

Responses to School Bullying in Saudi Arabia and how these responses are reflective of Educational Policy

by

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RESPONSES TO SCHOOL BULLYING IN SAUDI ARABIA AND HOW THESE RESPONSES ARE REFLECTIVE OF EDUCATIONAL POLICY

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To my beloved wife Salwa,

Who taught me how to believe in my dreams,

And

To my beautiful angels, Widd, Rawand, and Reewa,

Who taught me how to love unconditionally.

To My beloved Mum

Thank you for being my role model

And I'm also in awe to my late Father for his ongoing inspiration and
guidance throughout my life

Abstract

Introduction: This research examines policies relating to school bullying in Saudi Arabia and how existing policies have been understood and applied.

Research Methods: An interpretivist theoretical perspective was used to qualitatively investigate school bullying. Four male schools and three female schools were approached and a total of 39 staff were interviewed. These staff members included teachers, social workers, principals and deputy principals. In addition, three policy officers from the Education Department were interviewed.

Results: Findings indicated that there was a general lack of understanding about school bullying, even though educators were aware of the existence of an official policy. Schools responded to situations of school bullying, when they occurred, by drawing on traditional methods of assessment and response rather than using more evidence-based practices.

Discussion and Conclusion: The outcome from the research has led to recommendations for improving the knowledge and training of educators to better equip them to respond to school bullying. These include educational sessions for teachers and students, training for school educators and an Education Department review of bullying policies.

Key words: bullying, school bullying, educators, policies around bullying

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Declaration

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university; and that to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

Hani Alsihli

PhD Candidate

Chapter 1: Introduction

Bullying among school students is not a new phenomenon. There have been always some students subjected to either direct or indirect harassment by other students who are either older or physically stronger than them. Academics and scholars have been writing about school bullying since the 1970s to identify the causes and effects of bullying and to use strategies to prevent it from happening in school settings (Olweus, 1978). The literature of student bullying has received considerable public attention in countries such as Japan, Canada, England, Australia, the United States.

Due to the increase in public concern about bullying, there has been an increase of research interest into bullying, especially on types of bullying, such as school bullying, cyber bullying, workplace bullying and also on the consequences of bullying. There has also been increasing societal awareness in many Middle East countries, particularly Saudi Arabia. Here we see that students are not the only victims of bullying: there are also teachers who bully or are bullied by students (Olweus, 1991). This is a particular manifestation of the bullying problem in Saudi Arabia. There are several other factors that contribute to bullying in the school environment, such as the use of offensive and derogatory language among students or having larger class sizes, which can create an unfriendly environment.

Defining Bullying

There are as many definitions for the term ‘bullying’ as there are different types of bullying. However, the main focus of this study is on school bullying. Having said that, the current definition of bullying can be summarised in three elements; these involve intentional or deliberate acts, repeated over time, and characterised by a power imbalance. According to Cross, Shaw, Hearn, Monks, Lester & Thomas (2009, p. 22), bullying can be defined as:

Any form of aggressive behaviour that is repeated, intended to cause harm and characterised by an imbalance of power, and is ‘hidden’, out of sight of, or unacknowledged by, adults. Covert bullying includes behaviours linked to social aggression, relational aggression and indirect aggression, including

bullying by means of technology where the bullying behaviour is either unwitnessed, or not addressed, by an adult.

The Department of Health and Human Services (2015) defines bullying as ‘unwanted, aggressive behaviour among school-aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance’. Bullying is also a recurrent behaviour that is repeated, and often is repeated again and again over time. Kids who are bullied and also kids who bully others may develop serious, lasting problems. Bullying can take place in a covert or overt form and it can happen person-to-person or online.

Purpose of the Study

The study aims at investigating the responses by policy makers, principals, teachers and school advisors (who are social workers) to school bullying in Saudi Arabia and will compare responses to policies around this issue. The study also aims to see how policies could align more effectively with staff responses to bullying in schools. The study will explore bullying responses using a qualitative approach.

The participants in this study are principals or deputy principals, teachers and school advisors (also known as social workers in Saudi Arabia) and policy officers in education administration. How can principals, teachers and school advisors identify bullying? Which student behaviours should be classified as bullying? Are school policies robust enough to counter instances of bullying amongst students?

Research Objectives

This project has four aims:

1. To explore current practice around school bullying and the influence of social and cultural factors that may influence bullying responses in educational institutions
2. To understand how teachers, principals and policy officers identify and manage school bullying
3. To identify strengths and the weaknesses of existing policies around school bullying
4. To develop a framework for best practice around school bullying.

Research Significance

It is vitally important that students learn in a safe learning environment in order for them to achieve life and learning goals. This study critically investigates bullying responses and strategies in schools. The purpose is to develop best practice around school bullying so that schools in Saudi Arabia will be able to curb bullying problems effectively. A comparison of policies and practices around bullying in both countries will lead to a broader understanding of best practice in response to bullying.

Personal Motivations

My interest in bullying began when I started working as a social worker at Alsawlatiah primary and secondary schools in 2006 to 2008. During my work at Alsawlatiah — a privately owned school — I helped many students who were subjected to bullying by other students. My role was to enhance the students' emotional wellbeing and to improve their academic performance, as well as to provide advice to the teachers and parents of the bullying victims on how they could give the most effective support to these students. My interest in bullying gained momentum when I became a lecturer at Umm Al-Qura University in Medina. I continued counselling students who had been bullied at the university by their classmates or other students. I realized that bullying was not only confined to primary or secondary schools: it is pervasive throughout the entire educational system. At that time I started to research the issue of school bullying and I soon noted that most people do not understand the issue of bullying well. Both principals and teachers often confuse other school misbehaviors with bullying. Their lack of understanding about bullying is also compounded by the absence of clear policies and procedures to tackle bullying in the school environment. Clearly, bullying is a phenomenon that is not clear-cut to many because it comes in many forms and shapes. So, I decided to study school bullying in depth, hoping that this would help school principals in Makkah to take some measures to identify and prevent or counteract bullying in their schools.

I have chosen bullying because first and foremost it interests me, and second, I believe it is my duty as a social worker to promote social justice, human rights and equality and to advocate for the victims of bullying. Despite the fact that bullying is a multifaceted behavior that shifts with the situation, the people involved, the time and place, I am hopeful that my research about school bullying in Mecca will enlighten the

authorities, principals of universities and schools around the country to the bullying problem in Saudi Arabia.

Bullying is an endemic problem in Saudi schools; it has an adverse impact on the students' learning and so indirectly impacts their parents. Unfortunately, bullying in Saudi Arabia has not entered the media spotlight so far. My research on school bullying should stimulate public outcry and force teachers, administrators and policy makers to 'step up to the plate' and do something about it.

One thing that makes it hard to prevent bullying in Saudi schools is that teachers cannot predict who will get bullied. This means that bullying can happen to any student, regardless of their sex, age, ethnicity or sexual orientation. However, bullying victims tend to show some common characteristics, such as shyness, anxiety, low self-confidence and unhappiness. Most victims whom I met with during my work at Alsawlatiah primary and secondary schools exhibited these characteristics. Similarly, bullies can be recognized by looking at the common characteristics they exhibit. First, they are aggressive and confrontational, as well as being mean and spiteful. As an experienced social worker who has worked with both victims and bullies, I can say that that most Saudi people would admit to having experienced a bullying situation at some point in their life. This is indicative that bullying in Saudi schools is pervasive. Therefore, I believe the most viable way to prevent bullying from occurring is to educate people to understand the psychological impact bullying can have on students, both the victim and the bully. This thinking led me undertake the present extensive study about bullying and its effects.

The Importance of this Research

In the past, many people saw bullying as part of growing up; as adults they would grow out of the habit of belittling others. However, this is not the case. People will not grow out of bullying behavior. Therefore, bullying behavior needs to be discouraged in all school environments. If bullying is seen as a norm in schools and something that is just part of growing up, it would be difficult to reduce it let alone to eliminate it. The Saudi Education Department and school principals need to work together to devise measures and strategies to identify school bullying and prevent it from happening. It is my belief that all students should be provided with a safe, comfortable environment in order for learning to occur. It is my hope and intention that this study would be

valuable to all educators who are struggling to identify the characteristics of bullying and ways to prevent it from occurring in the school environment.

Summary of Chapters

Chapter One introduces the thesis and its explains its significance and discusses the personal motivation of the researcher for undertaking this study.

Chapter Two presents a brief history of bullying in worldwide and many Arab countries, including Saudi Arabia. This helps us understand the phenomenon of bullying from different experiences from countries around the world, so that the behaviour of bullying in Saudi Arabia can be contextualised. A number of definitions of bullying are considered in the chapter, which also looks at types of bullying, characteristics of the bully and the victims. Also, this chapter explains the theoretical underpinnings which are essential to explain the occurrence of a social problem. There are many theories that explain school bullying in the context of Western culture, including those relating to personality standpoint, school standpoint, sociocultural perspective, group and peer pressure perspectives; there are also some psychological and social theories which explain bullying behaviours. The chapter goes on to list the causes of bullying generally and in Saudi Arabia in particular. Also, the chapter discusses some intervention strategies and anti-bullying policies that have been applied by many countries to deal with bullying.

Chapter Three focuses on school bullying in Saudi Arabia and bullying in a global context. The chapter explains that bullying in Saudi Arabia is a pervasive, endemic problem that can turn into deadly violence. The chapter focuses on the lack of understanding at the school level about the causes of bullying and the consequent lack of effective intervention. The chapter also explores the causes of school bullying in some European and North American countries as well as South Australia and describes the policy approaches and interventions these countries have adopted to reduce or prevent school bullying.

Chapter Four outlines the history of education in Saudi Arabia and in doing so, sheds light on my motivation towards this research. Then the chapter proceeds to describe in more detail the learning system in Saudi Arabia and its culture. The roles of management and the teachers are also discussed in this chapter as well as the dominant role that religion plays in the education system in Saudi Arabia. The chapter briefly

talks about the history of girls and women's education in Saudi Arabia and how the kingdom is striving to make some reforms in regard to its system of women's education. The effect that Saudi culture has on education is also discussed in the chapter. Clearly, Islamic law and authority has a great influence at all levels of Saudi society and affects the psychological wellbeing of every individual and the society as whole.

Chapter Five explains the method used in the research, which is a qualitative design. The chapter explains why this particular method has been adopted to investigate school bullying in Saudi Arabia as well as the policies that surround and affect it. Also, the chapter describes the setting and sampling of the research, including methods of data collection and analysis. The ethical considerations of the study are also discussed in this chapter.

Chapter Six is mainly about the findings from the interviews and the focus group. This chapter highlights some of the contemporary understanding of school bullying and key policies to reduce or prevent it. The chapter presents the responses of the interviewed participants regarding school bullying and relevant policies.

Chapter Seven explores and analyses the findings of the research. Seven themes emerged from the interview responses and focus group and these are presented in this chapter. This is followed by a theoretical analysis and discussion of the limitations of the study, the summary, recommendations for policy changes and future research are also presented in this concluding chapter.

Chapter 2: Historical Understandings of Bullying Globally

The topic of bullying is not new; numerous studies have already been conducted on this topic in different global regions — something that makes it possible to compare experiences between the different regions. The topic has been covered widely because it is a contemporary issue that can be readily explored to determine its implications for social relations. This literature review has been structured to discuss the issue of bullying from a historical perspective and also to attain a contemporary understanding of the issue. The studies discussed in the literature review cover the issue from a global perspective and also from a local perspective that pertains to the Saudi-Arabian context. Therefore, a precise background will be developed from these particular scholarly works and used to improve our understanding of bullying in Saudi-Arabia. The literature review will also help to shape the debate on this issue by viewing it from different perspectives as well as by seeking to contextualise the behaviour.

Definition of Bullying

For the purpose of this study, it is appropriate to develop a definition of bullying contextualised to this particular study. Different definitions of the term have been presented in previous studies, which were useful for setting the research parameters of this study. There is in fact no universal definition of bullying, although it has been categorised loosely under ‘aggressive behaviours’. Merriam-Webster (2018) defines bullying as ‘an act of abuse or mistreatment instigated by someone who is stronger on a more vulnerable person’. This definition brings into focus the issue of power imbalance as the factor triggering the bullying behaviour. The weakest suffer in the hands of the most powerful individuals. To add to this definition, the National Centre Against Bullying (2018) defines bullying as a scenario where people perceived as weaker are repeatedly harmed by stronger ones. This definition supports the first definition in terms of being an issue of power imbalance. In Smith (2016), bullying is described as an aggressive behaviour that is aimed to hurt other people, and its main genesis is power imbalances. The author also argues that the behaviour of bullying is repetitive, and it is perpetuated by individuals who believe that they can obtain social benefits from the behaviour (Smith, 2016). Although there are numerous definitions

of ‘bullying’, the key variables relate to the issues of power relations where stronger individuals use force and harm weaker individuals. The act of bullying is habitual and it often occurs where there is an imbalance in social influence and physical power, which distinguishes it from simple conflict (Cross et al., 2011). The imbalance of power in this case becomes evident as the weaker individuals become the victims of the act. The behaviour can also be rationalised by differences in race, gender, personality, physical appearance, religion, sexual orientation and other factors (Nadeau et al. 2004). This means that the action is associated with different factors that can be either personal or environmental. Moreover, in most cases, these are the only factors that can impact the power imbalance that exists between individuals and groups. Bullies use different methods to dominate their victims, which include: verbal harassment, physical assault, or coercion (Cross, et al., 2011). There is no single research study that relates all these factors to the personality of the different people that are involved in the act of bullying their peers. However, an assumption can be made that the choice of methods used in bullying is dependent on the personal and environmental factors surrounding the involved parties. When the act is carried out by groups, the primary bully has one or more lieutenants who are willing to help with his or her activities.

As stated by Cross, et al. (2011), bullying is fuelled by three main characteristics: these include antagonistic intent, inequity of power, and repetition over a period of time. To further explain these concepts, ‘antagonistic intent’ is to actively oppose something or someone; ‘inequity of power’ is the imbalance of power where one party is stronger than the other; and ‘repetition’ describes a situation where bullying behaviour is perpetuated more than once. In most cases, all these factors are prevalent but the mode of determining the antagonistic intent has not been fully explored in past research, and especially in consideration of the Eastern context as opposed to the Western context. Therefore, when considering these factors, it would be appropriate for researchers to investigate the relationships that exist between these factors within the act of bullying. Another issue to be considered might be whether these factors are dominant in the global sphere, as compared to variations in more localised contexts. More specifically, relating the factors to the status of bullying in Saudi Arabia will advance the debate on the subject and even help in filling knowledge gaps likely to exist regarding the occurrence of bullying in Saudi Arabia. The key variables to be

considered from the perspective of the Saudi Arabian context are those environmental and cultural factors that are known to shape the behaviour of individuals within different social systems. Clearly, cultural and environmental factors will shape our definition of bullying because people have diverse perceptions of things, and the lenses through which they perceive things will also differ from one culture to the other. For example, the perceptions of Saudis regarding bullying might differ from perceptions in the Western world.

In achieving an understanding of bullying, it is relevant to contextualise the topic from both international and local perspectives. This contextualisation will make it possible to interpret the extent to which the behaviour impacts on local and global relations. In the case of the current study, Saudi Arabia is the local context and needs to be understood within a broader Arabic setting, while other regions, including the Western setting, form the global contexts from which the issue of bullying can also be considered.

As established by Smith and Birney (2005), bullying appears to have become more prevalent and more violent over the past few years. There also seems to have been a change in perspective about tackling bullying in the environments in which it takes place. This may be directly related to how violence is contextualised and perceived in various cultures as either detrimental or, conversely, as a form of strength as viewed by the perpetrator. Research shows that ten to twenty percent of children under the age of twelve are bullied in most American schools (Nadeau et al. 2004). This indicates that bullying behaviour is rife in the Western world. However, whether interventions are commensurate with the instances of bullying is a matter that still needs further understanding. Given that the percentage of the reported cases shows high prevalence rates in very young children, we could assume that the issue is rampant and thus should be addressed proactively to avoid exacerbation of the problem.

A full description of bullying can be accomplished through a consideration of the major categories of bullying that have been widely covered in the literature. Various categories have been identified and studied; however, focusing on only a few is equally valid. According to Rigby (2014), bullying is divided into four major categories, namely: verbal, emotional (which is also known as relational), physical, and cyber bullying. The first three are more prevalent in middle school (ages 11–14) while cyber bullying appears to be more common in high schools (ages 15–18 years).

Hence, they can be categorised in this manner and interventions applied can be based on how the learners in those age groups relate to each other at school.

Types of Bullying

It is useful to evaluate the definitions of ‘bullying’ first before categorising it into types. Most importantly, considering the Arab and Western definitions of bullying carefully will help to contextualise the issue from a cultural perspective. In the Western world, scholars have offered various definitions of the term based on the setting in which the practice is taking place, the people involved, and their motivations. According to, Margevičiūtė (2017), bullying is ‘generally perceived to be an intentional aggressive behaviour, mobbing, harassment, pestering, silent treatment, ignoring, etc., with an outcome of causing pain or discomfort of some extent’ (p. 207). This definition is closely related to the definition provided by Shetgiri (2013) but with additional elements; these are the inclusion of physical and verbal aggression as indicators of direct bullying and relational aggression as a factor of indirect bullying. Shetgiri also identifies cyber bullying as an equally important aspect of bullying but adds that it is a complex part of the bullying discourse that is quite difficult to identify (Shetgiri, 2013). Furthermore, cyber bullying is beyond the scope of this research as the focus here is mainly on learners in the school setting.

In addition to the above two Western definitions of bullying, the term is further defined in the Australian school context as power abuse in relationships, which is characterised by a power imbalance between the perpetrator and the victim; it involves acts of aggression that can be easily avoided by a reasonable person, and these are acts that take place repeatedly over a long period of time (Hemphill, Heerde & Gomo, 2014). The Australian definition adds more content to the definition provided earlier as it outlines the three most critical characteristics of the social problem and the involved parties.

In contrast, it is appropriate to also juxtapose the Eastern definition of bullying with the Western definition. From an Eastern perspective, Kazarian (2013) has defined school bullying as an intentional, harmful act repeatedly perpetuated on a weaker individual in a school setting. Here, the concept of repetition is identified and included, as in the previous definitions. This definition resonates with that of Hemphill, Heerde and Gomo (2014), especially by its delineation of the salient characteristics of

bullying. The elements that distinguish school bullying from other acts of violence at school include imbalance of power, intention to perpetuate harm, and by the perpetrator repeating the harmful act (Kazarian, 2013).

There seems, therefore, to be no distinguishing elements between these Western and Eastern definitions of bullying. The convergent elements in the definitions are the imbalance of power and the repetition of the harmful act over a length of time. A conclusion can be drawn from the various definitions that bullying is a form of direct or indirect dehumanisation of other people by the bullies. In addition, there is an indication that if the harmful behaviour is carried out repeatedly, the defenceless victim is more likely to feel dehumanised. Ultimately, these definitions relate acts of bullying to the relationship that exists between the involved parties.

Following the contextualisation of the problem from the Western and Eastern perspectives, we can turn to different types of bullying. According to Hong, Neely, and Lund (2014), bullying is divided into two types: individual and collective bullying. Individual bullying involves a single perpetrator who dominates one or multiple targets (Hong, Neely & Lund, 2014). This means that bullying incidents are perpetuated by individuals who have a certain power over others in a repeated manner, to form the behaviour characterised as bullying. Collective bullying involves the act of ‘mobbing’, which comes about when an individual is bullied by a group of perpetrators. This group may be a family group, peer, school, workplace or from the neighbourhood. It can also be done online (Rose, & Monda-Amaya 2011). However, the focus of this study is school bullying; therefore, every aspect of the discussion should apply in a school context.

The two major groups can be further broken down into physical, verbal, relational and cyber bullying (Kazarian, 2013). Physical bullying is where someone’s body is hurt and/or his possessions are damaged. It involves acts like stealing, shoving, fighting and destruction of property. In most cases, a target experiences different forms of bullying before they experience the physical aspect. However, physical bullying can quickly escalate to a tragic ending that demands immediate attention and counteractive measures (American Educational Research Association 2013). Verbal bullying involves name-calling, threats, spreading rumours and lies, and making fun of others. It is the commonest form of bullying. It is more common in girls than in boys, perhaps reflecting that females can be more subtle and clever with words. However, there are

boys who are also able to utilise the skill, especially when they want to escape the consequences that result from physically bullying another student (American Educational Research Association 2013).

The third type is relational bullying where the main intent is to harm someone's reputation and social standing (Dailey, Fery & Walker 2015). It can also involve physical and verbal bullying and is largely seen among younger people. Just like verbal bullying, it seems to suit the personality of some girls. Relational bullying can be used to improve one's own social ranking as well as to harm that of others (Dailey, et al., 2015). It can go on for a long time without being noticed. Consequently, it can be more damaging compared to other types.

The last category is cyber bullying, where people harass, embarrass and threaten each other using technology (Rose, & Monda-Amaya 2011). This often happens on social platforms such as Facebook and Twitter. It can also be done via email and instant messaging. When adults are involved, the act is referred to as cyber aggravation or cyber stalking: both are considered criminal behaviour that can lead to imprisonment or other legal penalties (Rose, & Monda-Amaya 2011).

School Bullying

School bullying is the main issue of concern in this study. According to Kazarian (2013), school bullying is a global problem that has attracted the attention of the international community. The understanding, assessment, and prevention of school bullying has been a significant issue in the Western world for some years, resulting in numerous empirical studies being conducted on the issue, as reported by Kazarian (2013). However, in the Arab world, the issue of bullying is a more recently identified phenomenon that is now attracting the attention of different parties. This situation can be explained by the lack of an appropriate definition of bullying in the Arab world, unlike in the Western world, where the definition was conceptualised a long time ago and there has been some progress in terms of interventions.

An added difficulty has been to establish an Arabic equivalent of the term 'bully', as the electronic translation of the term refers to the term *baltagi*, which actually means 'hired thugs' or terrorists (Kazarian, 2013). However, adoption of the terms 'school violence' and 'aggressive behaviour' in connection with bullying has

created interest in the phenomenon in the Arab world, unlike in the past when the definition was not fully developed.

