

# Theoretical Foundations of Research on Adolescent Bullying in The School Environment

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## ABSTRACT

This article explores the theoretical foundations related to the phenomenon of adolescent bullying in the school environment. Key aspects that define the nature and dynamics of bullying are examined, including social, pedagogical, and psychological factors. The mechanisms of aggression among adolescents and their impact on interactions within the educational setting are analyzed. Special attention is given to various forms of bullying, such as physical, verbal, and cyberbullying, as well as the consequences for both victims and aggressors. The article emphasizes the importance of understanding the context in which bullying occurs and the need for developing comprehensive prevention and intervention strategies aimed at creating a safe and supportive school environment.

**Keywords:** Bullying, social factors, pedagogical factors, psychological factors, aggression, adolescents.

## INTRODUCTION

The problem of bullying in modern society is not new. This phenomenon has been observed throughout history, but its study by psychologists began only in the 18th century. Discussion of this phenomenon became more active towards the end of the 19th – beginning of the 20th century. For a long time, the problem of bullying remained outside the field of view of Russian science and was considered a topic that was not usually discussed. Over time, its significance increased, and it became the subject of public discussion and scientific research. The etymology of the term "bullying" goes back to the English word "bully", which is translated as "hooligan". This term refers to both physical and psychological violence and intimidation. The study of violence is an important area for world psychology, sociology, pedagogy and other scientific disciplines. The first works on this topic were published at the beginning of the 20th century abroad, where many effective programs for the prevention of bullying were subsequently developed.

In Uzbekistan, the problem of bullying was not perceived as a separate phenomenon for a long time and remained in

the shadows, it was not customary to talk about it. However, in recent years, this topic has become the subject of open discussions. In the conditions of modern society, aggression and cruelty towards others manifest themselves in various forms, including cyberbullying, and can have serious consequences for all participants in the process.

According to studies, more than 52% of schoolchildren in Uzbekistan have experienced bullying, while 15% of them prefer not to share their experiences with others. In addition, the problem of bullying affects not only children: about 70% of teachers have also experienced aggression from students or colleagues in educational institutions.

According to many researchers, teenagers are at increased risk of bullying. Previously, school was perceived as a safe space for students, but over time this opinion has become outdated. One of the key difficulties in studying bullying is the lack of a single definition of this phenomenon.

Different authors approach its analysis from different positions. For example, D. Olweus, one of the first scientists to address the problem of bullying, describes it

as intentional and systematically repeated aggressive behavior that includes inequality in social power or physical strength. This definition emphasizes that bullying often occurs in children's and adolescent groups, which indicates its relevance in the school environment. [1]

In her monograph, N.V. Kukhtova refers to the definition by S. Arora, who describes bullying as violence at school, observed from the outside, occurring in interactions between young people and leading to a feeling of resentment or stress. This definition also focuses on the social context of bullying and its impact on the emotional state of victims.

E. Miller and D. Lane interpret bullying as a long-term process of purposeful cruel physical or psychological influence of one child or a group of children on another. E. Miller identifies four key components that define this phenomenon:

1. Aggression (or negative behavior) of the aggressor is always directed at other people.
2. Behavior is constant.
3. Rudeness on the part of the aggressor is deliberate.
4. Roles in this interaction are determined by the level of power possessed by the participants.

In Russian scientific literature, the concept of bullying is considered more broadly and is not always tied to a specific age group. For example, I.S. Kon interprets bullying as intimidation, physical or psychological terror aimed at subordinating one person to another and creating a sense of fear in the victim.

E.N. Ushakova defines bullying as a form of psychological or physical aggression, the purpose of which is to cause harm to the victim, intimidation or stress.

O.L. Glazman considers bullying as a stable stereotype of interaction in a group, in which an individual is faced with intentional harm or discomfort from more powerful individuals or groups. [3]

According to S.V. Krivtsova, bullying is aggressive actions of some children towards others, with an inequality of power between the aggressor and the victim, as well as a tendency to repeat such actions. These two aspects - inequality of power and repetition - are the key

characteristics of bullying.

T.A. Mertsalova describes bullying as a form of interpersonal interaction in which one participant takes the position of the offender, and the other - the victim, subjected to systematic physical or psychological violence over a long period of time.

E.S. Illarionova defines bullying as a process of intimidation, which can manifest itself in the form of psychological or physical terror aimed at subordinating another person or creating a feeling of fear in him.

From the analysis of these definitions it is clear that bullying as a psychological phenomenon has its own structure. E.P. Ilyin identifies several roles in this structure: the persecutor, the victim, observers (neutral participants), assistants to the persecutors and defenders of the victims. Bullying among teenagers is a fairly common phenomenon.

In order to effectively prevent violent behavior, it is important to understand the motives, causes and prerequisites for the development of bullying, as well as its features. D. Olweus identifies the main motives of bullying, among which are the desire for power, pleasure from causing harm to others and receiving a reward - both material (for example, things taken from the victim) and psychological (for example, prestige or social status).

