The Role of School and Vocational Guidance Counselor in Reducing School Bullying, From the Point of View of Middle Education Teachers

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Abstract:

The study aims to identify the school and vocational guidance counselor's role in reducing school bullying from middle school teachers' viewpoint It was conducted on a purposeful sample of 124 middle school teachers from study community estimated with 17 Facebook groups for intermediate education teachers. Furthermore, the descriptive and analytical approach was adopted. The electronic questionnaire was used as a study tool consisting of (37 items) divided on two axes: Information (21 items) and the Psychological follow-up (16 items)).The study found that the school and vocational guidance counselor has a role in reducing school bullying, but not to the required extent, as s/he relies only on informing axis, where as psychological follow-up is rarely used, according to the view of middle education teachers.

Keywords: School and vocational guidance counselor- violence - bullying - adolescent student - middle school teacher.

الملخص:

تهدف الدراسة لمعرفة دور مستشار التوجيه والإرشاد المدرسي والمهني في التقليل من التنمر المدرسي من وجهة نظر أساتذة التعليم المتوسط، وأجريت على عينة قصدية من أساتذة التعليم المتوسط (124 أستاذا) بعدة مجموعات فايسبوكية خاصة بأساتذة التعليم المتوسط. حيثاعتمدت على المنهج الوصفي التحليلي، أين قُدر مجتمع الدراسة ب 17 مجموعة فايسبوكية، واستخدم الاستبيان الالكتروني كأداة للدراسة تتكون من (37بند) موزعة على محورين: "الإعلام' يشمل(21 بند) و"المتابعة النفسية" ويشمل (16 بند).

توصلت الدراسة إلى أن لمستشار التوجيه دور في التخفيف من التنمر المدرسي ولكن ليس بالقدر المطلوب إذ يكتفي إلا بمحور الإعلام أما المتابعة النفسية فهي قليلة نوعا ما وذلك حسب نظر أساتذة التعليم المتوسط.

كلمات المفتاحية: مستشار التوجيه والإرشاد المدرسي والمهني - العنف-التنمر - التلميذ المراهق- أستاذ المرحلة المتوسط

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The problematic :

Bullying phenomenon is one of the behavioral problems that arise between different age groups and occur in all societies, whether developed or developing. Usually bullying behavior is more prevalent in the school environment as a form of repeated aggression that aims to intentionally harm the other person. The different names of bullying (in Arabic: *alaistisad*, *alsuela*, *alaistiqwa* or *albltja*) confirm the phenomenon's seriousness, as it spreads rapidly among students. The American Psychiatric Association describes it as an "epidemic of violence" (Chettibiand Boutaf, p. 2). After reviewing global statistics to determine its severity, it appears that bullying is one of the most common problems found in the United States of America's schools. Studies indicate that 8% of high school students miss at least one class a week for fear of being bullied when going to school (The International Center for Childhood, Early Education and Development, 2017, p. 3), and the U.S. Department of Education acknowledged that 77% of middle and high school students bully others throughout their educational careers.

In Japan, bullying led some students to commit suicide in 1994, and the case was filed at the Tokyo High Court, and the case results confirmed that the cause of suicide was bullying by his schoolmates, which resulted in a decision to fine the parents of the bully to pay nearly 90,000 US dollars to the victim's parent. Thus, this was the first judicial recognition of bullying in the history of the Japanese judicial system. This resulted in a national study of 9420 students from schools (elementary - middle - secondary) where the results show that 22% of primary students suffer from bullying in parallel, 13% of intermediate students and 3.9% of high school students suffer from bullying (Abu Al-Diyar, 2012, pp. 20-22).

According to the statistics of the National Center for Education Statistics' recent studies, 8% of students admitted that they were victims of bullying, and the cases of bullying are increasing (Abu Al-Diyar, 2012, pp20-34). The regional report of the Middle East and North Africa Organization indicates that data on the extent of the problem is generally sparse, and this may be due to the sensitivity of the subject (Chettibi and Boutaf, BS, p. 2).In addition, UNICEF stated in its latest report (2017) on children and violence in schools that 1 out of 3 students between 13-15 years old suffer bullying from their peers, which indicates that 70% of bullying reports occur in school (Bashaet al., 2018, p. 6.8).Bullying has very dangerous effects on both children and adolescents. They may reach the point of refusing to go to school, dropping out of school, and low motivation to learn that results in lower academic achievement. This is in addition to anxiety, psychological stress, and disorders that lead to low self-esteem, depression and suicidal ideation, as well as introversion, isolation, among others. All these problems affect the achievement of educational goals, and the progress of society as a whole. This confirms the need for psychological and educational guidance and counseling in order to avoid such problems and help students to overcome them safely and smoothly.

