

BULLYING AMONG PRISON INMATES IN PAKISTAN: AN EXPLORATION OF THE PROBLEM

Psychology

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ABSTRACT

The study attempted at redefining bullying, its nature, scope, and dimensions in cultural perspective of Pakistan. Direct and Indirect Prisoners Checklist (DIPC modified) © Ireland 1999 and Rehabilitation in Correctional Settings Attitude Scale (RICS) © Rice, 1970 were used in the study. Randomly selected (400) male and female prison inmates from all four Provinces' major prisons of Pakistan participated in the study. Study was conducted in the cultural context of a collectivist society, like Pakistan (developing country), while the previous studies were carried out in individualistic societies, i.e., in the UK, USA, or Canada (developed countries). Reliability values for the DIPC and RICS subscales were calculated and found to be in acceptable range, except for the Proactive /Positive Behaviors. Thus, all sub scales except for "Proactive/Positive Behaviors towards Other" were included in the main analyses. The results suggested that victims experienced physical, psychological, theft-related, and indirect bullying to similar degrees. However, psychological bullying was the most prevalent, while physical bullying the least. Both male and female prisoners reported that they were victimized by bullying more than they perpetrated bullying, with gender having no difference. Demographic variables and prisoner's self-reported

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engagement in bullying behavior did not show any significance.

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Bullying among Prison inmates in Pakistan: An Exploration of the Problem

Bullying is a pervasive problem, with incidence rates ranging from 3% to 20% in the developed world (**Whitney & Smith, 1993**), while its rate in developing countries or underdeveloped countries is yet unexplored. Presently, it is occurring with greater lethality than from the past (Espelage et al., 1999). It is a problem that has existed for a long time, although it was an ignored area of research. It started to be empirically studied in 1970s, initially focusing on schools, workplaces, para-military organizations, and prisons.

Bullying is also defined as "... the intentional intimidation or denigration of an individual through the misuse of power or position in the workplace" (Morris 1993). Seward (1994) is of the point of view that a person is bullied when he or she is exposed regularly to the negative actions on the part of one or more persons. According to O'Donnell & Edgar (1999), "Bullying is a conduct motivated by a desire to hurt, threaten, or frighten someone."

Prisons are potent sites for the occurrence of adult bullying (**Beck, 1992**). The structure and organization of the prison system itself may promote bullying: for example, the maintenance of discipline and authority has been linked to bullying (**Askew, 1989**).

Bullying in prison has recently been the subject of regular academic research. It has been studied but on a lower scale with a very limited sample. In UK, the first study on prison bullying was carried out in 1986 by McGurk and McDougall. This was the first in the field of prison bullying research that remained unpublished even until as late as 1991. No further study was conducted until 1992 (**Beck, 1992**). Since then there have been 36 studies that addressed bullying among prisoners (e.g. Power et al., 1997) and 13 discussions of studies, reviews of research field or depiction of anti-bullying strategies (Ireland, 2002). Only 16 have been published in academic peer-reviewed journals, the first appearing in 1996 (Connell & Farrington, 1996; Ireland & Archer, 1996). In the light of above mentioned research, it is concluded that bullying in prisons had long been recognized as a serious problem though there is a little

empirical work in the area. In fact, it is encouraging that the concern to investigate into the nature and extent and associative aspects of bullying has grown today.

Bullying itself is subject to a number of definitions containing about five key elements (**Farrington, 1994**): 1. It must contain physical, verbal, or psychological attack, 2. Involves an imbalance of power, 3. be unprovoked, 4. be repeated, and 5. Intended to cause fear or harm to the victim. However, Beck & Ireland (1995) suggests that in the background of a prison it does not necessarily need the action to be repeated to be described as bullying. This endorses the view of Randall (1997) who argues that it is the fear of repeated aggression that it is important, not the actual incidence.

some researchers contributed to the field (e.g. Ireland, 1997, 1998a, 1998b, 1999a, 1999b, 1999c, 1999d, 1999e, 2002; Curylo, 2000; Harer & Langman, 2001; Tahir et al., 2001; O'Donnell & Edgar, 1999; Ireland et al., 1999; Ahmed & Salleh, 1997; Ireland & Banister, 1997; Smith, et al., 1999; Grant, 1999; Ireland, Beck & Smith, 1998; Beck, 1992; Brooks, 1993; Connell & Farrington, 1996; Power et al., 1997; Ireland & Archer, 1996; Brooks & Pratt, 1997; Beck & Ireland, 1997; Willmont, 1997; Livingstone & Chapman, 1997; Maruyama, 1978, etc...).

