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**Title of Thesis: Parent-child conflict, anti social behaviour and hedonism in relation to bully perpetrating behaviour among adolescents.**

### **Abstract**

Bullying is a global phenomenon which affects a significant minority. Bullying in schools is a pressing social issue that has become a major concern in professional, research, and public domains. In the last few decades, bullying in schools have received increased attention. Bullying is a form of aggressive behaviour manifested by the use of force or coercion to affect others, particularly when the behaviour is habitual and involves an imbalance of power. It includes verbal harassment, physical assault or coercion and may be directed repeatedly towards particular victims on different grounds. There has been considerable evidence that small sub-groups of children are persistently targeted verbal, physical and psychological abuse by their peers. Bullying behaviour can have negative consequences for both the bully and the victim. Bullying is a problem which the school administration faces regularly. It contributes to a negative school social climate that is not conducive for good social relationships or learning. In India too, it has been made mandatory that the schools constitute an anti-bullying committee in their schools. Parents play many critical roles in promoting their children's capacity to have healthy relationships. When children perceive of conflict with their parents, they may indulge in delinquent behaviour which would be harmful to them and the society at large. Social cognitive competencies in the complex circle of behaviours, attitude and expectations upon which the phenomena of bullying is based indicates anti-social behaviour and hedonism among adolescents involved in aggression or bullying. Further in India, the phenomena of bullying is being taken seriously over a last few years with a surge of suicides among adolescents and the increasing anti-social behaviour among teenagers. Also, given the complex social systems in India and taboos attached to it, bullying among adolescents is hardly reported. Therefore the present study was undertaken to examine the extent to which parent child conflict, anti-social behaviour and hedonism play a role in an adolescent's bully perpetrating behaviour.

For the purpose of sampling, first of all, list of Government run schools located in South East Delhi were prepared alphabetically. From the list every fifth school were selected, on the

basis of which a total of 10 schools were selected for the study. 2200 participants were contacted for the administration of the bullying tool of which 120 were rejected because of incomplete responses on the questionnaire. The participants consisted of males only. For identification of the bully perpetrators and non-bullies, Illinois bullying scale (Espelage and Holt, 2001) was administered on the students of the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> classes of each school. The tool was administered on the students of the two classes who were available in the classroom and agreed to spare time and give responses. The scores obtained in the tool to identify the bully perpetrators and non-bullies. Quartile deviation was used to identify bully perpetrators and non-bullies. Adolescents whose scores on the tool were found above the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile were considered as bully perpetrators and those found below the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile were considered as non-bullies. In this way, out of the 2080 participants, 152 adolescents were identified as bully perpetrators whereas 158 adolescents were identified as non-bullies. In total, the age range of the participants was 12-15 years. After identification of the bully perpetrators and non-bullies, other three tools namely Parent Child Conflict Tactics Scale (Straus, Hamby, Filkenhor, Moore & Runyan, 1998), Child Social Behaviour Questionnaire (Warden, Christie, Cheyne, Fitzpatrick & Reid, 2000) and Present Hedonistic dimension of Zimbardo Time Perspective Inventory (Zimardo and Boyd, 1999) was used on the identified participants (bully perpetrators and non-bullies) rest of the tools were administered on them.

Findings showed that the rate of bullying behaviour particularly in government school was sufficiently high as more than one hundred fifty bully perpetrators were identified from two thousand two hundred adolescents. Adolescent's relationship with the parents, dominance of the hedonistic value and their involvement in anti social activities were some of the important factors found to be strongly linked with the bullying behaviour of adolescents. These factors were so closely linked with the bully perpetrating behaviour that extent of bully perpetrating behaviour can be predicted on the basis of the factors taken for the study. On the basis of findings of the study it can be concluded that for the bullying like behaviour among adolescents their family environment particularly relationship with the parents play major role besides their personality. Similarly, due to lack of parental control, children develop and get involved in anti social activities as a result teasing and abusing become habit for them and they do not hesitate in instigating breaking norms of societies or the institutions.

**Keywords:** *Adolescents, Bullying, Parent-child conflict, Anti-social behaviour, Hedonism*