Algeria is among the countries that focused on school counseling and guidance. The period from 1974 to 1991 is one of the most important stages in the Algerian education system. This stage witnessed the establishment of the School and Vocational Counselor's post, according to

Decision No. 91/124/214 of 09/18/1991, which includes the installation of the School and Vocational Adviser Counselors in high schools. This counselor plays an important and prominent role in the educational institution because of its specialized training that enables him/her to take effective measures and help students to face and reduce their problems, and to fulfill themselves and get thus the proper adjustment, which leads to sound mental health's/he also directs the pupils according to their abilities and preferences and what is required by the educational map, in order to help him/her build his future project and avoid negative behaviors such as school bullying that hinders his/her progress and mental health.

Hence, this leads us to pose the following problematic: Does the school and vocational guidance counselor have a role in reducing the phenomenon of school bullying, from the viewpoint of middle school teachers?

Sub-questions

Does the school and vocational guidance counselor have a role in reducing school bullying through information classes from the viewpoint of middle school teachers?

Does the school and vocational guidance counselor play a role in reducing school bullying through psychological follow-up sessions from the viewpoint of middle school teachers?

1.2 Study objectives

- Knowing the role of school and vocational guidance counselor towards the phenomenon of school bullying.

- Determining the reality of school bullying and the extent of its spread.

-Providing counselors, mentors and specialists in the field of education with a proposed indicative program, and the possibility of employing it in Algerian educational institutions to limit school bullying

1.3 Conceptualization

A. School bullying: One of the types of aggression that is practiced by a student against another student in order to harm him/her.

B. School and vocational guidance counselor: It is the qualified and competent person who practices his/her work in the school field in order to help pupils overcome and face their problems.

1.4 Conceptual analysis
1.4.1School bullying:

1.4.1.1 Definition: According to Hala Ismail (2010), it is "a form of aggression towards others, whether it is physical - verbal - psychological - social or electronic. It is one of the problems that have negative effects on the bully, on the bully victim, or on the entire school environment."

Heath et al (2013) argue that it affects the psychosocial structure of the school community (El-Desouki, 2016, p. 3).

1.4.1.2 Characteristics of bullied students and their victims:

There are several characteristics that distinguish these students, including:

A-Characteristics of bullying students:

Smith (2001) shows that bullies are divided into two parts according to their characteristics as follows:

*a. Introverted bully:*s/he is the bossy bully, pretending to be kind, the deceiving, who hides his feelings of teasing.

*b. Social bully***:** s/he is the bully who is controlling, active, extrovert, in addition to being constantly aggressive.

B- Characteristics of bullied students:

*Passive victims***:** they submit by word and deed to the bullies, respond to their threats by withdrawing and fleeing or paying the price for their forgiveness.

Provocative victims: They are the ones who tend to take revenge. They get affected if they are attacked. They do not give up easily. (Chettibiand Boutaf, pp. 9-10)

1.4.1.3Participants in bullying behavior:

A- The bully

B-Victims: Victims of bullies are classified into two categories:

*Passive victims***:** they do not defend themselves. Their reactions are negative, they withdraw from the situation more than facing it.

Active victims: They confront the bully by showing aggression. They compensate for their weakness by bullying other children who are smaller and weaker than them, and they succeed

C-Bystanders: The ones who watch, do not participate, and feel guilty about not intervening due to failure caused by their extreme fear.

D-Supporters: Those who support bullies because of the friendship they have with them.

F- The guards: They are the ones who sympathize with victims and provide them with assistance.

E- Outsiders: neutrals who do not favor either side

1.4.1.4 The reasons of the bullying spread

There are several reasons leading to the spread of bullying, including:

A. Media: Among the most influential media outlets, we mention:

Wrestling channels spread: recently, the very violent free wrestling channels that use unusual means in conflict has increased, and the wrestling often ends with the gushing of blood of one or both of the wrestlers. (Al-Ammar, 2016, p.8)

Violent cartoon films: Violence has touched cartoon films, where it has become dependent on the supernatural and imaginative ability of human action, so terms such as magic, extermination of opponents, the greatest strength in battles and others are used. This helped creating a corrupt environment in which children learn using violence as the only means to obtain rights or extend control (Bahnasawiand Ramadan, 2010, p.6)

B. Family issues: It is very natural for children to be affected by their family environment, as they reflects a picture of it. The family directs several forms of violence towards its children, including:

Physical violence: Using one of the physically abusive behaviors, such as hitting, burning, or biting, and it may be unintended or for the purpose of discipline.