The result of being caught bullying others can also result in severity. The official can withdraw privileges from the bully, segregate from his/her peer, and if the bullying is severe in nature, there stands chances that bully might get transferred to some other institution or get extension to his/her duration of sentence. Still, if a bully remains unchallenged regarding his/her behavior, it cannot be expected that he/she will learn to live law-abiding lives or release (**Livingstone, 2000**).

Bullying has also an impact on the prison as a whole. If it is allowed to flourish, it can cause disruption, create no-go areas in the prison and allow criminal subculture to gain power and subvert prison rules (Home Office Prison Service, 1993). It can undermine the safety of the prison and the authority of the staff, raising the question of who is in control of prison-bullies or prison officers. It can also increase tension between staff, add to workloads, become a drain on resources (Home Office Prison Service, 1993), and reduce the likelihood that prison staff will be able to work with prisoners to address their offending behavior and prepare them for release (Livingstone, 2000). Therefore, bullying can be serious for those involved in the prison system as a whole (Ireland, 2002).

Goals of Research

In general, as a new field of investigation bullying research appears incomplete in its various dimensions. Research which addressed bullying with inmates has been confined to the United Kingdoms and Ireland, with exception of Connell & Farrington (1996), who addressed bullying among young offenders at an open custody facility in Canada (Ireland, 1999).

Far more important is that bullying seems to evolve as a matter of concern only in “developed societies” countries like United Kingdom, USA, Canada, etc. Which are characterized as “individualistic societies”; minding ones own business, believing in themselves for success or failure, and trying to survive on their own (Hui, 1988). While on the other hand, there is scarcity of research among “underdeveloped societies” countries like Pakistan, which are commonly labeled as “collectivistic societies”. The results of cross-cultural study conducted by Hofstede (1980) reveal that, the United States, Australia, and Great Britain were found to be the most individualistic countries; while on the contrary, Venezuela, Columbia, and Pakistan stood the most collectivist.

Hui (1988) found those collectivists were found to hold relatively favorable attitudes towards sharing other’s burden and troubles. Minding for the group and valuing interdependence of the individuals of the group. It is assumed that “collectivist societies” possess in general different norms and style of life. It is concluded that, in the final run, it may define process of bullying and with a different perspective of cultures like Pakistan.

All the investigations have been conducted in the cultural context of “developed” (e.g. UK, Canada, etc.) countries with a paucity of interest in “developing” (e.g. Pakistan, etc.) societies. Experiences of collectivist-oriented societies (commonly labeled as “developing” countries like Pakistan) have not been addressed at all. Hence the definition, prevalence, types, effects, coping methods of bullying may vary cross-culturally. It is a gross error; therefore, to generalize to collectivist societies from experiences of individualistic oriented ones.

In the light of the above review of research and discussion about the problem, there is a need to explore bullying once more but in Pakistani prisons.

This research attempts to examine further the problem of bullying among Pakistani male and female adult prison inmates in a rather wider context raising the following questions like:

1. How prevalent are bullying perpetration and bullying victimization in Pakistani prisons?
2. What type of bullying and victimization prevails in Pakistani Prisons?
3. Do age, rate of religious practice, perception of fairness, total length of stay, socio-economic status, previous stay, duration of current sentence, educational level, length of current stay, seriousness of offense relate to bullying victimization behavior?

