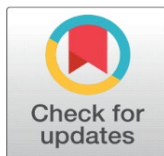
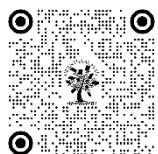


# PEER VICTIMIZATION AND AGGRESSION AMONG SCHOOL STUDENTS

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## ABSTRACT

Research around the world has shown that peer victimization is a common phenomenon among pupils in educational institutions. Peer victimization here refers to different forms of repeated physical or emotional harm directed towards a child. Physical harm could include hitting or punching, whereas emotional harm could include name-calling or being excluded from the peer group. Aggression is defined as a behaviour directed toward the goal of harming or injuring another living being, where the other person will be motivated to avoid the harm. Aggression is related to mental health problems in children, including externalizing disorders as Oppositional Defiant Disorder and Conduct Disorder, as well as internalizing problems with Depression and Anxiety. The belief that aggression is more of a problem of the industrialized nations is falling short of space as the developing ones are catching up with them. Aggression not only spoils the school environment but also is a risk factor for future delinquency (UNESCO). The aim is to study peer victimization and aggression among school children. The sample consisted of 60 children of which 30 were boys and 30 were girls. The age of the students ranged between 10 to 16 years. All the students were residents of Bangalore city. The students were administered the multidimensional peer victimization scale-24 and the aggression scale. Prior consent from the school and parents was taken before administering the scales to children. The subjects were assured regarding the confidentiality of the data and that the collected data would be used for research purposes only. A purposive sampling design was opted for the study. The mean, SD and t were computed using appropriate statistical measure. The result showed that there was a significant gender difference in peer victimization and aggression.

**Keywords:** Peer victimization, Aggression, School Students



## 1. INTRODUCTION

The likelihood of being bullied or victimized by one's peers is high during middle childhood, a key time for the active construction of positive and negative self-cognitions (Hoover, Oliver, & Hazler, 1992; Ladd & Troop-Gordon, 2003; Pellegrini & Bartini, 2000; Smith, Shu, & Madsen, 2001). Peer victimization researchers and theorists describe at least two broad types of victimization: overt/physical victimization and covert/relational victimization (Crick, Casas, & Ku 1999; Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). Several studies have identified behavioral problems (e.g., aggression, disruptiveness) and emotional problems (e.g., worrying, anxiety, fearfulness) as risks for physical and relational victimization by peers (Crick & Grotpeter, 1996; Hodges, Boivin, Vitaro, & Bukowski, 1999; Kochenderfer & Ladd, 1997; Paquette & Underwood, 1999; Schwartz, McFadyen-Ketchum, Dodge, Pettit, & Bates, 1999; Troop-Gordon & Ladd, 2005). Ample research evidence has indicated that peer victimization is associated with a variety of negative outcomes, including poor school adjustment, and internalizing (e.g., depression) and externalizing problems (e.g., aggressive behavior; Longobardi et al., 2017; Noret et al., 2018).

Adolescents spend a notable amount of time in school and with their peers, and the influence of school and peer context on adolescent development has received increased attention in recent years (Huang et al., 2013; Longobardi et al., 2017; Noret et al., 2018). Moreover, a climate of school violence, poor student-teacher relationships, and low social status are significant risk factors for victimization (Longobardi et al., 2018). research evidence has repeatedly shown that peer victimization is a powerful risk factor for adolescent aggressive behavior (Sullivan et al., 2006; Aceves and Cookston, 2007; Ostrov, 2010).

Peer victimization can take the form of relational victimization (social exclusion, rumour spreading) and/or physical victimization (bullying, punching). These two forms of victimization have been shown to be highly correlated, with polyvictimization, conceptualized as the simultaneous exposure to different types of abuse, being highly common (Casper DM, & Card NA. (2017). Peer victimization and bullying are frequent in late childhood and adolescence, with prevalence estimates between 35 and 49% (Bradshaw CP, et.al. 2007, Modecki KL, 2014). Such high frequency does not imply it should be treated as a “harmless rite of passage”. On the contrary, similar to the negative and long-lasting impact of early experiences of neglect or abuse on life outcomes (Gur RE, et.al. 2019, Lansford JE, et.al. 2021, McLaughlin KA, et.al.2012, Nusslock R, et.al. 2016, Teicher MH, et.al. 2016.), there is now compelling evidence for pervasive adverse short- and long-term effects of peer victimization on physical and somatic symptoms, psychological health (increase rates of anxiety, depression, and suicidality), inflammation markers, stress response, social relationships, academic and occupational achievements, or cognitive function (Brunstein Klomek A, et.al. 2007, Copeland WE, et.al. 2013, Espejo-Siles R, et.al.2020, Giletta M, et.al, 2018, McDougall P, et.al. 2015, Schacter HL et.al. 2021, Takizawa R, et.al. 2014, Wolke D, et.al. 2013, Wolke D, et.al. 2014).

