

Teachers Bullied by Their Superiors in Schools in Lebanon: An Exploratory Study

Mira M. Alameddine,^a Hanadi S. Mirza^b

^a Lebanese University; Faculty of Letters and Humanities, UNESCO Area, Beirut-Lebanon
mira.alameddine@ul.edu.lb

^b Lebanese University; Faculty of Pedagogy; Beirut-Lebanon
hanadi.mirza@ul.edu.lb

Abstract

Bullying is a dangerous phenomenon because it is a continuous act that causes problems at school, university and even at work. Bullying comes in different forms; and one way of addressing this phenomenon has been through mediation programs that aim for student-peer mediation and that create a safe environments at schools. This present study investigated teachers' perceptions of teachers being bullied by their superiors or having witnessing other teachers being bullied. It also investigates whether teachers believed measures against bullying were taken on the part of management. 154 professionals participated in the study. According to the surveyed teachers, their superiors don't bully them. The data gathered indicated that these superiors do not humiliate them in public nor in private. Very few teachers admitted to being humiliated by their superiors (between 6% and 24%). Moreover, some teachers in Lebanon experience bullying and that female superiors were more prone to be the bullies and not much is being done regarding addressing the issue of bullying. An alarming finding is the fact that one teacher admitted to solving bullying incidents through beating the bully. The study reveals that mediation should be implemented in Lebanese schools to teachers as well.

Keywords: teachers, perceptions, bullying, mediation, Lebanon

1. Introduction

Bullying has become a common phenomenon (Boulton, Murphy, Lloyd, Besling, Coote, Lewis, Pernin & Walsh, 2013; Woudstra, Van Rensburg, Visser & Jordaan, 2018). It has become a material for studying because it is the result of adaptive answer to social influences (Yahn, 2012). In addition, bullying is not a onetime event; it reoccurs continuously. It starts with a simple tease, then the bully follows it with a test to discover the reaction of the bullied and then moves to threatening which in its turn can lead to violence (Woudstra et al, 2018). In other words, bullying process is the interaction between the perpetrator- the bully- and the victim- the bullied.

Data collected from several studies and UNICEF reports (Uso, Villanueva & Adrian, 2016) reveal that bullying is a serious matter which needs immediate intervention since it causes problems at schools, at work and in societies. Moreover, bullying could easily lead the victims to serious health problems, both physical and psychological (Ariza-Montes, Muniz, Leal-Rodrigues & Leal Millan, 2016). At the workplace, bullying becomes even more dangerous since it will not only affect individuals, but also the organizations (Ariza-Montes et al, 2016). Bullied employees will fail to perform properly, thus leading to job inefficiency.

Some employers bully their staff. This type of bullying can be in the form of insults, scorn, or depriving the workers from acknowledgement of their work. It can also be in the form of imposing unrealistic work requirements, banning staff from social events and even verbal threats. Moreover, bullying can take the form of giving staff demeaning tasks, spreading rumors about them and ridiculing their private lives (Klein & Bentolila, 2018).

Bullying has become a true epidemic of damaging results. These results are highlighted by the weakness of many teachers who are submissive to the oppression that the labor market commands in a context of crisis and job instability. Moreover, there is indication of the high frequency of bullying within the education sector in many

countries such as Australia, Finland, the UK, the USA, China, and Ireland. In Turkey, for example, research shows that 50% of the Turkish primary school teachers had experienced bullying (Ariza-Montes et al, 2016).

Bullying, also called abuse, has several definitions that shed light on its numerous features. According to Klein & Bentalila (2018), bullying can be defined in two ways. Psychologically and sociologically, it is the pattern of verbal/non-verbal which happens over a period of time, between individuals who are not equal in power. In this relationship the behavior leads to emotional and physical consequences. A parallel definition identifies bullying as a behavior which ails the employee, resulting in substantial uneasiness for the receiver who regards it as a negative and condescending experience. Inappropriate behavior is regarded as bullying when performed at least once a week for a period of half a year.

Research on bullying in the last decade focused on children and adolescents as victims, adults as victims and workplace bullying, but not teacher -to -teacher bullying nor principal-to teacher bullying (Woudstra et al, 2018). Although bullying has been investigated widely, these types of bullying have received slight research consideration (De Wet, 2012). Moreover, it has been non-existent in public and political environment in most countries, which in turn has resulted in a disordered disconnected response from schools and governments (Garrett, 2014). These bullied teachers usually experience a sense of isolation and shame (Woudstra et al, 2018). To address this problem, researchers need to recognize teachers could be bullied and this is an international problem that necessitates global commitment (Woudstra et al, 2018), for when teachers are at a psychological risk, they cannot perform well; thus no 'education' takes place.