Characteristics of Bullies

Bullies have certain characteristics which, when understood, make it possible for an individual to identify them in any environment. For instance, research has shown that self-esteem issues, arrogance and narcissism can result in the aggressive behaviour that is typical of bullying (Eisenberg & Aalsma 2005). Those who do it out of jealousy may have been victims themselves at some point in their lives. It may also happen simultaneously, when a child who is bullied at home then goes on to bully other students at school (Eisenberg & Aalsma 2005). According to a certain psychologist, Roy Baumeister, those who are prone to abusive and aggressive behaviour often have exaggerated but delicate egos (Attwood, 2004). They carry themselves with high self-esteem, which is why they are often affronted by any denigration. They also lack deference toward other people and often react with disrespectful comments and invectives when faced by difficult situations. To add to Baumeister's arguments, other authors believe that the minds of bullies are externalised in such a way that they defy social rules and authority and have negligible empathy for their victims (Dake, Price & Telljohan, 2003; Veenstra, Lindenburg, Oldehinkel, de Winter, Verhulst & Ormel., 2005).

However, all these are Western perspectives of the characteristics of bullies. This means that they might not apply when the Saudi-Arabian perspective is considered. The sociocultural perspective can be useful to explain how the Eastern world regards the act of bullying others. From the Eastern perspective, there is an understanding among young people that violence is a powerful weapon of dispute resolution among individuals (Aoud, 2012). Therefore, the Western perspective is slightly different because it is more oriented towards esteem issues, while the Eastern perspective is more oriented towards using violence to mitigate conflict. Therefore, it may be more appropriate to include Saudi Arabia in this Eastern perspective, where bullies might cause actual physical harm to their victims, compared to the relatively high rate of emotional harm caused to victims in the Western world. However, any conclusion that bullying in the Eastern world has more impact on the victim than bullying in the Western world is yet to be empirically evaluated. In fact, the study and

contextualisation of bullying is still taking shape in Saudi-Arabia, which also implies that evidence on the nature of bullies in the kingdom is still sparse.

Evidence shows that depression and other personality disorders may also trigger aggressive behaviour. This is a Western perspective but it has been found to be generally true, and corroborated by several studies, that emotions are a strong influence on the behaviour of adolescents (del Barrio & Carrasco, 2014; Llorca, Malonda, & Samper, 2016; Domes et al., 2013). Some people are quick to anger or are prone to aggressive behaviours, which may lead to others mistaking their actions as hostile. Some individuals have an unhealthy need to preserve their self-image (Veenstra et al., 2005). Some or all of the above factors can lead to a person becoming a bully. Despite a common misunderstanding, exposure to violence in video games and television shows (unlike antisocial traits or depression), are not predictors of youth violence and aggression. However, this might not be the case in Saudi Arabia, as Kazarian (2013) has argued that exposure of Saudi children to Western violent movies is a factor that increases their aggression and violent tendencies. He explains that movies have normalised violence among these children, and they come to believe that it is the right approach to conflict resolution. However, certainly not all cases of bullying are triggered by exposure to violent Western movies.

Poor parenting may also be a factor contributing to bullying, and this has been widely covered in the literature. According to Gregory et al. (2013), a genetic predisposition or a brain abnormality can also contribute to aggressive behaviour. Parents often help toddlers to control their emotions and restrict hostile behaviours. However, there are cases where an insecure attachment to family members, ineffective discipline by parents and guardians or other environmental factors, such as sibling rivalry or stress at home, can result in aggressive behaviours (Cornell, et al. 2013). Moreover, bullies are believed to be serially negative and, when they perform poorly in school, they may have difficulty resolving their issues in constructive ways (Cornell, et al. 2013). They often develop ongoing negative attitudes towards their peers, themselves and also towards school.

Conversely, other researchers have found that some bullies are very strong psychologically (Menesini & Salmivalli, 2017). These individuals are said to hold high societal standing among their peers. Such bullies target victims who are emotionally fragile and/or socially ostracised (Eisenberg & Aalsma, 2005). Peer groups can also

contribute to excessive bullying both in school and at home. It has been found that a small group of bullies, who are not in turn bullied, often enjoy going to school. They are confident and bold since they believe themselves to be superior in some way. They are the least likely to take sick days from school (Espelage & Low, 2012). Indeed, when these children grow into adults who bully, they will often become authoritative and have a strong urge to dominate others (Espelage & Low 2012). In this way, bullying in the early stages of life can be perpetuated into the later stages of life, and we then see a situation where adults become bullies in the workplace. Therefore, the phenomenon of bullying must be identified and contained early, while it can still potentially be controlled.

Characteristics of Victims

It is important to define the characteristics of victims of bullying because this makes it easier to identify incidents as bullying by analysing the behaviours of victims. For example, at school, teachers can easily determine whether bullying has taken place by monitoring the behaviours of the affected victims. With this knowledge the school teacher can more easily intervene to solve the problem. According to Dr Cook, a typical victim will typically be non-aggressive, have negative thoughts, lack social skills, come from a troubled family and be poor at solving social problems (Cook et al., 2010). Victims are also characterised by physical weakness, and can easily become distraught emotionally. The victims may also have certain physical attributes that make them easy targets, such as being overweight, having certain deformities or skin colour, among other attributes. Gender also dictates the method of bullying likely to be used. According to Espelage, Low and De la Rue (2012), boys are more likely to be subject to physical bullying, whereas girls are often bullied indirectly. This reflects a power imbalance in society, where some are strong and others weak. Based on a meta-analysis conducted by Cook, the main risk factors for both bullies and their victims is the lack of social problem-solving skills (Cook et al. 2010). Consequently, children who are bullied often display certain traits, such as reluctance to attend school, headaches, and loss of appetite. They also show minimal interest in school activities as well as events at home. They often display an overall sense of sadness. These issues are likely to impair their academic performance at school and their ability to socialise with other students at school and in their home communities.

Characteristics of Typical Bystanders

Bullying often happens in front of people, who are known as bystanders as they are not directly involved in the behaviour. The involvement of bystanders rests on the bully's ability to create an illusion that he or she has their support. The illusion instils fear in the victim which results in a fear of speaking out. Unless the bully's mentality is challenged by the group in the early stages of the act, it becomes the norm, as it has been accepted and supported by the group. If remedial action is not taken, the culture of bullying can persist for years, which means that the victims will continue suffering without receiving any help from bystanders or witnesses (Fekkes et al. 2005). Bystanders who happen to involve themselves in friendship groups or peer groups often use their group influence to speak against bullying, unlike those who are not affiliated with any group (Swearer & Espelage, 2010). This approach is recommended because it is the right step towards conflict resolution in an environment where bullying is rampant. It is evident that bystanders should intervene and increase individual self-efficacy by building a foundational belief that bullying is morally and socially wrong (Glew et al. 2008). However, this outcome will depend on the nature of the bystanders and their effectiveness in any dispute resolution process.

Intervention Strategies

It is important to intervene in bullying to avoid devastating effects on the physical and emotional wellbeing of the victims. So far, various techniques have been identified as effective interventions to bullying. Over the last ten years, many studies have been done on anti-bullying strategies used all over the world (Ttofi & Farrington, 2011). It is evident that some of the strategies used are not effective in reducing the severity of victimisation. Based on the most comprehensive meta-evaluation of the strategies, only 20 percent of bullying reduction has been reported after implementation and evaluation of well-designed strategies (Ttofi & Farrington, 2011). This implies that bullying has been so effective that the interventions being applied do not completely protect or cushion victims from the act. On the other hand, the ineffectiveness of these interventions only means that more victims will continue to suffer at the hands of bullies. Unfortunately, it is difficult to tell which strategies are used by which schools since most schools do not use well-defined strategies. What is important is that schools continue to seek and implement the most effective strategies available to avoid irreparable damage to the victims.

One way to achieve this is to seek to objectively identify the most effective anti-bullying strategies and to apply them in schools. A comparative analysis of the existing research on this matter is required to evaluate the extent to which the interventions have worked or have failed in different global and local environments. A major study that was commissioned and carried out by the British Government provided relevant information about how frequently certain anti-bullying strategies were used in different schools across the nation (Thompson & Smith, 2011). The strategies included a whole-school approach, adult modelling for positive relationships, circle time, cyber mentoring, bystander defender training and meetings with parents (Thompson & Smith, 2011). They also examined some reactive strategies against bullying, which included direct sanctions, mediation, support groups and the Method of Shared Concern (Analitis et al. 2009). This was the first nation to provide a comprehensive and detailed report on the anti-bullying programs used its primary and secondary schools and to evaluate how successful each strategy was.

However, there is still a deficiency, as the study failed to link the anti-bullying strategies to the cultural or environmental factors in areas where bullying is rampant. For instance, the UK environment is different from the Saudi environment due to pronounced cultural and environmental differences. Therefore, following this approach will only be effective if these contextual differences are considered alongside planned interventions. Only then will it be possible to determine the universality of the proposed strategies and whether their application can be replicated in other areas with very different cultures.

Similarly, there is no systematic approach that has been taken in Australia, for example, on the specific issue of intervention. One has to rely on largely anecdotal evidence with unknown validity. However, the Friendly Schools Whole-of-School Intervention Program does present some evidence on anti-bullying strategies (Cross et al., 2011) that are capable of reducing bullying when applied appropriately. However, it is not clear how widely they are used and which factors contribute to their success. Similarly, the Method of Shared Concern can also be utilised to address certain cases of bullying (Rigby & Griffins, 2010, 2011). Ultimately, further evaluation of these methods is necessary to determine their overall effectiveness in curbing bullying in the Australian context, and whether the same programs can be replicated in culturally different regions, such as Saudi Arabia.

Theories of School Bullying

There are several theoretical perspectives of school bullying as it is formulated in Western culture. This means that these theories are more applicable to the Western context than to the Eastern context. However, if articulated appropriately, these theories can also be applied in the Saudi context, especially when there is evidence that they have been effective in the Western context. The theories include personality standpoint, school standpoint, sociocultural perspective, group and peer pressure perspectives. Along this, several psychological and social theories will be discussed because they are relevant to understanding behaviours from a psychosocial perspective. They define actions and the reasons behind behaviours such as bullying. These theories include the ecological theory of development, the transactional model of development, social learning theory, psychoanalytic theory, and relational-cultural theory.

Personality standpoint.

Personality standpoint focuses on exposing how perpetrators and their victims think. For example, it has been observed that Turkish television shows are wildly popular with children in the Arab world (Baldry & Farrington 2000). Such violent movies give the children the illusion that fighting is a suitable method for solving problems. It also makes them feel strong and invincible. Personality standpoint goes hand-in-hand with sociocultural perspective in that they both show anecdotal evidence that Arabic children experience diversity-based bullying. In Lebanese schools, for instance, peer-to-peer bullying occurs on the basis of religious affiliation, physical appearance (especially non-perfect teeth) and also sexual orientation (Baldry & Farrington 2000). This implies that bullying in Lebanon is culturally based, as it is founded on cultural and social differences among peers. To solve such a problem in the Saudi context, it will imply that the intervention must focus on these two critical aspects — cultural and social.

School standpoint.

School standpoint looks at the school's cultural climate and social environment as the culprit in bullying cases. This perspective maintains that schools that have student-friendly rules, manageable rules, good student-teacher relationships and well-maintained school grounds are more effectively able to discourage bullying and youth violence at school (Astor, Guerra & Van Acker, 2010). It entertains the idea that school

violence and bullying are a result of an overt or covert struggle for power between the students, the parents, the teachers and the administration. The above power struggles often lack any plans for resolution. Consequently, students who start engaging in antisocial violence may also abuse drugs and perform gang-related activities. Some may go as far as joining gangs at very young ages (Benbenishty & Astor, 2012). Truancy becomes a norm, hence the rates of disciplinary referrals and suspensions increase. The teachers become demoralised by the students' poor performance. Another problem is the adversarial relationships between the school and the parents of problematic children. Parents tend to become less involved in their children's lives since they often do not have a solution to the situation. Consequently, the overall performance of the school drops.

Group and peer pressure perspective.

Group and peer pressure perspective understands bullying as a group dynamic involved with the aftermath of the victimisation. It suggests that peer groups are often formed in secondary schools. They supposedly protect a person from bullying since, by this stage of their development, an individual student has probably already been bullied or has bullied someone. Solberg and Olweus (1994) came up with a standard cut-off point which classified victims. The system is known as the Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire (BVQ) and it has been used in countries like Greece, Turkey and Italy. According to this scale, a child who reports two to three or more incidents of bullying in a month can be classified as a victim. The method has also been used by Arab-Americans in the United States (Olweus, 1994). This approach could be universally applied in identifying victims within a school, with the main aim being to find the right interventions. As such, its application in Saudi-Arabia could be useful as has occurred in the West. The Arab world has currently not used such measures against bullying. However, the Peer Interaction in Primary Schools Questionnaire (PIPSQ), which has been used in Egypt and Saudi Arabia, attempts to correct this deficiency. Once the PIPSQ was translated into Arabic, it showed a cultural and sex-based factorial invariance. More research is needed to fully explore the relationships between bullying, on one side, and culture and gender, on the other side. It will be beneficial to contextualise such studies to the Saudi case, as it is a culturally-rich country. There is a direct relationship between this context and the sociocultural perspective in terms of the bullying problem.

Sociocultural perspective.

Unlike the personality perspective, which mainly focuses on extraordinary children with extraordinary problems as the cause and origin of bullying in schools, the sociocultural perspective views bullying as a result of societal laws and culture (Cornell & Bandyopadhyay, 2010). From this viewpoint, bullying occurs due to people holding on to a culture of war rather than that of peace (Cornell & Bandyopadhyay, 2010). For instance, school children who grow up in societies and cultures that are polluted by political turmoil and violence are bound to emulate such violent and uncouth behaviour on a daily basis, which then becomes the basis for bullying and violence both at home and in school.

Bollmer, Milich, Harris and Maras (2005), in their research finding, established that mass media in Arabic countries do portray extensive violence, which is relevant to a sociocultural perspective. The fact that the media, which is accessible to everyone, including children, glorifies violence makes it seem like it is normal. Youth in the Arab world tend to form groups that are often motivated by various needs and influences. When youth have been exposed to violence from childhood, they tend to use it as a form of communication, which then leads to in-group members bullying non-group members (Bollmer, et al., 2005). The group and peer pressure perspective also focuses on the role of bystanders in bullying scenarios. There are four roles that are apparently played by bystanders in the school bullying drama. Bystanders can choose to actively assist the bully. They can also act as reinforcers, where they encourage the bully but they are not directly involved. Third, they may withdraw from the situation entirely from a belief that it does not concern them. This is referred to as taking an outsider role (Bollmer et al. 2005). Finally, bystanders can take the defender role. This is where they take sides with the victim and offer to help them. They may do this by fending off the bully verbally or physically, or by involving a more responsible party, such as a teacher or counsellor.

In relation to the group and peer pressure perspective, research shows that most students rate their peers more favourably if they are in their group. Other groups and individuals automatically become threats or targets. The in-group individuals also tend to look for vulnerable and easy out-group targets to maintain respect or establish superiority among their group mates. The above finding explains why a student would bully an out-group student who is less vulnerable than a certain in-group one. It would

seem to be because of the group mentality of belonging and safety in numbers (Swearer & Espelage, 2010). An unspoken loyalty is developed within the group and the same sentiments are rarely shared with outsiders, who might often include parents and teachers. Moreover, there has been no definitive, organised investigation of the group and peer perspective in the Arab world. However, it is argued that the social-psychological perspective can be relevant to youth in collectivist cultures, as the self represents one aspect of a group (Swearer & Espelage 2010).

Ecological Theory of Development.

This theory helps to explain bullying from a biological perspective. According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), the bio-ecological theory is used as a context to review the recognised risk and protective aspects related to involvement in school-related bullying in the juvenile and adolescent periods. For easy understanding of this theory, it is conceptualised here into four levels; namely, microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem. The most basic system is the microsystem, which includes the immediate surrounding entities that directly affect children at school or within the family. The mesosystem level of influence designates how the diverse parts of children's microsystems interact with each other. Increasingly, the exosystem level of influence focuses on how school systems and neighbourhoods impact on a child's bullying or victimisation behaviour. Also, the macrosystem level of influence focuses on how the aspects related to far-reaching norms and trends in principles and strategies of a society influence the behaviour and development of children.

According to Swearer et al. (2010), the interaction of intrapersonal, family, school, peer, and community attributes influences both bullying and victimisation and, hence can modulate the risk for self-regulation and behavioural difficulties. These authors further reported that the act of bullying includes both physical and verbal behaviour within an elaborate framework. Further, Zins et al. (2007) established that the microsystem of the family, the classroom or the peer group positively correlate with bullying behaviours. Based on these two studies alone, we can surmise that bullying encompasses a multifaceted set of precursors, behaviours and concerns and, therefore, motivations for children and adolescents to bully others are intricate, multi-determined, and variably reinforced. Consequently, Card et al. (2008) argued the view that risk factors and caring factors within the mesosystem can extensively act as

moderators, with the inclusion of interacting microsystems such as parent–teacher relationships.

According to the study conducted by Wang et al. (2015), concerning the examination of risk factors for bullying behaviour within the exosystem of the school setting, it was reported that risk and protective measures used with children during their nurturing times determine their future behaviours. The ecological theory thus sets out an argument that the ecological model is not only constructed in the layers of the chronosystem but is set within the broader historical and temporal framework in which children develop. For instance, Lenhart et al. (2008) conducted a study on how the contemporary ecological environment influences child vulnerability to bullying and victimisation in schools, especially with increased use of the Internet and mobile technologies. The study reported that there is a unique contextual influence of bullying incidents compared to previous generations of children where technology was relatively non-existent.

Subsequently, a study carried out by Kretschmer et al. (2015) examined maladjustment attributes among children subjected to bullying at different stages of their growth and identified some evidence for multifocality. In this view, victims have experienced a diversity of psychological health outcomes resulting from being bullied, as well as complications with depression, somatic complaints, anxiety, negligence, and violence. Thus, the ecological model incorporates multiple levels of influence, with the aim of providing a framework to more deeply understand the social context of a bullying culture. It does this by expounding the outcomes of affected victims.

The Transactional Model of Development.

This theory emerges from the consideration of how parental traits relate to or predict the outcomes of children. Dodge and Pettit (2003) argued that in synergetic models of development, especially those involving a child and a parent, reciprocal influences are normalised. In a nutshell, parents and children shape the behaviour of each other and co-construct their relationship based on bi-directional influence. According to Georgiou (2008), parental attributes, such as child-nurturing style, influence both victims and bullies. He further posited that children acquire aggressiveness towards weaker counterparts in ways that reflect the behaviours and social relations of their family members. Additionally, Demaray and Malecki (2003) claim that children who exhibit bullying tendencies in school have learned from their parents how to react and

retaliate when confronted. Correspondingly, Perry et al. (1995) held that children who are subjected to bullying are likely to come from families with a history of child neglect and abuse, and poorly resolved disputes.

Several other studies have drawn conclusions that children of authoritative parents exhibit minimal adjustment difficulties in several spheres of psychosomatic competence, and lower levels of both behavioural and psychological dysfunction as well as any tendency to engage in bullying (Spera, 2005). In this context, authoritative parents would be those parents who gladly and willingly address their children's concerns with sincerity but also monitor their children's conduct and establish clear guidelines for them. In contrast, Kaufmann et al. (2000) argue that children who engage in bullying their peers in schools most probably come from those families where parents or guardians use harsh authoritarian and disciplinary child-nurturing approaches, while those who are subjected to bullying come from families where parents nurture their children with permissive approaches.

Further, according to Cernkovich and Giordano (1987), children who engage in bullying their peers at school are those whose background is characterised by parental rejection and poor parental involvement. As such, it is presumed that parents who associate with their children by supervising them thoroughly and anticipate them to prosper are influential in restraining aggressive behaviour both within and outside the family setting. According to Perren and Hornung (2005), parental engagement that does not cross the boundaries of overprotection rarely influences bullying; however, extreme controlling and monitoring directly influences bullying. The simple hypothesis of these parental-influence theories is that parental nurturing that is perceived by children as overprotective, blocks children's initiative and restricts their ability to retaliate when bullied. As such, it can be noted that several levels of protection are associated with both victimisation and bullying, though in contrary ways. This theory can then be used to explain the characteristics of the victims of bullying as an aspect of their behaviour or character which make them vulnerable.

A study conducted by Craig et al. (1998) regarding the effects of operational and functional family traits, identified that family management and parenting practices are interrelated with particular behavioural qualities and that these contribute indirectly to victimisation and bullying. This can be used to explain the characters of bullies, and the factors that influence their bullying behaviours. Likewise, a model tested by Snyder

et al. (2005) on the reciprocity effects of child behaviour in relation to parenting reported that discipline measures are categorically co-constructed by the child and the parent together, rather than being forced by the parents on the child. Thus, this theory is summed up on the premise that children are the dynamic co-creators of their relationship with parents and their behaviours help to form this relationship.

Social learning theory.

According to Bandura (1978), social learning theory is based on the hypothesis that children learn through observing others' actions, attitudes and behaviours, including the outcomes of those behaviours. In a nutshell, social learning theory maintains that children observe others and then imitate them by learning via social behaviour. In other words, children are likely to ask their peers if a particular act of aggression is acceptable, and if the social custom regards it as a normal behaviour then children will emulate that. Further, O'Connor and Scott (2007) argue that a child's real-life experiences, to which they are either directly or indirectly exposed, shape their future behaviour, and children apply those learned behaviours when resolving discrepancies, managing their emotions, solving conflicts and engaging with peers. There is a relationship between this concept and bullying in Saudi Arabia, as there is a general belief among the youth there that violence, as portrayed in the Western media through movies, is the most appropriate dispute resolution technique.

The social learning theory has been studied and its hypothetical significance reinforced by research findings. Hart and Kritsonis (2006) postulated that children acquire bullying behaviours in a manner that is similar to how they acquire other complex forms of social behaviour, especially through observation–modelling or direct experience. The study by Low and Espelage (2012) concerning utilisation of the social learning theory as a basis for comprehending bullying behaviours, made a postulation that juvenile and pubertal aggression stem from social aspects, such as family conflict, drug and alcohol use, intimate partner violence, and other antagonistic and non-agile criminal behaviours. Swanson (2015) suggests that exposure to violence has been increasing throughout the years because recurrent exposures to violent behaviour are usually imitated over and over again. Swanson (2015) adds that social learning theory designates that the way children imitate particular behaviours is mostly through the modelling process.

According to Mejía-Arauz (2005), observing and replicating violent behaviour is the most predominant of the modelling processes. He further stated that, though behaviour can be moulded to a certain degree by gratifying or disciplining consequences, most behaviours are learned, either purposefully or mistakenly through the observation of a model. Bandura, (1971) suggested that observational learning enables children to assimilate bulky, incorporated units of behaviour without the need of building up the forms progressively by painstaking trial and error. Based on these arguments, it is evident that the aggressive actions of bullies are shaped by the violence that they observe in their surroundings or by what they watch in the media and come to believe is an appropriate approach to conflict resolution.

