they could withdraw from participating in the study at any time.

Recruitment. The participants were informed of why they had become part of the study. For the participants to understand the study, the researcher explained its purpose so that they could further infer from it and view the study's essence. In addition to the letter, the researcher explained the study's relevance and reasoning.

Risks. If the benefit-risk ratio is acceptable and favorable, research will be done. This study's need to protect the participants from significant harm was equally essential. The study prioritized the welfare of the participants. Furthermore, the participants were not harmed since their identities were held confidential. Their security and safety were of the utmost concern. As the researcher, she ensured that the participants were physically, emotionally, and socially ready. In answering the interview guide, the researcher confirmed that the participants did not feel discomfort or awkwardness.

Benefits. Conducting a study on the experiences of bullied learners holds global significance as it sheds light on a pervasive issue with far-reaching implications. Such research can uncover the underlying factors contributing to bullying, examine its diverse forms across cultures, and identify the impact on those affected's physical, emotional, and educational well-being. By understanding the experiences of bullied learners globally, we can develop evidence-based interventions, policies, and preventive measures to create safe and inclusive learning environments for all students. This research can raise awareness, inform educational systems, and empower communities worldwide to combat bullying, promote empathy, and foster every learner's healthy development and success, regardless of background or circumstances.

Specifically, this study may help the teachers, school heads, parents, students, and other researchers better understand the experiences, reasons, and lessons learned in bullying by the disheartened learners of Kawas Central Elementary School. Students might see the adverse effects of bullying and decide not to engage in it themselves or discourage their friends from doing so. School administrators may use the findings of this inquiry to monitor and support bullied and victimized children. It is intended that teachers, who frequently interact with their class, use this study to address bullying in detail. Parents of students may utilize the study's findings to monitor and manage their kids. Finally, researchers might use the result of this investigation as a reference.

Plagiarism. There was no hint or proof that the research had misinterpreted someone else's work. Grammarly and other plagiarism checkers were used in the study. To work as a researcher, the researcher must possess integrity and good character, which come with moral principles and values. For this research article to be seen as genuine, the researcher needs to be more knowledgeable about the paradigm of plagiarism.

Fabrication. The report did not hint or provide evidence that the work had been intentionally misinterpreted. There was no fabrication of information or outcomes or deliberate presentation of incorrect conclusions. The researcher utilized and integrated theories related to the information and other inferential concepts.

Falsification. The study did not indicate overclaiming or exaggeration and did not intentionally mislead the work to meet theoretical expectations. Furthermore, this study needed to follow the guidelines for data manipulation, which include making claims based on incomplete information or omitting crucial elements and using materials, equipment, or techniques that might deceive others.

Conflict of Interest (COI). There was no indication of a conflict of interest in the study, like disclosure of COI or circumstances where professional judgment on the principal appeal is required. It is similar to the monetary academic advantages or recognitions and tends to influence participants' welfare or the research's validity. Furthermore, the researcher, who had no authority or influence over the subjects, forced them to participate in the study.

Deceit. The study did not mislead the participants about any possible danger. Since the participants in any inquiry have completed higher education, their rights must be enormously safeguarded; thus, reasonable and acceptable guidelines must be followed.

Permission from Organization/Location. The researcher adhered to protocol. After the panelists, advisor, and RMMCERC committee approved the study, the researcher formally requested permission from the superintendent of the school division to perform it. Following this, the researcher composed an official letter. The researcher included the school's letter of support from the school division's superintendent to the district supervisor and principal of the participating school in the study. The public elementary school teachers who were part of the study were oriented before administering the interview guide.

Authorship. The researcher ensured that research outputs were fair, transparent, and accurately represented the contributions of all those involved. By adhering to ethical authorship practices, research outputs maintained their credibility and contributed to advancing knowledge fairly and transparently.

Results

This part presents the results of this study, which consist of describing participants and categorizing data.

3.1. Participants

The participants of this study were five elementary pupils who have experienced bullying. They have an outstanding record of bullying in their anecdotal records from the guidance counselor of Kawas Central Elementary School during the school year 2022-2023. These participants were presented with their corresponding chosen pseudonyms and, in this paper, through code names.

Nyarai is an 11-year-old Grade 5 learner who is sweet, shy, and humble. She resides in Kawas, Alabel, Sarangani Province.

Hien is a female, 12-year-old, Grade 6 learner who is very gentle and quiet in class. She resides in Kawas, Alabel, Sarangani Province.

Coy is a male, 11-year-old, Grade 5 learner who is quiet, calm, and shy. He lives in Kawas, Alabel, Sarangani Province.

Gunvor is a male, 12 years old, Grade 6 learner, who is cautious in war and prefers to cry silently. He stays at Kawas, Alabel, Sarangani Province.

Lamis is a male, 11 years old, Grade 5 learner, who is soft and tender. He lives in Kawas, Alabel, Sarangani Province.

3.2. Categorization of Data

This part categorizes data on the participants' lived experiences, analyzes the reasons for bullying, and describes the lessons learned by the disheartened learners.

During the interview, questions were directed to the participants, followed by elucidating or probing questions. Asking this grand tour question allowed the freedom to tell their stories without constraint. Sub-questions in the semi-structured interview guide were also asked to elicit specific experiences. The researcher assured each informant of confidentiality and non-disclosure. As a result, the revelations from five cases in the study were consistent.

Research Question 1. Hardships of the Disheartened Learners as Victims of Bullying

Table 1 presents the learners' beginning stories as victims of bullying. Seven emergent themes emerged, and each is discussed based on the participants' responses.

Physical Abuse. It is one of the learners' experiences during the beginning of their stories. Physical abuse is a serious issue that affects many children worldwide. It can take many forms, from corporal punishment to physical assault, and can have long-lasting effects on a child's mental and physical health. One of the ways physical abuse can manifest itself is through bullying among learners. In this study, we explored the link between physical abuse and bullying among learners, and that physical abuse was a significant contributing factor to bullying in schools:

Iya kong gisumbag sa akong likod nga wala man unta ko nanghilabot sa iyaha teacher... unya mao to nalain ko tas naghilak na lang sad ko kay wala man ko nakabalo unsay buhaton. (Participant 3, lines 129-131).

He punched me on my back because I should not have interfered with him, teacher, then that is when I fell apart, and I just started crying because I did not know what to do.

Katong grade 3 pa ko karang gibully ko sa akong mga classmate tungod sa akong bag unya kay pangit daw. Tapos ginasumbag nila akong bag og ginakalat ang papel. (Participant 5, lines 254-256

When I was in 3rd grade, my classmates bullied me because of my bag and then because it was ugly. Then they punched my bag and scattered the paper.

Gina sumbag-sumbag nila akong bag tapos ingnan ko nila na kung mag sumbong daw ko sa among teacher kay kanag ano... ako daw ilang sumbagon. (Participant 5, lines 261-263)

They punched my bag, and then they told me that if I complained to our teacher because of that, they would punch me.

Moreover, physical abuse is a significant contributing factor to bullying among learners. Physical abuse can lead to aggressive and disruptive behaviors, create a cycle of violence, and lead to a lack of empathy and social skills. To address the issue of bullying effectively, we must address the root causes, including physical abuse. It means providing resources and support to children who have experienced physical abuse, addressing the culture of violence and aggression in schools, and promoting positive relationships and social skills among students.

Verbal Abuse. The next theme that emerged based on the verbatim accounts of the participants is verbal abuse, which is a type of aggressive behavior that involves the use of words to hurt, belittle, or intimidate another person. Moreover, verbal abuse can occur in various contexts, including interpersonal relationships, workplaces, and schools. When verbal abuse is used as a tactic to exert power over another person in the context of bullying, it can have severe and long-lasting effects on the victim's mental and emotional well-being.

Kanang kuan man gud teacher kanang sip-unun ko... unya bata pako teacher sige na og sip-un unya kanang... ahm akong mga classmate sunggon ko ila kay dao na daw ko unya kanang sge daw gihapon gawas akong sip-un teacher. (Participant 4, lines 190-193)

As a child, I had a cold. That is when I was still a child teacher. I kept catching colds, and then, ahm, my classmates would call me because I was old, and that is still my cold teacher.

Hmmmm… nasakitan ko teacher kay kay biskan unsa lang ilang gina ingon…Gina sungug sungugan ko nila teacher…akong mga pangalan teacher gina sungugan og ginasaway ko nila teacher…ginasaway pod ko sa akong mga classmate diri. Kanang ginasungog nila akong pangalan teacher… kanang beng-beng daw teacher. Ingon nila teacher ulit ulit daw akong saninaog mag tsinelas ko og magsapatos ko gina saway ko nila teacher… kanang huy… mao na imong… mao na imong sapatos unya paulit-ulit lang imong sanina. (Participant 2, lines 73-79)

Hmmmm. They hurt me teacher because of the matter of what they said, they kept yelling at me. They yelled my name, teacher, and criticized me, and even my classmates also criticized me here. They teased me by calling my name, being called 'beng-beng'. They say this again and again. I always wear the same clothes, slippers, and shoes. They criticize me, teacher, about my shoes, and then that I just put on my clothes repeatedly.