Teacher-to-teacher bullying and management-to-teacher bullying is considered as a form of workplace bullying. Workplace bullying is the unsolicited exploitation from any source of power that can intimidate, regulate or take away someone's self-esteem, worth or any human rights in the workplace (Carbo & Hughes, 2010).

The definitions and descriptions above combine aspects of the undermining nature of bullying as well as the disempowerment and negative impact that bullying has on the mental health of all bullied individuals, teachers in particular. This phenomenon requires immediate attention, for it gives rise to problems at schools. Henceforth, internal actions taken by the schools, like implementing their own peer mediation systems, could be a successful solution. These peer mediation systems are flexible frameworks within which victims are trained to offer emotional and social support to peers in distress. In peer mediation systems colleagues play an imperative role in the daily decision-making and developments which affects the school's daily life (Uso, Villanueva & Adrian, 2016). The benefits of such mediating programs are fundamentally founded on the closeness and status of the colleagues mediating between the victim and the bully (Cowie, 2014).

Formal Power and Bullying

Formal power is related to a person who has control over another person. There are several research studies on bullying in formal power situations. In such situations the bully has established control over the victim. For instance, a manager has the power to terminate an employee's services or to deduct wages for no legitimate reason. People with power can misuse their power to bully their employees. In the classroom environment, a teacher's power includes determining the grades a student receives. It is through this power that a teacher can bully a student. Such bullying conduct is a misuse of legitimate power given to oversee another person.

According to Jevtic, Petrovic and Stankovic (2014), among the common bullies in the workplace is the administrator. The researchers explain that a superior is usually more regarded as the abuser than a colleague. When victims seek help from the manager's superior, in most cases no action is taken against the abuser. However, when the manager discovers the report, he/she pursues revenge on the employee. According to a survey conducted by Namie (2000 as cited by Jevtic et al, 2014), 81% of bullies are superiors who have the authority to terminate their victims.

Klein and Bentalila (2018) conducted a study to investigate the different dimensions of bullying that teachers experience from principals. A total of 310 teachers from the three different cycles of school filled out seven questionnaires. The questionnaires provided a multi-dimensional picture of what bullying is. The researchers summarized the major causes of bullying at work and listed the consequences of such acts. According to Klein and Bentalila, individual differences between management and staff, whether culturally, ideologically or gender based,

give rise to possible abuse and source for bullying. Moreover, exchanges communication between offender and target of abuse caused by conflicting personality traits might also intensify problems. Teachers who have exceptional personality traits are at high risk of becoming bullied because of envy. Bullying is affected by the hierarchical organizational structure; management can easily exercise their power over staff. Other reasons that are connected to bullying are workloads, tension-laden organizational climate and large employer–employee status gaps contribute to the bullying of workers by their employers. In their study, the researchers found out that bullied teachers had a tendency to worry, were suspicious of things around them and could not accept personal criticism. The most important result of the study is that bullied teachers exhibited improper behavior which reflected on their work and their relationship with their students.

Dussault and Frenette (2015) listed the factors that could contribute to workplace bullying. When factors such as autonomy, skill utilization, job security and participation in decision making are lacking at work, then it becomes very likely for bullying to occur. Moreover, when teachers are overloaded with work, are not part of decision making and do not have job security, then they are easy targets for bullying by their superiors. Finally, the researchers observed that leadership management style that principals follow also affects bullying. When the Principals' follow the *lassiez-faire* leadership model, teachers are more likely to be bullied by their immediate superiors.

Not only do superiors and principals bully teachers, teachers hold power over their students through their control of the students' grades, privileges and academic performance. It is true that most teachers are caring individuals who are true educators, there are some teachers who are bullies. These teachers mistreat their students and abuse them through the practices of verbal insults, threats and even physical abuse (Jevtic, Ptrovic & Stankovic, 2014).

Informal Power and Bullying

Informal power occurs when control is employed by one peer over another. Informal power situations can involve bullying too. In such cases it could be adults or children controlling their peers improperly. In peer relationship, power is equal; however, when one person controls another, then abuse is being inflicted. It is not acceptable to abuse another person simply to gain feelings of power.

It seems that few workplaces are without bullies, including schools, medical centers, churches, and nonprofessional positions. Research related to victims of bullies concluded that 29.5% had a graduate or professional degree, 27.5% had a four-year degree, and 78% ranged in age from 24-46 years old (Gibbs, 2007).

Workers who are bullied are affected by the act of bullying physically and mentally. This will consequently affect their work performance and their social life. Woudstra et al (2018) state that bullied workers experience sleep interruptions with nightmares, insufficient rest, headaches, backaches, fatigue or exhaustion, illness, hyperactivity, skin changes, ulcers, first time substance abuse, and even suicide. The authors, insecurity, poor concentration, aggression or revenge, panic attacks, and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. All of these lead to low performance in the job and thus could lead to absenteeism and low turnover. Finally, bullied workers stop socializing which lead to isolation or a loss of friendships.