Psychological violence: emotional abuse comes with the parents refusal, for example, not giving smiles to the child, which leads to the formation of a low self-concept, and also leads to hostility, dependence, disappointment, contempt, and intimidation.

Neglect: children's inability to get their basic needs. it is considered the greatest social threat to them. If neglect becomes excessive, accompanied by physical and psychological violence, it may lead to death.

Sexual violence: adults' exploitation of children, for example, in sex trade, debauchery, touching their organs, and actual sexual practices which reachs the exploitation of children and forcing them into prostitution as a means of earning money (Makhloufi, 2016, p.6)

C. Subjective reasons: This may be an expression of boredom, or they think that their bullied victims deserves being bullied.

D. Psychological reasons: When students feel frustrated or stressed, they seek to release those emotions through violence and bullying, whether against others or to themselves (Al-Omari, 2019, p. 4)

1.4.1.5 School bullying types

School bullying occurs in different forms, including:

 *Physical bullying***:** It is represented in pushing, beating, colliding with victims and stealing their property. The rate of physical bullying was 42%. In another study it was concluded that Lebanese children are 41% more likely to be physically bullied, especially children between the ages of 9 and 12 (Save the Children Association, 2018, p. 5)

Sexual bullying: it includes sexual harassment. According to a report by UNICEF, it shows that children between the ages of 13 and 17 are subjected to sexual harassment, with a rate of 97-99% (Basha et al., 2018, p.7)

Verbal bullying: includes threats, insults, ridicule and humiliation and verbal bullying has reached 30%. The report of the Save the Children Association also proves that Syrian children are more vulnerable to verbal bullying, with a rate of 32%.

Psychological bullying: it includes negative messages, such as feeling unwanted or worthless, through isolation, rejection, threat, or emotional indifference.

Cyberbullying: is the act of inflicting harm on the other party, using electronic devices connected to the Internet, and the rate of cyberbullying has reached 6% (Ibid.)

Social bullying: The rate of social bullying is 22%, and studies have shown that adolescents are more susceptible to social bullying. 59% of children are exposed to bullying, between 9 and 12 old, while the number of adolescents is estimated at 45%. (www.unicef .org)

1.4.1.6 Programs to counter bullying

We mention among them:

-Whole language approach

-The capsle program

-Peer mentoring program

1.4.2 <u>School and vocational guidance and counselor</u>

1.4.2.1 Definition: "a member of the educational staff specialized in educational guidance and counseling. S/he works within a geographical region consisting of a group of educational

institutions. S/he performs his/her duties in accordance with the decisions of the Ministry of National Education."

1.4.2.2 School and vocational guidance and counselor's characteristics

The American Counseling Association has identified characteristics that a counselor should exhibit. Including:

* Strong personality and mental ability.

* Genuine love for others and an objective understanding of people.

* Ability to establish healthy relationships.

* Ease and capacity of information

There are three variables that must be available in the counselor, as they are related to the roles, functions and tasks that s/he performs, and they are:

- Academic variable

Obtaining a recognized scientific university degree in one of the disciplines: Psychology - Education Science, among others, which was mentioned in Article 103.

- Professional variable

Since the counselors are qualified and competent people, they must possess the capabilities and skills that help them perform their job to the fullest.

-Personality requirements

They are the components the counselors' personality that make them superior psychologically, enabling them to build effective professional relationships with clients and help them solve their problems.

1-4-2-3School and vocational guidance and counselor's roles:

✓ Informing

✓ Assessment

✓ Guidance

✓ Psychological follow-up

1.5 Previous studies

• **TarabIssaGraissi's(2012) study** entitled "*Bullying Behavior and its Relationship to the Academic Self-concept and Academic Achievement of Students*". It aims to uncover bullying behavior and its relationship with the academic self-concept and students' academic achievement. The sample consisted of 376 male and female students from different levels, and they were selected through the stratified random method. The Bullying Scale Tool and the Self-Concept Scale (prepared by the researcher) were used. To collect data, she depended on the relational descriptive approach. Among its prominent results:

- There is an inverse-negative correlation between bullying behavior and academic self-concept among middle school students, and this indicates that the higher the level of bullying, the lower the students' academic self-concept.