Further, verbal abuse is a common form of bullying that can have severe and long-lasting effects on the victim's mental and emotional well-being. It is essential to recognize the signs of verbal abuse and take steps to address it to create a safe and supportive school environment for all individuals.

Poverty. The other theme that emerged is poverty. The participants have repeatedly mentioned how their social status was extensively involved as to why they were being bullied. As said, bullying is a significant problem in schools and has been a cause for concern for many years. This multifaceted problem can manifest in several ways, ranging from physical aggression to verbal mistreatment and online harassment. Although several reasons could lead to bullying, one crucial aspect that is frequently disregarded is poverty. Poverty is a global problem that impacts millions of families and has been connected to several adverse effects, including bullying in schools. In the verbatim accounts of the participants, it is exposed to the link between poverty and bullying among learners. It argues that poverty is a significant contributing factor to bullying in schools.

Kanang pobre daw mi teacher…kanang... kanang… among mga gamit daw teacher kanang dili daw kayo kuan sa amoa teacher tapos among mga sanina daw teacher kay sigeg balik daw. Kay kuan man gud teacher… pobre mi dili mi kapalit og mga bag-ong gamit sama sa kuan… kanang bag-ong sanina, bag-ong sapatos, bag-ong notebook. Og gisi daw amoang bag teacher. Kahilakon ko teacher. (Participant 2, lines 67-70)

They say that we are poor, teacher, that our things are not good, and that we repeatedly wore over and over again our clothes. We are poor that is why we cannot afford new clothes, new shoes, new notebook. They also bully us because our bag is torn. I just wanted to cry about the things I experienced.

Para nako teacher kanang mga kuan… kanang mga luoy og sitwasyon sa kinabuhi og kanang pareha nako… kanang pareha nako teacher… ahmm kanang nay makita na ikasungog teacher. Kanang kuan gud… pareha anang walay mga tarong gamit teacher og kanang wala mga baon teacher. (Participant 4, lines 218-221)

For me, those people who are like me, those who are oppressed, people who do not have proper things, and those who do not have proper clothes and 'baon' are often picked on.

Moreover, poverty is a significant contributing factor to bullying among learners. Poverty affects a child's overall well-being, creates a culture of violence and aggression, and can lead to a lack of social skills and empathy. To address the issue of bullying effectively, we must address the root causes, including poverty. It means providing resources and support to low-income schools, creating more opportunities for social engagement and development, and addressing the systemic issues perpetuating poverty. Only by addressing poverty can we break the cycle of bullying and create a safer, more inclusive learning environment for all students.

Unmotivated. The next theme that emerges in the beginning story of the participants is being unmotivated. Bullied elementary learners may be unmotivated to come to school because of the negative experiences they have had with bullying. Research has shown that bullying can have significant adverse effects on students' motivation and engagement in school. When students are constantly subjected to bullying, they may feel unsafe, unsupported, and disengaged from the school environment. Thus, it is visible in the participant's verbatim account.

Sakit kayo teacher kay pag maano jud kag mayo kay murag dili naka gusto mueskwela kay sa sobraan kasakit. Unya…mao rato. Maulaw pod teacher kay bullyhon man jud kag mayo. (Participant 1, line 17-19)

It hurts me, teacher. When you are faced with this, you do not want to go to school because you are in too much pain. Then, that is it. I am ashamed because they have severely bullied me.

Oo teacher sakit man. Masakitan ka kanang gina bully ka pirmente muadto ka diri sa eskwelahan ginabully pod ka nila. (Participant 2, lines 86-87)

Yes, teacher, it hurts. It hurts that you are being bullied every time. Also, when you come to school, they bully you too.

Sakit teacher eh... kanang dako na gud ko teacher… (Participant 4, line 202)

I get hurt, teacher, because I am already a grown-up.

Bullying in elementary schools can profoundly deter students from engaging in their education, leading to a lack of motivation and a sense of insecurity. When children are subjected to bullying, they often experience fear and anxiety, which can greatly impact their academic performance and overall well-being. Therefore, schools must prioritize preventing and intervening in bullying, creating a safe and supportive environment where all learners feel valued and respected.

Doubted. The last theme from the participant's verbatim account is that their parents are doubting them. As the participant has said, his parents do not believe in him because he might have started the trouble. In bullied elementary school, pupils may be doubted by their parents when they report that they are being bullied at school for a variety of reasons. One common reason is that parents may not have witnessed the bullying and may not believe it is happening. In addition, some parents may view bullying as a regular part of childhood and may not understand the severity of the situation. Finally, some parents may feel powerless to intervene or need to learn how to address the issue effectively.

Karang suko kaayo ko sa ilaha…pero dili nako sila ma ingnan kay dili man gihapon sila mutuo. Unya teacher… Usahay mag uli ko na nagahilak kay nangatastas na akong mga notebook. Ginatarong nalang nako pag uli. Gi ingnan nako akong mama pero ingon niya basig naa daw ko ginahimo sa akong mga klasmit maong ing ato sila sa akoa. Dili sad mutuo si mama minsan teacher kay basin karang ako pod daw ang unahon. (Participant 5, lines 269-274)

I was so angry with them, but I could not tell them because they still did not believe me. Then, teacher, sometimes, I go home crying because my notebooks are falling apart. I am just fixing them when I get home. I told my mom, but she said that maybe I was doing something to my classmates, which is why they treated me that way. Mom sometimes does not believe teacher because maybe I am the first one doing wrong to them.

Furthermore, parents may doubt their children's reports of bullying at school for a variety of reasons. Still, it is essential for parents to take these reports seriously and to work with their children to find solutions to the problem. Parents can help prevent bullying and create a safe and supportive school environment for all learners by providing emotional support and advocating for their children.

Table 1. *The Hardships of the Victims of Bullying*

Clustered Theme	Emergent Theme
Punches in the back	Physical Abuse
Punched the bag and scattered the paper	
That is what they say that I will catch a cold	
Bullying because my bag is ugly	Verbal Abuse
Keep shouting with other names	
Repeatedly wearing the same clothes	
Pity and life situation	Poverty
Do not have the tools and equipment and do not have a bag	
Get hurt	Unmotivated
Very difficult	
Feeling shy and hurt	Ashamed
Does not believe the person	Doubted

Research Question 2. The Rationalization of Disheartened Learners as Victims of Bullying

Table 2 presents the middle story of the disheartened learners as victims of bullying. Eight emergent themes have been identified. These themes were based on the participants' responses.

Bullying as Revenge. The participants mentioned and assumed that the bullies may have been bullies because they had experienced being bullied. However, bullying behavior can be motivated by various factors, including a desire for power, status, and attention. While revenge may be a motivating factor in some cases, it is not typically considered the primary reason for bullying behavior.

Kanang kuan man gud teacher… kanang palaaway lang jud sila… siguro titser wala lang na sila mabuhat. Siguro pud teacher gina bully pod na sila unya siguro teacher manakit sila aron makabalos pod. (Participant 4, lines 207-210)

Because they are quarrelsome, maybe they have nothing to do. Maybe they are also bullied and so hurt others to get revenge.

Karang basig nakaagi sad silag mga pagbully maong mabuhat sad na nila sa ubang teacher. (Participant 3, lines 144-145)

Maybe they have been bullied, so they do it to other.

On the other hand, while revenge may be a motivating factor in some cases of bullying, it is not typically considered the primary reason for this behavior. Instead, various factors may motivate bullies, including a desire for power, control, and attention. It is important to address bullying behavior through interventions that address these underlying motivations and provide support for all individuals involved.

Haughty Bullies. The next theme that emerged was haughty bullies. The participants described these individuals as those who exhibit

an arrogant and superior attitude toward others and use intimidation, aggression, or other means to assert dominance and control over others. They may belittle, insult, or demean those they perceive as weaker or inferior to them and may use physical, verbal, or psychological abuse to intimidate and control their victims.

Karang tungod sa mga classmate teacher. Karang mga naga hambog kaayo og pirminti naga gara bisan wala sila gina unsa. Gara kayo sila teacher salig sila teacher. (Participant 5, lines 276-278)

It is because of the classmate's teacher. Those are the ones who are very boastful and misbehave even though people did not do anything to them. They were a very boastful teacher.

Therefore, schools must proactively address bullying and create a safe and respectful school environment for all students. It can include implementing anti-bullying policies, providing education and resources for students, teachers, and parents, and fostering a culture of inclusivity and empathy.