Gibbs (2007) cites the percentages of people being bullied at work. Women are targets for bullies 75% of the time. Women bully women 84% of the time and men bully women 69% of the time. Results indicate that both men and women bully one another other at work for the same percentage. Gibbs further lists the reasons to why some workers bully other workers. She states that a bully's personality has actually developed in such a way that satisfaction comes from controlling others. The bully seems become gratified when he or she inflicts abuse upon someone else. Moreover, a bully's action evolves in workplaces that are political and competitive. In this situation, a bully who is in competition for a promotion might try to destroy the other person's chances. Finally, bullying can occur unintentionally. For example, if a person is having a bad day and takes his or her anger on his or her colleague.

Peer Mediation

Bullying, conflict and violence in schools are a major problem for students, educators and management. These damaging behavioral forms are quite predominant and shared all over the world in school setting. Furthermore, creating a safe, progress-oriented and socially-oriented school setting is becoming harder every day. Nevertheless, it is important to ensure school safety for children and adolescents (Adiguzel, 2015). Humans cannot function without

safety. They cannot think, work or learn if they do not feel safe. Humans need the feeling of safety if they are to develop and grow. When people do not feel safe, they might behave in an abnormal way in this respect, when school environment is not safe nor are school personnel supportive, then bullying, violence and conflict will become inescapable and increase. Consequently, converting the entire school culture into collaborative and problem-solving environment becomes a vital necessity.

The Association for Conflict Resolution [ACR], 2007 defines mediation as a conflict resolution process run by a third-party specialist who is called a mediator (as cited by Adiguzel, 2015). Mediation process focuses on conflict resolution. Conflict in school setting is a major problem for educators and administrators and it is prevalent and common all over the world. It may induce act of violence.

To provide insights into the multilayered effects of workplace bullying on employee wellbeing by employing a moderated mediation model of resilience and perceived victimization, Gupta and Bakhshi (2018) conducted their study to assess the role of mediation and how victims of workplace bullying perceive it. The researchers also studied the moderated mediation impact of resilience and perceived victimization on the association between bullying and employee wellbeing. To collect the data, 512 employees participated in the study, using structural equation modeling. The results of the mediation analysis showed that moderated mediation between improves workers' well-being. When mediation occurs between the bully and the victim, the victim develops resilience buffers. The researchers conclude their study by endorsing the role of individual factors in a more comprehensive model of workplace bullying asserting that knowledge about factors of bullying and victimization would assist in working out a prevention and intervention strategies.

Oriol, Miranda, Amutio, Acosta, Mendoza, & Torres-Vallejos (2017) investigated the harmful effects of bullying in educational centers in Peru. The researchers conducted a multi-mediation structural model with 21,416 Peruvian adolescents. The study aimed at determining how the influence of violence that occurs at school affects how students perceive violence within school. Results confirm that violence in school settings has high influence on violence exercised by adolescents and teachers within the school. Students bullied by teachers is the most important reason for depression, loneliness, and encourages peer victimization. The researchers conclude their study by emphasizing the need for mediation programs to help victimized learners.

To determine the impact of peer mediation programs at a secondary school, as compared to a center without mediation program, Usó et al (2016) conducted their study. The researchers evaluated the impact of the program through three levels of variables: pro-victim attitudes, the roles adopted by the youngsters and the school climate. To collect data for their study, Usó and the other researchers distributed different questionnaires to 323 students between the ages of 12 to 14 and to 17 teachers. The participants first filled out the pre-test questionnaire and after the mediation program filled out the post-test questionnaire. Data analysis indicated the effectiveness of peer mediation programs it fosters pro-victim attitudes, thus prevents the increase of negative roles and improves school climate.

Empathy plays a vital role in helping students overcome bullying. Through mediation, teachers can develop empathy towards their students. Murphy, Tubritt, O'Higgins Norman (2018) investigated how teachers respond to the reports of bullying and how they address the problem. The researchers studied the teacher empathy levels and how much the level affects the readiness of the teachers in assisting bullied children. The data collected and analyzed revealed that teachers' empathy levels play a direct role in helping bullied children. When teachers have empathy, they are better prepared to tackle bullying incidents at school. Empathy can be developed through awareness and training which mediation programs train for.

In an attempt to explain how cultural norms within a school could impact bullying, Henken and Swenson (2012) measured potential mediators of the relationship between teacher beliefs about bullying and actual peer victimization and to what extent students are willing to intervene when they witness bullying. Participants were 340 from Grade 3-8, and 66 of their teachers. Results indicated that teachers who believed that bullying is normal did not intervene to stop bullying. Moreover, lack of intervention was in turn related to higher levels of peer victimization. Because the teachers believed that the victims should stand up for themselves, the victims' peers did not intervene to stop bullying. Teacher intervention and peer empathy, as mediators, were connected to student levels of persecution

and inclination to intervene both between-school-grade associates and within-grade partners at an individual perceptual level.