Research Methodology

A combination of standardized instruments was used in this study. The research instruments used for data collection in this study were the rating typed questionnaires described as under:

1. Direct and Indirect Prisoners Behavior Checklist (DIPC©) Modified: Part I & II. DIPC© also contained fifteen (15) background search questions.
2. Rehabilitation in Correctional Settings Scale (RICS)

Reliability of DIPC

Kuder-Richardson 20 for dichotomous scores was calculated for the DIPC subscales in order to assess their internal consistencies. The internal consistency reliabilities of the DIPC subscales were all in the acceptable range, except for the Proactive/ Positive Behaviors towards Other subscale, and ranged from .76 to .95, with a median value of .87. Thus, all scales except for the Proactive/ Positive Behaviors towards Others subscale were included in the main analyses.

Reliability of RICS

In order to assess the internal consistency reliability of the RICS subscales Cronbach alpha scores were calculated. The reliability values for the RICS were respectable, ranging from .67 to .87, with a median value of .73. Therefore, all of the RICS scales were included in the main analyses.

Date Collection

For DIPC and RICS scales data collection was made from 400 prison inmates, randomly selected representative sample of 5% of the total target population of 10500, satisfying the following criteria representing male

and female prisoners from all the provincial capitals' central and district jails living in 'C' class (i.e. dormitories/cells).

Table: Demographic Characteristics of the Prisoner Sample

Demographic Variable	N	M	SD
Age	400	33.5	6.0
Gender	400	1.5	0.5
Educational Level	400	2.6	1.0
Marital Status	400	1.6	0.7
Socio-Economic Status	397	2.7	0.5
Previous Stay	33	3.3	2.6
Total Length of Current Stay	399	3.7	1.0
Total Length Stay	399	4.0	2.4
Current Duration of Sentence	350	19.3	6.7
Seriousness of Offense	400	2.2	0.9
Perception of Court Decision	400	2.5	0.7
Rate of Religious Practices	400	1.6	0.6

Results

Research Question 1 (RQ-1) was concerned with the prevalence of bullying perpetration and bullying victimization in Pakistani prisons. Descriptive data were calculated for the DIPC subscales in order to determine the type and prevalence of bullying and victimization in the sample (see Table 1).

Table 1: Direct and Indirect Prisoner Behavior Checklist Descriptive Data

DIPC Subscales	N	M	SD	Subscale Items	M/Subscale Items
Victim					
Physical Bullying	400	1.13	1.37	4	0.28

Psych/Verbal Bullying	400	2.53	3.15	9	0.28
Theft Related	400	1.48	2.01	5	0.30
Indirect Bullying	400	1.85	2.54	7	0.26
Perpetrator					
Physical Bullying	400	0.22	0.85	4	0.05
Psych/Verbal Bullying	400	1.69	2.14	11	0.15
Theft-Related Bullying	400	0.29	0.94	5	0.06
Indirect Bullying	400	0.81	1.88	9	0.09
Other Behaviors					
Negative Behaviors Toward					
Staff/Prison Rules	400	0.66	0.87	2	0.33
Involvement of Prison Staff					
Towards Bullying Behavior	400	1.14	1.45	4	0.28

The results suggested that victims experienced physical, psychological, theft, and indirect bullying to similar degrees. However, psychological bullying was the most prevalent and physical bullying the least prevalent type of bullying behavior in which perpetrators reported they engaged. Overall, on all of the types of bullying behaviors prisoners reported that they were victimized by bullying more than they perpetrated bullying. In addition, the Negative Behaviors Toward Staff/Prison Rules scale had the highest prevalence and perpetration of physical bullying had the lowest prevalence relative to all of the DIPC subscales.

Second question was concerned with determining the effect of bullying-victimization experience on self-attitude. This was determined by examining the relationship of the DIPC subscales with the RICS subscales. Pearson product moment correlations were calculated for the various subscales (see Table 2).