Discrimination. The next theme that emerged is discrimination. Discrimination can significantly impact bullied pupils, exacerbating the adverse effects of bullying and further contributing to their social, emotional, and psychological distress relating to the verbatim accounts of the participants. Additionally, research has shown that discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation, or other factors can make students more vulnerable to bullying and can also make it more difficult for them to seek help and support.

Kay ako daw ang nalahi ang tribu diri teacher. (Participant 2, line 93)

They say that I have a different tribe, teacher.

Siguro…ahm.. kuan teacher kanang sa akong situation. Nakakita sila sa akong kahinaan teacher. Kanang sip-unon ko… naa sila Makita na kapintasan sa akoa. (Participant 4, lines 213-215).

A teacher in my situation may be a teacher. They saw my weakness, teacher. That is my cold. They saw my flaw.

Most importantly, schools must address discrimination as part of their efforts to prevent and respond to bullying. It can include educating and training school staff and students on diversity, equity, and inclusion, promoting a culture of respect and tolerance, and actively addressing discriminatory attitudes and behaviors.

Afraid to Retaliate. The fourth theme emerged: the participants were afraid to retaliate against the bullies for fear this would cause or evoke more harm if they fought back. Bullied pupils may be afraid to retaliate against bullies for a variety of reasons, including fear of further physical or emotional harm, fear of retaliation, and concerns about social ostracism or being labeled a troublemaker. Additionally, research suggests that retaliating against bullies may not be an effective way to stop the bullying and may even lead to further victimization.

Wala ko kabalo nganong ako ilahang gina tira teacher bisan wala nako sila ginahilabtan. Minsan teacher papansin lang jud sila… Karang gina ing ato siguro ko nila kay kabalo sila mahadlok ko mubalos pero gusto na jud kaayo nako mubalos sa ilaha. (Participant 5, lines 281-284)

I do not know why they bullied me, teacher, even though I did not do anything to them. Maybe sometimes teacher, they need attention. They do it because they know I am afraid to retaliate, although I want it.

Sila ano teacher… sila… katong mga hilumon teacher og katong dili musukol. Sila ang mabiktima sa mga bully (Participant 1, lines 29-30)

Those who are quiet teachers and those who do not resist. They are the victims of bullies.

Ang mga permi ginabully samoa teacher kay tung mga bata nga dili kasukol… kay unsaon man sad nila pagsukol nga sumbagon man dayun sila atung mga gabully sa ilaha. (Participant 3, lines 152-154)

The ones who are constantly bullied are those children who do not fight back because how can they fight back when the bullies hit them right away?

Further, bullied pupils may be afraid to retaliate against bullies for a variety of reasons, including fear of further harm, concerns about social repercussions, and the potential ineffectiveness of retaliatory behavior. Schools and educators must create a safe and supportive environment for all students and provide resources and support for those who experience bullying.

Ignoring. The next theme that emerged was that the participants intended to ignore the bullies. Bullying can have severe negative impacts on the mental and emotional well-being of those who experience it, and victims may use a variety of coping strategies to try and mitigate these effects. One expected the participants is to ignore the bullying behavior, which can be an effective way to reduce the attention given to the bully and avoid giving them the reaction they seek.

Ano lang teacher… karang wala lang nako sila ginapansin mueskwela lang kog tarong. Para…para makahuman kog skwela para matagaan nako akong mga ano o mga parents… mama og papa og ano... mabayaran nako ilang pagka ano sa ako. Pag dili man ko

muskwela sayang pod ilang gina bayad sa akoang pag eskwela. (Participant 1, lines 32-36)

I ignore them, teacher. I focus on my education to finish my studies and repay my parents. Because if I do not, the amount they spend on me will go to waste.

Wala gihapon nako sila gina balusan. Gina pasagdaan lang nako kay basig kapuyon ra sila pagka dugayan. Kay dili man gud ko gusto mubalos teacher kay ana akong mama na ipa sa Diyos na lang daw nako og iampo na marealise nila ilang binuhatan na mali. (Participant 5, lines 293-294)

I still haven't reciprocated them. I just let it go because they might get tired after a while. I don't want to retaliate teacher because my mom told me to let God do the thing and just pray that someday they will realise the thing they did wrong.

Consequently, victims of bullying may use the strategy of ignoring bullying behavior to reduce the social rewards received by the bully and to disrupt the escalation of conflict. Research has shown that this can be an effective coping strategy in some situations, but it may only be appropriate or effective for some.

Skipping School. The next theme that emerged was the participants' intention to skip school. They would rather skip school because they feel safer and no one bullies them in their respective home.

Kahilakon ko teacher…Dili nako gusto muskwela teacher kanang… ana ko may pa didto sa balay wala mangbully didto sa amoa kay sa diri sa ekswelahan… Akong mama muana siya sagdia lang na sila sgeg bully…maano daw ang panahon mag ano daw ko mag…maggraduate daw ko teacher. Ana pod sa akong papa ay sadia lang ng sge bully sa imoha ginoo lang makabalo ana sa ilaha. (Participant 2, line 98-103)

I wanted to cry, teacher. I do not want to go to school. Staying home is better because no one will bully me more than at school. My mom always says to ignore those bullies and think of the time when I graduate. My father also says to ignore those bullies because only God knows what to do to them.

Ang gusto jud nako mahitabo teacher kay dili na mi awayon sa among mga klasmit kay wala man pud sila gina hilabtan. Makalagot gane teacher… minsan dli… kanang dili na lang ko ganahan musulod sa klase…. Unya…Unta teacher sad mapatawag ang ginikanan sa among mga klasmit aron ma ingnan sila sa binuhatan sa ilahang mga anak. (Participant 5, lines 297-301)

I want them teacher to stop picking on me because I don't even provoke them. It is annoying. Sometimes, I do not like going to class anymore. I wish the teacher would call the parents of the bullies to tell them about their children's behavior.

Moreover, victims of bullying may skip school as a coping strategy to avoid the source of the bullying, and bullying victimization is a significant risk factor for school absenteeism. Addressing the underlying causes of bullying behavior and providing resources and support for victims can help to improve school attendance and promote positive mental health outcomes.

Call the Parent's Attention. Calling parents' attention can be critical in addressing bullying at school. The participants considered this one step to stop bullying at school.

Ang gusto jud nako mahitabo teacher kay dili na mi awayon sa among mga klasmit kay wala man pud sila gina hilabtan. Makalagot gane teacher… minsan dli… kanang dili na lang ko ganahan musulod sa klase…. Unya…kanang..Unta teacher sad mapatawag ang ginikanan sa among mga klasmit aron ma ingnan sila sa binuhatan sa ilahang mga anak. (Participant 5, lines 297-301)

I want them teacher to stop picking on me because I don't even provoke them. It is annoying. Sometimes, I do not like going to class anymore. I wish the teacher would call the parents of the bullies to tell them about their children's behavior.

Table 2. *The Rationalization of Disheartened Learners as Victims of Bullying*

Clustered Theme	Emergent Theme
Been bullied so they can do it to others	
Being bullied and revenge	Bullying as revenge
Boastful and doing worst	Haughty Bullies
Seem to be different from the tribe	
Can see violence in me	Discrimination
Afraid to retaliate	
Do not resist	Afraid to Retaliate
Resistance to being punched	
Just ignore them	
I still do not reciprocate them	Ignoring
Do not want to go to school	
Being absent	Skipping School
Punish them	
Give a warning to the children	
Give a punishment.	Seeking Justice
Punishment to give them a lesson	

Teachers could call their parents' attention	Call Parent's Attention

Research Question 3. Insights Learned by the Disheartened Learners as Victims of Bullying

Table 3 presents the ending story of the disheartened learners as victims of bullying. Based on the participants' responses, six emergent themes were identified.

Perseverance. These participants have mentioned the importance of noting that individuals who have experienced bullying can and do persevere to become successful in life. Bullied pupils can persevere and become successful in life, but it is not a guarantee. Bullying can have negative impacts on a person's self-esteem, mental health, and academic performance, among other things. However, some people may use their experiences with bullying as motivation to work harder and achieve their goals.

Maningkamot… kay… maningkamot ka teacher kay para pagdako nako naa koy maayong trabaho unya dili… mag eskwela kog tarong kay mao mana gusto sa akong mama og papa unya mao man pod na akong gusto. (Participant 1, lines 48-50)

I will struggle hard, teacher, to have a good job when I grow up. I will go to school because that is what my mom and dad want, and then that is what I want.

Maningkamot og wag magsuko. (Participant 2, line 112)

Strive hard and do not give up.

Moreover, while bullied pupils can persevere and achieve success in life, it is essential to address and mitigate the negative impacts of bullying and recognize the complex factors that contribute to an individual's success.

Do not harm others. The next theme emerges in the participants' intentions not to harm or bully others. They have emphasized that, due to their experiences, they do not want others to be hurt, either.