Psychoanalytic theory.

Psychoanalytic theories of attachment and aggression are useful for interpreting social aggression as a form of bullying among students in schools. Orenstein (1994) argued that when carrying out bullying studies in schools, consideration should also focus on girl bullying. He argued that in order to better comprehend the influences of public discourse upon the emergent psyche of young girls, the influence of technology, and the hidden curriculum of education should be taken into account. According to Morris (2001), psychoanalytic theories are used to provide scholars with a basis for interpreting and inferring responses to inquiries that have been modelled regarding human behaviour.

While the psychoanalytic theory does not totally explicate the phenomenon of bullying in schools, it does offer a context for significant discourse that is essential for facing the realism of social aggression and emotional aggression, including the psychological infliction that it causes. Subsequently Bókay (1998) points out that the diversity of psychoanalytic understanding, by its very nature, is prone to conflict, as the views of analysts vary and deviate. Regardless of this, psychoanalytic theories are significant in exploring bullying in schools as they assess these engagements impartially, using coherent divergent approaches that help to provide an explanation of the bullying phenomenon.

Relational-cultural theory.

According to Jordan (2010), relational-cultural theory explains how children internalise experiences of association and dissociation and develop ‘relational images.’

In this case, relational images represent individuals' insights into relationships and their expectations in terms of relating with each other. As such, students are subjected to the multiple relational schemas as they engage in behaviours and interactions with others. From this aspect bullying is associated self-disparaging relational images resulting from experiences of direct dissociation from others or sometimes due to being influenced by the cultural aspects of disconnection.

Pepler et al. (2006) argue that the relational-cultural perspective on bullying most applies when dealing with concerns of gender. This implies that discrete forms of relational disconnection, such as victimisation, rejection, or discrimination based on gender, as well as cultural forms of relational disconnection, are associated with the experience of systemic harassment or stigma. According to Crick and Zahn-Waxler (2003), cultural relation theory takes the view that bullying is a gendered phenomenon in several ways, especially seen when children attempt to gain status in terms of real or perceived sexual orientation. Episelege et al. (2012) holds that in most schools children are subjected to sexual harassment behaviours or homophobic name-calling as a dominant feature of bullying. The existential perspective about relational-cultural theory is that it identifies bullying as a uniquely problematic concern that can foster fewer adaptive and more maladaptive interactions, in such a way that it can enhance or diminish children's effectiveness in interacting with others.

Contemporary Perspective on Bullying in Saudi Arabia

The nature of bullying in the Western world is quite different from the Eastern world as a result of different factors that will be discussed in this section. This is related to the identity of the bully and the victim. In the West, more attention is paid to the prevalence of peer–peer victimisation than on teacher–student victimisation (Kazarian, 2013). This is the case despite the findings by Twemlow et al.'s (2006) study that found 45% of teachers had bullied their students in the past. This rate is statistically significant to the extent that the issue of teachers bullying the students should be investigated further. Unfortunately, there are limited studies on this issue in the Arab world. For instance, bullying in Saudi Arabia goes beyond peer-to-peer violence in schools (AlQahtani, 2008; Alzahrani, 2012). There are cases of teachers being bullied by students. Such an instance shifts the definition of bullying from the context of peers to involve other players such as teachers, who are usually considerably older than the learners. Almost all schools in Saudi Arabia are segregated based on gender, which

again is an interesting factor to consider in the context of types of bullying (Alzahrani, 2012). Since gender is an important factor influencing bullying in schools, it is highly relevant to investigate the implication of separating students on the basis of gender and how this might affect the prevalence of bullying in schools. Several types of bullying have been observed in the kingdom. In 2008, AlQahtani carried out a study of male and female bullying in schools in Riyadh. The study concluded that 31.5% of students were bullied (AlQahtani 2008). This is a relatively high ratio given that all of the bullying covered in the study was taking place in the school environment.

Verbal bullying in Saudi Arabia is mostly connected differences in tribe or nationality, as is also the case in Lebanon, where confrontations often take place between Shiite and Sunni Muslims (Kazarian, 2013). The two factors of tribe and nationality play a huge role in how children relate to each other. It is not uncommon for a child in the kingdom to actively stigmatise another child for being from a different tribe. There is also name-calling, which may involve racial slurs. The use of skin colour or country of origin to degrade others is also ubiquitous in the country (Veenstra et al. 2005). For instance, terms like *ta'meya* and *tabouleh*, which refer to certain foods from Egypt and Lebanon respectively, are used to refer to the citizens of the two countries (Veenstra et al. 2005). Therefore, victims of bullying can also be grouped by countries of origin when evaluating the factors involved.

In Saudi Arabia, the glorification of masculinity and preservation of honour is pervasive (Meyer, 2007). Therefore, violent retaliation in boys' schools is often ignored and deemed to be a natural reaction of boys. However, girls in Saudi Arabia are also actively involved in physical bullying. They often form groups of six to seven girls known as *boyaat*, a term that originates from an Arabic word that refers to a girl acting like a boy (Furlong et al. 2010). These groups terrorise other girls by pulling their hair and hitting them. They may also threaten others with physical violence.

A woman's honour is crucial in Saudi Arabia (AlQahtani, 2008). Therefore, it would make sense that cyber bullying is rampant in the kingdom. This involves blackmail and spreading rumours about people, especially women. Girls' schools are environments where the students, teachers and faculty are all female (Al Qahtani, 2008). Girls are allowed to dress freely within the walls of the school. They can also expose their hair and apply make-up. The environment allows the girls to showcase their beauty and prowess. In an era where technology controls everything, the girls are

bound to find their photos online where indecent exposure of the victim may be used to blackmail or humiliate the victim (Beran, 2005). The use of swear words, insults and mockery on social media is also common. The Ministry of Interior in Saudi recently set up a website to receive complaints on cyber bullying. This could serve as a deterrent; however, it could also contravene certain human freedoms since the kingdom's laws forbid any form of communication between the sexes outside of family and marriage bonds.

Causes of Bullying in Saudi Arabia

There are various known causes of bullying that can be evaluated from both Western and Eastern perspectives. According to a study done in 2015, the following problems were found to contribute to bullying in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. First, students in Saudi Arabia suffer from a lack of support and protection in school. This means that neither the school administration nor the teachers provide a safe environment where students can feel comfortable enough to report cases of bullying. As a result, the students are forced to fend off the bullies by themselves. Others seek help from other bullies, locally known as *boya* (Zerillo & Osterman 2011). Such approaches are likely to worsen the situation as they may lead to violent confrontations between the groups. Consequently, this may create a shift in the definition of bullying to include violence and acts of aggression at school. If such behaviours are allowed to continue taking place at school, then solving bullying will remain a problem for both teachers and learners.

The teachers are as afraid as the students. Some of them report that they are terrified of facing bullies or their parents. They are afraid that the parents might get aggressive and fail to believe or understand their children's predicament (Alzahrani, 2012). Once a teacher attempts to reprimand a bully, they might become a target themselves, which would complicate their lives in school and even more so at home. The teachers who are brave enough to get involved often lack the proper expertise to deal with bullying effectively. In most schools, any policies in place to deal with bullying are inconsistent. Therefore, each teacher is forced to deal with the issue in their own way (Alzahrani, 2012). As a result, this means that the strategies used by teachers to deal with bullying are unique to them and only applied during specific instances as deemed relevant.

Some students lack motivation to learn in school. Consequently, they cause havoc since they often have no other way to express their negative energy. The students have little time for recreational activities. Excessive book-learning leads to frustration and aggressive behaviour (Waseem, Ryan, Foster & Peterson, 2013). There is also lack of communication between important parties, such as teachers and parents, parents and students, and students and teachers, which creates a deficiency in the means to manage issues of bullying. As a result, the parties end up blaming each other for the problem instead of finding the right solutions to the identified problems.

Bullying Interventions

This section reviews a substantial number of studies that have evaluated anti-bullying interventions. School-based interventions and anti-bullying policies are the commonest interventions that have been widely applied and evaluated in the past literature. It is essential to identify and apply specific bullying interventions to mitigate the problems that are associated with bullying.

School-based interventions.

School-based interventions have been proposed as effective interventions in the prevention or reduction of the prevalence of bullying in schools (Shetgiri, 2013). These comprise multidisciplinary interventions that also involve curriculum interventions and group training interventions (Vreeman & Carroll, 2007). The whole-school approach places its focus on the whole-school context rather than on the individual bullies involved in the act. Teachers, students, peers, and parents are involved in the implementation of the intervention, which then makes it possible to achieve the objectives of the intervention. Vreeman and Carroll (2007) add that the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP) was the first school-based intervention to be applied in schools. The components of the program include training school personnel, videotaping classroom curricula and disseminating information to parents (Olweus & Limber, 2010). However, parents are not fully involved in this type of intervention. The school environment is restructured in this program, since it is the arena within which the act occurs. It involves targeting the perpetrators and victims of bullying, and engaging them in discussions alongside teachers and parents (Kazarian, 2013). Self-efficacy training is provided to bystanders and teachers, while the bullies receive training in empathy. At a classroom level, peer education is provided on the negative impacts of bullying, and classroom-specific rules on bullying established for

adherence by the students (Kazarian, 2013). As indicated by Vreeman and Carroll (2007), the outcomes of this intervention indicated a reduction in the rate of bullying.

Therefore, this model of intervention could be used more often to curb instances of bullying in schools. In Saudi Arabia, this intervention was first implemented in 2011 by the National Family Safety Program (NFSP), where adolescent peers were trained in how to provide peer education to students in Riyadh (AlBuhairan, et al., 2016). This approach was received warmly by all stakeholders, and it was a worthy attempt to address the issue. However, no evaluation results following the intervention have been published. Since there have been no substantive results from this intervention, the current research will attempt to fill that gap.

Anti-bullying policies.

Shetgiri (2013) demonstrates that bullying-related suicides and other negative implications of bullying have led to a push for anti-bullying policies. Anti-bullying policies can be implemented individually or alongside whole-school-based anti-bullying interventions. The government should be actively involved in the development of the policies, which are then implemented by other authorities. For example, in Saudi Arabia, the government should develop the policies, and then other local school authorities could be directed on how to implement them. This approach has been adopted in the United States but there is limited evidence to indicate its applicability in the Saudi context. Therefore, there is a need to evaluate the approach and decide on its feasibility and sustainability when applied within Arab culture.

Clinical implications and management of bullying.

It is relevant to investigate the clinical impact of bullying on all individuals involved. Bullying is clinically significant because of its association with problems such as anxiety, low self-esteem, and depression among the victims (Cook et al., 2010). To add to this, Wolke and Lereya (2015) argue that bullying also imposes negative health impacts on the bullies, the bystanders, and the victims. Bullies are likely to experience academic performance problems in school and poor adjustment at school (Menesini & Salmivalli, 2017; Shetgiri, 2013). The effects of bullying are likely to be visible in both the bullies and victims of bullying, as earlier indicated in Wolke and Lereya (2015). In addition to the depression and anxiety symptoms, victims of bullying may also experience headaches, psychosomatic complaints, poor performance, and abdominal

pains during the morning hours (Shetgiri, 2013). In worst case scenarios, victims of bullying are likely to perpetrate violence at school by carrying weapons for self-defence purposes. The consequences of such cases can be very serious, and it is clear that interventions are needed to effectively solve this problem. These cases show that it is important to apply clinical management techniques to curb further deterioration of the involved individuals. Currently, there are no publications that reveal any clinical interventions to date in the Saudi context; therefore, further scientific research is desirable to fill this knowledge gap.

This chapter has developed a background to the problem of bullying by starting with a definition of this complex issue as discussed in the literature. Different types of bullying have been identified; the characteristics of the involved individuals evaluated; the interventions of bullying described; the clinical significance of bullying has been established, and theories related to bullying have also been elaborated. This review of the literature has shown that school bullying is a universal problem that affects a wide range of individuals, irrespective of whether they originate from the West or East. It is true that most of the reviewed literature presents a Western perspective, but it is still applicable in many ways in the Eastern context. The literature portrays bullying behaviours in Saudi Arabia differently, largely because the definition of the term in the West differs from that in the East. It will also be useful to relate theories of bullying to the results of this study to determine if they may impact learners in the kingdom as in the Western world. Ultimately, this knowledge gap will also be filled by the findings from the participants on the questions related to the characteristics of bullying, types of bullying, interventions of bullying, and the theories of bullying that are applicable to the Saudi context. Answering these questions will be challenging and rewarding.

Chapter 3: School bullying: Saudi Arabia in global context

Bullying in Saudi Arabian Schools

Bullying is a social problem that takes place all over the world, irrespective of the social or economic situations of the people living in those regions. Diverse reports have been presented on bullying in different parts of the world, including in Saudi Arabia. Bullying in Saudi Arabian schools is rather extreme. The seriousness of the problem can be judged by studying the people affected and the extent to which they are affected by the vice. In the case of extremity of the problem in Saudi Arabia, the extremity has been shown is due to the observation and even multiple report reports of teacher being bullied by students. University student in the kingdom often inflict cause serious injuries on each other. There is a case in Dammam where a secondary school teacher was attacked while at school. Aggressive and reckless behaviour can be observed in teachers as well (Astor, Guerra & Van Acker, 2010). They may use offensive language while yelling at their students. Since most classes hold up to 50 students, the result is often a heated, loud and angry environment where both the teachers and students are constantly on edge. These are a few examples to illustrate the types of bullying events that take place.

There is always relevance in determining the triggers of bullying and there is evidence to suggest that the whole school environment contributes to the bullying problem. For instance, Philpot (2012) insists that educators themselves instigate bullying activities in their classrooms in one way or another. According to Robers et al.,(2012) in a meta-analysis of studies conducted in Saudi Arabia, approximately 28 percent of students between the ages of 12 and 18 have bullied at schools. There are also many more students who admit that they are bullied by their peers (Wang et al. 2009).

According to Gleason (2011), bullying in Saudi Arabian high schools is pervasive, yet the schools lack effective means to deal with the epidemic. Gleason (2011) interviewed teachers, guidance staff and school administrators and concluded

that there was a lack of communication between the groups. She also found that girls were more involved in bullying than boys. Also, bullying was found to affect the students' academic performance significantly. According to Attwood (2004), the bullying was not only among the students but was also carried out by some teachers who used excessive criticism or punishments.

Protecting Students

There are various measures that can be used to protect students from bullying. According to Fekkes et al. (2005), a large concentration of teachers within the school environment helps to keep the school environment safe as compared to when there are few teachers in the school. Teachers should develop a positive relationship with students and encourage them to report any bad experience that might indicate bullying is occurring. Gleason (2011) is in support of this argument when he states that administrators and teachers must always play a proactive intermediary role, one in which they help students to be resilient, collect information on instances of bullying, and aim to be fully involved in the implementation of anti-bullying policies in their schools. Other authors think that teachers must know their students by building strong bonds with them as an approach to identifying their needs and solving issues as required (Heinrichs, 2003; Gleason, 2011). Developing a positive relationship between students and teachers is an important way to encourage victims of bullying to build resilience so as to mitigate the possible effects of bullying acts. Teachers should always be ready to intervene as much as possible to avoid escalation of problem events. The students must be educated by teachers on how to deal with bullying, including how to report such incidents to adults.

Effects of Bullying

Bullying is a universal problem that has affected a large proportion of students in schools, and even adults. It is, of course, also problematic in the workplace. However, this research will mainly focus on bullying in schools. The effects of bullying are universal; hence, victims are likely to face similar challenges, irrespective of where they live. This means that learners in Saudi schools face the same consequences as any other learner across the world who is subjected to bullying situations. Children or adults who are subjected to bullying persistently are likely to suffer from the same consequences. Bullying has many serious effects on victims. This section will discuss

psychological, physical and long-term effects and also consider the effect of bullying on academic performance.

Psychological impact.

Being bullied at school often leads to negative health outcomes for victims, and some victims may face long-term problems as they grow into adulthood. According to research, depression, anxiety, and low self-esteem are the commonest psychological impacts of bullying among learners (Adler, McLaughlin, Rogers, Chang, Lapitsky & Lerner, 2006). In addition, bullying translates into maladjustment in young children as well as for bullies who are victims themselves. Despite the overwhelming evidence that bullying increases the risk of suicide, bullying alone does not cause one to commit suicide. Associated depression is the main reason bullying victims commit suicide (Baldry & Farrington, 2000). Statistics show that 15 to 25 children commit suicide in the UK every year as a result of bullying (Rajmil, 2009). In cases where one lacks support from family and friends, the effects are worse. Therefore, it is important that affected individuals should be consoled as much as possible by their families and other individuals within their surroundings to minimise mental health risks.

Bullies are known to project their own negative feelings of insecurity and vulnerability onto victims (Benbenishty and Astor, 2012). The psychological projections of those feelings affect the individual from the micro-level of interpersonal relationships to the macro-level, which involves international issues such as politics and global conflict. It is evident that bullying incidents are bound to have psychosomatic, somatic, and academic effects on both oppressors and victims. Previous studies have found that bullying is responsible for under-developed emotional and social attributes among both children and adults (Cook et al., 2010; Fitzpatrick, Dulin, & Piko, 2010). For instance, it causes dejection and reluctance to participate in community activities and events. It also makes it difficult to make friends, which results in loneliness and depression in most cases. Furthermore, bullies tend to have poor relationships with their peers since they pose a threat to them. Most peers refuse to interact with the bullies since they fear them. Additionally, Russell, Sinclair, Poteat and Koenig (2012) pointed out that bullies as well as their victims suffer from self-pity and negative views about themselves. This psychological state makes them more vulnerable to drug use compared to neuro-typical students.

Similarly, Zerillo and Osterman (2011) found that the victims suffered many psychological symptoms as a result of bullying. These include antisocial behaviour which may result in loneliness and depression. Bullying also contributes to low self-esteem. Zerillo and Osterman, (2011) made very similar findings to those of Russell and his colleagues. Suicide is another problem associated with bullying. Kim, Koh and Leventhal (2005) assessed the relationship between bullying and suicidal risk. They did their study in a Korean middle school and also concluded that bullying can cause serious mental and physical illnesses. As stated above, the majority of bullying victims have poor relations with their peers. The end result is usually depression which, if not treated, can trigger suicidal thoughts and acts. The findings of these studies all point to the conclusion that bullying has very destructive consequences; these might include suicidal tendencies for the victim and sometimes for the bully, if they are also on the receiving end from another person or group.

Bullying is the cause of many psychological issues in children and adolescents. Once a person is subjected to any degree of mean or harsh treatment, they cannot help but seclude themselves for fear of being attacked. They are also often continually anxious, which leads to isolation and eventually they may drop out of school if they cannot handle the pressure (Robers et al., 2012; Russell, 2012). In addition, psychological stress makes the victims more susceptible to clinical mental illnesses. The impact also causes the stress hormone cortisol to be produced in excessive amounts. Eventually, the hormone will attack the person's immune system, which increases their chances of catching colds as well as contracting other diseases and infections. These health complications may contribute to poor school attendance. Nadeau, Tessier, Lefebvre and Robaey (2004) found that ten to twenty percent of children under twelve often experience aggression from their peers in school. The number of children who reported having a hard time adapting to the school environment was also often directly proportional to physical and psychological bullying.

This problem is likely to be experienced in the Arab world just as in the West. However, according to Kazarian (2013), the challenge is that there is limited information because prevalence studies on this issue in the Arab world are very rare. This author concluded that research results are comparable between the Arab world and Western countries regarding the prevalence of bullying and its impact on

individuals (Kazarian, 2013). On the contrary, the problem is that studies on the issue in the Arab world are rare; hence, it is impossible to ascertain whether the problem is being eliminated or is worsening. This also means that it is not possible to fully determine the extent to which bullying psychologically affects the victims in Saudi Arabia as compared to Asian and Western countries. Therefore, it would be relevant for future research to study the prevalence and psychological impacts of bullying in Saudi schools.

Physical health impact.

In addition to the emotional impact of bullying to the victims of the vice, it is also important to address the physical effects because they sometimes occur concurrently. It is likely that there is a direct relationship between bullying and the physical health of victims. Research on this question has been conducted in different parts of the world seeking to establish the relationship between exposure to bullying and routine visits of individuals to healthcare practitioners. It was found that school bullying does affect the physical health of bullied individuals (Knack, Jensen-Campbell & Baum, 2011; Ouellet-Morin et al., 2011). This implies that individuals who have been bullied are likely to report physical health problems. This evidence has also been supported by Kazarian (2013), who found that numerous cases have so far been reported of bullied children frequently visiting health practitioners with complaints of physical health problems. In such cases, more of the bullied children reported symptoms of abdominal pain and headache when compared with their non-bullied counterparts (Kazarian, 2013). These sentiments are supported medically by the argument that there is low production of cortisol among the bullied children, which increases their risk of becoming physically unhealthy (Knack, Jensen-Campbell & Baum, 2011; Ouellet-Morin et al., 2011). This type of hormonal imbalance explains why bullied children have more physical health problems compared to their non-bullied counterparts. More often, physical abuse may leave the victim with body injuries, which are classified as physical health issues. Unfortunately, empirical research on this particular issue in Saudi Arabia is scarce; thus, the issue cannot be fully demystified to help an understanding of the situation in the Arab world. This also means that it is not possible to compare and contrast the situation in Saudi Arabia with the situation in the Western world in relation to the physical health aspects of bullying in schools. This is one of the knowledge gaps that should be pursued in future research.

Long-term impacts.

There are both short-term and long-term effects of bullying for both the victims and bullies. Research on this issue demonstrates the extent to which bullying impacts the involved parties in their future lives. Some research on this issue has examined different age ranges; for example, Wolke and Lereya (2015). It is useful to evaluate the effects in childhood and then see how these extend into adulthood. Evidence indicates that most people who have experienced bullying during childhood are likely to be diagnosed with anxiety disorders and depression in adulthood (Copeland, et al., 2013; Stapinski, et al., 2014). More evidence indicates that bullying may lead to long-term psychological challenges in adulthood, to the extent of suicidal ideations. In some instances, suicides have been reported in individuals with a history of bullying (Takizawa, Maughan & Arseneault, 2014). Another study found that people who had been bullied during childhood generally had poor health that included headaches, stomach aches, and slow recovery from illness (Wolke, et al., 2013). The above findings directly point to the physical effects of bullying on the wellbeing of the victims. The study by Lester (2009) also found that workplace bullying is directly related to bullying at school. The implication is that bullying starts at a tender age and later manifests into adulthood if not appropriately controlled or mitigated. This is very problematic because as people gain power at an organisational level, they will be inclined to bully weaker individuals. Therefore, to avoid this long-term bullying in the workplace, it is advisable for the necessary counter-measures to be applied during childhood. If this could take place in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, we might see reports of workplace bullying decline markedly.