Research has indicated that being peer victimized is associated with emotional distress, anxiety, and depression (Kochenderfer-Ladd & Wardrop, 2001), as well as later psychological maladjustment and loneliness (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Crick & Bigbee, 1998; Crick, Casas, & Ku, 1999; Nansel et al., 2001; Prinstein, Boergers, & Vernberg, 2001). These relationships have been noted cross culturally. Bullied children between the ages of 9 -12 years old in Greece (Andreou, 2001) and South Korea (Schwartz, Farver, Chang, & Lee-Shin, 2002) reported lower feelings of self-worth and academic functioning in comparison to their non-bullied peers. Research conducted in England (Mynard, Joseph, & Alexander, 2000) and Australia (Rigby, 2000) found that victimization was related to increased psychological distress (e.g., depression, loneliness, and anxiety) for peer victimized adolescents.

Aggression is the most significant psychopathological risk factor among children and adolescents. Aggression has a multifaceted construct and can affect the social, psychological, and physical health of students and teachers. In social psychology, aggression refers to behaviors emerged to harm another person. Fite PJ, et.al. (2014). Aggression is prevalent among children and adolescents. Works DM. (2015), Sayarpoor M, et.al. (2011). Approximately, one in every 10 children suffer from chronic aggressive behaviors or is harassed by peers. Abu Al Rub M. (2018). In 2018, the UNESCO estimated that approximately 30% of all students annually experienced some type of aggression at school. UNESCO, (2018).

Aggression causes devastating effects on social competence, efficiency, and interpersonal relationships (Jenkins LN, (2017), Allameh A, et.al. (2015), Chen X, et.al. (2010) and can develop a negative image among peers and teachers, peer rejection, academic underachievement, alcohol abuse, drug abuse, delinquency, suicide, self-harm, aggression, and anxiety. ZinatMotlagh F, et.al. (2013), Grange P, et.al. (2010), Leff SS, (2013). It is believed that aggressive behaviors in childhood is associated with an increased risk of psychological problems in adolescence and adulthood. Musci RJ, et.al. (2014). In addition to the individual dimensions of aggression and its consequences in the school, it can have extensive social and economic costs. Research indicates that school violence is associated with less employment and a further use of mental health services in adulthood. Baams L, et.al. (2017), Brimblecombe N, (2018).

## 2. METHODOLOGY

### AIM

To find the peer victimization among school students

To find aggression among school students.

### OBJECTIVE

To study the peer victimization among school students

To study aggression among school students.

## **HYPOTHESIS**

There will be no significant difference in all 6 subscales of peer victimization between girls and boys.  
There will be no significant difference in aggression between girls and boys.

## **VARIABLES**

Independent variable: Girls and boy's students.

Dependent variable: Peer victimization, aggression.

## **SAMPLE**

The sample consists of 60 students, of which 30 students were girls and 30 were boys studying in a school in Bangalore city. The age of the students ranged between 10 to 16 years. All the students were residents of Bangalore.

## **INCLUSION CRITERIA**

Age ranged between 10 to 16 years.

Both boys and girls were included in the study.

The students were residents of Bangalore city.

## **EXCLUSION CRITERIA**

Primary school students were not considered for the study.

Students below the age of 10 years were not considered for the study.

Students having any psychological issues were not considered for the study.

## **RESEARCH DESIGN**

A between group design with purposive sampling was opted for the study.

### **3. TOOLS**

#### **MULTIDIMENSIONAL PEER-VICTIMIZATION SCALE-24 (MPVS-24): (2000).**

The scale was developed by Mynard, H., & Joseph, S. (2000). The scale consists of 24 items. It has six subscales- physical victimization scale, social manipulation scale, verbal victimization scale, verbal victimization scale, attacks on property scale, electronic victimization, and social rebuff. The items are scored on 3-point scale 0 – not at all, 1-once, 2- more than once. Scores on the total scale have a possible range of 0 to 32, and a possible range of 0 to 8 on each of the four subscales. The scale has a good reliability of Cronbach's alpha greater than .80 for the MPVS total score, The scale has good concurrent validity  $r = .54$  for the MPVS.

#### **THE AGGRESSION SCALE: PAMELA ORPINAS AND RALPH FRANKOWSKI (2001).**

The aggression scale consists of 11 items. The scale measures behaviours that might result in psychological or physical injury to other students. The scale requests information regarding the frequency of the most common overt aggressive behaviours, including verbal aggression, physical aggression, as well as information about anger. To minimize recall bias, the scale requests information about behaviours during the past 7 days. Responses to each item can range from 0 times through 6 or more times. Responses are additive; thus, the Aggression Scale ranges between 0 and 66 points.