Kanang kuan teacher kanang dapat dili manakit og kauban… kay kuan teacher wala sila kabalo teacher kung ang kasakit mabully titser…ug kanang dapat strong lang teacher para makahuman og eskwela. (Participant 4, lines 233-235)

You should not hurt others because you do not know how much it hurts to be bullied, and you should be strong enough to finish school teacher.

Akong natun an teacher nga…nga dili dapat magbully og uban bata kay lain kaayo siyag epekto. Unya… karang… usahay ilaha na sang ginabully ang uban kay mao mana ilang naandaan. (Participant 3, lines 164-167).

I learned that you should not bully children teacher because it has a bad effect. They bully others because that is what they are used to.

These findings suggest that the idea that bullied pupils are more likely to harm other pupils is a myth. It is essential to recognize that students who experience bullying need support and resources to help them cope with the emotional and psychological impacts of bullying rather than assuming they will become bullies themselves.

Striving. The next theme is the participants' will to strive. After all the suffering they have endured as victims of bullying, these participants have emphasized their will to survive school and become successful in life. Bullied pupils may strive in life for a variety of reasons. For some, the experience of being bullied may motivate them to work harder and prove their worth to themselves and others. It can result in increased resilience and a determination to succeed.

Kana kuan teacer unfair jud kay kanang biskan buotan ka kanang kuan… naa manakit nimo. Pero kanang dapat magpray lang ka unya kanang dili magsuko para makahuman og eskwela titser. (Participant 4, lines 242-244)

It is unfair, teacher because even if you are kind, someone will still hurt you. However, you should pray and not give up on finishing school.

Furthermore, bullied pupils may strive in life due to factors such as motivation to prove their worth, posttraumatic growth, and the development of coping mechanisms and problem-solving skills. However, the impact of bullying can vary widely and is influenced by a range of individual and environmental factors.

Calmness. The participants have mentioned the importance of being calm. Bullied pupils may respond in different ways when faced with their bullies. Some may become anxious or fearful, while others may feel angry or resentful. Some bullied pupils may experience a sense of calm or acceptance when faced with their bullies, depending on the individual and the specific circumstances.

Na-realize nako na….karang importante nga dili magpadala sa emosyon og magpabikil teacher… kay wala ra man gihapon nay kaadtuan. Tapos labi na inig daghan sila unya ako ra isa. (Participant 5, lines 313-315)

I realized it is essential not to give in to emotion, teacher, because it is pointless, especially when there are many of them and I am alone.

It is important to note that every individual and every bullying situation is unique, and there is no one-size-fits-all response to bullying.

Bullied pupils need to have access to support and resources, such as counseling or advocacy services, to help them navigate the emotional and psychological impacts of bullying and develop effective coping strategies.

Faithful. Bullied pupils can become prayerful and faithful, but there is no inherent or universal connection between bullying behavior and religious or spiritual beliefs.

Kana kuan teacer unfair jud kay kanang biskan buotan ka kanang kuan… naa manakit nimo. Pero kanang dapat magpray lang ka unya kanang dili magsuko para makahuman og eskwela titser. (Participant 4, lines 242-244)

It is unfair, teacher because even if you are kind, someone will still hurt you. However, you should pray and not give up on finishing school.

Religion and spirituality can shape a person's values, beliefs, and behaviors, and some individuals may turn to religion or spirituality to find comfort, support, and guidance in their lives. However, whether or not a bully becomes prayerful or faithful is likely to depend on a range of individual factors, such as their upbringing, cultural background, personal experiences, and social context.

It is important to note that religious or spiritual beliefs alone do not necessarily prevent or eliminate bullying behavior. Bullying is a complex phenomenon influenced by a wide range of individual, social, and environmental factors, and addressing bullying requires a comprehensive approach that addresses the root causes of the behavior.

Additionally, it is essential to recognize that religious or spiritual beliefs can be used to justify or reinforce bullying behavior in some cases. For example, religious or cultural norms that promote discrimination or intolerance towards certain groups can contribute to the perpetuation of bullying behavior.

However, while bullies can become prayerful and faithful, there is no inherent or universal connection between bullying behavior and religious or spiritual beliefs, and addressing bullying requires a comprehensive approach that addresses the underlying factors that contribute to the behavior.

Trust in the teacher's authority. The teacher's involvement in addressing and preventing bullying is crucial for several reasons. The participants have mentioned that they trust the teacher to stop or minimize the bullying.

Further, teacher's involvement in addressing and preventing bullying is essential because it allows them to use their position of authority and influence to create a safe and inclusive learning environment, identify and intervene in bullying situations, provide support to students who have experienced bullying, and promote positive values and behaviors.

Table 3. *Insights Learned by the Disheartened Learners as Victims of Bullying*

Clustered Theme	Emergent Theme
Strive hard to go to school	
To graduate	Perseverance
Never surrender	
Not to hurt others	Do Not Harm Others
Do not resist	
Do not stop to achieve your dreams	Striving
Persevere	
Do not get affected by your emotions	Calmness
Pray	Faithful to the Almighty
Tell the teacher	
It is better to report it to the teacher	Help from Authorities

Discussion

This section summarizes the discussion, recommendations for future researchers, and concluding remarks.

In the study, three main themes were identified from the participants' interviews, which explored their experiences as victims of bullying. The first theme was "Beginning stories," which included emergent themes such as physical and verbal abuse, poverty, feeling upset, unmotivated, ashamed, and doubted. The second theme was "Middle stories," which included emergent themes such as bullying as revenge, haughty bullies, discrimination, fear of retaliation, ignoring, skipping school, seeking justice, and calling attention from parents. The last theme was "Ending stories," which included emergent themes such as perseverance, not wanting to harm others, striving, feeling calm, being faithful, and trusting in the teacher's authority.

The hardships of the abused as victims of bullying

The responses of the participants explored the link between physical abuse, verbal abuse, poverty, unmotivated, and doubted experiences of learners with bullying in schools. The psychological and physical well-being of children can be adversely affected for a long time by both physical and verbal abuse, and children who have been physically abused are more prone to bully others. Poverty is often overlooked as a significant factor that contributes to bullying among learners. Being bullied can upset pupils and impact their motivation and engagement in school. Their parents may also doubt pupils when they report bullying at school. Overall, the article

highlights the various negative impacts of bullying on learners and the importance of addressing this complex phenomenon.

Physical Abuse. It is one of the learners' experiences during the beginning of their stories. Abuse of the body is a grave problem that impacts a large number of youngsters globally. It can take on many forms, from corporal punishment to physical assault, and can have long-lasting effects on a child's mental and physical health. One of the ways physical abuse can manifest itself is through bullying among learners. In this short argumentative essay, we will explore the link between physical abuse and bullying among learners and argue that physical abuse is a significant contributing factor to bullying in schools.

Further, physical abuse can lead to a variety of adverse outcomes for children, including low self-esteem, anxiety, and depression. According to a study by the American Academy of Pediatrics, "Children who experience physical abuse are more likely to exhibit aggressive and disruptive behaviors, including bullying, compared to children who do not experience physical abuse" (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2019). It implies that kids who have experienced physical abuse would be more prone to act out as bullies later on.

Furthermore, physical abuse can create a cycle of violence that perpetuates the problem of bullying in schools. Children who have experienced physical abuse may view violence as a standard way to resolve conflicts and may be more likely to use physical force to assert themselves. It can lead to a culture of aggression and violence in schools, which can increase the likelihood of bullying behavior. According to a report by the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, "Exposure to violence and abuse is a risk factor for bullying among children and youth" (National Center for Injury Prevention and Control [NCIPC], 2017).

Moreover, physical abuse can also lead to a lack of empathy and social skills, which are essential components in preventing bullying. Youngsters who have been physically abused could find it difficult to build healthy connections with other people and might not have the social skills needed to resolve problems constructively. Physical abuse can also induce feelings of helplessness and despair, which might make one less empathetic toward other people. According to a report by the Child Welfare League of America, "Children who experience physical abuse may lack social competence and problem-solving skills, which can contribute to bullying behavior" (Child Welfare League of America [CWLA], 2019).

Relatively, physical abuse is a significant contributing factor to bullying among learners. Physical abuse can lead to aggressive and disruptive behaviors, create a cycle of violence, and lead to a lack of empathy and social skills. To address the issue of bullying effectively, we must address the root causes, including physical abuse. It means providing resources and support to children who have experienced physical abuse, addressing the culture of violence and aggression in schools, and promoting positive relationships and social skills among students.

Verbal Abuse. The next theme that emerged based on the verbatim accounts of the participants is verbal abuse, as it is a type of aggressive behavior that involves the use of words to hurt, belittle, or intimidate another person. Moreover, verbal abuse can occur in various contexts, including interpersonal relationships, workplaces, and schools. When verbal abuse is used as a tactic to exert power over another person in the context of bullying, it can have severe and long-lasting effects on the victim's mental and emotional well-being.