I.A. Galkina identifies several key motives for bullying, including envy, desire for revenge, desire for self-affirmation in a group, need to be the center of attention, and desire to humiliate an opponent. N.A. Larchenko supplements this list, pointing out such motives as hostility, struggle for power, desire to surprise others, and desire to humiliate those who are not liked. [2]

D.N. Soloviev classifies the factors that contribute to the emergence of bullying into two categories: individual and group. Individual factors include aggressiveness, victimization (predisposition to becoming a victim), and conformism (adapting to the group). Group factors are associated with the lack of value unity in the team, low group cohesion, insufficient self-identification of the individual in the group, and an unfavorable socio-psychological climate.

I.A. Galkina also divides the causes of bullying into four main groups: pedagogical, psychological, social and

family. Pedagogical causes are related to the characteristics of the educational process and the atmosphere in the classroom: this may be an unfavorable socio-psychological climate, lack of cohesion among students, teachers ignoring manifestations of bullying, as well as a lack of preventive and corrective measures at school. [2]

T.G. Rumyantseva adds to this category of causes such factors as stress caused by the academic workload and relationships with classmates and teachers, as well as indifference and insufficient control on the part of teachers and parents over manifestations of bullying.

According to I.A. Baeva, teachers can contribute to the emergence of aggression in schoolchildren if they single out certain students, create a competitive atmosphere in the classroom, resort to psychological pressure or physical violence. T.M. Zhekulina also emphasizes that low academic motivation can be one of the causes of bullying. A student's lack of activity can encourage him to seek new emotions, which sometimes leads to aggressive actions towards victims of bullying. Psychological factors are associated with the personal characteristics of both aggressors and victims, as well as observers. [1]

Social causes of bullying are manifested in the support of aggressive behavior in society, which can be observed on television, on the Internet and in computer games. T.S. Sulimova points out that violence among adolescents is a reflection of a broader social situation, where violence in society is associated with political and socio-economic conditions, cultural norms and values, as well as compliance with laws.

Social factors that contribute to bullying include gender stereotypes, socioeconomic inequality, and the influence of the media. In adolescence, one of the key factors contributing to aggression is the victim's appearance. Abnormal physical attractiveness, perceived as a sign of deviation from traditional gender norms, the use of non-standard symbols, or ethnic characteristics can cause negative attitudes from peers.

As for family causes of bullying, a lack of parental attention and love, as well as the presence of physical or verbal aggression in the family, can contribute to the formation of aggressive behavior in adolescents. Interpersonal relationship patterns observed in the family affect how the teenager will behave in society. Teenagers who take on the role of aggressors often witness violence

in their home environment. Research led by T.V. Senko emphasizes that strict family relationships and isolation from the outside world can contribute to the emergence of violence both in the family and in society.

N.V. Tarabrina's research emphasizes that the following categories of children most often become victims of violence:

- Children who grew up in conditions of family abuse, forming a hostile perception of the world around them. Such children can be subjected to violence by stronger ones, and themselves show aggression towards weaker ones.
- Children in a state of neglect and emotional rejection. They often do not receive proper care and support, which can lead to delays in psychophysical development. These children are easily influenced and are not able to adequately assess danger, which makes them vulnerable to violence.
- Children brought up in an atmosphere of unquestioning obedience. They may have difficulty establishing personal boundaries and often do not know how to refuse, which makes them less able to resist violence. Such children usually experience fear and anxiety.
- Children with neuropsychiatric disorders, including mental retardation and various psychopathies, as well as the consequences of organic brain damage.
- Young children who, because of their helplessness, become easy targets for violence.

Thus, it can be concluded that the causes of bullying are diverse and varied. Some of them are formed in the family environment, while others depend on the policies of educational institutions and the preventive and corrective measures they carry out.

The study conducted by S.A. Korzun and O.V. Strapko examines manifestations of aggression both from bullies and from victims of bullying in adolescence. The authors highlight the main forms of bullying, which include: spreading false rumors, ignoring or excluding from joint activities, ridicule of appearance and the use of physical force. [4]

During the analysis of aggressive behavior of adolescents depending on their role in the bullying process, it was

found that bullies more often exhibit physical and verbal aggression, and are also prone to suspicion. At the same time, victims of bullying more often demonstrate indirect forms of aggression and experience a sense of guilt. This indicates that persecutors use more active methods of aggression compared to victims.

Aggression among teenagers generally manifests itself in the form of hostility, verbal conflicts, disobedience and even vandalism. Teenagers often openly demonstrate their antisocial behavior.

It should be noted that bullying has gender characteristics. For boys, bullying is usually associated with male cultural norms and the struggle for power, which is most often expressed physically. In contrast, bullying among girls has a more personalized and psychological nature, often manifesting itself in emotional and cyberbullying, which can be accompanied by physical violence. Due to their gender characteristics, girls may experience greater difficulties in overcoming a bullying situation.

Thus, teenagers are in a vulnerable position when it comes to bullying. The reasons for the emergence of this phenomenon among young people are varied and can be associated with pedagogical, psychological, social and family factors. The main forms of bullying among teenagers include verbal abuse, slander, ignoring, exclusion from the group and physical violence. It is also worth noting that bullying manifestations may differ depending on gender. Boys are more likely to experience physical forms of aggression, while girls are more likely to experience emotional bullying. Teenagers' reactions to bullying may vary: they may show active or passive resistance, avoid conflict, run away from aggressors, or demonstrate pseudo-active resistance.

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