Table 2: *Pearson's Product Moment Correlations between the Direct and Indirect Prisoner Behavior Checklist and the Rehabilitation in Correctional Settings Attitude Scale subscales*

DIPC Subscales and Overall Scales	RICS Subscales					
	IMSC	IN	TIN	SOC	LSFA	LAW
Victim Physical Bullying	0.04	0.02	0.04	0.02	0.02	0.03
Victim Psy./Verbal Bullying	-0.02	0.01	-0.01	-0.03	-0.04	0.00
Victim Theft Related	-0.01	0.04	0.01	-0.01	-0.02	0.00
Victim Indirect Bullying	-0.02	0.02	-0.01	-0.03	-0.05	0.00
Perp. Physical Bullying	0.03	0.00	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.00
Perp. Psych/Verbal Bullying	0.03	-0.01	0.00	-0.01	0.02	-0.01

Perp. Theft-Related Bullying	0.00	-0.02	0.00	-0.01	0.01	-0.02
Perp. Indirect Bullying	0.01	-0.05	0.02	-0.02	0.01	-0.06
Negative Behaviors Toward Staff/Prison Rules	-0.03	0.06	0.00	-0.02	-0.05	0.02
Involvement of Prison Staff Towards Bullying Behavior	-0.05	0.00	-0.02	-0.05	-0.07	-0.03
Victim Overall Bullying	-0.01	0.02	0.01	-0.02	-0.03	0.00
Perpetrator Overall Bullying	0.02	-0.02	0.01	-0.01	0.02	-0.03

Note. (IMSC = Attitudes toward Image of Self-Competence scale, IN = Attitude Toward Inmates scale, TIN = Attitude Toward Treatment of Inmates scale, SOC = Attitude Toward Society scale, LSFA = Attitude Toward the Legal System and Figures of Authority scale, LAW = Attitude Towards the Law scale)

The results did not yield any statistically significant correlations between the DIPC and RICS subscales. These results suggested that bullying-victimization experience was not related to self-attitude.

Results of One-Way ANOVA (analysis of variance for RICS) between-subject factors shown in Tables -2 (1 to 6), indicated that on all the six-sub scales (IMSC = Attitudes Toward Image of Self-Competence scale, IN = Attitude Toward Inmates scale, TIN = Attitude Toward Treatment of Inmates scale, SOC = Attitude Toward Society scale, LSFA = Attitude Toward the Legal System and Figures of Authority scale, LAW = Attitude Towards the Law scale) subjects' involvement towards the bullying behavior remained constant.

Next question addressed the relationship between victimization by bullying and prisoner demographic variables. In order to address this question a composite variable, DIPC Victim Overall Bullying, was computed based on all of the DIPC items that reflect bullying victimization. In order to determine if there was an association between victimization and the demographic variables, a correlation matrix was calculated (see Table 3). For the bivariate correlations Pearson's Product Moment correlation coefficients were calculated when both variables had ratio or interval scales. Alternatively, Spearman's Rho was calculated when at least one variable of each pair had a rank/order scale of measurement.

Table 3: Pearson's Product Moment and Spearman's Rho Correlations between the Direct and Indirect Prisoner Behavior Checklist (DIPC)

Victim Overall Scale and Prisoner Demographic Variables

Demographic Variable	DIPC Victim Overall Bullying
Age	0.04
Gender	0.09

Educational Level	0.03
Marital Status	0.07
Socio-Economic Status	-0.04
Previous Stay	-0.04
Duration of Current Stay	-0.06
Total Length of Stay	-0.05
Duration of Current Sentence	-0.11*
Seriousness of Offense	0.09
Perception of Court Decision	0.02
Rate of Religious Practices	-0.09

* $p < .05$

The only demographic variable that was related to victimization was duration of current sentence. Specifically, there was an inverse relationship between the length of a prison sentence and the degree to which prisoners got victimized by bullying.

Final part addressed the relationship between perpetrator bullying behavior and prisoner demographic variables. In order to address this question a composite variable, DIPC Perpetrator Overall Bullying, was computed based on all of the DIPC items that reflect perpetration of bullying. In order to determine if there was an association between perpetration and the demographic variables, a correlation matrix was calculated (see Table 4). Similar to the analytic strategy for the purpose, either Pearson's Product Moment or Spearman's Rho correlation coefficients were calculated.