Another relevant finding in previous research is that bullied children attained lower academic qualifications, which reduced their attainment of financial wellbeing in the future (Wolke, et al., 2013). The report found that poor financial management could be seen as linked with evidence of bullying during childhood. In addition to this, another long-term effect to consider is that victims of bullying might find it hard to keep long-term friendships or sustain positive relationships during adulthood. Some victims are prone to antisocial feelings and even become young parents (Lehti, et al., 2012; Lehti et al., 2011). Therefore, based on the above findings, it is fair to state that victims of bullying are more likely to face challenges later in life as a result of the emotional or physical trauma inflicted on them by bullies. The implication is that

victims of bullies are more likely to have unsatisfactory lives that lack the energy and fulfilment enjoyed in the lives of non-victims. Hence, the signs and symptoms of bullying should always be checked and the potential negative impacts mitigated immediately to prevent the occurrence of long-term effects that might lower the quality of life of victims. However, there is lack of significant empirical studies on this topic covering the Saudi context.

The other effect of bullying is that it contributes to violent behaviours in the lives of involved individuals. This implies that the perpetration of violence is highly influenced by previous bullying events during childhood. There is relevant evidence indicating that serial killers are often victims of direct or indirect bullying in school during their early lives. For instance, Henry Lee Lucas, a serial slayer and diagnosed psychopath, said that the rejection and hardships he faced at the hands of school bullies contributed to his antisocial behaviour as an adult. Another serial killer, Kenneth Bianchi, was teased for wetting his pants and twitching and often ignored as a teenager (Besag, 2002). This illustrates that a violent childhood affects one mentally and emotionally, and eventually leads to violence. Psychologists believe that violence leads the victims to escape from a reality that makes them feel trapped and weak.

Academic performance.

The impact of bullying on the academic performance of both victims and perpetrators is another key aspect of this debate to be discussed. This is an issue that has been studied often by previous researchers in the West and other regions of the world. The study by Wolke and Lereya (2015), in investigating the long-term effects of bullying, found that school adjustment, academic achievement, and absenteeism were negatively correlated with bullying. Further evidence indicates that victims had poor school adjustment, performed poorly academically, and perceived their school environment negatively (Nakamoto & Schwartz, 2010; Vaillancourt et al., 2013). Other studies found that bullying leads to high rates of withdrawal from school since victims develop a fear of attending school (Glew et al., 2008; Arseneault et al., 2006). This implies that high levels of absenteeism were reported in the cohort of victims. The research also indicated that bullies displayed poor school adjustment, just like the bullied children, when compared with other students (Nakamoto & Schwartz, 2010; Vaillancourt et al., 2013). In equal measures, Brown and Taylor (2008) also found that bullies achieved lower academic performance compared to other students. However,

most of these studies have a Western perspective; which makes it difficult to apply these conclusions to the Eastern context.

Further research on the relationship between bullying and academic performance has been able to portray the nature of the relationship that exists between these two variables. Al-Raqqad et al. (2017) argues that academic performance among the bullied children is compromised and cannot match the performance of those who are not involved in bullying. The reasons leading to the poor performance is that the bullied children become less self-confident and are constantly fearful, which leads to low levels of attention in the classroom. Another explanation for poor performance, as illustrated in Al-Raqqad, et al. (2017), is that bullied students are more likely to stay at home; hence, they fall behind as others continue to learn. In some cases, even if they attend their classes, they are likely to lack concentration in the classroom, which will still translate into poor academic performance.

Many other studies concur that bullying has negative impact on the academic achievement of the victims (Cythia, 2014; Mundbjerg et al., 2014; Ammermueller; 2012; Brank et al., 2012). Since there is a wide literature base covering the negative impact of bullying on the academic performance of victims, it can be concluded that bullying is a social problem that should be addressed expeditiously to maintain academic performance levels. It is important to describe this issue in terms of the different Western and Eastern contexts; however, there is limited evidence on this issue in Saudi Arabia to provide a clear perspective on the situation there. Nevertheless, we know that academic impacts are universal and so therefore the findings on this issue from the Western perspective will also be applicable to the Saudi context. Further research should be able to make empirical findings regarding the academic performance of bullying victims in Saudi Arabia.

Assessment of School Bullying

Prior to applying any intervention to curb school bullying, it is necessary to conduct an assessment of the problem. Evaluating the scope of the problem is important because it enables those responsible for intervention to understand, plan, and evaluate known anti-bullying programs that can be applied in schools (Kazarian, 2013). For scientific purposes, school bullying can accurately be assessed by systematically observing the frequency, form, and duration of bullying through techniques such as

interviewing and standardised interviews' (Kazarian, 2013). Stakeholders such as parents, children, and their teachers can be involved in self-reporting measures to investigate peer victimisation; then anti-bullying interventions can be evaluated and the best interventions can be determined (Craig, Pepler & Atlas, 2000; Diamanduros, Downs & Jenkins, 2008). One way to achieve this is to use of the 38-items Olweus BVQ. In the BVQ, students are questioned on the frequency of being bullied or bullying others. Students who report having been bullied two or three times within a month are classified as victims of bullying. An appropriate anti-bullying intervention can be selected based on the questionnaire results (Kazarian, 2013). The results of BVQ and other assessment tools help to determine which type of intervention should be used in the particular situation. Some major interventions are as discussed below.

Interventions to Reduce Bullying

Despite its negative effects, bullying is also believed to act as a platform for teaching life lessons. For instance, according to evidence, bullying makes some victims stronger than those who are not subjected to bullying (Bradshaw et al. 2011). A child development academic, Helene Guldberg, once stirred up controversy when she argued that being a target of bullying teaches the child to solve life problems better, as well as how to interact effectively with others. Her most controversial statement was that teachers should not intervene, since it would be more effective if the child handled the situation by themselves (Bradshaw et al. 2011). However, contrary to Guldberg's sentiments, it is clear that teaching anti-bullying coping skills to likely targets of bullying has been proved effective in reducing bullying incidence.

Some researchers argue that there should be collective responsibility between individuals, peer groups, schools and families to fight and prevent bullying (Mayer & Furlong, 2010), since it is a social phenomenon that also affects the bystanders. They suggest that schools should create comprehensive prevention programs to promote a better understanding of social-behavioural changes among students (Mayer & Furlong, 2010). In 2010, Swearer and his fellow researchers found that most bullying prevention programs in school were not effective in reducing bullying (Swearer et al. 2010). According to Mayer (2007), studies on bullying have been carried out for more than 30 years. Most studies quantify the issue from the student's perspective. However, they fail to include aspects such as gender, sexual orientation, race, and disability and to consider how bullies weaponise these factors. As a result, evaluation of the studies

is difficult since there is not enough data measured (Sharkey et al., 2010). Bullying can be measured using techniques such as ratings, scales, surveys and observations. Prevention measures can be applied in schools at different levels, as further explained below.

Prevention at the individual level.

This is the first intervention step required to curb the issue of bullying in schools. It recognises the importance of identifying the problem at grass roots level and solving it with those individuals primarily involved in the practice. A study by AlBuhairan, et al. (2016) outlines various approaches that can be used to prevent bullying at the individual level. For instance, according to the study, awareness-raising programs are essential to develop communication skills for parents, students, and professionals in the school. This approach entails strengthening the alliance between schools and parents in pursuit of the best interests of the children, especially concerning their safety at school (AlBuhairan, et al., 2016). The students should also be taught about engagement with other students within the school; communication skills and mutual tolerance are emphasised to improve the quality of student–student relationships. A focus on tolerance will ensure that the children reach out to each other to achieve their academic and social potential (AlBuhairan, et al., 2016).

School professionals should learn about conflict resolution to mitigate instances of bullying among learners. In relation to this, AlBuhairan, et al. (2011) argued that professionals in the school lack significant knowledge on issues such as child maltreatment and its relevance in assessing bullying situations. Educators should be aware of the normal development of adolescents, be able to identify the risks of bullying at a personal level, and be able to identify problematic behaviours. This implies that the professionals at the school should possess skills that can aid them in identifying the problems and then applying interventions that can help to solve the problem over the long term. There is lack of evidence to show that the education professionals in Saudi schools currently possess these skills to enable them create positive social relationships among the students. Moreover, there is lack of empirical research in the Saudi context to judge the effectiveness of parents being involved in their children’s safety at school in conjunction with developing positive relationships with their teachers.

Prevention at system level.

In addition to prevention at the individual level, it is also important to prevent it at the system level. In their study, AlBuhairan et al. (2016) posited the need to instigate change at the system level in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, including education reform and academic development. According to the findings by Freeman, et al. (2009), the pressure that learners experience in schools can lead to peer victimisation. This can also be turned to positive use, as the long-time children spend in the school system can be advantageous for the personal development of children and adolescents (AlBuhairan et al., 2016). For example, various initiatives could be trialled in the schooling system, such as engaging students in co-curricular activities focusing on their social development. This approach could be used to eliminate unwanted negative behaviours at the same time.

There are certain strategies that can protect learners from bullying (Cornell et al. 2013). The strategies include: 1. School and community leaders write a systematic plan on how they want the school community to turn out in the future. 2. Leaders carry out an evaluation of the school's needs and strengths. 3. Teachers teach interpersonal skills relating to bullying to all students. 4. Teachers inform bullies about the damage they cause their peers and curb their behaviour. 5. Parents, teachers and health professionals work together to motivate bystanders to speak out against bullying. Ttofi et al. (2011) found that anti-bullying programs in various schools in Saudi Arabia were only effective if they were intense. They found that the most effective ones included full-time supervision during breaks, frequent teacher-parent meetings and tougher discipline regimes. Such programs reduced bullying by 20 percent. The researchers also suggested that schools should deal with bullying at an individual level rather than at the whole school level. Teachers should also strive to incorporate the student's life experiences and challenges outside school, especially at home.

In the KSA, the Ministry of Education has provided guidelines to check on handling misconduct in schools. The guidelines should ensure there is consistency in following the recommended procedures to addressing the identified problem. However, more studies should be conducted to present significant evidence on the development of systems that will enhance positive coexistence among the students both at school and at home. This may also mean that parents should play an active role in ensuring that their children conform to the school's behavioural rules. This all points

to the fact that all stakeholders must play an active role to ensure that when students interact with their peers at school, their conduct is appropriate.

Legislation on bullying in Saudi Arabia.

Saudi Arabia has recently attempted to solve the bullying problem through legislation. For instance, in 2014, Saudi Arabia made plans to set up a panel that would draft legislation that would recognise bullying as a national problem. Schools would be required to abide by the legislation, which was to include policies and procedures to stop bullying. It would also require all schools to educate their teachers, faculties and students about the harmful effects of bullying. The draft legislation was announced by the chief of the National Family Safety Program (NFSP), Dr. Maha Al- Muneef, in June 2014. In their first meeting, the NFSP partnered with UNICEF and the Saudi National Childhood Commission to share relevant examples about successful anti-bullying programs in countries like the US, Finland and Australia.

The NFSP carried out a survey in 2013 for one month. It involved 12,757 students. The results revealed that half of that population had been victims of bullying. In the same year they carried out another survey on 10, 927 students, which found that 36.5 percent had been victims of bullying (Cornell et al., 2013).

Prior to this important initiative of Al-Muneef, Saudi Arabia did not implement formal policies to curb bullying, although it was clear there was a lot of bullying occurring, especially in girls' schools. The diminishing role of the school as an institution that builds character was seen as a reason for the increase in violence among youth. In 2013, a secondary teacher was killed by students in Jazan, while another was attacked in a secondary school in Dammam. There were also four students detained by guards in Jeddah as they were attempting to set their school on fire. According to Cornell et al. (2013), Abdullah Al-Thaqafi, who was then the Director of Education in Jeddah, made a statement that the same students had been accused of trying to burn down the school on several previous occasions. Due to the above events, The then Minister of Education, Prince Faisal bin Abdullah, ordered a special national investigation that would involve assessment of the situation and make recommendations on how to curb the bullying problem. The fact that teachers yell and reprimand the students harshly came up in the investigation.

Current Perspective of Bullying in South Australia

The prevalence of bullying in South Australia has reduced over the years. Schools have adopted several anti-bullying strategies and are reporting positive outcomes. However, a recent report from the University of South Australia revealed that bullying is still a serious issue in country regions of the state (Fekkes et al, 2005). The report was funded by the Australian Government and is the first of its kind. It features the experiences and perceptions of the stakeholders in different schools in South Australia. A review of anti-bullying strategies in Australian schools utilises data that was collected from six different states in 2015. It involved 1688 students, 25 schools and 451 teachers. It shows how bullying is being addressed at the school level (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2015). It also identifies different stakeholders and describes their different roles in the attempt to eradicate bullying. The report's authors, namely Professor Ken Rigby and Dr Kaye Johnson (2012) claim that there is evidence that schools are doing a tremendous job in preventing bullying through classroom-based programs. However, there is still much that needs to be addressed.

First, there is a lack of awareness about anti-bullying policies among students and parents. Students also need extra motivation to approach their teachers and counsellors to report these kinds of issues. About 15 percent of students between the ages of five and ten reported that they are currently being bullied in school. Among bullied students, 51 percent are upset by it, 12 percent choose to stay away from school to avoid it, and 36 percent reported that bullying hindered them from effectively concentrating on their schoolwork (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2015).

All of the 25 schools in the study had a written anti-bullying policy. According to the statistics, 50 percent of students and 30 percent of parents were aware of the policy's existence. Interventions relating to the bullies themselves need improvement. Professor Rigby (2012) notes that children choose to go to their peers for help before their parents and teachers. Since the teachers are supposedly more knowledgeable about the topic, we need to make sure that students are comfortable talking to their teachers and school counsellors about bullying. The rate at which bullying cases were solved after students approached their teachers was 36 percent for primary schools and 22 percent for secondary schools (Rigby, 2013) However, some students reported that reporting cases to the teachers made things worse. It even provoked the bullies into being more malicious and extreme. Therefore, many students need to be convinced

that consulting a teacher about such a problem would be helpful and that confidences would not be traced back to them by the bullies. Other concerns regarding the study will be discussed later in the paper.

There is abundant evidence on the nature, types and extent of bullying in South Australian schools. Most of the data was obtained by two researchers, namely Rigby and Slee (Owens, Shute & Slee, 2000). The first criterion to be used in the research was based on percentages of students who claimed to have been bullied in relation to five different forms of bullying experiences. The study involved 6,000 boys and 2,500 girls from 16 different schools. The schools were located in South Australia, New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria, and data was collected between 1993 and 1994 (Olweus, 1994). The children ranged from nine to seventeen years old, which made their average age fourteen.

The study concluded that verbal bullying was the most prevalent type among both boys and girls. It was experienced by one child in ten. Physical bullying was the least common. Threatening to harm each other was experienced equally by both sexes. Exclusion was more common than physical bullying, especially among the girls. It is convenient for researchers to find one predominant form of bullying. However, a student who is often bullied is most likely to be treated harshly in many different ways, which might include verbally, physically, emotionally or even over the internet.

The second exercise covered how often children were bullied on a scale of never to every day.

Table 1. Incidence of reported victimisation among school children (percentages)

	Boys	Girls
Every day	1.8	0.9
Most days	4.4	3.8
Once or twice a week	6.8	5.2
Once a week	6.3	5.1
Less than once a week	29.2	27.6
Never	51.4	57.4

The above result shows that both the male and female distributions are highly skewed, which means that a large proportion of students are not bullied at school in any particular year. Girls were also bullied less often. However, once the data is evaluated weekly, the percentages increase significantly, with 19.3 for boys and 14.6 percent for girls (Australian Bureau of Statistics).

Age is a crucial factor influencing the frequency of bullying. A survey was taken of students in South Australian co-educational primary and secondary schools who claimed to be bullied at least once a week, according to age. The students were aged between ten and seventeen years. The findings were that victimisation was more frequent among the younger children and often reduced as they grew out of their teenage years (Rigby, 2000). Although the study did not cover children below the age of ten, past studies have concluded that bullying is prevalent in eight- and nine-year-olds. A revised estimate of the data involving the younger children would show that 20 percent of males and 18 percent of females between 7 and 17 years were bullied weekly (Rigby, 2003). Another conclusion drawn from the above survey was that bullying persisted as the children found themselves in a relatively more impersonal environment — that is, secondary school.

South Australia has an effective Kids Help Line (KHL). This is a free telephone line which is accessible to all the children in Australia. In 1994, KHL received over 7,000 calls on bullying (Olweus, 1994). This number represented four percent of all the calls made that year.

Table 2. Calls about bullying received by Kids Help Line, according to age group

5 to 9 years	16%
10 to 14 years	75%
15 to 19 years	9%

The above data suggests that children between the ages of ten and fourteen are bullied most severely. Based on the KHL calls, girls seemed to be bullied, more since 55 percent of the callers were female (Olweus, 1994). However, it does not necessarily follow because girls made twice as many calls as boys. It only shows that girls are more inclined to talk openly about being bullied.

From the above data, it is safe to say that bullying in South Australia, and probably the rest of the world, reduces as children grow older. Hence, fewer cases are reported in secondary schools. However, it does not explain whether the proportions of different types of bullying follow this pattern. A study involving 8,000 boys and 4,000 girls was carried out to investigate this issue. The findings were that physical bullying decreased as children grew older (Rigby, 2012). It was however replaced by intense verbal bullying. Indirect exclusion as a form of bullying remains constant throughout the school years. Despite the similarities for both the boys and the girls, it is clear that girls practice more indirect bullying, while boys tend to be physical (Rigby & Barnes, 2002). Exclusion (as a type of bullying) is common for boys between the ages of 16 and 17, while it is practised by girls at every age

Generally, bullies tend to be older than their victims. Whether the bullying is individual or in groups is often dependent on the school. Boys who are victimised often point out a single bully. However, the bully often has a group of supporters who help him carry out the act. Girls often tend to report bullying by groups (Rigby, 2003). Both boys and girls are sometimes bullied by members of the opposite sex. About a third of boys (21 percent) in South Australia reported that girls bully them.

Implementation of bullying laws in South Australia.

In January 2018, a 14-year-old girl committed suicide in Australia following a relentless campaign of bullying. The girl's name was Amy 'Dolly' Everett. Consequently, the movement to implement bullying laws was ignited (Australian Bureau of Statistics). Now Australia has more access to social media. The Australian Education Department Survey reported that over 5,000 students are bullied every week. In Australia, bullying has always been perceived as a social norm. It was believed to toughen children up and build character. However, the death of Amy proved that bullying can seriously impact on a child's wellbeing. It can also lead to fatal consequences. The bullying policies and laws that were in place, or the lack thereof failed to recognise the severity of bullying. In 2017, the suicide death of Libby Bell, a student in Adelaide, prompted a review of the South Australian anti-bullying laws in late 2017 (Australian Bureau of Statistics). Libby was a Year 8 secondary school student. She committed suicide after a prolonged period of bullying in school, public places and in online mediums such as Facebook, Snapchat and Instagram.

Statutes Amendment Bullying Bill 2017.

The Hon. Dennis Hood, leader of the Australian Conservatives introduced the Statutes Amendment Bullying Bill in September 2017 in the South Australian Legislative Council. It is locally and affectionately known as ‘Libby’s Law’. It suggests severe punishment for bullying, including cyber bullying. The 2017 bill is modelled on Victoria’s response to ongoing bullying in the *Crimes Amendment Bullying Act 2011*. The act was introduced following the death of Brody Padlock (Australian Bureau of Statistics). She was a nineteen-year-old waitress who committed suicide after being bullied in the workplace.

Section 20C of the bill introduces the offences of bullying, which includes the following definitions: ‘The intent to cause harm or to be reckless as to whether one’s actions will cause harm or not; the committal of more than one act of bullying over a span of one week; or causing harm or serious harm to others’. The bill defines bullying as the implicit threat to cause harm. It also includes the terms ‘humiliating’, ‘degrading’ or ‘harassing’. Publishing or transmitting offensive material via any means of communication is also seen as bullying by the bill (Australian Bureau of Statistics). Also prohibited is the use of abusive or offensive language. Harm is often defined in relation to physical and mental damage. However, the bill concentrates on ‘serious harm,’ which includes harm that endangers a person’s life, harm that causes serious impairment both physically and mentally, and harm that can lead to serious disfigurement. The bill’s intention is that, in cases of serious harm, it is not important for the victim to prove that the perpetrator *intended* to cause serious harm. Also, in cases where the victim self-harms, it is not necessary to prove that the defendant knew or should have known that the victim could harm themselves.

Proposed penalties for bullying in South Australia.

The bill provides a maximum of ten years imprisonment in instances of severe bullying. Less severe instances would get from one to five years imprisonment. The bill gives a leeway for alternative verdicts at the judge’s discretion. For instance, in a case where the offensive bullying cannot be proved beyond reasonable doubt, but a minor offence has been established, the judge is at liberty to incur penalties or community service as they deem fit. The bill was passed in the Legislative Council in mid-November, despite resistance by the Youth Affairs Council of South Australia and the Commissioner for Children and Young People. The latter two groups held

similar sentiments on the dangers that might follow from exposing the education system to criminal law (Rigby & Cox, 2014).

Methods of Intervention Used In Australia

Direct sanctions.

There are different ideas on the use of direct sanctions in different schools. It is acceptable when bullying has been substantiated or when other students witness the bullying act. Some schools specify situations when direct sanctions can be used. They include extreme forms of bullying, such as cyber bullying, and cases involving violence (Rigby & Cox, 2014). Direct sanctions are used when there is physical harm and also in cases of one-on-one bullying. Direct sanctions are also used when other forms of intervention, such as warnings, counselling and restorative practice, fail. They are also applied when bullies are unwilling to change their behaviour. Currently, there is no empirical research on this method of intervention being applied in Saudi Arabia, or on the nation's success rate in eliminating or preventing occurrence of bullying. Therefore, it would be appropriate for this approach to be replicated in the kingdom, as in Western countries, such as Australia.

Strengthening the victim.

Some schools view strengthening the victim as a more relevant and effective strategy. As with direct sanctions, schools' opinions vary, especially regarding the severity of the victimisation. Some schools claim that this method is more effective when the bullying is severe, while others only use it in mild cases (Rigby, 2012). Despite the minor differences in perspective, there is a general acceptance of the strategy throughout the country. However, schools agree that the method is most effective when the victim has low self-esteem and deficient coping and social skills. Most importantly, the student has to be willing to work hand-in-hand with a behaviour teacher. The method plays a role of developing certain skills related to the student's personal development. As a result, they do not provoke negative thoughts and actions in other students.