Bullying is everywhere. It exists in schools and in almost any workplace. The heart of this abuse is a person's power and control over another. Bullying in its formal form is tangible power, because the bully is in a superior position and has authority over the victim. Informal power is when bullying occurs between peers; however, these peers do not regard themselves as equals. Bullying can be understood in children, since it is part of growing up and developing character through problem-solving experiences. However, caregivers, whether parents or educators should educate children to treat one another in a respectful and kind way. When this fails, schools and workplaces should have programs that will support the bullied victims. Mediation programs become one of several answers to the problem of bullying not only for students but also for teachers who need to feel safe in the workplace.

The above discussion reveals that workplace bullying is a serious problem that requires immediate attention. Workplace bullying seems to be prevalent in academia and school environments more than any other workplace. Moreover, mediation is limited to students and not to teachers. It becomes imperative to study the phenomenon and investigate the situation in Lebanon to determine if mediation is a possible solution for teachers who are bullied.

Aim of the Study

This study aims at investigating teachers' perceptions of teachers being bullied by their superiors and the measures taken to deal with such issue.

Research Questions

This study attempts to answer the following research questions:

- How do teachers in public and private schools in Lebanon perceive the incidents of teachers being bullied by their superiors?
- How does school management deal with incidents when teachers are being bullied by their superiors?

2. Methodology

A qualitative research design was used in this study to investigate the perspectives of teachers in schools in Lebanon towards teachers being bullied by their superiors and the possible measures to deal with this problematic issue in the workplace. A group of teachers in Lebanon filled out a survey which was analyzed descriptively.

Participants

A total of 154 professionals participated in the study. 153 teachers filled out a questionnaire on bullying in Lebanese schools. All participants were Lebanese. The participants received the survey online via Facebook, LinkedIn, and WhatsApp, through private dissemination of emails, and through the email directory of the ATEL association. Out of the 153 teachers, 7 were males and 146 were females. These teachers were mostly from private schools, 123 teachers. Only 30 teachers were public school teachers. The teachers' years of experience ranged between 1 year and more than 11 years. Furthermore, most of the participating teachers were experienced with more than 11 years in the field. Out of these experienced teachers, 104 teachers (around 68%) were familiar with mediation while 49 teachers had no idea (around 32%).

The last participant was Mrs. Randa Haddad Eid. Mrs. Haddad Eid is in charge of school mediation in the Professional Center of Mediation (CPM) at St. Joseph University (USJ) in Lebanon.

Tools

Two tools were used in gathering the data. The first is the *Teacher Bullying in Schools in Lebanon* survey and the second an interview with Mrs. Randa Haddad Eid.

The survey was developed by the researcher with question 7 adapted from Klein & Bentolila, (2018). The survey was uploaded unto *Survey Monkey*. It included open-ended and closed-ended questions. Number 7 has 20 items and requested the participants to rate the statements on a 5-point-Likert scale. Questions 1-6 consisted of demographic

information about the applicant and question 7 had sub-questions that follow the Likert system. Questions 8 and 9 are qualitative where participants expressed their opinions about how teacher bullying is being treated in their schools whether there is a mediation center in their schools or not. The survey was piloted asking 2 teachers whose French is their L2 and 2 other whose L2 is English to comment on the survey. All questions were found clear using simplified language.

The interview consisted of 20 questions that asked about the CPM center, the schools using mediation, and the training the center provides.

Procedures

Two announcements were sent out for teachers across Lebanon. One was in French and the other in English. The announcements included the survey link and the purpose of the study. The announcements were broadcasted on Facebook, LinkedIn, WhatsApp, and via emails on May 23rd, 2019. For two weeks, responses came back and by June 4th, 2019, the number of teachers who had filled the survey was 153.

The interview with Mrs. Randa Haddad Eid took place on June 13th, 2019 at the CPM. The interview took around 40 minutes. After the interview ended, the researcher transcribed the data.

Survey Results

The data collected revealed that only 5% of the teachers were males and 95% were females. Moreover, most of the 153 teachers came from the private sector, amounting to 80% while 20% came from the public sector.