• **Dina Ziyad Salim Al-Masaeed's study(2016-2017)** entitled *Ways to Confront Student Bullying from the Point of View of the Northeastern Badia Schools Principals*. It aims to: Identify ways to confront student bullying from the point of view of principals of Northeastern Badia schools and the impact of variables (gender - educational qualification and years of experience).The sample

consisted of 104 school principals. A questionnaire was used, which consisted of 35 items distributed into 4 areas (physical - verbal - social - assault on property).To collect data, it relied on the survey descriptive approach, and among its most prominent results:

-The domain of property bullying came first, then the physical domain, then the verbal domain, and then the social domain.

-There are no statistically significant differences between the arithmetic means of the estimates of the study sample individuals on the tool as a whole attributed to the differences in the variables of gender, academic qualification and experience.

- It recommends that school principals need to understand the most important causes of bullying, and what the needs of bullying students are, and to guide and warn them at the same time using school penalties.

• **Fatima Zahraa and Boutaf Ali's study** entitled *The Reality of Algerian School Bullying, Intermediate Education Stage, Field Study.*It aims to reveal the reality of bullying in the Algerian middle education stage by clarifying its motives, sources, forms, places of its practice, and its consequences. Its sample consisted of 120 male and female students of different instructional levels in intermediate education. In the study aquestionnaire tool was used and the descriptive approach was adopted. Among its most prominent results:

- Bullying is widespread in schools to an alarming degree. One of its effects is that it works to usurp the will of the victim, suppress his/her freedom and interfere in his/her privacy.

- Bullying is issued by a student/group of students in several places inside and outside the school, and is characterized by confidentiality and continuity.

- It is a source of fear and anxiety, a waste of energy, and a major factor in creating other bullies.

2. Method and Tools.
2.1 the Exploratory Study
2.1.1 Theexploratory study's limitations
The Facebook groups of intermediate education teachers were usedrelying on the electronic questionnaire. This is due to the Corona pandemic situation that the world is experiencing. The exploratory study lasted from 17 May 2020 until 18 May 2020.Its aim is to calculate the validity and reliability of the research tool

2.1.2 Method of examination and characteristics of the sample
This study was conducted on a sample of middle education teachers from two Facebook groups.

Table. (01) shows the size of the original community and the study sample

Group name	Original community	Study sample
Arabic Language Teachers for Intermediate Education	19071	30
Intermediate Education	3495	

Teachers Association		
Total	**22566**	**30**

Source:prepared by the researcher.

2.1.3 Research Instrument

A study tool was built in order to achieve the goals of the study, which an electronic questionnaire is based on the Survey Heart program to help in designing it. The questionnaire consisted of 37 items distributed on two axes (2 axes), the first axis (informing) includes 21 items, and the second axis (psychological follow-up) includes 16 items.

Table. (02)shows the total items in the questionnaire

Axis	Items	Total
Informing	3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10-11-12-13-14-15-16-17-18-19-20-21-22-23	21
psychological follow-up	24-25-26-27-28-29-30-31-32-33-34-35-36-37	16
Total	39	

Source: prepared by the researcher.

2.1.4The psychometric properties of the tool

In order to ensure the validity of the tool, its validity and reliability were calculated by relying on SPSS.V.23

A-Validity

In order to find out the validity of the questionnaire (the research tool), we relied on:

- **The veracity of the arbitrators**: After its calculation, a rate of 75% was obtained, which means that the instrument is valid.

- **Self-validity:** the value of self-validity is 0.89, and therefore it can be said that the tool is characterized by validity.

B-Reliability

To calculate the reliability of the study tool (the questionnaire), the formula (Alpha Cronbach) was used. This is in order to ensure the validity of the reliability of the study tool on the sample. The overall reliability coefficient for the study axes is high, as its value is (0.80), and this is for all paragraphs (items) of the questionnaire, which consisted of 37 items, while the reliability of the first axis, related to informing, was 0.78, and the reliability of the second axis for psychological follow-up was estimated at 0.81.

This indicates that the questionnaire has a high degree of reliability that allows us to rely on it as a study tool for the field application of the basic study.

2.2 Baseline Study

2.2.1 Methodology

The descriptive and analytical approach was used to describe the studied phenomenon and analyze it quantitatively and qualitatively, and because of its suitability with the subject of the study and its objectives.