This kind of intervention can be appropriate in Saudi Arabia, where there is little concern for the victims of bullying. First, the culture in the kingdom has created a perception that bullying has a positive side, as it supposedly helps to strengthen the victims. Some believe it will develop more confidence in the bullies. Therefore, this

means that strengthening the victim might be viewed in a different way in the kingdom. However, the needs of victims must be met, rather than worsening the situation by further compromising their wellbeing. Strengthening the victim could help to reduce the consequences of bullying on the health and academic performance of the victims. However, this outcome has yet to be observed in Saudi Arabia, and there is no evidence to suggest that it will be achieved in the near future.

Mediation.

Mediation is a useful strategy in most if not all cases of bullying. It works with individuals and also with groups of bullies. It is also suitable when the bullies' identities are known as well as all the circumstances of the victimisation. Like the two methods described above, mediation also has its detractors. Some schools say that the method is more effective when the cases are severe, while others claim that it can only yield positive results when used in mild cases (Rigby, 2000). There are also different opinions on whether mediation should be used for individual bullying or group bullying (mobbing). Some schools see it as a last resort; that is, tried when restorative practice and circle time fail. Another group proposes that mediation should be used with younger children, preferably those in the same class or grade. Evidently, there is little consistency amongst those advocating the use of mediation.

Mediation is used as an approach of negotiation whereby a third party is involved in the dispute resolution process. According to Fox and Stallworth (2009), direct negotiation is involved in such instances. However, it is unanimously agreed that mediation should be used on parties where the power balance is not too unequal. Also, both parties should agree with the procedure before it commences. This is in line with the argument by Zapf and Gross (2001) that the involvement of mediators in the process is could only victimise the victims more. Moreover, for an effective mediation process, the mediator should fully understand the nature of the conflict, to avoid confusion between bullying and interpersonal conflict (Saam, 2010). They should also participate willingly. It is evident that mediation has often given positive results. In this regard, there is a lack of significant evidence to illustrate the application of mediation in Saudi schools as an anti-bullying technique. Most of the available evidence only indicates the success of mediation in countering workplace bullying. Hence, it would be prudent to gather further evidence in the Saudi context of school bullying.

Support group method.

Many schools are not conversant with the method. Those who are aware of it agree that it is suitable for non-extreme group bullying cases. Its use is justified in cases where the victims are distressed and significantly affected by the effects of the bullying. All the parties should know each others' names (Rigby, 2012). They should also strive to familiarise themselves with the other people's predicaments. This method is mostly used in the primary sector to help the victims see that they have support within the school environment or community.

Method of shared concern.

This is one of the least common methods. It has been reported to be in use in one school in Australia, where it was used in cases of ongoing bullying where a group targeted one particular student. On another occasion, it was used on repeated offenders (Rigby & Griffiths, 2010). It is also suitable in cases where two individuals need to solve an issue. Thus it is seen as a method that helps small groups of friends with low-level issues. Consent from parents is required before this method can be used with students.

Steps to Reduce Bullying in South Australia

In one survey in Australia, certain schools were asked to make suggestions on what should be done to reduce bullying in schools. Below are the suggestions. Respondents suggested that training to deal with bullies should be provided in schools. For instance, there should be regular professional development sessions using 'circle time' and restorative practice. The government should provide resources to implement anti-bullying programs and support student leaders to be more active in dealing with victimisation. There was a concern regarding the slow response related to bullying cases (Rigby, 2012). Students and teachers felt that there should be a quicker and more consistent response.

It was also argued that the policies in place at that time were only 'window dressing' or intended for appearance's sake. The schools suggested that the Ministry of Education, in collaboration with schools, should show more commitment to tackling bullying. Respondents suggested a focus on harder and more serious cases. They recommended more social and emotional learning could happen in class. The teachers were encouraged to take stronger ownership of the anti-bullying programs.

Cyber bullying was put in the spotlight as most people felt that this form of bullying should be addressed urgently, especially among senior students (Olweus, 2012). There was also a general feeling that the South Australian Police (SAPOL) required more support as they fought against this subtle form of victimisation. Children were also encouraged to seek help. School policies needed to be updated and documented for future use. Surveys should be conducted more often and consistent class management was thought to be important. Lastly, the schools agreed that a whole-school approach should be applied, supported by special assemblies and frequent meetings with staff and parents.

A wide range of proactive and reactive strategies are being employed in Australian public schools to counter bullying. Evidence suggests that the prevalence of bullying has reduced nation-wide. Still, it remains alarmingly high. In 2014/2015, 15 percent of children reported that were being bullied (Australian Bureau of Statistics). Those who were disabled or financially deprived were bullied more. However, non-English speaking students were not bullied more than average, although racial harassment was directed towards Indigenous students. As seen in other countries, children who reported having been bullied suffered from stress-related issues which took a toll on their academic performance and their school attendance.

Encouragingly, anti-bullying policies have been developed in each participating school, as was indicated earlier. However, 50 percent of parents and 35 percent of students are not aware that the programs exist (Galloway & Roland, 2004). Initiatives to promote social and emotional learning have been started. Schools in Australia are experimenting with different methods to combat bullying, but with very little obvious success (Juvonen, Wang & Espinoza, 2011). Despite the plethora of initiatives and the use of proactive and reactive approaches in schools, there remains much to be done to reduce the high levels of bullying in schools. Reports from teachers and educational leaders have mentioned a great need for supportive resources and specialised training for teachers.

Several other Western countries have developed different approaches to addressing the bullying problem. Examples of these countries are Canada and the UK, where legislation has been found to be effective in addressing the problem, just as in the Australian scene. Success in implementing legislation could also mean positive outcomes for Saudi Arabia.

Legislation entails formulation of laws that regulate and the guide certain behaviour within society. Legislation, therefore, is one appropriate intervention that can be used to address the problem of school bullying in Saudi Arabia and other parts of the world. Before addressing the issue of legislation in Saudi Arabia, as a representative of other Eastern countries, we should look closely at its application in the West. For instance, in the case of Canada, academic debate and research on the issue of bullying has been in existence for the past 30 years (Paré & Collins, 2016). However, the involvement of the Canadian government in passing laws that would curb bullying in schools only began ten years ago (Paré & Collins, 2016). The Canadian government is now addressing the issue of bullying in schools through policies and laws, within a context of human rights and child rights, in all its provinces. In response to bullying in schools, the Canadian government has made changes to provincial education legislation to align with schools' remedial actions directed towards unsafe and inappropriate behaviour among students. To evidence the progress being made, Ontario and Quebec adopted anti-bullying legislation in 2012, while others adopted the same later in 2013 and 2014 after amending the *Criminal Code* (Paré & Collins, 2016). Positive steps in the fight against bullying have been achieved with the application of this legislation and other policies that schools at the provincial level within the country apply. The success of the approach in Canada could be replicated in other countries that are yet to turn to legislation as an anti-bullying intervention.

In the UK, there also exists legislation on anti-bullying to protect school children from the impacts of bullying. A good example is Bedale High School in North Yorkshire. According to its policy report for the year 2017/2018, the school has an anti-bullying policy that includes certain measures taken to foster positive behaviour among learners (Bedale High School, 2018). This policy is aimed at guiding school personnel in preventing and/or tackling bullying. The applicability of the policy is dependent on the existing legislation such as the *Public Order Act 1986*, *Protection from Harassment Act 1997*, *The Education and Inspection Act 2006, 2011*, *The Children Act 1989*, and *The Equality Act 2010* (Bedale High School, 2018). In an echo of other policies across the world, the policy at Bedale directs the staff members to which the bullying incident has been reported to take action immediately to resolve the impasse. This action involves counselling both the victim and the perpetrator of

bullying. The victims are consoled and their situation addressed in a manner that avoids exacerbating their fear and anxiety. The bullies are compelled to change their behaviours. All in all, continued support is provided to both parties to ensure a long-lasting positive relationship is created within the school environment. This initiative is representative of other schools in the UK that have put into place policies related to the national legislation on anti-bullying practices. It should also be used as model for schools in the KSA, which could apply similar strategies to mitigate bullying in its schools.

Difference between Bullying Policies in Saudi Arabia and Australia

Different countries apply a range of interventions with bullying; therefore, policies are likely to vary from one region to another, depending on the demographics in those countries. It is evident that there is a significant difference between South Australia and Saudi Arabia with regard to bullying policies and implementation. This is largely driven by their respective very different cultures. Saudi Arabians, for instance, have a culture that demeans girls and regards them as inferior to boys. Such a culture makes school girls susceptible to discrimination, segregation and bullying from their male counterparts (Farrington & Ttofi, 2011). Moreover, there are as yet no clear-cut policies and guidelines in place to protect and safeguard the interests and rights of female victims. This is different from Australia, where both boys and girls have been empowered, hence reducing incidences of victimisation of one group over the other. Western girls have been constantly educated about their rights, privileges and equal position in society and hence are in a better position to resist victimisation both at school and in the community. Furthermore, South Australia has in the recent past formulated policies to curb bullying that was becoming common among schoolchildren in country areas (Farrington & Ttofi, 2011). Policies in Australia are readily implemented by schools and all stakeholders in an efficient manner, compared to Saudi Arabia where there is reluctance by educational institutions and stakeholders to either develop or implement new policies.

‘Libby’s Law’, for instance, was legislation passed to restrict both physical and cyber bullying. This is in addition to the South Australian anti-bullying laws of 2017 that have been amended and improved over the years to adequately curb incidents of cyber bullying and defamation. South Australia is therefore more advanced in policy implementation regarding bullying than Saudi Arabia. That country has lagged behind,

largely because of its conservative culture and lack of proper systems and structures that could advocate for anti-bullying policies.

A conclusion can be reached on the basis of the above discussion. Whereas the communities in Saudi Arabia consider certain aspects of bullying as an exhibition of confidence and high self-esteem that should be encouraged, people in South Australia consider the act of bullying to be a form of harassment punishable by law. Answers to the contentious issue in question already point to distinctly polarised perspectives and viewpoints. In this context, the two countries cannot correlate in their policy formulation with regards to bullying. Despite the fact that globalisation and Western culture is slowly infiltrating into Asian culture, Saudi Arabia still has a long way to go towards having robust policies aimed towards fighting bullying, especially in schools. Worse, there are even teachers who feel threatened by bullies in schools because some operate in groups and may pose a significant threat to their (teacher's) safety, both at school and home. With no proper guidelines or policies to handle bullying cases in Saudi, many teachers decide to avoid confronting such pupils, allowing the practice to progress unchecked. South Australia, on the other hand, has experienced a remarkable drop in bullying incidents and this progress can be largely attributed to the formulation of policies that deter children and adolescents from indulging in bullying-related activities. With proper policy formation and its subsequent implementation, the country has been able to control the escalation of bullying incidents.

Based on the above findings, it is evident that bullying is a challenge in Saudi Arabia, just as in other countries in the West. Evidence indicates that bullying affects learners equally at all social levels. However, the Saudi situation is problematic because it is not keeping step with interventions that are being applied universally in other regions of the globe. For instance, the above evidence indicates that there are efforts to counter bullying in the Western countries both through policies and legislation. For instance, it is evident that the situation differs in the UK, Canada, USA, and Australia in terms of the interventions taken by these countries to mitigate the behaviour. Most interestingly, these countries have effectively passed legislation to guide school experiences and interactions in a manner that will likely reduce the occurrence of bullying. However, the same sentiments cannot be said about Saudi Arabia because there is no evidence that major steps to mitigate bullying have yet been achieved. The policies that exist in the kingdom are relatively weak when compared

with policies in the Western countries due to several underlying factors connected with culture and ultra-conservative traditions. It would, hence, be necessary to address the underlying issues to create a more positive environment in which the development of policies and legislation can be pursued. Otherwise, progress in Saudi Arabia on this matter will not keep in step with Western countries. There needs to be a collective responsibility to ensure that the recommended interventions are applied and functional.

Chapter 4: History of the Education System in Saudi Arabia

Researcher Background and Motivations

It was my social work background that firstly motivated me to embark on this journey of current research into bullying in Saudi schools. After graduating from the Department of Social Work at Umm AL-Qura University, I started working as a professional social worker for primary and secondary schools in the city of Mecca, Saudi Arabia. Later on, I was promoted to lecturer back at Umm AL-Qura University, which further drove my ambition to investigate social problems using scientific methods.

During my time as a social worker in schools, I encountered obstacles which created enormous challenges for me. One of the major obstacles was ignorance regarding the social work profession among the education community, where the profession of social work is seen as easy job that everyone can do. This thinking has led many teachers who are not professionally qualified social workers to take up those positions in Saudi schools, resulting in many complex problems in the schools getting worse going unresolved. Such problems are not only disruptive, and unacceptable student behaviours, such as abuse, harassment, or cheating during tests or exams; they also include much more serious problems which lurk beneath the surface — like school bullying. This is an underlying problem that needs to be detected and dealt with decisively by social work professionals.

Many school problems undoubtedly require qualified and skilled workers to provide the right kind of intervention, and this can only be found in professionals with a social work background. It is vital to restore the social work profession to the forefront again where it can show its expertise in dealing with difficult school-based problems. With my background in this field of education, I am able to empower, advocate, motivate, connect, and encourage the community to take the social work profession seriously and accept the knowledge, skills and ability it can bring to difficult school problems.

Social workers play a crucial role in schools. They operate as the link between school and home. The fundamental premise of school social work services is based on helping students who need extra support to meet their basic physical and emotional needs. It can assist those students who want to develop self-confidence and reach their full potential by working together with their families to address complex social issues. Schools in Saudi Arabia can benefit from having qualified social workers contribute their special expertise to ensure students stay connected and engaged in their learning, and, most importantly, feel safe in their school environment. By eliminating barriers to learning, this can only strengthen students' academic progress.

As mentioned earlier, the education system in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has been significantly influenced by religion, and most specifically Islam. According to Elyas and Picard (2010), the history of the Saudi education system shows a clash between traditional and modern systems of education. There have been attempts to modernise the system but at the same time ensure that the traditional Islamic teachings of sharia law are still respected and followed. The education system in the Kingdom therefore has a strong focus on teaching Islamic beliefs and values in madrasahs (schools), with the current system dating from when the government began modernising its infrastructure after the discovery of oil (Prokop, 2003). Since the rise of terrorism, many Western media sources have blamed the basis of the Saudi Arabian education system for focusing too much on Islamic teachings to the point of breeding hate and intolerance amongst its younger generation. Friedman (2001) points out that the Saudi education system has been long seen as responsible for fostering jihadist beliefs and even hatred towards the United States.

The major reason is that the education system historically focused on Sunni teachings, some of the strictest forms of Islamic teachings, which advocate for total adherence to sharia laws and refusing to engage in any form of Western lifestyle. Bar (2006) noted that the 9/11 events and many terrorism events sparked a significant debate, not only in Western countries but also in the Muslim world, regarding the link between Islamic teachings and their effects on students as they grow up. Muslim governments, including the Saud monarchy, have experienced increased pressure when it comes to education systems, with many scholars and Western governments calling for a reform of curricula to move away from the influence of fundamentalist teachings of Islam and sharia law (Onsman, 2010). Many of the reforms in the Saudi

Arabian education system have resulted in an uncritical adoption of Western university curricula, content and teaching practices, which seem to aim at reducing the concentration on religious studies. However, the reformed education system has faced opposition from the religious elites in the Kingdom (called the *Ulama*). This group, who mostly belong to the sharia law sect, are given the responsibility for the educational systems in the Saudi Arabian kingdom.

***Kuttab* and Madrassa Forms of Learning Systems**

A look at the history of the Saudi Arabian education system shows that its practices have been greatly influenced by ancient teachings. Saudi Arabia is, in fact, the original home of Islam. The education system is also influenced by the general education system across the Arabian Peninsula, which focuses on two major formats — traditional and formal. According to Tibi (1998), the traditional education system in Saudi Arabia was religiously centred, with reading and being taught the Quran offered at the pre-school stage before the children would be taught at the local mosques. The curriculum of the Quranic schools and education system focused on teaching young children about the Quran and Hadith, with the key method of learning being to memorise and repeat Quranic verses. As mentioned earlier, the religious duties in Saudi Arabia were left to the religious elites, with minimal government intervention.

The major reason for making the children memorise the verses at such a young age came from the understanding that each parent had the responsibility of passing knowledge of the Quran to the next generation. Prior to the founding of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 1932, other forms of education were severely limited and therefore the only form of education available in the country was religious education. Tibi (1998) noted that formal education, on the other hand came to be organised into the *kuttab* and madrassa forms of learning systems. In the *kuttab* system of learning, education instruction primarily focused on religion, Arabic language and basic arithmetic calculations. The *kuttab* system was for a long time the only type of formal education available in the Arabian Peninsula. In the 20th century, the madrassa replaced the *kuttab* as an updated type of formal education, as it included a broader curriculum and gave more responsibilities to the teacher (Onsman, 2011). The major similarity between the *kuttab* and madrassa learning systems is that the methods of instruction and the role of the teacher (as preacher) remained similar in both learning systems. The madrassa system also emphasised the benefits of the children's education

starting at home and the parents being the child's first teachers. It was the duty of the father to teach the children the word of God, which mostly involved teaching them the phrase 'no God but Allah.' At the age of six, all children were expected to perform ritual prayer, meaning that at that stage they should have learned enough to pray without the guidance of their parents.

The current education system indicates there has been a shift in the management of education in the kingdom. In the past, education was fully managed by religious institutions, to emphasise on the central role of religion on teaching and learning in all schools. This system is totally different from Western systems, where education is hardly influenced by religion. The Ministry of Education (MoE) was established in 1975 to be in charge of education policies in the kingdom (Ministry of Education, 2017). The education system is now managed by the Minister of Education, whose main role is to implement education policy on behalf of the government. The ministry is supported fully by the government, with budgetary allocations to ensure that current policies are implemented. Ultimately, it can be postulated that the existence of the position of the Minister of Education confirms that the kingdom has now removed the power of religious institutions in the education sector and transferred most responsibilities to government departments. This means that the education system has been appropriately structured with responsibilities and job descriptions established and appropriate individuals appointed to carry out those responsibilities.

The Continued Use of *Halgah* as a Method of Teaching

Szyliowicz (1973) compared methods of teaching formal education in Saudi Arabia to the way religious teachings take place in mosques and other religious sites. The comparison was cited in Faruk (2015) as,

The following method of instruction prevailed in medieval Islam through [sic] adaptations were [sic] made to meet the needs of different levels of instruction. Formal delivery of lecture with the lecturer squatting on a platform against a pillar and one or two circles of students seated before him was the prevailing method in higher levels of instruction. The teacher read from a prepared manuscript or a text, explaining the material, and allowed questions and discussion to follow the lecture (p. 50).

Such a method of teaching and learning in formal educational settings resembles the *Halgah* method, which is mostly used in religious gatherings, such in mosques, where the audience listens to the imam preaching while sitting around him.

Another major difference to note in this case is that the interaction between the learners and the teacher is limited, as the students or receivers of knowledge are supposed to learn from the imam by listening attentively, willingly, and exclusively from him. As one can see, this type of teaching and learning has its basis in religion and many teachers still use the system of teaching and learning followed by imams in mosques. In mosques or religious gatherings, the imam or religious leader is seen as the source of knowledge and information, and therefore learners are supposed to listen attentively without interrupting the lesson until it finishes (Harrison, 2008). At the end, learners may then ask for clarifications if there is anything they have not understood. However, this form of education emphasised obedience as the learners were supposed to follow everything taught in the Quran without questioning. Likewise, formal education also featured the same method of learning, with the teacher standing or sitting at the front and the learners surrounding him (Szyliowicz, 1973).

As mentioned earlier, the respect a teacher gets from the learners is as a result of their accepted role as the conduit of knowledge and information. The students or learners look up to the teacher as they acquire knowledge from them, whether religious or formal. The learner–teacher relationship is heavily influenced by the historical Islamic education system, which portrayed religious leaders as the most powerful people in society because they held the responsibility of translating the Quran and helping people understand it (Karmani, 2005). However, the pursuit of knowledge in modern times has shifted and current practices must reflect changes in teaching pedagogy.

Role of a Teacher in the Saudi Arabian Education System

In contemporary times, the public education system in Saudi Arabia has adopted policies that seek improvement in all the fundamental aspects of education: for example, in school buildings, curricula, students and teachers. The dramatic changes in the education system that are underpinning the country's development of infrastructure were pioneered by the late King Abdullah. The King Abdullah projects predominantly emphasise introducing education reforms in Saudi Arabia, with the goal

of ensuring success in the development of public education and support for its stakeholders. Thus, the main focus of the King Abdullah projects is to lead initiatives to ensure teachers and head teachers are empowered and given the appropriate resources to develop the school curriculum. The ultimate aim is to progress and advance the attainment of all students.

Nevertheless, it is worth noting that the King Abdullah project cannot by itself fully achieve the expected educational developments. More effort is still required to improve the quality of teachers as leaders in Saudi Arabia (Alabaas, 2010). Drummond and Al-Anazi (1997) stress that head teachers are the main agents and enforcers of educational reform; hence, the Ministry of Education should focus on creating an enabling environment for them. The ability of head teachers to enforce educational reforms lies in their position within social and occupational structures; they are assigned top-down power, policy, and practices that they will then integrate and devolve to the schools' teachers, followers, parents, and students. As such, the Ministry of Education should ensure teachers have almost complete autonomy regarding supervision, availability of resources for development, teaching approaches, and tailoring of school programs. To some extent, it is believed that if teachers are guaranteed autonomy, undoubtedly there will be improvement in the process of teaching, policy making, learning, curriculum building, leadership, and teacher development. The implication is that there will be continued improvement in the approaches that teachers use at the school and how they are applied in accordance with high-level policies established by the MoE. However, the latest trends in the role of teachers in the kingdom relate back to Islamic teaching where most of the teachers were religious figures, as opposed to the contemporary era, where teachers are trained and employed as secular professionals.

According to Jawad (1993), both the Holy Quran and the *Sunnah* teachings show that Muslims were encouraged to read, write and think critically. As mentioned above, the role of a teacher was greatly influenced by the respect granted to religious leaders, such as imams, who were seen as the purveyors of knowledge in society. Baker (1997) compared the role of a teacher in the Saudi education system to how Muslims look upon Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) (peace be upon him) as the teacher of morals and values. Historically, Muslims view teachers as the embodiment of the teaching of the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH), and therefore a teacher is a highly respected person in

the society. Just as Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) is viewed as carrying the authority of God and is thus respected in society, a teacher also holds a high position in the class, commanding respect from the learners. The rules set in a school setting help to establish order, just as the religious learners are expected to follow a certain code of conduct to be accepted in an institution (Al-Sadan, 2000). A comparison between the American and Saudi Arabian education systems shows a major difference in how teachers are viewed. For instance, a student in the Saudi Arabian education system cannot interrupt a teacher while they are talking, showing how respect is a cherished value in both the classroom and the religious setting.