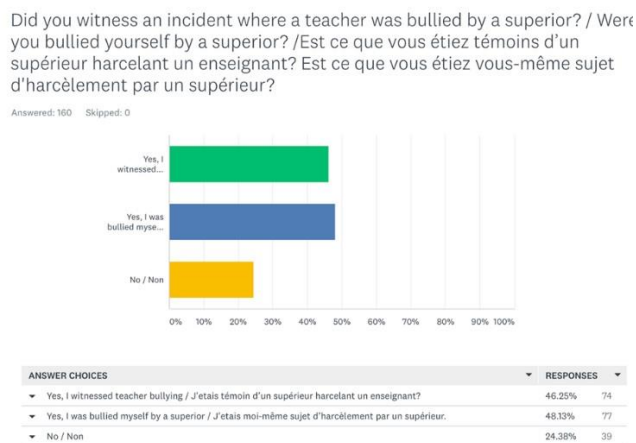


Figure 1. Being bullied or witnessing teachers being bullied

Figure 1 shows the percentages of teachers bullied or having witnessed bullying. As the figure reveals, very few teachers did not witness bullying. Only 25% were spared the experience. The largest percentage was from teachers who experienced bullying themselves. 48% of the teachers admitted to being bullied, while 46% said they had witnessed incidents of other teachers being bullied.

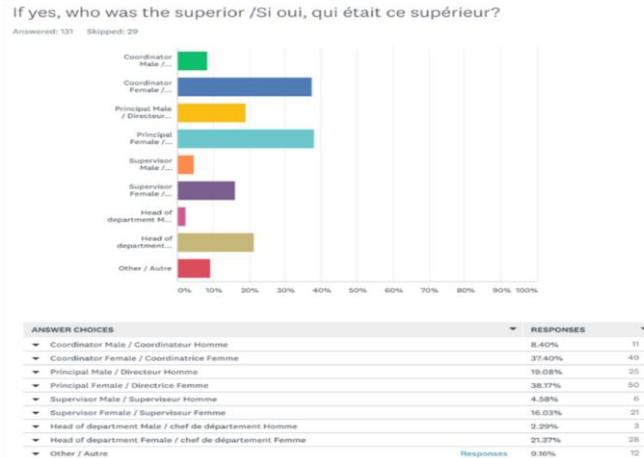


Figure 2. Identity and gender of the superior

Figure 2 shows the percentages of the types of bullies. As the graph reveals, the highest percentages of bullies are females. 37% of coordinators who were bullies were females as were the principals, also 37%. The supervisors 17% and Head of departments 22%. According to the survey, male superiors did not bully the teachers as much as female superiors did.

Teachers' Ratings of Their Superiors

Participants rated the 20 statements in question 7 in the survey on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree, to agree, to undecided, to disagree, and to strongly disagree. In Table 1 (see Appendix), the teachers rated the statements to show their views about their superiors. The table shows percentages of teachers' views of their superior(s) – from the first 9 questions. It is clear that teachers do not regard their superiors as perpetrators. On the contrary, the majority of around 40% strongly disapproved of the statement that their superior(s) insults them regarding their work or performance. These superiors support their teachers and believe in them (60%). They don't insult them (55%). Moreover, these superiors do not threaten the teachers (58%) and do fulfill the professional promises they give their teachers (43%).

Moreover, questions 10-14 (Table 2 in Appendix) revealed how the teachers perceive their superiors. It covers questions 10-14. As the table reveals, around 42% of the teachers reported that their superior(s) expresses negative behavior by sending out messages of dissatisfaction through nonverbal behavior. The table also reveals that 62% of the teachers have good relationship with their superiors for the latter do not show discomfort when meeting them nor do they criticize them in front of others (60%). 89% of the teachers stated that their superior(s) does not insult them nor their families.

The data collected from questions 15-20 reveals that 71% of participants believe that their superior(s) talk(s) respectfully about them, does not ignore them (59%) and treats them properly regarding personal matter (61%). These teachers also stated that their superior(s) does not intrude in their personal life and only discusses work related issues with them (76%). Finally, these superiors treat them somewhat fairly because they do not get angry at them for no reason (63%).

Table 3 below investigates the presence of a mediation center at school and the measures taken towards teacher bullying.

8-Is there a mediation center in your school? If yes, is the mediation center helping in dealing with teacher bullying and how does it deal with it? If it is not helpful, how is teacher bullying being dealt with in your school?	
-No: 77 people	-Unfairly: 2 people
-Not treated: 6 people	-Teachers just vent to each other about it: 2 people
-Yes: 5 people	-No mediation center, it is not even considered bullying, but good management: 1 person

-Awareness only for students bullied not for teacher: 3 people	-What helps is to deal with the one bullying: 1 person
-No comment: 1 person	-Beating: 1 person
-Don't know: 1 person	-No mediation center, talked to a priest who talked to the principal: 1 person
-No, manager/coordinator/boss always right: 2 people	108 responses
-Conflicts solved by HR: 3 people	45 skipped
-Psychologist: 1 person	There are ways to report the issue: 1 person

Table 3. Mediation center at school

This table shows the answer to the open-ended question number 8. As the table reveals, 77 teachers admitted that there are no mediation programs in their schools. Moreover, if it does exist, then the program is directed to helping bullied students and not teachers. 45 participants did not answer this question.