2.2.2 The baseline study limitations

This online questionnaire was applied through the social networking sites Facebook.Groups (17) that are related to teachers of intermediate education were selected, and the study lasted 7 days, from May 19, 2020, to May 25, 2020.

2.3 Sampling method and sample characteristics

The study was conducted on a sample of middle education professors, who were purposefully selected from the Facebook groups, as its sample was estimated at 124 teachers.

3. Results

After analyzing the results of the electronic questionnaire, the results shown in Table No. (03) were obtained.

Table. (03): The role of the school and vocational guidance counselor in reducing school bullying - from the viewpoint of middle education teachers.

His/her functions	Percentage	Rank
In informing	36.68%	1
In psychological follow-up	23.55%	2

Source: prepared by the researcher.

Through the table, we notice that the school and vocational guidance counselor focuses on the task of informing more than on the task of psychological follow-up in reducing school bullying, and this is according to the viewpoint of middle education teachers. We conclude that the school and vocational guidance counselor has a role in reducing school bullying - from the viewpoint of middle education teachers

4. Discussing and interpreting the results

Based on the theoretical framework of the study and previous studies that are related to the topic and based on what was presented in the results of the study and according to the research questions:

4.1 Discussing and interpreting the results of the first question :It states: Does the school and vocational guidance and counseling counselor have a role in reducing school bullying through informing classes.- From the viewpoint of middle education teachers?

Through **Table (03)**, the informing function ranked first in reducing school bullying - according to the viewpoint of middle education teachers - we explain this with:

The commitment of the school and vocational guidance counselor to the legislative texts that affirm the information. For example, the Article 6 of Decree 827.91 of November 13, 1991 and Article 16 of the same decision which stipulates in its content the reduction of school dropout, which may be one of the causes of school bullying. In addition, Article 14 of the same

aforementioned decision, which emphasized ensuring the fluidity of information within the institution. His/her focus on the function of informing may be in order to escape from administrative tasks. In addition, it may help him/her discover students who suffer from special problems, and it may also be to prevent damages that affect students' learning. The pedagogical studies emphasize the arbitrary (motivation - self-esteem) aspect of learning among students.

Although the function of informing occupies the first place, its percentage is small and does not represent what was expected or required of him/her to do in order to avoid school bullying through information classes. As an explanation, the professor does not accept the school and vocational guidance counselor and his/her role in the institution, because s/he considers him/her a competitor. It may also be due to the lack of aids use in his/her work, such as the brochure, among others. It can also be attributed to the lack of coordination between the teacher and counselor for school and vocational guidance and counseling, in addition to the lack of information provided to parents.

4.2Discussing and interpreting the results of the second question: which states: Does the school and vocational guidance counselor have a role in reducing school bullying through psychological follow-up sessions - from the viewpoint of middle education teachers?

From Table (03), the psychological follow-up task ranked second in reducing school bullying - according to the viewpoint of middle education teachers. We explain this with: most laws that do not give him/her a free space for creativity in his/her work, or it may be due to lack of time, or the lack of legal texts detailing (explaining) how to do psychological counseling, perhaps. Likewise, it's due to the large number of students and the expansion of his/her work, as well as to the lack of involvement of parents who are an important element in the extension process. In addition it may be because of his/her commitment to the administrative form in work more than his/her interest in guidance work, in addition to the novelty of the subject of school bullying.

We also explain that the function of psychological follow-up in reducing school bullying according to the viewpoint of middle education teachers gets a small percentage. Perhaps because s/he sometimes sympathized with the students who carried out this act, as well as his/her fear of reporting these cases so that the issue do not get worse. This may also be in order to avoid the administrative solution that may reach (exclusion) and resort to prevention methods (informing classes

5. Conclusion

In order for the psychological counselors to play their role in reducing bullying within educational institutions, we suggest the following:
- Allocating an appropriate time to provide guidance services properly
- Reducing administrative work in order for him/her to carry out the guidance process
- Carrying out periodic sessions on how to use the guidance tools and methods
- Attaching the school guidance and counseling counselor to another counselor to divide the tasks assigned to him/her.

- Organizing open days to clarify bullying in all its forms and spread the idea of "no to bullying".
- Educating specialists to find out the real causes behind school bullying behavior in order to know the best ways to confront it.
- Proposing extension programs using other techniques and methods to address the bullying phenomenon.

Encouraging cooperation between the counselor and the professor for the success of the guidance processd in the future research), in other words, the areas that others can address in future research.

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