Consequently, in a comparison of respect between Saudi Arabia and Western countries, it is evident that the Western education system is more liberal in the sense that students do not show the magnified form of respect to the teachers that we see in the Saudi education system. In the Saudi Arabian education system the teacher commands great respect and attention from learners in the same way preachers command the respect of their listeners. Jamjoom (2009) notes that in the setting of the Saudi classroom, the role of a teacher is to provide knowledge to the students; the students' role is to show a quiet respect, to listen to and absorb everything the teacher has to say. Thus the classroom is teacher-centred, since all the attention is focused on the teacher and students are expected to listen attentively without interrupting (Al-Hazmi, 2003). This teacher-centred pedagogy stems from religious teaching methods where learners understand that the imam has all the knowledge and therefore they are in no position to challenge him during the process of learning. Naturally, this gives rise to a system of education where the teacher is viewed as right at all times, even when in the wrong.

How the role of teachers contributes to bullying.

Teachers are the primary agents in the interaction with learners in the school environment, where they stand *in loco parentis* since the parents are not present. Saudi teachers regard themselves as legitimated leaders, and believe they have the right to participate in formulating and implementing strategy and school development plans. However, in practice, they do not play this part and their role is limited to teaching in the classroom. Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) pointed out that when teachers are subjected to authoritarian head teachers, kept in ignorance of the system, overloaded with work hours and debarred from adequate training, they often find themselves in a

relatively weak position to control their classes, let alone offer adequate and appropriate guidance to students. Therefore, there it could be surmised that dealing with issues related to bullying are beyond their scope. This implies that teachers should be empowered appropriately and supported in every aspect by the systems governments have put in place. Barth (2001) confirms that an overloaded timetable and excessive teaching hours imposed on Saudi teachers, coupled with resistance from colleagues and head teachers, overwhelm them and prevent them even attempting to monitor the ethical and moral behaviours of students. Additionally, the educational curriculum is so controlling that it forces teachers to focus on teaching and administering tests rather than attending to the behaviours and social development of students. Thus, Frank (2011) advocated that teachers need to be empowered in regard to their potential roles, professional identity, and agency. If they were provided with resources and opportunities to grow, they might develop the capacity to monitor the personal development of their students.

Saudi Arabian Education Management System

In Saudi Arabia the education system falls under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Higher Education and the General Organization for Technical Education and Vocational Training. According to the World Bank 2008 report, public spending on education by 2004 was 2.7 percent of the GDP and now is at 6.7% of the GDP (Ministry of Higher Education in Saudi Arabia, 2012). Such figures show that the Saudi Arabian government has focused on transforming the education sector from the religion-based system of the past into a modernised and more westernised model. The education system in Saudi Arabia is divided into pre-primary education, primary education, intermediate and secondary education, and tertiary education (Alharbi & Drew, 2014). Pre-primary education covers children aged between three and five years, who are expected to attend kindergarten before formally joining primary schools. The purpose of pre-school education is to provide a sound basis for learning before young children proceed to the primary level of education. At the pre-primary level, the education provided is mainly centred on childhood development, which makes this the fundamental stage where the behaviour of children is shaped in accordance with established standards and values. Primary education in the Saudi Arabian system takes six years, and a child enters first grade at the age of six. At the end of the primary years, the children are sit an examination to obtain the Elementary

Education Certificate, which enables them to proceed to secondary or intermediate school. After passing their final secondary exams, students can either join institutions of higher learning, such as universities, or join technical and vocational education and training programs. Higher education usually takes four years in humanities and social sciences fields, and five to six years in the fields of medicine, engineering, and pharmacy. At this stage a learner can be said to have fulfilled the requirements of the education system in regard to learning and attainment of knowledge and skills in various subjects. Our focus now shifts to higher education in the kingdom and how the Saudi government supports it.

King Saud University was established in 1957 and this year marks the beginning of modern higher education systems in the kingdom. Other universities in the country include Taibah University, Qassim Universities and Taif University, all of which were established under the Seventh Development Plan. Turay (n.d.) traces the development of education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia from historical religious studies to the formal adoption of modernised education in the 1930s. The first Saudi King, Abdul Aziz, set up a publicly funded secondary school system in 1951 as well as establishing the Ministry of Education in 1954 (Darandari et al., 2009). The author also notes that Islamic teachings and religious faith have been dominant in the Saudi education system. However, a comparison between the current and previous education management systems shows that the government has taken control of the education system away from the religious elites (Alebaikan & Troudi, 2010). This also means that the influence of Islamic religion and preachers on the form and type of education provided has been reduced considerably.

To understand how bullying is manifested in educational institutions in Saudi Arabia, there is a need to continually revisit how the educational system in Saudi Arabia is structured. Understanding the education system allows us to evaluate the learning environment and identify some of the pitfalls that affect the learning process at the various levels described above in this section. The elementary level is considered to be very important as it serves as the basis for the development of the whole educational program.. The standard curriculum applied in this level is the same for all students, despite the fact that boys and girls study in different schools. The intermediate level serves children from the age of 12 to 14. Students must pass a final

examination as a prerequisite for the Intermediate School Certificate, which is a requirement for going on to secondary school (Ministry of Education, 2015).

History of girls' and women's education in Saudi Arabia.

According to Amani (2005), the proper understanding of a woman's position in Saudi society requires looking at the historical socioeconomic and political conditions of the country since its inception. Saudi Arabia has historically been a conservative state since its inception, due to the central role it plays in the Arab world and the Islamic faith. As noted earlier, Saudi Arabia is the home of the two holiest shrines in the Islamic religion, Mecca, and Medina. The country is also regarded as the birthplace of Islam, and therefore for a long time the political and socioeconomic activities in the country have been influenced by religious leaders, who continue to play a dominant role in all activities in the country (Almunajjed, 1997). The Wahhabism sect of Sunni Islam developed in the past after the signing of a pact between ibn Saud and ibn Abd-al-Wahhab. Under the pact, the House of Saud would deal with political and economic matters, while ibn Abd-al-Wahhabi descendants would deal with religious matters, which included the education sector. According to historical Islamic culture and its conservative nature, women were considered inferior to men, and mostly their place was regarded to be in the kitchen. The education system in Saudi Arabia focused mostly on educating boys as they grew up, since society viewed them as taking on more responsibilities as men in the future. The law that women could not mix with men, and the perpetuation of such a restriction in society and the workplace, made it very hard for women to pursue education (Solati, 2017). However, Saudi Arabia has begun to change its strict stance on women's education. Current reforms should make it possible for women to attain the highest level of education in the country, the same as their male counterparts. This of course implies that it is necessary to create equity between the two genders in all matters that relate to education.

After years of discrimination and segregation, which disadvantaged women in education, Iffat, the wife of former King Faisal of Saudi Arabia, opened the Dar al-Hanan and Nassif private schools for girls in the city of Jeddah in 1957. Following this, the monarchy changed its stance on girls' education and focused on introducing more educational reforms, including opening more state-operated girls' schools (Aba-Namay, 1993). The push for girls' education was one of the major reforms undertaken by former King Faisal, who aimed to use the country's oil revenues to modernise its

infrastructure and improve its education system. Such reforms went on to cost King Faisal his life, as he was assassinated by his nephew, who was one of the religious fundamentalists protesting reforms that were seen as weakening the influence of religion on socioeconomic and political matters in the kingdom (De Onis, 1975). The history of the education system in Saudi Arabia shows that education was only provided to boys by their fathers from an early age. The religious fundamentalists felt that allowing women to access education meant going against the teachings of the Quran, something that can be considered blasphemous in Islamic culture.

According to AL Rawaf Simmons (1991), there was no formal public education for women in Saudi Arabia before 1960, even though a number of private schools existed offering education for girls and women. Girls from rich families were usually educated at home by private tutors, as religious laws banned men and women or girls and boys to mix freely in public. Girls from low-income families, were sometimes allowed to attend *kuttab* schools, where they learned Islamic teachings from the Quran taught either by a religious woman or blind religious man (AL Rawaf & Simmons, 1991). However, there was no education for the majority of the girls, except the occasional tuition they received at home from their mothers or female relatives. Seleh (1973) notes that the first private school for girls, known as Madrasat AlBanat AlAhliyah, was established in 1941 by immigrants from Indonesia and Malawi. The establishment of the school came after some immigrants visited the country during the pilgrimage period and decided to stay on. The starting of a girls' school by non-Saudis illustrates that at that time, local Saudis were not interested in educating their daughters.

King Saud made a landmark speech in 1959 regarding the issue of women's education, where he promised government support for the education sector in order to increase literacy levels among women and girls (Seleh, 1973). The Royal Decree issued by the King at the time showed that Saudi Arabia was set on modernising its education and culture and that the monarchy had the blessings of the powerful religious leaders known as the Ulama. Despite the King's directions, the formal adoption of education for girls and women did not develop as expected (AL Rawaf & Simmons, 1991). This was due to the fact that most people still thought in a conservative way and many parents were hesitant to send their girls to school, as they viewed this to be contravening the teachings of the Quran. Saudi-Arabian society was made up of three

groups regarding the issue of girls' education. The first group was outright opposed to sending their girls to school, even though they accepted sending them to *Kuttabs* or *madradas* where they could still receive religious education. The second group felt that formal education should be introduced to girls, but religious studies should take centre stage in the curriculum (Al Rawaf & Simmons, 1991). The third group was the most liberal of the three, and it wanted girls to be able to study in higher education, including university and college level.

The history of the Saudi Arabian education system shows that higher education for girls and women was established much later than for boys and men. According to Al Rawaf and Simmons (1991), the universities of Saudi Arabia, just like the schools, were initially developed to educate men only, as men and women were not allowed to interact with each other freely, especially in public. However, the increased demand by women for higher education forced universities and colleges to open centres for women's studies or female campuses. For instance, the Center for Girl's Studies at the King Saud University was opened in 1976 and focused on teaching a range of courses such as English, history, Arabic language and geography (Al Rawaf & Simmons, 1991). Despite such positive changes in the provision of education, some conservative traditions have persisted and still complicate the matter. For instance, female students could not be taught by male teachers directly; therefore, even today, the teaching process takes place with the aid of audio-visual technology, meaning female students do not interact with male tutors directly. Moreover, stereotypes negatively affecting how women see their career prospects mean that most of them are not even motivated to advance their studies to college or university level.

According to Bahgat (1999), the education systems in Saudi Arabia and other Gulf monarchies have failed historically due to a range of factors. Even though, since the discovery of oil, Gulf monarchies have focused on expanding educational facilities and encouraging more children to enrol in schools, the quality of education offered does not meet the complex modern needs of Gulf societies. The major factors affecting educational systems in the Gulf, and more specifically in Saudi Arabia, include a mismatch between traditional and contemporary learning, the imbalance between indigenous and expatriate labour forces, and gender inequality, leading to a gap between the achievements of men and women. The creation and expansion of the public education system in Saudi Arabia can be attributed to the rise in oil revenues,

and not necessarily to a drive to meet the educational needs of the population. The sudden expansion of oil revenues also meant that the government acted to spend the money before having a well-articulated development plan for the education system.

El-Sanabary (1994) notes that the development and expansion of the Saudi Arabian education system has disadvantaged females as compared to males because many people in the kingdom hold ultra-conservative views relating to the Islamic faith. The model of female education in Saudi Arabia is unique, even when compared to education systems in other Gulf countries. For instance, the Saudi education system features a dual system of male and female education, a gender-specific educational policy that puts more emphasis on women's domestic functions and where schools and colleges are still gender-segregated. The expansion of the education system in Saudi Arabia has improved the situation for women, but it does not necessarily alter ingrained gender and power relations in the country. Many citizens in the kingdom are still highly traditional, and will oppose any moves to promote more physical interaction between men and women, even in schools (El-Sanabary, 1994). One can see that the conservative nature of Saudi society continues to disadvantage its education system which is mostly driven by oil revenues and not designed to solve the socioeconomic and political problems affecting the Gulf kingdom. Baki (2004) has also explained that the Saudi-Arabian gender-segregated higher education system is ideally suited to transmit traditional societal expectations to the employment sector.

Finally, the education sector's focus on traditional thinking means that it continues to be backward, instead of driving reform in a country which is in dire need of socioeconomic and political change. For instance, the belief that women should not interact freely with men comes from ancient custom, but the current education system has focused on maintaining such beliefs in the name of following the Islamic faith. It is clear that the historical role of the education system in Saudi Arabia focused on religious education, which favoured males and disadvantaged women (Azuri, 2006). The current educational system has not changed much from the ancient system, as the same forms of discrimination continue to be practised. A modern society should be instead focused on reforms, both economic and political.

In girls' schools, the type of bullying taking place there might not be as extremely violent as in boys' schools, but it still has significant effects on victims. In relation to the gender issues, girls are actually more likely to be affected by bullying

incidents because they belong to 'the weaker sex'. In his arguments, SooHoo (2006) described a process known as 'othering' that entails the determination of the person who is valued and another one who is not valued, which then leads to the creation of a social hierarchy that is founded on privilege. Girl-girl bullying can be said to be psychological in nature due to the actions carried out during the bullying process. For instance, female bullying mainly entails gossiping, name-calling, elimination from social circles, and character assassination (Chu, 2005; Meadows et al, 2005). Another key feature of girl-girl bullying is relational: there are no physical altercations, the attacks against each other are wholly psychological (Dellasega & Yumei, 2006). Since the attacks are mainly emotional, it is more difficult to identify bullying among girls as opposed to males, where most bullying incidents are physical in nature. It also differs from male bullying because girls tend to split into groups that end up separating from other girls for various reasons that seem important to themselves. Furthermore, bullying among girls is more likely to go unnoticed due to lack of noticeable physical injury.

Girl-girl bullying makes an interesting comparison with boy-boy or boy-girl bullying. Several studies have effectively highlighted the importance of the problem by focusing on bullying incidents that particularly affect girls at school. However, most of these studies relate to the Western context as opposed to the Eastern context. Unfortunately, very limited research has so far been conducted on the topic, and there is no better understanding of these incidents in Saudi Arabia. This also means that girl-girl bullying has rarely been reported in the kingdom, as opposed to other countries. However, research findings are probably applicable in this context despite the present lack of empirical studies.

Saudi Arabian Culture

To explore the impact of culture, in terms of political and social norms, and religious structures on education and practices, we need first to comprehend the importance of Islam, especially regarding how it stimulates and manages every phase of social development in the kingdom. It is with utmost certainty we can presume that the crux of the culture of Arabia rests not in history but in the words of the language of the Holy Book, 'the Qur'an' (Alfassi, 1979). Saudi Arabia is considered the holiest land in Islam, as it harbours most of the holiest sites in Islam; most significantly, it is the

destination for the Hajj, the largest pilgrimage in the world. It is also noted that the culture of Saudi Arabia is to some extent predisposed to tribal customs and morals.

According to Vidyasagar and Rea (2004), the Saudis regard Islam to be the truthful belief, as well as a standard, the norm, a constitution, and a multifaceted style of living. Saudi Arabia is administered by Islamic law; hence, Islamic law underpins an education system that integrates educational philosophies with Islamic teachings. The outside world does acknowledge the Islamic culture of Saudi Arabians but, despite the various social changes evident in Saudi Arabia, it sees that Saudi society remains in firm alignment with Islamic law. Despite the many positive shifts that have permeated various aspects of society, it is evident that gender equality is an area of slow development. For instance, Alfassi (2009) argues that the modern Saudi woman still has limited opportunities regarding employment and access to education and training. To some extent the inequalities witnessed are the result of the predominance of gender segregation in the culture. Thus, the main challenge for Saudi culture is still how to eliminate the 'veil of segregation' to allow all people to live, study and work on an equal social platform, irrespective of gender.

The Impact of Culture on Education

Saudi Arabia is firmly focused on improving its citizens' lives in all facets, including educational, social, and humanitarian aspects. The richness of Arabic and Islamic heritage, with its homogeneity, history and cultural foundation, serves as the social fabric that unites the country in pursuing social development.

According to Alhareth and Al Dighrir (2015), Saudi Arabia has been at the forefront in enforcing strategies that have brought about a significant expansion of both public and private education. These developments have been well received on the whole by Saudis, who understand the relevance of good education to social progress. The growing focus on higher education helps scholars to understand, analyse and address emergent social challenges, moral dilemmas and complex social problems.

Consequently, Alajlan and Peterson (2013) purport that Islamic philosophy is inherent in all aspects and practices of education in Saudi Arabia. Evidently, the philosophy entails values and norms that stem from the key foundations of knowledge of Islam, and the Qur'an. Notably, education reforms in Saudi Arabia within the last decade have emphasised cultural aspects of the country, especially when addressing

gender issues. According to the Ministry of Education (2015), the number of academic institutions, ranging from primary to tertiary levels, has increased and the number of enrolled students has surged. More and more students have enrolled to attain knowledge and it is certain that students of the female gender are helping to drive enrolments up.

According to Al-Bakr (2015), the need for knowledge has led the Saudis to devise an education system and practices that conform to its special social and cultural norms. Thus, it is argued that the notable growth in positive education aspects in Saudi Arabia has been offset by cultural aspects, especially religion, that dictate most of the country's social and political norms. Hence, due to the various constraints that stem from religion, it can be admitted that to overhaul education completely to reach international standards would be a challenge. This is the case because Saudi society is tied to religious, political, and social norms which base their policies upon Islamic ideals which in turn influence the education system. The cycle of cultural influences continues indefinitely; the education system is also tied to educational institutions and academicians, whose policies and activities are strictly monitored by religious entities.

Although it is hardly covered in the Saudi context, research has found a relationship between bullying and religion and culture. According to Coulter, Herrick, Friedman and Stall (2016), where bullying is practised most often, the behaviour is not shunned but is rather approved among peers. Thus, when the environment promotes such behaviours, individuals tend to practise that particular behaviour without hesitation, from the fear of being termed cowards if they do not act in accordance with what might be seen as the behavioural norm. Furthermore, according to Sentse et al. (2015), pro-bullying also occurs in schools, especially by students who want to get approval from their peers, and especially when they are of low status. This means that when such a culture dominates, the students are more likely to approve bullying as a norm. In such cases, the victims might not report incidents of bullying, and the teachers might not take any action on the perpetrators, as the behaviour has been normalised. As already stated, bullying in Saudi Arabia has been normalised because of inadequate interventions by the teachers. This has created a detrimental culture that does not foster oneness and cohesion among the learners. Continuation of this culture is likely to lead to higher rates of bullying across the kingdom, which may make interventions even more difficult.

Religion-oriented culture.

According to Alajlan and Peterson (2013), Islamic law and religious authority have pervasive influence on all domains of Saudi society. Several Saudis have acknowledged that their religious ideals act as a constraint to them developing some educational strategies. For instance, the culture's religious philosophy precludes activities where male students might communicate with female students and female students might connect with male students. This cultural norm has been routinely accepted, since Saudi Arabia is a country with no division between religion and state (Hussain, Wallace & Cornelius, 2007).

Religion does infiltrate almost every corner of Saudi society. For instance, Saudi educational institutions are monitored by religious 'police' with the aim of ensuring the institutions are properly enforcing the ideals of Islamic law. Academic institutions have an obligation to develop and implement policies that are predominantly allied with Islamic law. However, some critics have argued that the involvement of religious police in running educational institutions limits these institutions' ability to encourage creativity and innovation, considering that any innovation is required to conform to moral and ethical policies. Hence, any new research, or any introduction of foreign knowledge, is counter-checked to ensure it meets the parameters of religion, prior to being launched. The same applies to foreigners who want to be involved in teaching services in Saudi institutions. They have to operate within the Islamic philosophy and ideology and must modify their pedagogy to fit in with the society's cultural expectations. In relation to this, if bullying exists in the school environment, then even foreign teachers will have to accept it as the norm.

Personal and professional values.

To some extent, personal and professional values are interrelated and every person possesses them in different measures. It is the particular extent and mix of these values that differentiates people. According to Laird-Magee, Gayle and Preiss (2015), individuals have core values that shape their internal self-concept. This means that values guide individuals' actions in all aspects of their lives. Therefore, they are personalised to the extent that they reflect the lived realities of the people that possess them. In addition, personal values dictate an individual's professional ethics (Laird-Magee, Gayle & Preiss, 2015). This indicates that holding professional values is relevant ethically as it demonstrates the ability of an individual to make decisions

based on moral principles. This aspect of professional values is highly applicable to social work practice. For instance, according to Richter-Hauk and Arias (2008), the Code of Ethics in social work requires all social workers to willingly adhere to professional values during their practice. Social workers are given the opportunity for structured reflection on personal values and ethics that apply when they interact with other people. This means that personal values are directly linked to ethical decision-making processes in the social work profession. Ultimately, it is desirable for social work practitioners to possess both personal and professional values for effective community partnership.

Personal and professional values, and their apparent relationship with ethics and morals are perceived differently by different people. Discussion on this topic from the Western and Eastern perspectives is essential to reach a proper understanding of how values are perceived by individuals from different cultures and beliefs. From a Canadian perspective, a value is linked with an individual's capacity to evaluate (Drolet & Sauvageau, 2016). This means that holding a value indicates the capacity of that individual to behave ethically. However, the literature does not confirm whether this is the case in the rest of the Western world. In the UK a study was conducted by Sunley and Locke (2010) on personal values and professional values of teachers and an overview of the literature since 2010 was provided. According to this study, teachers are required to adhere to high moral and professional morals, as they act as role models to learners (Sunley & Locke, 2010). Generally, the study concluded from the reviewed articles that values are necessary in the education discipline. There might be some difference between education and social work; however, it is evident that both professions are underpinned by the personal and professional values held by the people practising them. However, there is a belief that both teaching and social work are convergent when dealing with social interactions. Therefore, values should be considered in all aspects of practising in the two professions.

It is also useful to consider this topic from an Australian perspective. In a study by Chang and Lin (2008), the authors developed and discussed the relationship between personal values and leadership. According to the study, values play a significant role in shaping the behaviour of leaders. It is also known, as Chang and Lin (2008) acknowledge, that behaviours and personal values differ from culture to culture. However, as argued by Smith, Peterson and Schwartz (2002), when studied

cross-culturally, it becomes more difficult to define and classify behaviours. This means that behaviours must be uniquely classified based on their cultural underpinnings, but they can be studied for specific purposes. In this regard, the Western values that determine the behaviour of leaders are likely to be different in the Chinese context and, indeed, in the Saudi Arabian context. Therefore, it is essential to understand the cultures of different societies and how those cultures shape the personal and professional values of the people. In this case, a further exploration of the personal and professional values of people from Muslim regions will create a perfect juxtaposition.