## **PROCEDURE**

The sample consisted of 60 school students. Of the 60 school students 30 were females and 30 were male students. With the prior permission of the school and parents the students were administered the multidimensional peer -victimization scale -24 and the aggression scale. The consent of the students, parents and school was taken. The students were explained the importance of the research and were assured that their data would be used only for the research purpose and confidentiality would be maintained. Any doubts with regards to the items of the questionnaire were clarified immediately.

### **4. ANALYSIS OF RESULTS**

The results were scored, and an independent t test was computed to study the peer victimization and aggression of school students.

**Table 1 shows the Mean SD and "t for boys and girls in physical victimization scale of school students.**

| Variable                     | Group | N  | Mean | SD  | t      |
|------------------------------|-------|----|------|-----|--------|
| Physical Victimization Scale | Boys  | 30 | 6.43 | .50 | 6.03** |
|                              | Girls | 30 | 5.66 | .47 |        |

\*\* Significant at 0.01 level.

Table 1 shows the mean, SD, and t for boys and girls in the physical victimization sub- scale of peer victimization. The mean for the boys is 6.43 and SD is .50. The obtained mean value for girls is 5.66 and SD is .47. The t value is 6.03 which is significant at 0.01 level indicating that there is significant difference in physical victimization between the boys and girl students. The obtained result has been supported by the study conducted by Crick, N.R et.al (1999). The result of their study has revealed that boys were significantly more physically victimized than girls. In another study conducted by Sullivan, N.T et.al (2006), the result of the study indicates that physical victimization was more strongly related to both categories of alcohol use, aggression, and to delinquent behaviours among boys than among girls.

**Table 2 shows the Mean SD and "t for boys and girls in social manipulation scale of school students.**

| Variable                  | Group | N  | Mean | SD  | t     |
|---------------------------|-------|----|------|-----|-------|
| Social Manipulation Scale | Boys  | 30 | 5.60 | .49 | 6.0** |
|                           | Girls | 30 | 6.36 | .49 |       |

\*\* Significant at 0.01 level.

Table 2 shows the mean, SD, and t for boys and girls in the social manipulation sub-scale of peer victimization. The mean for boys is 5.60 and SD is .49. The mean value for girls is 6.36, SD is .49. The obtained t value is 6.0 which is significant at 0.01 level indicating that there is a significant difference between boys and girls in the social manipulation. The result of the present study has been supported by the study carried out by Lars-Gunnar Lundh, G.L et.al (2014). The result of the study revealed that the girls being more victim to indirect aggression. Study conducted by Roy, B and Jha, N (2022) on gender difference in expression of aggression have revealed that females showed a trend to score higher on indirect aggression. Mynard H. and Joseph S. (2000) found that girls had experienced more social manipulation than boys.

**Table 3 shows the mean, SD, and t for boys and girls in verbal victimization scale of school students.**

| Variable                   | Group | N  | Mean | SD   | t      |
|----------------------------|-------|----|------|------|--------|
| Verbal Victimization Scale | Boys  | 30 | 6.26 | .90  | 5.55** |
|                            | Girls | 30 | 4.83 | 1.08 |        |

\*\* Significant at 0.01 level.

Table 3 shows the mean, SD, and t for boys and girls in the verbal victimization sub-scale of peer victimization. The mean value for boys is 6.26 and SD is .90. The mean value for girls is 4.83 and SD is 1.08. The obtained t value is 5.55, which is significant at 0.01 level, indicating an important difference between boys and girls in verbal victimization. The study has supported the result of the present study carried out by Wang, J. et al (2009) have indicated that boys were more involved in verbal bullying than girls. Girls were more involved in relational bullying. A study conducted by Hülya Kartal (2009) has revealed from his study that the percentage of male students experiencing verbal, physical, and spreading of rumors type of bullying was significantly much higher than female students. Neupane, D. (2014). Conducted a research study on Gender role in school bullying. Boys have reported higher mean scores of physical bullying, verbal bullying, physical victimization, and verbal victimization.

**Table 4 shows the mean, SD, and t for boys and girls in attacks on property scale of school students.**

| Variable                  | Group | N  | Mean | SD  | t      |
|---------------------------|-------|----|------|-----|--------|
| Attacks on Property Scale | Boys  | 30 | 5.26 | .82 | 3.84** |
|                           | Girls | 30 | 5.96 | .55 |        |

\*\* Significant at 0.01 level.

Table 4 shows the mean score, SD and t for boys and girls in attack on property sub scale of peer victimization. The obtained mean value for boys is 5.26 and the SD is .82. The mean value for girls is 5.96 and SD is .55. The obtained t value is 3.84 which is significant at 0.01 level indicating that there is a significant difference between boys and girls in attack of property. Popoola, I.B. (2005) studied prevalence of peer victimisation among secondary school students in Nigeria. The result of the study revealed that females reported higher level of social victimisation, verbal victimisation, and attack on property than males. Volchegorskaya E.Y. et.al (2019) examined Gender differences in bullying among primary school children. A contradictory result revealed that an attack on property was more detected in boys than in girls.