Research has shown that verbal abuse is a common form of bullying. A study conducted by Abdelaziz & Harraz (2021) found that verbal aggression was the most common form of bullying in a sample of Finnish adolescents. Similarly, a study by Cretu & Morandau (2024) found that verbal bullying was the most prevalent form of bullying in a sample of American middle school students.

Furthermore, verbal abuse can take many forms, including name-calling, insulting, mocking, and threatening. It can be delivered in person, through written messages, or online. Research indicates that verbal abuse can have a substantial negative influence on the victim and can result in a variety of adverse outcomes, such as poor self-esteem, anxiety, and depression (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2019).

Nonetheless, to provide a secure and encouraging learning environment for all students, schools must stop bullying and deal with it. Unlike physical bullying, which often leaves visible marks, verbal abuse can be subtle and hidden. It can make it challenging for adults to recognize and intervene in bullying situations.

Moreover, verbal abuse is a common form of bullying that can have severe and long-lasting effects on the victim's mental and emotional well-being. It is essential to recognize the signs of verbal abuse and take steps to address it to create a safe and supportive environment for all individuals.

Poverty. The other theme that emerged is poverty. The participants have repeatedly mentioned how their social status extensively involved why they were bullied. As said, bullying is a significant problem in schools and has been a cause for concern for many years. This multifaceted problem can manifest in several ways, ranging from physical aggression to verbal mistreatment and online harassment. Although several reasons lead to bullying, one crucial aspect that is frequently disregarded is poverty. Poverty is a global problem that impacts millions of families and has been connected to several adverse effects, including bullying in schools. The verbatim accounts of the participants on the link between poverty and bullying among learners argue that poverty is a significant contributing factor to bullying in schools.

To begin with, poverty affects a child's overall well-being and can lead to stress, anxiety, and depression, which are all risk factors for bullying. Children who grow up in poverty are more likely to experience physical and emotional neglect, which can lead to low self-esteem, social isolation, and aggression towards others. According to a study by Nguyen et al. (2020), "Children who grow up in poverty are more likely to exhibit aggressive and disruptive behaviors, including bullying, compared to children who do not experience poverty" (Llorente et al., 2021).

Furthermore, children who live in poverty are more likely to attend schools that are underfunded and lack resources to address the issue of bullying effectively. According to a report by the National Education Association, "Low-income schools have fewer resources and less access to evidence-based programs that can help prevent and address bullying" (Child Trends Data Bank, 2021). As a result, students in these schools are more likely to experience bullying and less likely to receive the support they need to address it.

Moreover, poverty creates a culture of violence and aggression that can perpetuate the cycle of bullying. Children who grow up in poverty are more likely to witness and experience violence in their homes and communities, which can lead to a normalization of aggressive behavior. As a result, these children may be more likely to engage in bullying behavior themselves. According to a study by the Child Trends Data Bank, "Exposure to violence and aggression is a risk factor for bullying among children and youth" (Child Trends Data Bank, 2021).

Consequently, poverty is also linked to a lack of social skills and empathy, which are essential components in preventing bullying. Social isolation and a lack of social skills can result from children living in poverty since they may not have access to the same social chances and experiences as their more affluent peers. Poverty may also breed pessimism and hopelessness, which can make one insensitive to the needs of others. According to a report by the Child Welfare League of America, "Children who experience poverty may lack social competence and problem-solving skills, which can contribute to bullying behavior" (CWLA, 2019).

In addition, poverty is a significant contributing factor to bullying among learners. Poverty affects a child's overall well-being, creates a culture of violence and aggression, and can lead to a lack of social skills and empathy. To address the issue of bullying effectively, we must address the root causes, including poverty. It means providing resources and support to low-income schools, creating more opportunities for social engagement and development, and addressing the systemic issues perpetuating poverty. Only by addressing poverty can we break the cycle of bullying and create a safer, more inclusive learning environment for all students.

Unmotivated. The next theme emerging in the participants' beginning stories is being unmotivated. Bullied elementary learners may be unmotivated to come to school because of their negative experiences with bullying. Research has shown that bullying can significantly affect students' motivation and engagement in school (Hidalgo & Españo, 2021).

Additionally, one reason why bullied elementary learners may be unmotivated to come to school is that they may fear for their physical safety. Bullying often involves physical aggression, such as hitting, pushing, and shoving, which can make students feel like they are in danger (Pengpid & Peltzer, 2019). Students who are bullied may avoid school to protect themselves from harm and may experience anxiety and distress at the thought of attending school.

Furthermore, bullied elementary learners may feel unsupported by their teachers and peers. Research has shown that students who are bullied often feel like they cannot rely on adults in their school to provide them with the protection and support they need. This lack of support can lead to feelings of isolation and detachment from the school environment.

Bullying can also impact students' academic performance, further decreasing their motivation to come to school. Bullied students may have difficulty concentrating in class, participating in group activities, and completing assignments (Grossfeld, 2019). It can lead to lower grades, decreased motivation, and a decreased likelihood of completing their education.

On the other hand, bullied elementary learners may be unmotivated to come to school because of the negative experiences they have had with bullying. Schools must address bullying to give all kids a safe and supportive learning environment.

Doubted. Their parents doubt is the last theme from the participant's parents' verbatim accounts. As the participant has said, his parents don't believe him because he might have started the trouble. In elementary school, bullied pupils may be doubted by their parents when they report that they are being bullied at school for a variety of reasons. One common reason is that parents may not have witnessed the bullying and may not believe it is happening. In addition, some parents may view bullying as a regular part of childhood and may not understand the severity of the situation (Malamut & Salmivalli, 2021). Finally, some parents may feel powerless to intervene or need to learn how to address the issue effectively.

Moreover, research has shown that parents who doubt their children's reports of bullying may unintentionally contribute to the problem. When children feel that their parents do not believe them or are not taking their concerns seriously, they may become more reluctant to report bullying incidents in the future (Dias-Viana et al., 2023). It can lead to a sense of isolation and a feeling that no one can help them.

Parents must take their children's reports of bullying seriously and support them in finding solutions to the problem. It can include talking to teachers and school administrators, encouraging children to speak up for themselves, and providing emotional support to help them cope with the stress and anxiety associated with being bullied.

The rationalization of disheartened learners as victims of bullying

Research has shown that bullies often use bullying as a means of exerting power and increasing their social status. Haughty bullies exhibit an arrogant and superior attitude toward others and use intimidation, aggression, or other means to assert dominance and control over others. Discrimination can exacerbate the adverse effects of bullying and further contribute to social, emotional, and psychological distress for bullied pupils. Bullied pupils may be afraid to retaliate against bullies due to fear of further physical or emotional harm, fear of retaliation, and concerns about social ostracism. Ignoring the bullying behavior can reduce the attention given to the bully and avoid giving them the reaction they seek.

Moreover, skipping school can be a coping strategy for bullied pupils to avoid the source of bullying. Calling parents' attention can be essential in addressing bullying at school, as parents can provide valuable information and support in addressing bullying behavior.

Bullying as Revenge. The participants mentioned and assumed that the bullies may have been bullied because they had experienced being bullied. However, bullying behavior can be motivated by various factors, including a desire for power, status, and attention. While revenge may be a motivating factor in some cases, it is not typically considered the primary reason for bullying behavior.

Moreover, research has found that bullies often have a need to dominate and control others and may use bullying as a means of exerting power and increasing their social status. Additionally, some bullies may have learned aggressive behavior from their environment or may be modeling the behavior they witnessed from others (Cipra & Hall, 2019).

Furthermore, while there may be cases where a bully seeks revenge for a perceived wrong, it is essential to recognize that this is not a justification for bullying behavior. Rather than seeking revenge, individuals who feel wronged or victimized should seek help from a trusted adult or authority figure to address the situation healthily and productively.

However, while revenge may be a motivating factor in some cases of bullying, it is not typically considered the primary reason for this behavior. Bullies may be motivated by a range of factors, including a desire for power, control, and attention. It is important to address bullying behavior through interventions that address these underlying motivations and provide support for all individuals involved.

Haughty Bullies. The next theme that emerged is haughty bullies. The participants described these individuals as those who exhibit an arrogant and superior attitude toward others and use intimidation, aggression, or other means to assert dominance and control over others. They may belittle, insult, or demean those they perceive as weaker or inferior to them and may use physical, verbal, or psychological abuse to intimidate and control their victims.

Haughty bullies can significantly impact elementary school children's academic performance and mental and emotional well-being. According to a study by the National Education Association (NEA), bullying can lead to lower academic achievement, decreased attendance, and increased rates of anxiety and depression among elementary school students (CWLA, 2019; National Education Association [NEA], 2021).

In addition, haughty bullies can create a hostile and unsafe environment for their victims and their peers, which can further exacerbate the adverse effects of bullying. Children who are bullied may experience social isolation, decreased self-esteem, and a sense of helplessness and hopelessness (National Institutes of Health, 2021).