Congruence of Islam with social work values.

Evidently, religion plays a central role in the social wellbeing of Islamic countries in the Arabian Gulf. According to Sloan et al. (2017), Islam is central to informing social work policies and practices within Islamic societies. This still happens even when some countries have attempted to delink social work practice from religion and when they have secularised it, so that scientific approaches are used to understand people and analyse the problems they face. This route has been taken by different countries in the West in a way that is not meant to denigrate the role of religion in social work practice, but rather to ensure that the government can effectively meet the social needs of its citizens (Sloan et al., 2017). Unfortunately, there has been resistance to this notion in the Gulf countries because of the very strong belief that religion should play a central role in social work practice. On the positive side, the values that are enshrined in the Islamic religion are actually congruent with the overall values seen in social work practice all over the world. Moreover, it is important to remember that social work practices in the Gulf region are influenced by collectivism, whereby all social norms are predetermined and set. In the same way, individuals within any society are required to adhere the values that are inherent in the social structures of that society.

Islam plays a very significant role in establishing cohesion and unity among people in all aspects of their lives (Ahmad, 2009). According to this author, unity is created within Islamic culture by considering *tawhid* as a universal principle of unity to make life more meaningful in political, social, and personal aspects (Ahmad, 2009). Cultural values within Islamic societies require individuals to follow the path of fairness, equity, and give-and-take in dealings with others; these values are considered as key elements of *ummah*. Based on *ummah*, Muslims are required to take on ethical

obligations towards other people in their surroundings; for example, helping people that are in need of help and consoling their distress in an appropriate manner.

Specifically, within the Islamic realms and the Holy Book of Qur'an, a believer's commitment to Allah is demonstrated by being ethical and being obligated to others in a way that shuns any kind of violence to others or murder (Ahmad, 2009). This obligation of Muslims not to cause harm to others is directly related to the topic of bullying. Bullying other people is clearly an example of the failure by the perpetrator to adhere to the teachings of the Qur'an, shunning violence against other people. Therefore, it clearly indicates that Muslims should be at the forefront in protecting their peers instead of bullying them. It also means that *ummah* can be used as a reference source by all Muslims to shun acts of bullying, as the practice is against Allah. Certainly, one could expect that the level of bullying in schools should be very low as this aspect of the Islamic culture is taught across the whole of the Islamic region.

However, it would be appropriate to be more specific and address the issue, not from the general Islamic perspective, but from the perspective of Saudi Arabia. Being specific to Saudi Arabia is essential in this case, because this is the particular context in which the social problem of school bullying is being addressed. Therefore, identifying the personal and professional values of individuals within the kingdom will be necessary to help establish their ideas about the perpetuation of violence within their social environments. Social work practice has a key role to play in instances where personal and professional values are likely to compromise social interactions within social realms. There are a few studies on social work practice in Saudi Arabia that can be referred to in investigating the role of values. For instance, the study by Albrithen and Dziegielewski (2016) investigated the issue of social work ethics in Saudi hospitals, mainly focusing on hospital social workers. The study argues that social workers usually come face-to-face with vulnerable people; thus, they are meant to apply ethical decision-making skills to achieve positive outcomes while interacting with these clients. This means that social workers are required to apply professional values that guide their practice in interacting with their clients, especially in the hospital setting.

Albrithen and Dziegielewski (2016) raise a number of issues among which is the consideration of culture as a determining factor in the interaction between social workers and the clients being served. For instance, in Saudi Arabia, it has long been

considered that universal ethical principles should be applied unconditionally to respect the cultural beliefs of social work clients. These findings support the arguments in Albrithen and Briskman (2014) that ethical approaches are relevant in social work practice because they are central to the development of professional practice. This implies that social workers are required to adhere to the highest standards of ethics in performing their roles. Unfortunately, ethical standards have not been fully anchored in Saudi Arabian social work practice as they are in the Western world. Therefore, social workers in the kingdom are likely to find it problematic to abide by the desired values as outlined in the ethical standards of social work practice. This also means that there is a likelihood that Saudi social work practitioners may possess strong personal values but may not be fully educated in the professional values that are universally accepted by international social work bodies. The above arguments have mainly applied in areas other than the school environment, but they are related to some extent, as social work values cut across the board and apply in every social context, irrespective of the type of clients being dealt with. Unfortunately, there is limited research on the application of social work values in Saudi schools, apart from the suggestions that social work practice should adopt approaches such as psychological counselling to promote the wellbeing of learners within the school community.

Personal values and violence.

There is a direct relationship between personal values and violence against children, as reported by research in the Saudi context. For instance, according to research by Al-Eissa et al. (2016), there is a direct relationship between violence against children and their later development into adolescence and adulthood. Traumatic events, such as abuse and neglect, promote unhealthy behaviours among children as they develop, as found by Almuneef et al. (2014). This implies that adults should always hold high moral standards and avoid compromising their personal values at the expense of children. Their personal values should always be in accordance with the good morals desired by society. For instance, in some cases, child abuse leads to the perpetration of violence by the victims of the violence (Al-Eissa et al., 2016). Hence, care should be taken to always ensure that children have positive experiences during their developing years to avoid detrimental events as they engage with others later. Any violence perpetrated against children can create a situation whereby they enact similar experiences while interacting with their peers. This also relates to the problem of

bullying, as children with these experiences are more likely to perpetuate similar actions on their peers, therefore, becoming bullies themselves at school or in any other environment.

The situation regarding child welfare in Saudi Arabia is perhaps unique. A past study by Al-Eissa (1998) posited that maltreatment of children is unrecognised, understudied, and underreported and was reported to be rare among social problems in the kingdom. However, the KSA government has been proactive in recognising there is a problem, but only in recent times. For instance, there are two recent Acts legislated that focus on the issue of child maltreatment. The first one is known as *The Social Protection Act 2013*. This is focused on the management of domestic violence cases in the kingdom, including maltreatment (Al-Eissa et al., 2016). The second law in connection with this problem is known as *The Child Rights and Protection Act 2014*, and was enacted by the government to protect children from maltreatment (Al-Eissa et al., 2016). This means that there is a joint effort, through the implementation of the two laws, aimed at protecting children from damage during their crucial years of development and hence enabling them to acquire the desired moral values. In such instances, having positive moral values is vital for the healthy development of children. This shows that the KSA government is committed to end child maltreatment. This is also likely to create an environment that prohibits violence towards children, which can so easily culminate in the act of bullying.

The literature on values has set a precedent on how people, as social beings, should behave within their social systems and interactions. They are required to hold respectable personal and professional values to enrich their relationships and advance their moral ideologies. This applies especially to social workers, who are required to practise morally to demonstrate their professionalism. Moreover, appropriate personal values need to be imparted in young children to enable them to adopt desirable behaviours according to wider society. Children should learn to adhere to the social norms that are also in accordance with Islamic values, and these include avoiding the perpetration of violence against others. This is the beginning of combating bullying in Saudi schools. However, the moral basis for avoiding violence must be continually reinforced.

Generally, this chapter has illustrated the various factors that relate to bullying behaviours. As we have seen, undesirable behaviours can be easily normalised in a

society if members believe that they are acceptable, even though they might not be appropriate when observed from another perspective. Therefore, in Saudi Arabia, to some extent, bullying has been normalised by the culture, even though the Islamic religion is against violence. It is the role of teachers to ensure that learners believe in the culture of peace to rein in the prevalence of school bullying. Social workers are in a position to help teachers in dealing with behaviours that are characterised as bullying in schools. However, the collaboration should involve other professionals, such as school counsellors, to ensure that long-lasting solutions are found and applied consistently.

Chapter 5: Method

Research Design

This study adopted a qualitative design to investigate responses to school bullying in Saudi Arabia and how these responses are reflective of education policies on bullying. Qualitative research is described as a form of research whose primary purpose is to develop ‘an understanding of human systems’ (Savenye & Robinson, 2004, p. 1046). In qualitative research, the researcher is able to learn about the capabilities, attitudes and perceptions, and world views of the respondents. In this case, school bullying is a research area regarding human behaviour that is of great relevance within the realms of the social sciences; therefore, the use of a qualitative paradigm to explore this topic is justified.

Basing this study on a qualitative research approach, I have chosen to use an interpretivist theoretical perspective, which ‘attempts to understand and explain human and social reality’ (Crotty, 2009, p. 67). The inductive nature of the research topic informed the choice of the methodology. The methodological approach incorporates a thematic analysis of the inductively obtained data. Deductive approaches are common practice in quantitative research, but qualitative research favours inductive approaches, because they allow the data to speak for itself. A thematic analysis was then used to add to current theories on the social issues of school bullying.

The study is exploratory research. The primary concern of exploratory research is to discover and generate or construct a theory (Jupp, 2006, p. 110). According to Schutt (2006, p. 14), exploratory research ‘seeks to find out how people get along in the setting under question, what meanings they give to their actions, and what issues concern them’. The present study is in line with this observation. The study seeks to investigate the historical understandings that have shaped the development of bullying in schools in Saudi Arabia. It is anticipated that, through the current study, some answers will be found on why bullying takes place in schools in Saudi Arabia and what informs the occurrence of this behaviour. This relates to the relevance of qualitative research in responding to the ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions on a particular problem, as

evidenced by Creswell (2014). Hence, through this approach, it was possible to explore the research problem by directly interacting with the research participants and to draw information from their personal accounts. As a result, it was possible to analyse subjective data from the research participants and then compare the results with the existing evidence in the literature to develop a richer appreciation of bullying in a Saudi Arabian context. The methodological approach taken in this study will be discussed later.

Setting and Sampling

The study was carried out in the city of Mecca, which is in the west of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The research was carried out in an urban context, with all schools adhering to the Islamic culture. The study recruited participants from six different schools, which included principals, deputy principals, teachers and social workers, as well as two policy officers from the Education Department in Mecca. These participants came from primary, secondary, and high schools in the city of Mecca. Since only six schools were used in the study, the identity of these schools will remain anonymous in order to protect the confidentiality of the participants. Ethics approval for the research was granted by the Flinders University's Social and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee (Appendix A).

According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, sampling is defined as, 'the act, process, or technique of selecting a representative part of a population for the purpose of determining parameters or characteristics of the whole population'. For the purpose of this study, the technique of purposeful sampling was preferred. Patton (2015) is helpful in his discussion of this technique. In describing purposeful sampling, Patton (2015) argues that, 'the logic and power of purposeful sampling lie in selecting information-rich cases for in-depth study. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the inquiry. Studying information-rich cases yields insights and an in-depth understanding' (p. 264). To add to this, purposeful sampling enables the researcher to select participants who are believed to be highly knowledgeable about the topic of study (Gentles, Charles, Ploeg & McKibbin, 2015). Therefore, the participants should meet certain inclusion criteria, to be selected by the researcher, as the most preferred custodians of the needed information. Through this sampling technique, 39 individuals were derived from the general population, a number that was believed to be appropriate

for exploring the phenomenon under study. This sample size seems to be thin, but it is sufficient for this type of research, unlike in quantitative research where huge numbers of participants are needed to participate (Gentles, et al. 2015, p. 1782). The reason for this is that, unlike in quantitative research, where participants are representatives of the general population, sampling in qualitative research only serves the purpose of collecting data that will be used to understand a particular phenomenon of interest to the researcher. Hence, in this case, 39 (35 male and 4 female) participants were chosen to illustrate the complexities surrounding the social problem of school bullying. The four categories of the participants are as represented in the following table.

Table 5.1: Transcription in translation: (Male participants)

I = interview		FG = Focus group		
Name of the institute	Social worker	Principal or deputy principal	Teachers	Policy officer
1. A school	I 1-1	I 2-1	2 I 1-7 I 1-8	0
2.B school	I 1-2	I 2-2	FG1-8	0
3. C school	I 1-3	I 2-3	FG2-9	0
4. E school	I 1-4	I 2-4	FG3-4	0
5. unidentified	I 1-5	0	0	0
6. unidentified	I 1-6	0	0	0
7. Education Department in the City of Mecca	0	0	0	I 3-1 I 3-2
Total of	6+2=8	4	21	2
	35			

Table 5.2: Transcription in translation: (Female participants)

I = interview		FG = Focus group		
Name of the Institute	Social worker	Teacher	Policy officer	
unidentified	I 4-1	0	0	
unidentified	I 4-1	0	0	
unidentified	I 4-1	0	0	
5. Education Department in the City of Mecca (Female section)	0	0	1-41	
Total of	3	0	1	4

Table 5.3: Individual interview:

Name of the Institute	Social worker	Principal or deputy principal	Policy officer
1. A Primary School	1	1	0
2. B Secondary School	1	1	0
3. C High School.	1	1	0
4. D Secondary School.	1	1	0
5. unidentified	1	0	0
6. unidentified	1	0	0
7. Education Department in the City of Mecca.	0	0	2
Total of	6	4	2
	12 individual interviews		

Table 5.4: Focus group:

name of the Institute	Teachers
1. A Primary School	2
2. B Secondary School	8
3. C High School.	9
4. D Secondary School.	4
Total of	23

Acknowledgements

Female participants: There are limited numbers due to cultural restrictions of a male interviewer conducting interviews with females. Hence, to collect data from the female participants I had to rely on a female colleague to help to collect the data.

Either a principal or deputy principal was recruited from each of the four schools selected within the city of Mecca, to create a total number of four. The deputies participated in the research in the absence of the principal. Principals and deputy principals are regarded as the face of the school. They are experienced in the education system and can be considered to provide both an official and administrative perspective on the issue of bullying. Furthermore, deputy principals interact more with the learners as compared principals, who mainly play administrative roles. Also, they are also not always at school but the deputies are mostly present at school, which makes it easier to access them at any given time.

Between two and nine teachers were recruited from each of the four male schools (n = 21). The teachers were all aged over 25 years and had work experience of at least three years. Teachers were included in the study because they are involved directly with the students and can provide a more pragmatic perspective on bullying. Furthermore, teachers are always present at the school and can be accessed easily. This means that they are exposed to the behaviours of learners and they can provide first-hand information regarding their experiences with bullying incidents that have occurred under their watch. Three policy officers were included, two male and one female (n=3). Lastly, some social workers were included in the study, among which six were male and three females (n=9). The selection of social workers was justified because they are also involved in handling social behaviours among learners. On the other hand, policy makers were selected because they are involved with government in the development of official policies. Or rather, they make suggestions on the policies that should be developed to deal with specific problems, such as bullying in this case.

Justifications for Participant Selection

The teacher

A teacher plays a key role in the process of education, which seeks to enrich society, in collaboration with the school, by raising students' achievement and motivation to learn. The teacher's role is not limited to explaining the lesson or the delivering information, but he/she also provides guidance to the learners. This is why the teacher's job is most important throughout history. For instance, the teacher is working continuously to raise the motivation of learners, promote the development of the community, and to shift the teacher's role from being the sole provider of the educational process to being an assistant and facilitator. The teacher also has a role in fostering the overall growth of students. It is well known in the modern educational age that the student is the focus of the educational process in its various dimensions. This process aims at, first and foremost, the overall growth of the student 'spiritually, mentally, and cognitively.' All this requires the teacher to ensure his goals, whether daily, weekly, monthly or annual, are met, and these include behavioural goals. The teacher should always strive for professional growth, development and innovation in the knowledge of contemporary professions. This requires him to be aware of modern methods and techniques to transfer knowledge to his students effectively and positively.

The role of the school leader (principal) in relation to teachers

The teacher should have acquired the necessary knowledge, skills and experience to improve his performance and develop his work. The school leader will involve teachers in enriching the curriculum and conducting the training courses needed by the teacher and supervising his duties, planning, methods, strategies, time and means. Additionally, the other roles of the principal are to make follow-up visits between teachers within the school and in other schools, and urge the teacher to participate positively and cooperatively and involve him in activities, plans and school decisions, and provide facilities and support for teachers and students. He is also supposed to ensure that the students attain personal growth and social adjustment, influence the behaviour of the teachers, push for achievement and excellence through persuasion and motivation, introduce scientific research and development, encourage the teacher to access new information, and generate innovative solutions continuously until the teacher attains a high degree of performance and proficiency. He is also to ensure excellence and creativity. All of these responsibilities underline the value of the teacher in school and society, because all the interactions, problems, and issues of society are reflected in this role.

The role of the principal (school leader) in relation to students

Student welfare must be the focus of the school principal because the goal is to develop a well-educated generation and prepare students to be effective members of the community. Principals also provide students with information on skills, values and trends, and promote scientific thinking, so they can lead productive lives and solve their problems. They collaborate with the local community to improve students' access to outside concepts and information. Furthermore, they need to create a positive environment in the school that values creativity and friendship. This also involves leaders refining their talents, participating in councils and school activities, and seeking their views and ideas. Leaders introduce suitable behavioural models and live within the community to help the student shape their future.

The role of the principal (school leader) towards parents

Parents should be fully involved in how their children are raised, how they behave, and their general health. They meet children's basic needs to help them adapt to the local and school environment, providing guidance and support. There must be communication between the school leader and parents to support the student's

academic performance and other achievements, to solve problems and involve parents in activities and seminars. This involves the provision of courses, lectures or exhibitions aimed at good decision making and planning for the future of their children. Principals encourage parents to support the school materially and morally throughout their child's education.

The role of the principal (school leader) towards the community

The school is no longer able to achieve its objectives in isolation. Schools that are open to their local community are able to achieve their objectives, in coordination with the individuals and institutions that make up the local community. School leaders can bring in community expertise to accomplish some projects in the school. Community campaigns, such as for public health, harvest celebrations give students valuable experience and can strengthen the relationship between the school and the community. This leads to development of society, promotes awareness, and enables schools to keep pace with scientific trends and new technology. It is also a way to provide psychological and spiritual reassurance to help students feel they have a close relationship with their community. The head of the school coordinates many extracurricular courses during holidays in cooperation with companies, institutions and banks.

Ethical Considerations of the Study

Ethical considerations are usually compulsory in studies where human participants are involved. According to Creswell (2014), ethical considerations are especially important in qualitative research to ensure that the research participants will not be harmed by being subjected to the research process. First, the researcher obtained ethics approval to conduct the research from Flinders University's Social and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee (Appendix A). Additional permission was obtained from the Education Department of the city of Mecca (Appendix C). It was important to seek these permissions ahead of the study to ensure safety of participants and to avoid conflict with the authorities. After seeking ethics approval from the relevant authorities, the next step was to seek informed consent from schools selected by the Education Department and, last but not least, seek knowledgeable consent from the participants (Appendix B). They were requested to sign consent forms after being presented with the participant information sheets and assured of their confidentiality and anonymity in a process as clarified in Wiles (2012, p. 41). Issues of confidentiality

and anonymity underpin professional research practice in the social science field. In this case, the participants were assured that their anonymity would be maintained and the confidentiality of their information assured. They were informed that the findings of the research would be used for research purposes only and that they would not be accessible to third parties not directly involved in the research process. They were assured that there would be no harm incurred in participating in the research. They were also reminded that they had the right to withdraw from the research at any time for any reason.

Data Collection

As indicated above, the research is qualitative in design and data were collected from the primary sources. The two main qualitative data collection techniques used in the research were individual in-depth interviews and focus groups. The interview questions are included in Appendix B.

Questions for Individual Interviews

Interview heading

‘Responses to school bullying in Saudi Arabia and how these responses are reflective of the educational policies on bullying’

Introductory Questions

- What prompted you to respond to the invitation?
- What is your understanding of school bullying?

Schools and Education Department

- Are there policies in place around school bullying?
- Are these policies created by the Education Department and passed on to schools?
- Are the policies mandatory?
- How are the policies implemented?
- Who is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the policies?
- Are there statistics collected around the incidents of school bullying at School?

Questions for Focus Groups

Questionnaire heading: 'Responses to school bullying in Saudi Arabia and how these responses are reflective of the educational policies on bullying'

Introductory Questions

- What prompted you to respond to the invitation?
- What is your understanding of school bullying?

Schools and Education Department

- Do teachers encounter bullying amongst students at school?
- What behaviours do teachers identify as bullying behaviour?
- How do students who engage in bullying come to a teacher's attention?
- How do teachers respond to bullying?
- Are their responses mandated by school policies, by Education Department policies or by personal understanding of correct behaviour?
- Are there therapeutic programs in place for students who experience bullying or for those who are identified as exhibiting bullying behaviour?
(Appendix B)

The Interviews

Interviews are research techniques that generate raw data about a certain phenomenon of interest through the interaction of two people in a certain setting (Olsen, 2012). They enable a researcher to get a glimpse of the experiences of different people (Seidman, 2013; Gubrium, et al., 2012). For this particular study, the interview would enable the researcher to obtain significant amounts of data on school bullying and its policies from the selected participants. Another justification for adopting the interview approach is that it has certain advantages, such as cost-effectiveness, efficiency, and simplicity (Creswell, 2014). Moreover, emotional feelings can be captured through the use of interview to enhance and strengthen the research findings from both verbal and non-verbal perspectives (Creswell, 2014).

The participants were split into two main groups to be investigated either through the interview approach or focus group approach. The participants who took part in the individual interview process were social workers, principals or deputy principals, and the policy officer in the Education Department in the Region of Mecca. Initially, during the sampling process, participants were informed of the interview process, their role in the interview process, and the time and location of the interviews. This was intended to prepare them to participate in the interviews and to avoid affecting the credibility and reliability of the research findings. All interview sessions took place in an urban setting within Mecca. The principals/deputy principals were scheduled to participate in an interview held at four different schools, and social workers were scheduled to participate in interviews held at six schools. Each principal/deputy principal was interviewed individually in the principal's or deputy principal's office within the school. For social workers, it was considered that those who worked close to the identified schools should be interviewed in those schools. An empty room was selected in which to hold the interviews. The policy officers were interviewed in their office at the Education Department in the City of Mecca. All participants were contacted a day before the interviews to reaffirm their willingness to participate and to inform them about the time and location of the meeting. An individual interview lasted approximately 30 to 60 minutes. Note-taking and/or audio tape-recording were considered to be the most appropriate techniques for documenting the interview responses. However, according to King and Horrocks (2010, p. 44), consent ought to be obtained first, prior to audio recording the conversation between the researcher and the participants, for reasons of confidentiality. Handwritten records may be used if the interviewee does not give consent to be audio-recorded or in situations when the recording equipment malfunctions. Thus, consent to audio-record the interview was reaffirmed prior to each interview. For reasons of confidentiality the individual interviews are not included in the thesis. They were, however, viewed in translation by both supervisors (Appendix C).