**Table 5 shows the mean, SD, and t for boys and girls in electronic victimization scale of school students.**

| Variable                       | Group | N  | Mean | SD  | t      |
|--------------------------------|-------|----|------|-----|--------|
| Electronic Victimization Scale | Boys  | 30 | 5.56 | .50 | 3.06** |
|                                | Girls | 30 | 5.06 | .73 |        |

\*\* Significant at 0.01 level.



Table 5 shows the mean, SD, and t for boys and girls in the electronic victimization sub-scale of peer victimization. The mean value for boys is 5.56, SD is .50. The mean for girls is 5.06, SD is .73. The obtained t value is 3.06 which is significant at 0.01 level indicating that there is an important difference between boys and girls in electronic victimization. The result of the present study has been supported by Enríquez, R.M. (2019) conducted a study on cyber victimization. The study revealed that univariate analysis indicated that more girls than boys were cyber-victimized. Olenik-Shemesh D, (2017) studied Cyber-victimization among children: prevalence, characteristics, gender differences, and links to social difficulties. The result revealed that the percentage of girl cyber-victims was higher than that of boys. In a study conducted by Martin, M (2013) the results indicated that girls were more likely to be involved in both electronic aggression and victimization than boys. Further, girls were more likely to be both electronic aggressors and victims simultaneously than boys.

**Table 6 shows the mean, SD, and t for boys and girls in the social rebuff scale of school students.**

| Variable            | Group | N  | Mean | SD  | t      |
|---------------------|-------|----|------|-----|--------|
| Social Rebuff Scale | Boys  | 30 | 5.60 | .49 | 3.69** |
|                     | Girls | 30 | 5.10 | .54 |        |

\*\* Significant at 0.01 level.

Table 6 shows the mean, SD and t for boys and girls in social rebuff sub scale of peer victimization. The mean value for boys is 5.60 and Sd is .49. The mean for girls is 5.10 and SD is .54. The obtained t value is 3.69 indicating that there is a significant difference between boys and girls in social rebuff. The result of the present study has been supported by Wood, J.J, et.al. (2002) conducted a study on behaviour problems and peer rejection in preschool boys and girls. The result revealed that overt aggression was associated with peer rejection for boys. Peltzer and Pengpid (2018) has reported that peer rejection in adolescent male had depressive symptoms.

**Table 7 shows the mean, SD, and t for boys and girls in aggression scale of school students.**

| Variable         | Group | N  | Mean  | SD  | t      |
|------------------|-------|----|-------|-----|--------|
| Aggression Scale | Boys  | 30 | 34.23 | .67 | 3.60** |
|                  | Girls | 30 | 33.53 | .81 |        |

\*\* Significant at 0.01 level.

Table 7 shows the difference in aggression between boys and girls. The mean obtained by boys is 34.23 and SD is .67. The mean for girls is 33.53 and SD is .81. The obtained t value is 3.60 which is significant at 0.01 level indicating that there is a significant difference between boys and girls in aggression. The result of the present study has been supported by the research studies carried out by various research scholars. According to the findings of Joarder, K.T and Roshni, R. (2021) in their research work on Aggression in boys and girls in relation to their residential background the results showed that boys were significantly more aggressive than girls. Rahman, M. & Nahar, L. (2013) studied aggression in boys and girls. The result showed that boys expressed more aggression than girls. In a study carried out by Rozzaqyah, F, et.al (2020) have found that boy students have a higher tendency to aggressiveness than girls. Laurence D. Owens & Colin E. MacMullin (1995) carried out a research study on gender differences in aggression in children and adolescents in South Australian Schools. The result revealed that boys were found to be more physically and verbally aggressive than girls but girls used more indirect aggression at the higher year levels.

## 5. CONCLUSION

1. The obtained result shows that there is a significant difference in physical victimization between boys and girls.
2. The result shows that there is a significant difference in social manipulation between boys and girls.
3. The result in the table shows that there is a significant difference in verbal victimization between boys and girls.
4. As per the result in the table that there is a significant difference in attack on property between boys and girls.
5. According to the obtained result there is a significant difference in electronic victimization between boys and girls.
6. The obtained result indicates that there is a significant difference in social rebuff between boys and girls.
7. The result in the table shows that there is a significant difference in aggression between boys and girls.

## 6. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. The study was limited to Bangalore city schools only.
2. Only two variables i.e., peer victimization and aggression were considered for the study.
3. Rural schools and rural students were not considered for the study.
4. The sample size was restricted to 60 students.

## CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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