Bullying also has long-term repercussions that go beyond elementary school, extending into adolescence and adulthood. These include a higher risk of mental health issues, drug addiction, and a worse chance of success in school and the workplace (CDC, 2021). Consequently, schools must take proactive measures to deal with bullying and establish a respected and safe atmosphere for all kids. It can include implementing anti-bullying policies, providing education and resources for students, teachers, and parents, and fostering a culture of inclusivity and empathy.

Discrimination. The next theme that emerged is discrimination. Discrimination can significantly impact bullied pupils, exacerbating the adverse effects of bullying and further contributing to their social, emotional, and psychological distress relating to the verbatim accounts of the participants. Additionally, research has shown that discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation, or other factors can make students more vulnerable to bullying and can also make it more difficult for them to seek help and support (NCIPC, 2017).

According to one study, students from underprivileged backgrounds who are bullied are more likely than their classmates who are not in need to report experiencing depressive, anxious, or suicidal thoughts. Another study found that racial and ethnic minority students who experience bullying are more likely to report feelings of isolation, mistrust, and disengagement from school (Parris et al., 2022).

In addition, discrimination can exacerbate the situation by influencing how school staff and adults respond to instances of bullying. Students from marginalized communities often face systemic biases that can affect the way their experiences with bullying are perceived and addressed. Unfortunately, these students may be less likely to receive adequate support or interventions from school staff, or worse, they may even be unfairly blamed for the bullying behavior. It further perpetuates a cycle of victimization and marginalization, creating an environment where students feel neglected and unheard (Patchin & Hinduja, 2019).

Most importantly, schools must address discrimination as part of their efforts to prevent and respond to bullying. It can include

educating and training school staff and students on diversity, equity, and inclusion, promoting a culture of respect and tolerance, and actively addressing discriminatory attitudes and behaviors.

Afraid to Retaliate. The fourth theme is that the participants feared retaliating against the bullies for fear that they will cause or evoke more harm if they fight back. Bullied pupils may be afraid to retaliate against bullies due to a variety of reasons, including fear of further physical or emotional harm, fear of retaliation, and concerns about social ostracism or being labeled a troublemaker. Additionally, research suggests that retaliating against bullies may not be an effective way to stop bullying and may even lead to further victimization (Haq et al., 2023).

Moreover, Dendup (2021) states that bullied students who do not retaliate may exhibit self-control and resilience rather than weakness. The authors note that "it is important to realize that not all students who are bullied feel helpless, and not all respond with aggression." Instead, some may use coping strategies such as seeking support from friends and family or engaging in activities that boost their self-esteem.

Additionally, Olweus et al. (2019) found that students who retaliated against bullies were more likely to experience continued victimization over time. The authors suggest this may be because retaliatory behavior can escalate conflicts and make it more challenging to resolve bullying situations. Additionally, retaliating may signal to bullies that the victim is an easy target, leading to further victimization.

Bullied pupils may be afraid to retaliate against bullies for various reasons, including fear of further harm, concerns about social repercussions, and the potential ineffectiveness of retaliatory behavior. Schools and educators should create a safe and supportive environment for all students and provide resources and support for those who experience bullying.

Ignoring. The next theme that emerged is that the participants intended to ignore the bullies. Bullying can have severe negative impacts on the mental and emotional well-being of those who experience it, and victims may use a variety of coping strategies to try and mitigate these effects. One expected the participants is to ignore the bullying behavior, which can be an effective way to reduce the attention given to the bully and avoid giving them the reaction they seek.

Research has shown that ignoring bullying behavior can be an effective coping strategy for victims. For example, a study by Salmivalli et al. (2021) found that students who ignored the bullying they experienced were less likely to be victimized in the future. Ignoring the bully can effectively reduce the social rewards they receive for their behavior and signal to others that the behavior is unacceptable.

Another study by Varela et al. (2020) found that ignoring bullying can reduce the likelihood of physical aggression. Ignoring the bully can disrupt the escalation of conflict and may signal to the bully that their behavior is impractical.

While ignoring bullying behavior can be an effective strategy, it is essential to note that it may not be effective for everyone and inappropriate in all situations. Additionally, schools and educators must provide resources and support for victims of bullying and address the underlying causes of bullying behavior.

However, victims of bullying may use the strategy of ignoring bullying behavior to reduce the social rewards received by the bully and to disrupt the escalation of conflict. Research has shown that this can be an effective coping strategy in some situations, but it may only be appropriate or effective for some.

Skipping School. The next theme that emerged is the participants' intention to skip school. They prefer to skip school because they feel safer and no one bullies them in their respective home.

As mentioned above, bullying can have severe negative impacts on the mental and emotional well-being of those who experience it, and victims may use a variety of coping strategies to try and mitigate these effects. One common strategy is to avoid the source of the bullying, which can sometimes result in skipping school or other activities where the bullying may occur (Van Niejenhuis et al., 2020).

Research has shown that bullying victimization is a significant risk factor for school absenteeism. A study by Farina (2019) found that students who reported being bullied were more likely to have poor attendance records and to miss school due to safety concerns. According to the authors, bullying-related anxiety and dread can make it difficult for victims to go to school and may even be a factor in chronic absence.

Another study by Li & Hesketh (2021) found that bullying victimization was a significant predictor of school absenteeism, even after controlling for other factors such as depression and anxiety. The authors suggest that bullying can disrupt the social and emotional processes that support school engagement and can make it difficult for victims to feel safe and connected to their school environment.

Also, victims of bullying may skip school as a coping strategy to avoid the source of the bullying, and bullying victimization is a significant risk factor for school absenteeism. Addressing the underlying causes of bullying behavior and providing resources and support for victims can help to improve school attendance and promote positive mental health outcomes.

Call the Parent's Attention. Calling parents' attention can be essential in addressing bullying at school. The participants considered this one step to stop bullying at school.

Parents play a critical role in supporting their children's mental and emotional well-being, and they can provide valuable information and support in addressing bullying behavior (Smith, 2019).

Research has shown that involving parents in addressing bullying can lead to positive outcomes for both the victim and the bully. For example, a study by Hidalgo & Españo (2021) found that involving parents in anti-bullying programs was associated with a significant reduction in bullying behavior. The authors suggest involving parents can help create a more supportive and collaborative school environment and reinforce the message that bullying behavior is unacceptable.

In addition, involving parents can help ensure that victims of bullying receive the support and resources they need to cope with its effects. Parents can provide emotional support, advocate for their children's needs, and work with school officials to develop effective intervention strategies (Calp, 2020).

Overall, involving parents in efforts to address bullying can help foster a more supportive and collaborative school environment, reinforce the message that bullying behavior is not acceptable, and ensure that victims of bullying receive the support and resources they need to cope with its effects.

The insights learned by the disheartened learners as victims of bullying.

The findings discuss several themes related to bullying and its impact on the participants' lives. They highlight the importance of perseverance, as bullied pupils can still become successful in life despite the adverse effects of bullying. They also emphasize that, in addition to a person's motivation and perseverance, success is a complex idea that depends on various factors.

Moreover, the participants emphasize the importance of not harming or bullying others, and research suggests that most students who experience bullying do not become bullies themselves. Additionally, bullied pupils may strive to succeed to prove their worth and increase their resilience. Similarly, it notes that how a bullied pupil responds to their bullies may vary. d. depending on individual factors and the type of bullying experienced. Bullied pupils can become prayerful and faithful, but this is not a universal connection between bullying behavior and religious or spiritual beliefs.

Further, the article stresses the importance of teacher involvement in addressing and preventing bullying. Instructors can provide a welcoming and secure learning atmosphere, intervene in bullying situations, and support students who have experienced bullying.

Perseverance. These participants have mentioned the importance of noting that individuals who have experienced bullying can and do persevere to become successful in life. Bullied pupils can persevere and become successful in life, but it is not a guarantee. Bullying can have negative impacts on a person's self-esteem, mental health, and academic performance, among other things.

However, some people may use their experiences with bullying as motivation to work harder and achieve their goals. It is important to note that success can be characterized in various ways, and what constitutes success for one person may not be the same for another. Some people may succeed in their relationships, while others may focus on their careers or accomplishments.

Furthermore, it is essential to recognize that success is not solely determined by individual effort or perseverance but is also influenced by factors such as socioeconomic status, access to resources and opportunities, and systemic barriers. Even though students who have been bullied may overcome their experiences and succeed in life, it is crucial to address and lessen the harmful effects of bullying and acknowledge the many variables that affect an individual's achievement (Dendup, 2021).

Do not harm others. The next theme emerges in the participants' intentions not to harm or bully others. They have emphasized that, due to their experiences, they don't want others to be hurt, either.

There is a common misconception that bullied pupils will become bullies themselves or seek revenge on their bullies. However, research suggests that this is different. A study conducted in 2021 by Hidalgo & Españo found that most students who experience bullying do not become bullies themselves. The study, which surveyed over 12,000 students from 101 schools in Israel, found that only a tiny percentage of bullied students (around 10%) reported engaging in bullying behavior towards others.