In answering the question regarding the existence of mediation programs at schools and whether it helps with teachers being bullied, 60 participants admitted that their schools do not deal with bullying because it does not follow a mediation program. 17 teachers said that principles and coordinators take care of the teacher bullying incidents at school. 4 participants said that they talk to their peers when bullied while 5 bullied teachers quit their schools. 2 participants mentioned that they resorted to the help of psychologists/counsellors, 2 others admitted that they got used to teacher bullying, and 1 doesn't interfere with such incidents. One participant doesn't trust the help of school staff and administration and rather prays to God to relieve her from such problem.

Interview Results

The interview with Mrs. Haddad Eid revealed that she received her CPM certificate in 2018 as a mediator and works for the CPM as the "School Mediation Project Coordinator". Mrs. Haddad Eid commenced her position in January 2019. She is responsible for implementing the school mediation projects in public and private schools in Lebanon. Ms. Haddad assumed her job and responsibilities in the Center in January 2019. She is the school mediation project coordinator and as such her work deals with school directors, parents' committees, educators and parents and preparing the annual school workshops on mediation. She stated that CPM has been mediating conflicts in Beirut since 2006. The center has been a partner with 40 schools since 2009, where it shares its mediating program.

Mrs. Haddad Eid admitted that there have been no reports to the CPM regarding teacher bullying. Moreover, CPM does not have knowledge of whether mediation program is used at schools to deal with teachers experiencing bullying. Mrs. Haddad Eid concludes her interview by stating that when teachers are bullied at schools "it would be recommended that an external person or mediator from a mediation center resolves the conflicts between teachers, including in the case of a bullied teacher and a superior, in order to maintain the neutrality and impartiality that are necessary in these situations. A mediation will work best in this case. It can be done through CPM, or a mediation cell that can be put in place."

3. Analysis and Recommendations

According to the results, teachers in Lebanon experience formal bullying (Blasé and Blasé, 2003; Dussault & Frenette, 2015; Gibbs, 2007; Hall, 2005; Woudstra et al, 2018). These teachers were more bullied by female superiors than by male superiors. It could be due to the fact that most of the teachers in the study are females. Studies on gender leaderships (Khazan, 2017) reveal that females in management tend to be aggressive. In her article, Khazan (2017) quotes Joyce Benenson, a psychologist at Emmanuel College, in Boston, "women are evolutionarily predestined not to collaborate with women they are not related to. Women and girls are less willing than men and boys to cooperate with lower status individuals of the same gender" (paragraph 29).

The survey results, however, represent a different picture. According to the surveyed teachers, their superiors don't bully them. Table 2 shows that these superiors do not humiliate them in public nor in private. They support them

in their professional development. Unlike the literature (Howlette, 2005; Kitchener, 2005; AAP, 2006; Boulton et al, 2013; Klein & Bentolila, 2018), these teachers stated that their superiors fulfill professional promises that these superiors had given them. Moreover, the superiors support the development of a sociable and friendly environment at school. Very few teachers admitted to being humiliated by their superiors (between 6% and 24%). 31% of teachers agreed that their superiors would not give them enough time to complete their tasks. This result, however, can be attributed to other factors than bullying such as school overloading teachers with work and tasks.

The results collected and represented in tables 2 and 3 reveal that there is a huge difference in the teachers' perceptions of their superiors. While the results in table one indicate that the teachers are bullied by their superiors, table 3 shows that they are not. Up to 89% of the participants stated that their superiors do not insult them. Table 4 also shows that the teachers are treated well by their superiors. Only a minority of 23% of these teachers admitted to being bullied by their superiors. The bullying comes in the form of verbal threats and not giving credit to one's work. However, in accordance with the literature (Jevtic et al, 2014; Ariza-Montes et al, 2016), 45% of the teachers, ie. almost half of them agree and others disagree, agreed that their superiors do not give them chances of professional growth and development. This finding contradicts with what we said earlier. This matter should be further investigated.

The data also revealed that not much is being done regarding addressing the issue of bullying. Even in the schools that implement mediation programs, these programs are directed towards students and not teachers. These teachers did admit that a mediation program would be very helpful for them (Gupta & Bakhshi, 2018; Oriol et al, 2017). Moreover, most Lebanese schools do not have the mediation culture. More than 60% of the respondents stated that they do not have such programs. An alarming finding is the fact that one teacher admitted to solving bullying incidents through beating; that teacher beat the student who bullied. This would explain why the school is not a part of the mediation culture. If solving a problem is done through beating, then bullying will be regarded as the norm and part of developing one's personality (Gibbs, 2007).