Table 4: *Pearson's Product Moment and Spearman's Rho Correlations between the Direct and Indirect Prisoner Behavior Checklist (DIPC)*

Perpetrator Overall Scale and Prisoner Demographic Variables

Demographic Variable	DIPC Perpetrator Overall Bullying
Age	0.04
Gender	-0.01
Educational Level	0.03
Marital Status	-0.02
Socio-Economic Status	0.05
Previous Stay	0.06
Duration of Current Stay	0.08
Total Length of Stay	0.05
Duration of Current Sentence	0.08
Seriousness of Offense	-0.06
Perception of Court Decision	-0.05
Rate of Religious Practices	-0.06

The results did not yield any statistically significant findings suggesting that there was no relationship between the demographic variables and prisoner's self-reported engagement in bullying behavior.

DIPC and RICS did not show yield any statistical significant for inter-correlation on their sub scale. They resulted into separate measures. Sub Scale of DIPC normally measures the self-reported bullying/victimization behaviour. While the sub-scales of RICS as an instrument measure the various dimensions of the prison inmate's attitudes towards their rehabilitation.

The Rehabilitation in Correctional Settings Attitude Scale was used to assess the effect of bullying-victimization experience on self-attitude. The results suggested that there was no relationship between prisoners' bullying-victimization experience and attitudes toward self.

These results are quite amazing as they did not explore any resultant attitude. It, in fact, contradict to the previous research like Home Office Prison Service UK (1993), McCorkle (1992) and Ireland (1999) reported that the victims exhibit their attitude towards self in different ways, either behaviourally or emotionally, or both. Marshal (1993) and Livingstone & Chapman (1997) viewed that victims may opt for suicide and self-injury respectively. Beck & Smith (1995) and Ireland (1997) reported behavioural escape.

However, the only demographic variable that was associated with victimization arose the duration of current sentence. Specifically, there was an inverse relationship between the length of a prison sentence and the degree to which prisoners got victimized by bullying.

The overall results of bullying among prison inmates in Pakistan should in general be view that the phenomenon of bullying is quite prevalent irrespective of gender.

CONCLUSION

After a careful analysis of the results of present research, in general, we may make the following thesis in relation to the prison inmates towards phenomena of bullying, prisoner's attitudes towards prison guards and vice versa, attitudes towards miscellaneous laws and the prison institutions in general.

Generally, it has been observed that like the entire world, irrespective of "Collectivism/ Individualism" or "Developing/ Developed" societies, the phenomenon of bullying is quite prevalent as a day to day practice in consolidation and acquirement of power and status in the prisons of Pakistan. It has been pragmatic that bullies are given higher status in prisons.

It has also come up that there exists no significant difference with regard to bullying practices and gender. Bullying is equally been practiced by both men and women with the same magnitude, type and style. In addition, the general demographic characteristics (social and situational factors) did not influence the bullying phenomena among prison inmates in Pakistan. However, the only variable which showed even inverse relationship was duration of current stay in the prisons.

Both the bully/victim groups reported the prevalence of indirect bullying (psychological violence) in contradiction to the direct bullying (physical violence). Results have quite been identical regarding self reported bullying behaviour among gender.

It was hypothesis that due to difference of norms, customs, traditions, practices, etc., among developed and developing societies, phenomena of bullying may also be defined and viewed in a different perspective, which did not approve. Thus it led to the conclusion towards the universality of the phenomena and the cross relationship regarding the nature of prisons as organization, their operation and objectives entirely.

However in particular, it is a point to argue that we lay emphasize on violence, inhuman conditions, lack of inmates personal rights, are the major characteristics of Pakistani prisons.

Prospects

Being a unique and pioneer, the present research has put scientific and systematic effort to explore the phenomena of bullying among prison inmates in the social set up of country like Pakistan. This practice of new research should be continued in future.

It is suggested that further research should peep into the activities, limits, and attitudes of the prison of authorities to broaden the spectrum of the bullying phenomena. Further research should also concentrate on variety of age groups like young inmates, as well.

It contributes towards the scientific approach on bullying among prison inmates. It further might also bestow to the improvement of prison conditions, system of their governance, revision of Pakistan Prison Rules, minimization of involvement of bureaucracy, rise to equal rights, coherence and co-ordination among prison and judiciary, awareness to the prisoners regarding their rights and obligations, etc. in relation to the inmates.

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