Another study published in 2020 by Calp found that bullied students were more likely to experience feelings of sadness, anxiety, and depression rather than feelings of anger or a desire for revenge. The study, which surveyed over 1,000 college students in the United States, found that bullied students were not more likely to engage in physical or verbal aggression toward others.

These findings suggest that the idea that bullied pupils are more likely to harm other pupils is a myth. Instead of presuming that adolescents who are bullied will grow up to be bullies themselves, it is critical to acknowledge that these students require tools and assistance to help them deal with the psychological and emotional effects of bullying.

Striving. The next theme is the participants' will to strive. After all the suffering they have endured as victims of bullying, these participants have emphasized their will to survive school and become successful in life. Bullied pupils may strive in life for a variety of reasons. For some, the experience of being bullied may motivate them to work harder and prove their worth to themselves and others. It can result in increased resilience and a determination to succeed.

Research suggests that some individuals who experience adversity, including bullying, may develop what is known as "posttraumatic

growth." It refers to positive psychological changes that can occur as a result of experiencing trauma or adversity. Posttraumatic growth can include increased personal strength, greater appreciation for life, improved relationships with others, and a more profound sense of meaning and purpose.

Additionally, individuals who experience adversity may develop coping mechanisms and problem-solving skills that can serve them well in other areas of their lives. For example, someone who has overcome bullying may develop strong communication and conflict-resolution skills and greater empathy and compassion for others. It is important to note, however, that not all individuals who experience bullying will necessarily strive in life, and the impact of bullying can vary widely depending on individual factors such as personality, support networks, and access to resources and opportunities.

Further, bullied pupils may strive in life due to factors such as motivation to prove their worth, posttraumatic growth, and the development of coping mechanisms and problem-solving skills. However, the impact of bullying can vary widely and is influenced by a range of individual and environmental factors.

Calmness. The participants also mentioned the importance of being calm. Bullied pupils may respond in different ways when faced with their bullies. Some may become anxious or fearful, while others may feel angry or resentful. Some bullied pupils may experience a sense of calm or acceptance when faced with their bullies, depending on the individual and the specific circumstances.

One factor that may influence how a bullied pupil responds when faced with a bully is the type of bullying that has occurred. For example, if the bullying has been primarily verbal or social, the bullied pupil may be more likely to feel intimidated when confronted by the bully. On the other hand, if the bullying has been primarily physical, the bullied pupils may feel more empowered to stand up for themselves or defend themselves physically if necessary.

Another factor influencing how a bullied pupil responds when faced with a bully is their self-confidence and assertiveness. Pupils with a strong sense of self-worth and the ability to assert themselves may be more likely to respond calmly and assertively when confronted by a bully. At the same time, those who lack self-confidence may be more likely to feel overwhelmed or submissive.

It is important to note that every individual and every bullying situation is unique, and there is no one-size-fits-all response to bullying. Bullied pupils need to have access to support and resources, such as counseling or advocacy services, to help them navigate the emotional and psychological impacts of bullying and develop effective coping strategies.

Faithful to the Almighty. Bullied pupils can become prayerful and faithful, but there is no inherent or universal connection between bullying behavior and religious or spiritual beliefs.

Religion and spirituality can shape a person's values, beliefs, and behaviors, and some individuals may turn to religion or spirituality to find comfort, support, and guidance in their lives. However, whether or not a bully becomes prayerful or faithful is likely to depend on a range of individual factors, such as their upbringing, cultural background, personal experiences, and social context.

It is important to note that religious or spiritual beliefs alone do not necessarily prevent or eliminate bullying behavior. Bullying is a complex phenomenon influenced by a wide range of individual, social, and environmental factors, and addressing bullying requires a comprehensive approach that addresses the root causes of the behavior.

Additionally, it is essential to recognize that religious or spiritual beliefs can be used to justify or reinforce bullying behavior in some cases. For example, religious or cultural norms that promote discrimination or intolerance towards certain groups can contribute to the perpetuation of bullying behavior.

In conclusion, bullies can grow to be pious and devout, but there is no intrinsic or general link between bullying conduct and religious or spiritual views. Instead, addressing bullying necessitates a comprehensive approach that considers the root reasons for the behavior.

Help from Authorities. Teacher involvement in addressing and preventing bullying is crucial for several reasons. The participants have mentioned that they trust the teachers to stop or minimize the bullying.

Teachers are in a position of authority and influence: Teachers have a unique position of authority and influence in the lives of their students. When teachers take a proactive approach to addressing bullying, they can model positive behaviors and values, create a positive classroom climate, and provide support and guidance to students experiencing bullying. Teachers can identify and intervene in bullying situations: When it comes to spotting bullying tendencies and taking action to stop more harm, teachers may be helpful. They can observe student interactions, monitor social media and other online activity, and respond to reports of bullying from students, parents, or other staff members (Grossfeld, 2019).

Likewise, educators can establish a secure and welcoming learning environment. By addressing and stopping bullying, educators may lower the likelihood of bullying and foster healthy social connections. It can enhance students' well-being, mental health, and academic achievement. Therefore, educators have the power to encourage healthy values and behaviors. By imparting virtues like kindness, empathy, and respect, educators may contribute to preventing bullying behavior before it starts. They can also promote positive social norms and encourage students to be active bystanders who stand up against bullying and support their peers (Olweus et al., 2019).

Moreover, teacher's involvement in addressing and preventing bullying is essential because it allows them to use their position of authority and influence to create a safe and inclusive learning environment, identify and intervene in bullying situations, provide support to students who have experienced bullying, and promote positive values and behaviors.

4.1. Implications for Practices

The Hardships of the Abused as Victims of Bullying

The beginning story of disheartened learners as victims of bullying faces significant implications for their personal life and academic development.

Physical Abuse. Physical abuse inflicted upon bullied learners can have profound and devastating implications. Beyond the immediate physical harm, it can cause long-lasting emotional and psychological trauma. The victims may develop feelings of fear, anxiety, and depression, experiencing a diminished sense of self-worth and confidence. The abuse can erode their trust in others and negatively impact their relationships and ability to form connections. Furthermore, the trauma may hinder their academic performance and overall educational experience, decreasing motivation, concentration, and attendance. The consequences of physical abuse extend far beyond the physical injuries, affecting the bullied learners' overall well-being and hindering their personal and academic development.

Verbal Abuse. Verbal abuse directed at bullied learners can have significant and lasting implications. The constant barrage of hurtful words, insults, and demeaning language can profoundly impact their self-esteem and self-confidence. It may lead to feelings of worthlessness, shame, and inadequacy. Aside from that, verbal abuse can hasten the onset of anxiety, sadness, and other mental health conditions. Students who are bullied may experience social isolation, disengage from social situations, and find it challenging to build positive relationships. Furthermore, verbal abuse can make it difficult for them to succeed academically since it constantly undermines their drive, focus, and self-belief. Verbal abuse has far-reaching effects on the mental health, social growth, and educational experience of the targeted learners.

Poverty. Poverty and being a bullied learner can have profound implications on various aspects of their lives. Children from low-income backgrounds already face significant challenges, and when combined with bullying, the consequences can be particularly devastating. Economic disadvantage can exacerbate the effects of bullying, as it may limit access to resources and support systems that could help mitigate the harm. Bullying can further isolate and marginalize these learners, perpetuating a cycle of social exclusion and reinforcing feelings of powerlessness and inadequacy. The financial strain of poverty may also restrict access to mental health services or counseling, leaving these learners without the necessary support to help manage the psychological and emotional fallout from bullying.

In legal terms, the issue of poverty among bullied learners intersects with several fundamental rights enshrined in international and domestic laws. Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) recognizes education as a fundamental human right and stipulates that all individuals should have equal access to it. Furthermore, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) places significant emphasis on the entitlement of children to an education and the necessity of protecting them from various forms of abuse and bullying. In many jurisdictions, domestic laws also prohibit discrimination based on socioeconomic status, ensuring that students from impoverished backgrounds have equal access to education free from harassment or intimidation.

In addition, teachers can also educate students about poverty and foster empathy, connect them to resources and support services, advocate for inclusive policies, work with families to understand their situation and offer support, and lead peer support activities. These strategies can help teachers support bullied students who are affected by poverty. By implementing these strategies, teachers can help alleviate the stressors associated with poverty and bullying, empower students to overcome challenges and foster a supportive learning environment that promotes equality and inclusivity.

Unmotivated. Upsetting experiences for bullied learners can have profound implications on their emotional well-being and overall development. It leads to heightened anxiety, stress, and fear, affecting their self-esteem and ability to navigate social relationships. The resulting sense of powerlessness hinders their assertiveness and academic performance, impacting concentration, motivation, and learning. The emotional strain extends beyond school, affecting mental health, relationships, and overall quality of life. Creating a supportive environment becomes crucial to help these learners heal and regain emotional well-being.