The interview data also supports this finding. No incidents of teachers being bullied by their superiors were reported and the mediation programs are mainly directed towards students. Although the CPM has trained more than 10000 students since 2009, it has not yet introduced the mediation program as a means to support bullied teachers. If teachers are to educate students, they need to have a positive subjective well-being so that they can help their students (Murphy, Tubritt, Norman, 2018).

Mediation should be implemented in all schools. It is needed to address all conflicts that might arise in schools (Usó et al, 2016). School life has to be safe for all. Through mediation cells and programs at schools, teachers will gain awareness of the types of bullying and will be prepared to indenting negative behaviors and thus become able to defend themselves (Murphy et al, 2018) and their learners, consequently.

Through mediation, individuals develop mediation mindset (Consensus Mediation, 2018) that will facilitate the transition from an aggressive atmosphere to an inclusive one where conflicts are resolved amicably. It will give training to all individuals in the workplace irrespective of their hierarchy.

The effects found at the school with a mediation program show that children feel safer. Moreover, there is consistency not only in the effects found in the well-being of bullied students. Workers in an environment that promotes mediation are more encouraged to seek help and address the conflict through mediation. These teachers submit reports without fear of retaliation. Thus, the presence of a mediation program has positive effects and brings in positive atmosphere into school premises.

This study has revealed that some teachers in Lebanon experience bullying from their superiors. They experience bullying from both genders, males and females. However, these teachers are bullied by female superiors more than by male superiors. The bullying comes from all levels of management: coordinators, supervisors, principals and head of departments. The data also reveal that teachers prefer having mediation programs in their schools. These teachers receive no help to adjust or resolve the conflicts that arise. They are most of the times left on their own to deal with it. At best, they only go to "vent" with other teachers.

Although there are peer mediators to resolve conflicts among students in some schools in Lebanon, teachers being bullied by their superiors are not taken care of. Consequently, there surfaces a necessity to have teacher mediators

at school or preferably an external mediator in order to address the matter of teachers being bullied by upper management.

Moreover, additional studies should be done in Lebanon to investigate the phenomenon of management-teacher bullying and teacher-teacher bullying. Such studies are very scarce and the teacher bullying phenomenon is not clearly addressed. The effects of mediation programs should also be addressed and evaluated.

REFERENCES

- Adiguzel, I.B. (2015). Peer mediation in schools. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 174, p. 826 – 829.
- Ariza-Montes, A.; Muniz, N.M.; Leal-Rodriguez, A.L. & Leal-Millan, A.G. (2016). Workplace bullying among teachers. *American College of Occupational Environmental Medicine*, 58(8), p. 818-827
- Boulton, M.J.; Murphy, D.; Lloyd, J.; Besling, s.; Coote, J.; Lewis, J.; Perrin, R. & Walsh, L.
Helping counts: predicting children's intentions to disclose being bullied to teachers from prior social support experiences. *British Educational Research Journal*, 39(2), p. 209–221.
- Carbo, J. & Hughes, A. (2010). Workplace bullying: Developing a human rights definition from the perspective and experiences of targets. *WorkingUSA*. 13(3), p. 387 - 403. 10.1111/j.17434580.2010.00297.x.
- Consensus Mediation. (2018). How to Implement a Mediation Mindset in Your Organisation. Retrieved from <https://www.consensusmediation.ie/implement-mediation-mindsetorganisation/>
- Cowie, H. (2014). Understanding the role of bystanders and peer support in school bullying. *The International Journal of Emotional Education*, 6, p. 26–32.
- De Wet, C. (2012). Risk factors for educator-targeted bullying: A social-ecological perspective. *Journal of Psychology in Africa*, 22(2), p. 239–243.
- Dussault, M. & Frenette, E. (2015). Superiors' transformational leadership and bullying in the workplace. *Psychological Reports: Employment Psychology & Marketing*, 117(3), p. 724733.
- Garrett, L. (2014). The student bullying of teachers: An exploration of the nature of the phenomenon and the ways in which it is experienced by teachers. *Aigne*, 5, p. 19–40.
- Gibbs, S.S. (2007). *Teachers bullied by other teachers*. (PhD Dissertation). Western Carolina University.
- Gupta, R. & Bakhshi, A. (2018) Workplace bullying and employee well-being: A moderated mediation model of resilience and perceived victimization. *Journal of Workplace Behavioral Health*, 33(2), p. 96-115. DOI: 10.1080/15555240.2018.1464929
- Hektner, J. M. & Swenson, C. A. (2012). Links from teacher beliefs to peer victimization and bystander intervention: Tests of mediating processes. *Journal of Early Adolescence* 32(4), p. 516–536
- Khazan, O. (2017). Why Do Women Bully Each Other at Work? Research suggests that conditions in the workplace might be to blame. *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2017/09/the-queen-bee-in-the-corneroffice/534213/>
- Klein, J. & Bentolila, A. (2018): Principals bully teachers at schools: causes, examples, and consequences. *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, DOI: 10.1080/13603124.2018.1518540
- Murphy, H.; Tubritt, J. & O'higgs Norman, N. (2018). The role of empathy in preparing teachers to tackle bullying. *Journal of New Approaches in Educational Research*, 7(1), p. 17-23.
- Oriol, Miranda, Amutio, Acosta, Mendoza, & Torres-Vallejos. (2017). Violent relationships at the social-ecological level: A multi-mediation model to predict adolescent victimization by peers, bullying and depression in early and late adolescence. *PLoS ONE*, 12(3), p. e0174139.
doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0174139.
- Sky News. (2019). Teachers quitting profession because of bullying by colleagues in schools. Retrieved from <https://news.sky.com/story/teachers-quitting-profession-because-of-bullyingby-colleagues-in-schools-11696810>
- Usó, I; Villanueva, L. & Adrián, J. E. (2016). Impact of peer mediation programmes to prevent bullying behaviours in secondary schools / El impacto de los programas de mediación entre iguales para prevenir conductas de acoso escolar en los centros de secundaria. *Infancia y Aprendizaje*, 39(3), p. 499-527, doi: 10.1080/02103702.2016.1189122
- Woudstra, M. H.; Van Resburg, E.J.; Visser, M. & Jordaan, J. (2018). Learner-to-teacher bullying as a potential factor influencing teachers' mental health. *South African Journal of Education*, 38 (1), p. 1-10.
- Yahn, M. (2012). The social context of bullying. *Encounter: Education for Meaning and Social Justice*, 25(4), p. 20–28.

Appendix

	STRONGLY DISAGREE (1) (N'ACCEPTE PAS DU TOUT)	DISAGREE (2) (N'ACCEPTE PAS)	UNDECIDED (3) (INDÉCIS)	AGREE (4) (ACCEPTE)	STRONGLY AGREE (5) (ACCEPTE FORTEMENT)
Give me too little time to complete complex tasks/ Ne me donne pas assez de temps pour finir plusieurs tâches complexes	20.65% 32	20.00% 31	18.06% 28	30.97% 48	10.32% 16
Tells me I have no ability/ Me dit que je suis incapable	33.55% 52	28.39% 44	10.32% 16	20.65% 32	7.10% 11
Tells me I don't work hard enough/ Me dit que je ne travaille pas assez	31.41% 49	23.72% 37	13.46% 21	21.79% 34	9.62% 15
Insults me verbally on my work/ M'insulte verbalement à propos de mon travail	39.10% 61	21.72% 34	8.97% 14	18.59% 29	11.54% 18
Brings up mistakes and failures from the past/ Mentionne mes erreurs et échecs précédents	28.85% 45	26.28% 41	9.62% 15	23.08% 36	12.18% 19
Makes verbal threats about my professional future/ Me menace verbalement concernant mon futur professionnel	33.78% 53	22.93% 36	10.83% 17	21.86% 34	10.83% 17
Does not fulfill professional promises s/he made to me/ Ne tient pas ses promesses professionnelles qu'il/elle m'a faites	26.58% 42	15.82% 25	19.03% 19	27.85% 44	17.72% 28
Doesn't take my opinion into consideration/ Ne prends pas mon opinion en considération	18.99% 30	17.09% 27	12.66% 20	27.22% 43	24.06% 38
Doesn't give me credit for my work/ Ne me donne aucune reconnaissance pour mon travail	22.15% 35	17.72% 28	8.86% 14	27.85% 44	23.42% 37

Table 1. Teachers' views about their superior-bully (questions 1-9)

▼ Expresses nonverbal dissatisfaction with my work/ Montre avec ces gestes qu'il/elle n'est pas satisfait de mon travail	23.08% 36	19.23% 30	16.03% 25	26.28% 41	15.38% 24	156	2.92
▼ Prevents professional or social contacts with my colleagues/M'interdit d'avoir des contacts sociaux avec mes collègues	39.10% 61	30.77% 48	12.82% 20	10.90% 17	6.41% 10	156	2.15
▼ Prominently shows discomfort with my presence in front of others/ Montre à autrui qu'il/elle n'est pas à l'aise en ma présence	34.39% 54	27.39% 43	18.47% 29	12.74% 20	7.01% 11	157	2.31
▼ Criticizes and embarrasses me verbally in the presence of others/ Me critique et m'embarrasse verbalement devant les autres	34.42% 53	24.68% 38	9.09% 14	22.08% 34	9.74% 15	154	2.48
▼ Says insulting things about me and my family/ Dit des injures concernant ma personne et ma famille	57.52% 88	30.72% 47	5.88% 9	3.92% 6	1.96% 3	153	1.62

Table 2. Teachers' views about their superior-bully (questions 10-14)