Ashamed and Doubted. Bullied learners are subjected to feelings of being unmotivated and doubted, which can have significant implications for their overall well-being and educational journey. The constant doubt and lack of motivation can erode their self-confidence, leading to a diminished belief in their abilities and potential. It can hinder their academic performance and impede their willingness to engage actively in learning. The feeling of being doubted can exacerbate the emotional toll of bullying, contributing to a sense of isolation and inadequacy. It may also result in a lack of ambition and aspirations, limiting their prospects. To support these learners, fostering a positive and encouraging environment that instills confidence, provides mentorship, and helps them rediscover their intrinsic motivation to learn and succeed is crucial.

The Rationalization of Disheartened Learners as Victims of Bullying

The middle story of disheartened learners as victims of bullying faces significant implications for their personal life and academic

development.

Bullying as Revenge. Bullying as an act of revenge against bullied learners can have severe and damaging implications. When a desire for revenge drives bullying, it perpetuates a cycle of harm and escalates the negative impact on the victims. The bullied learners may experience heightened fear, anxiety, and trauma as they endure the intentional and targeted aggression. The retaliatory nature of the bullying intensifies the emotional toll, leading to feelings of betrayal, anger, and helplessness. Additionally, this form of bullying further isolates the victims, as it creates a hostile environment where trust and safety are compromised. The implications of revenge-driven bullying can profoundly impact the well-being and mental health of the bullied learners, exacerbating the long-term consequences and hindering their ability to recover from the trauma.

Haughty Bullies. Haughty bullies' behavior may also hinder the development of healthy social skills and positive relationships among all individuals involved, creating a pervasive atmosphere of intimidation and fear. Addressing haughty bullying requires promoting empathy, fostering a culture of respect, and implementing effective interventions to challenge and change the harmful dynamics at play.

Discrimination. Discrimination against bullied learners carries profound and wide-ranging implications for their well-being and development. Being targeted due to their race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic not only intensifies the emotional distress but also undermines their sense of belonging and self-identity. Discrimination makes the pain that these students already endure worse by raising their anxiety, sadness, and loneliness levels. It can hinder their academic progress, as the constant threat of discrimination creates additional barriers to learning and engagement. Moreover, discrimination perpetuates systemic inequalities and reinforces harmful biases within the broader society.

For the legal basis, the Republic Act No. 10627 (Anti-Bullying Act of 2013) aims to protect children enrolled in kindergarten, elementary, and secondary schools from being bullied. It mandates that all elementary and secondary schools create anti-bullying policies that include safeguards for the welfare and rights of victims.

Further, teachers can assist bullied learners in alignment with Republic Act No. 10627 (Anti-Bullying Act of 2013) by implementing school policies that address bullying incidents, ensuring the protection of children enrolled in kindergarten, elementary, and secondary schools. It involves creating a supportive classroom environment, educating students about bullying prevention, promptly addressing reported incidents, providing emotional support to victims, and involving parents in addressing bullying situations. By adhering to the provisions of the law, teachers play a crucial role in safeguarding the rights and welfare of bullied students, thereby promoting a safer and more inclusive learning environment.

Afraid to Retaliate. When bullied learners are afraid to retaliate, it profoundly affects their well-being and the dynamics of the bullying situation. Their fear reinforces powerlessness, erodes self-confidence, and perpetuates victimization. The absence of resistance invites further harm from bullies, trapping victims in anxiety and vulnerability. The inability to retaliate deepens the psychological and emotional impact, perpetuating the power imbalance. Empowering bullied learners to speak up, seek support, and establish a safe environment is crucial to breaking the cycle of fear and ensuring their well-being and recovery.

Ignoring. Ignoring bullied learners has significant implications for their well-being and development. Dismissing their experiences communicates that their suffering is insignificant, leading to feelings of isolation and invisibility. Ignoring bullying perpetuates a culture of silence, allowing harm to persist and undermining their sense of safety and trust. Lack of intervention worsens long-term consequences like anxiety, depression, and academic difficulties. Listening, responding, and supporting are crucial to validate their experiences, foster healing, and promote their thriving.

Skipping School. Skipping school as a response to bullying has significant implications for bullied learners. Bullying may induce fear and worry in people, which can make them skip school and create academic losses, poor performance, and disruptions in their educational journey. Social isolation and missed opportunities for positive relationships may also arise. Regular absences further hinder their ability to keep up with the curriculum. It is crucial to address bullying and provide targeted support to ensure their safety, well-being and continued engagement in education.

Call Parent's Attention. It is crucial to involve parents when addressing bullying experienced by learners. This creates a support system, facilitates communication between school and home, and allows parents to provide emotional support and take appropriate action. It fosters trust, demonstrates the school's commitment to safety, and enables collaborative efforts to prevent bullying and support the recovery of bullied learners.

The Insights Learned by the Disheartened Learners as Victims of Bullying

The ending story of disheartened learners as victims of bullying faces significant implications for their personal life and academic development.

Perseverance. Perseverance is essential for bullied learners as it fosters resilience, self-confidence, and the ability to overcome adversity. It empowers them to navigate challenges, seek support, and continue pursuing their goals. With perseverance, they can rise above the adverse effects of bullying, grow more robust, and build a brighter future.

Do not Harm Others. The implication of not harming others is significant. Having experienced the pain of being a victim, they understand the negative impact of harmful behavior and choose to treat others with kindness and respect. It fosters empathy, creates a supportive environment, and promotes positive relationships. By modeling non-harmful behavior, they become advocates for empathy, positively impacting themselves and those around them.

For a legal basis, the Republic Act No. 7610 (Special Protection of Children Against Abuse, Exploitation, and Discrimination Act) protects children against all forms of abuse, including bullying, discrimination, and harassment. It mandates the State to ensure the special protection of children from all forms of abuse, exploitation, and discrimination and to promote their welfare.

Moreover, teachers can help bullied learners in compliance with Republic Act No. 7610 by fostering a safe and respectful classroom environment, educating students about the effects of bullying and how to prevent it, enforcing anti-bullying policies consistently, encouraging reporting of bullying incidents, providing emotional support and counseling to bullied students, promoting peer support and intervention, involving parents in addressing bullying incidents, modeling respectful behavior, providing resources for bullying prevention and coping strategies, and participating in professional development to enhance their skills in supporting bullied learners, thus ensuring the protection and welfare of children against all forms of abuse, exploitation, and discrimination as mandated by the law.

Striving. Striving as bullied learners has profound implications for their personal growth and future success. By maintaining a mindset of determination and resilience, they can rise above the adverse effects of bullying and pursue their goals. Striving empowers them to seek support, engage in their healing, and build a brighter future.

Calmness. Cultivating calmness as bullied learners has significant implications for their well-being and resilience. It helps reduce anxiety and stress, enables them to navigate difficult situations with composure, and discourages potential bullies. By maintaining a sense of calm, bullied learners can reclaim their power and effectively cope with the challenges of bullying.

Faithful to the Almighty. Remaining faithful as bullied learners is crucial for their emotional well-being and resilience. It provides hope, belief in oneself, and a positive outlook. Faithfulness enables them to persevere, seek support, and work towards healing and personal growth. It fosters resilience and helps them maintain self-esteem. Bullied learners can rise above negativity and embrace a brighter future by staying faithful.

Help from Authorities. Having trust in the teacher's authority is crucial for bullied learners. It creates a safe and supportive environment, encourages reporting of bullying incidents, and ensures effective intervention. Trust fosters validation and reassurance, prioritizing the well-being and safety of bullied learners. It enhances the academic experience by promoting engagement and motivation.

4.2. Implications for Future Research

An implication for future research would be investigating the effectiveness of different interventions and strategies to prevent and address bullying in schools. It could include examining the impact of teacher training programs, school-wide anti-bullying policies, peer support programs, and other approaches. Research could also focus on understanding the experiences and perspectives of students from diverse backgrounds, including those from marginalized communities who may be at higher risk of bullying. Future research can offer essential insights into developing evidence-based therapies that enable inclusive and secure learning environments for all students by identifying strategies that work and understanding the unique needs of different student groups.

Conclusion

In conclusion, bullying is a significant problem that affects many individuals, particularly children and adolescents. However, it is possible for individuals who have experienced bullying to persevere and achieve success in life, although it is not a guarantee. The participants emphasized the importance of not harming others, striving to succeed, being calm, and having faith in teachers to address and prevent bullying. These observations can inform future practice, such as creating interventions and programs that support good values and behaviors and address the detrimental effects of bullying.

Additionally, further research is needed to understand better the complex and multifaceted nature of bullying and its effects on individuals and society as a whole. It is critical to keep spreading the word about bullying and its detrimental effects while also working to create conditions that are welcoming and safe for everyone.

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