Focus Groups

Focus groups are one-time meetings of a group of people who are involved in a face-to-face group interview with the researcher (Carey & Asbury, 2016, p. 14). Even though the individual members of the focus groups might not know each other personally, they always share the same background experiences. There is a very large

number of studies that have adopted the focus group approach, which means that it is one of the leading research instruments preferred by researchers. Focus groups are popular in social research because they are appealing; people like to be heard and feel that they are being heard and understood by other people within the group (Carey & Asbury, 2016, p. 14). These are the main justifications for using focus groups in the current research on school bullying. However, this approach may lead to bias during the data collection process. For instance, according to Litosseliti (2003, p. 24), the behaviour of individuals may be influenced by the group and they might alter their opinions to suit the group's dynamics. To counter this, a friendly and non-threatening environment was created, and the moderator was alert to the visual cues, body language, and other indications of the participants' emotions. Another key strength that helped to counter this limitation was that the research participants share the same Islamic culture, language, and experiences, which made it possible to discuss and elaborate the phenomenon without fear of misunderstanding.

For the purpose of this study, the 23 male teachers, among the selected sample participants, were involved in four focus group interviews. It was anticipated that these teachers would be adequately knowledgeable and willing to communicate in a focus group discussion held in a collegial and familiar environment on the topic of school bullying in their own schools. It was hoped that the use of focus groups was the right approach to obtain the perspective of teachers on this social problem. A conference room with appropriate communication equipment was identified in each of the institutions for the purpose of conducting the focus group interview. It was critical to ensure that the room was big enough to accommodate all the participants. The focus group session lasted 60 minutes and the discussions were either audio-recorded or recorded in hand-written notes, after due consent was obtained from the participants (Appendix C). For reasons of confidentiality, the group discussions are not included in this thesis. However, they were viewed in translation by both supervisors.

Data Analysis

All the data collected in this research will be qualitative in nature as it will mainly include accounts of experiences of the participants on the social problem of school bullying. The data analysis will entail three main processes: transcription of the data and writing it in Arabic, translating the text to English, and then thematically analysing the data through textual coding.

Data Transcription and Translation

The first step in the data analysis process was to transcribe the audio-recorded conversations and the hand-written notes. The intention was to validate the hand-written text generated during the interview sessions. The interviews were conducted in Arabic, which means that the audio recordings and written notes were also in Arabic. Therefore, the first step was to transcribe the audio recordings and the notes into text format, still in Arabic. It was easier to transcribe directly, using the same language that was used during the interviews. The same principle applied to the transcription of the focus group discussions into textual data. The next step in the data analysis process was to translate the transcripts from Arabic into the English language. The purpose of translating at this point was to make data coding easier, as the thematic analysis was to be done in English. Moreover, the research was to be finally written up in English; hence, the relevance of translating the transcribed text to English, which is a widely used language globally. Of course, it would also make the data accessible to the two thesis supervisors. Large amounts of data were generated and translated and the next step in the process was then to subject the data to thematic analysis.

Methodology: Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis is the approach of choice to analyse raw data obtained from research participants (Guest 2012, p. 11). The implication is that this data analysis approach can achieve the desired objectives in analysing qualitative data. In thematic analysis, patterns are pinpointed and examined by the researcher to identify similarities in data (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 83). The process entails the identification and examination of themes from the textual data and then discussing them in such a way that the phenomenon under study is clearly portrayed. Phrases are counted in thematic analysis and also implicit and explicit ideas can be extrapolated from the data. In all cases, transcripts are read, themes identified from within the collected data. Then, data coding takes a central role to regularise, compare, and relate the different elements or ideas within the textual data in order to add to and critique some of the theories and models currently proposed for the study of bullying.

For the purpose of the thematic analysis process, open coding was applied on the data. Open coding enables the researcher to identify distinct categories and concepts within the collected data (Daly, Kellehear & Gliksman, 1997). Through coding, the categories are highlighted to distinguish them from each other and even to eliminate

the most irrelevant categories from the data. In this research, the textual data was reviewed, evaluated, and useful categories identified based on how they related with each other. Similar categories/ideas or concepts within the data were then grouped under a single theme. The themes were developed based on the research questions and categories were defined under those themes to draw out their meaning.

Rigour and Validity

The intention of qualitative research is that it be rigorous and valid. Rigorous research should, 'provide information that is related to events that happen in the world' (Rice & Ezzy, 1999, p. 31). This was done by means of conducting interviews and focus groups with participants who are actively involved with school students. In engaging with principals, deputy principals, teachers, social workers and policy makers, the intention in this study is to ascertain valid research which can critique, inform and then be used to develop more effective policy around bullying in schools in Saudi Arabia. The main limitation is that the subjective interpretation by the researcher on the coding process may have compromised the nature of the identified themes as being truly representative of the perspectives of the participants. This limitation was countered by reviewing the codes and categories several times to ensure that they were classified under the appropriate themes.

Chapter 6: Findings from Interviews and Focus Groups

The main purpose of this study was to examine participants' perspectives and opinions on school bullying in Saudi Arabia, particularly in Mecca, as well as to explore their experiences as educators. A second purpose was to explore to what extent participants in Saudi Arabian schools know about bullying and its effects on school environment. Another goal of the study was to find out whether the participants are aware of policies around school bullying.

This chapter will shed light on the existing anti-bullying programs or strategies that aim to keep the learning environment safe. The results of this study were obtained by using qualitative research method through two qualitative data collection instruments. The first method was via interviews conducted with social workers, principals and deputy principals, and policy officers at the Saudi Education Department. The second method was to set up focus groups. Group members were mainly teachers who were invited to participate in this study.

The participants were asked to comment on the following themes: Background knowledge of school bullying; Types of bullying; statistics collected around the incidents of school bullying; personal versus professional values regarding bullying; Strategies (policies) to prevent bullying; the character of the bully and victim; prevalence of bullying.

This section contains many quotations from the participants in this research. I have included their actual words even if colloquial terms were used. The translations into English also maintain the same authenticity by using colloquial terms.

Table 5.1: Transcription in translation: (Male participants)

I = interview		FG = Focus group		
Name of the Institute	Social worker	Principal or deputy principal	Teachers	Policy officer
1. A school	I 1-1	I 2-1	2 I 1-7 I 1-8	0
2. B school	I 1-2	I 2-2	FG1-8	0
3. C school	I 1-3	I 2-3	FG2-9	0
4. E school	I 1-4	I 2-4	FG3-4	0
5. unidentified	I 1-5	0	0	0
6. unidentified	I 1-6	0	0	0
7. Education Department in the City of Mecca	0	0	0	I 3-1 I 3-2
Total:	6+2=8	4	21	2
	35			

Table 5.2: Transcription in translation (Female participants)

I = interview		FG = Focus group	
Name of the Institute	Social worker	Teacher	Policy officer
unidentified	I4-1	0	0
unidentified	I4-1	0	0
unidentified	I4-1	0	0
5. Education Department in the City of Mecca (Female section)	0	0	1-41
Total:	3	0	1

Table 5.3: Individual interviews

Name of the Institute	Social worker	Principal or deputy principal	Policy officer
1. A Primary School	1	1	0
2. B Secondary School	1	1	0
3. C High School.	1	1	0
4. D Secondary School.	1	1	0
5. unidentified	1	0	0
6. unidentified	1	0	0

7. Education Department in the City of Mecca.	0	0	2
Total:	6	4	2
	12 individual interviews		

Table 5.4: Focus Group Interviews

Name of the institute	Teachers
1. A Primary School	2
2. B Secondary School	8
3. C High School.	9
4. D Secondary School.	4
Total of	23

Background and Knowledge of School Bullying

Teachers

In responses to the second question *What is your understanding of school bullying?* all the teachers said they had never heard of the term ‘bullying’ (*Tanmor* in Arabic) before having this group discussion. The key goal of this question was to understand whether the teachers had heard of the term of bullying before as well as to enlighten the participants about the behaviours that constitute bullying. Responses to this question revealed a total lack of knowledge about school bullying and a lack of understanding of the reasons why bullying happens in the first place. All participants were aware of issues of aggression, assault and abuse, including verbal or physical harassment, but did not realise how to classify these behaviours. This led to their inability to understand bullying and deal with it effectively in the school environment,

For instance, FG 18 stated ‘Bullying as a term is not known...I asked the social worker about the term because it was unknown.’ Also FG 1 stated: ‘Bullying is aggression’. FG 1 # explained further: ‘I think, bullying is unwanted aggressive behaviour among students or school aged children’.

FG #12 tried to explain what bullying is by giving an example: ‘It feels like a tiger has been [and] attacked him.’

The researcher was surprised that almost none of the FGs had ever heard of the term bullying. On one hand the teachers seemed to appreciate the seriousness of school bullying through their descriptions, but on the other hand they did not have a full understanding of the behaviour or how to deal with it.

This result confirmed to the researcher that the term 'bullying' is unfamiliar to the teachers, and they need to describe it in terms of other misbehaviours.

The questions helped to answer the research question regarding participants' knowledge and understanding of the term bullying in general and school bullying more specifically.

Male social workers

In response to the second question '*What is your understanding of school bullying?*' which was designed to discover the social workers' understanding of the term bullying, all the social workers stated that they had never heard of the term bullying (*Tanmor* in Arabic). The responses for this particular question exposed the lack of knowledge among the participants regarding their understanding of school bullying and how it occurs.

I1- 2 pointed out: 'Unfortunately, there is no such concept of bullying, because there is no explanation about it, nor does it have a clear meaning. Moreover, there is an ambiguity surrounding the term of bullying. Even though the term "bullying" is new, the problem of bullying in Saudi schools existed before in my opinion.'

I1- 3 stated: 'In our society there is no such term of bullying and many people do not have any understanding about it. There are many equivalent words that are more popular than the term bullying such as HIAMH, JAARAHM' [which means having more control over the other]. Some educators are not familiar with the term bullying.'

He (I1- 3) also pointed out that in regard to a school bullying definition: 'I think it is abuse in general and physical abuse in particular. Through this abuse, there is a little more damage.'

Female social workers

All three female social workers stated that they had heard of the term bullying (*Tanmor* in Arabic) and despite the fact that they had some knowledge about the term, their

knowledge did not stem from any literature on the topic, but came from ‘their own personal experiences’.

I4-1 stated: ‘Bullying is violence and intensity in dealing with students and the school community as a whole’.

I4-2 stated: ‘Bullying is a form of violence, abuse and insult’. [Whether directed from one individual to another or from a group to an individual or other group]. ‘The bully usually is stronger than the others.’

Despite the attempts made by all participants to provide a description of school bullying, derived from their personal experiences or knowledge, many of their perceptions and explanations are far from the accepted definition of school bullying. For example, some equated school bullying with physical abuse. This was a typical misunderstanding.

The participants were divided into two groups. One group did not show any sign of understanding school bullying, while the other group did try to come up with some definitions or at least provide an description of school bullying. However, their explanation was not clear enough because they were confusing school bullying with other misbehaviours.

Policy officers (male and female) at the Education Department in the City of Mecca

During interview with the policy officers, the researcher noticed that their answers to the first question were quite similar to those of other participants. They did show some understanding of the term ‘bullying’ in their answers but could not say which sources they were relying on. This can be clearly seen in their definitions of school bullying. I3-1, for instance, explained that bullying is: ‘A type of violence practised by some students, individually or collectively, and this behaviour is repeated and inflicts psychological and physical damage to the others.’

Also I3-1 gave quite a good definition of bullying, relying on his long experience as a policy developer and head of the guidance section in the Education Department in the city of Mecca. But when the researcher asked him ‘Is the term (school bullying) well known?’ he (I3-1) replied: ‘In my opinion, no. It may be a new phenomenon. Yes, here are other names (control, force, authoritarianism, dominance)’.

I4-4 stated that bullying referred to: ‘A girl mimicking a boy's personality, such as raising their voice like men, fighting with each other using hands and fists, and also having a similar haircut to boys.’

I3-2 was the only one who appeared to have a good understanding of the term bullying and school bullying specifically, even though he didn't provide any definition from an academic resource. He drew on his own experience and acquired knowledge.

According to his CV, which he described for the researcher, he has conducted many workshops addressing the topic of ‘bullying’ but unfortunately these workshops were only available for social workers or ‘student or school advisors’.

Regarding ‘*What is your understanding of school bullying*’, he stated: ‘The concept is generally clear in relation to bullying and it can be formulated in your own way. There is a difference between bullying, abuse and violence [but] bullying is part of violence and abuse.’

He (I3-2) also pointed out: ‘A necessary element in bullying behaviour is continuity’. He said that ‘to qualify an incident as bullying, it must be a continuous behaviour from the bully to his victim’.

Participants who had heard of the term bullying pointed out that it is not enough to recognise bullying without looking into the underlying causes, in order to know how to deal with it. During the interviews, both male participants emphasised that bullying either does not exist in Saudi schools or if it exists, there are only a few cases. The participants do not view school bullying as a pervasive problem in schools, that needs urgent intervention to tackle the problem.

We note from the participants’ answers that despite the attempts they made to define or provide examples for the definition of school bullying, they derived opinions from their own personal experiences and not from information learned from scientific books, training courses or professional values. It is clear that school bullying did not appear to them to be a major problem that might need significant attention from the school community.

Principals or deputy principals

Not surprisingly, all the principals and deputy principals admitted that they had never heard of the term bullying (*Tanmor* in Arabic) nor denied its existence. In response to

the question that was designed to explore their background knowledge of school bullying, all of the participants appeared to be quite lacking in information and awareness regarding school bullying

I2-1 said: 'I do not have any particular definition of bullying and I don't think anyone else does.'

Also, I2-2 stated: 'Bullying is one of these new terms and has never existed in policies previously. It is generally absent'.

Also he (I2-2) said: 'Bullying means ... abnormal behaviours'.

I2-3 stated: 'No, there is no scientific definition for school bullying. It is [just like] fierceness and stubbornness.'

All the participants' answers showed a lack of proper understanding about school bullying. The main thing that influenced participants to convince everyone that there is no bullying in their school was the fear that acknowledgement of the existence of bullying would open the door wide to criticism that the school is not trying to confront bullying and address it. In addition, it would negatively affect the school's reputation and status in the community.

The researcher noted that the participants appeared to be more worried about saving the school's reputation than tackling the real problem.

Type of Bullying

Teachers

Most of the respondents (if not all) had witnessed many forms and types of bullying, including financial, hitting, verbal insulting, stealing peers' property, and using signs or gestures to threaten potential harm.

For instance FG #3 said: 'Bullying is where the victim cannot complain or speak up. Bullying is like, for example, when a student has control over another student or a group of students by demanding money through extortion and so on, and no one can complain about it due to fear of repercussions.'

Also, the same FG (#3) stated: 'Verbal bullying is when there are insults being hurled every day towards a student by repeating negative words, and normally the victim cannot respond or speak out.'

The same FG 3 stated: 'Or the bully beats him (student) daily until he becomes his victim, and the student who's been bullied cannot speak or tell anyone about it.'

FG #5 described another type of bullying: 'Students (victims of bullying) are forced to do the homework for the bully. The bully has earmarked a student to do his homework on a regular basis and they cannot refuse.'

FG # 8 mentioned another type of school bullying. 'The bully may stand up for the victim or protect him from the others because he likes him (sexually), and he may prevent others from directing any harassment or abuse to him. The victim can't lodge a complaint or tell anyone because, unfortunately, he's accepting the bullying.'

FG (#8) continued:

'There was another case that was not discovered until the teacher noticed that the student was unable to sit on a chair comfortably. After several investigations and referring him to the principal they found out that he had been bullied sexually and the bully used soap during the sex as a lubricant'.

The responses to the question regarding different types of school bullying showed that most teachers have witnessed all types of bullying in their schools, despite the fact that they had difficulties in classifying the types of bullying.

These findings support the idea of doing further research into bullying in Saudi schools in order to identify how to detect and reduce the severity of bullying, and to know how to control and deal with it in schools.

Social worker (school or student advisor)

Regarding incidents of school bullying that occur in front of the social worker or that they hear about, most of these respondents had witnessed many forms of bullying, including hitting, verbal insulting, harassment, stealing peers' property or forcing the victim to do the bully's homework. The bully uses direct signals to show their victim that they will get hurt if they complain or report it to anyone.

I1-1 stated: 'Bullying comes in different types; sometimes it might take the form of behavioural bullying, such as beating, other violent acts or controlling actions. And sometimes it might involve taking things from the victim, such as pens, pencils, or pocket money. Or bullying can also mean forcing the victims to do the bully's homework'.

I1-2 gave his own version of school bullying: ‘Attacks and insults, verbal abuse and ‘peer-to-peer’ physical bullying is involved’. This means that fighting between students normally starts with verbal insults and name-calling and then it becomes physical fighting.

Similarly, I1-3 gave almost the same description of types of school bullying, focusing on these types: verbal bullying or physical bullying and sometimes the bullying can turn into physical fighting due to sports.

The results of the question regarding the types of school bullying indicate that most social workers have witnessed all types of school bullying in their schools, although they were unable to classify them. They identified various forms of misbehaviour that are fundamentally related to different types of school bullying. This result supported the idea of encouraging further research regarding school bullying in Saudi schools to understand, identify and reduce all types of bullying among students.

Statistics Regarding Incidents of School Bullying

Teachers

Participants were asked if they had collected any statistics around school bullying either in the past or recently. Everyone participating in answering the previous question confirmed that there had been no studies of school bullying, and that there were therefore no statistics collected in regard to school bullying and its prevalence in school.

FG # 7 for instance indicated: ‘There are no statistics around school bullying.’

FG #17 and FG # 18 also both agreed: ‘There are no statistics around this.’

FG # 21 also confirmed that: ‘There are no statistics for school bullying, but double-check with the principal; he might have some.’

Even though the answers represented the participants’ point of view, they indicate that the schools were not dealing properly with bullying. Answers also confirmed there are no statistics to reveal the extent of the school bullying problem.

Social workers

Social worker participants were asked if they had any statistics referring to school bullying and whether these statistics were old or recent. Everyone who participated in

answering the previous question pointed out that there were no studies in regard to school bullying or its prevalence.

I1-1 stated: 'There are no statistics.'

I1-2 pointed out: 'No, there are no statistics around school bullying.'

I1-6 agreed with the above social workers' answers and added: 'I don't know of any statistics specifically for bullying.'

I1-5 agreed: 'I don't think we have any.'

Although the answers were given by the small number of social workers who participated in this study, their views can be seen as a clear indication that there is a lack of receptivity in Saudi Arabia regarding school bullying. At this point in time, it appears no statistics have been collected to indicate the size or complexities of school bullying.

Principal and deputy principal

All the principals and their deputies who participated in the current study were asked whether they had collected any statistics or carried out any studies about school bullying either historically or recently. All confirmed there were no studies of school bullying, nor were any statistics collected in regard to school bullying and its prevalence in their schools.

I2-3 stated: 'No, there are no statistics for school bullying.'

I2-3 also confirmed: 'No, there are no statistics regarding school bullying.'

I2-4 agreed: 'I don't think we have any statistics for school bullying.'

To sum up, all the participants' responses reveal a lack of awareness about bullying and that was shown by their lack of motivation or interest for collecting statistics about the problem.

Policy officers: male and female

The policy makers who participated in this study were asked the same questions about whether or not they had collected any statistics about school bullying. All confirmed that they had not come across any studies or collected any statistics about school bullying or its prevalence.

I3-1 stated: 'It is not considered a phenomenon in the education system in Mecca, as it is a simple problem with only a few cases, thank God, so there are no statistics.'

I3-2 agreed: 'No, there are no statistics about school bullying, unfortunately.'

Like the male policy officers, I4-4 also confirmed: 'No, there are no statistics about school bullying.'

In summary, all the answers from the focus group participants about the existence of statistics show that there is a general lack of awareness and understanding of school bullying and its consequences. This can be a sign that Saudi schools are not considering or recognising that school bullying is a major problem that needs to be studied and tackled.

Strategies (policies) to Prevent Bullying:

Teachers

The next questions for the participants asked if they knew of any policies or strategies relating to preventing bullying in schools. The following questions were asked:

'Are responses [to bullying] mandated by school policies, by Education Department policies or by your personal understanding of desirable student behaviour?'

Are there policies in place around school bullying?

Are these policies created by the Education Department and passed on to schools?

Are the policies mandatory?

All of the participants stated that there was a policy about school bullying, except one participant who acknowledged that he did not know of any specific policy. Even though these participants had stated that they knew about school bullying, they could not provide any details about any relevant policy. They knew that there was a policy that dealt with school bullying; however, they did not know what the policy details were or which chapter in the Book of Attendance and Behaviour dealt with school bullying.

Most of the teachers, except one, stated that they did not use any specific approach to dealing with bullying or follow any specific policy information around bullying. Although the teachers took some practical steps to deal with the bullying, which was

to speak with any student who showed evidence of bullying behaviour, these steps were driven more by their own personal experience.

FG # 7 stated: 'There is no defined teacher's role, or maybe it is not clear enough if there is a role or a specific procedure. We simply refer the whole case to the principal or student advisor (social worker).'

Also, he (FG # 7) pointed out: 'Just to clarify, all our efforts are just personal efforts and they are not derived from any particular policy.'

FG #14 said: There are no guidelines currently available on how to deal with bullying that are specific to the school administration or the Department of Education or the Ministry of Education.

FG #23: 'Policies exist but unfortunately they are not enough to prevent such incidents from happening. Some students, you expel them from attending school for a week or so, and the only response we get from them is 'I don't mind.'

Also, FG #13 pointed out: 'In the guidelines for conduct, there are no special roles or instructions under the heading of 'bullying.' This modern term (bullying) isn't in there. This term may fall under one of the terms used for other behaviour'.

FG #13 also drew attention to a very important point: 'However, the problem is that when we ask for the application of a policy or regulations we will find obstacle after obstacle, not only at the school level but also at the management level of education.'

FG # 20 had figured out his own way of dealing with school bullying: 'Traditionally beating is the fastest way to deal with any misbehaviours. Most students are not afraid of the consequences of their misbehaviour due to poor teacher reaction or school administration. Beating is deemed as the quickest and strongest remedy for any misconduct or misbehaviour because 'our students are violent, and this violence is due to social failures and the 'school of hard knocks'. If there is a strong reaction from teachers, students will be afraid.'

FG # 20:'The actions we take are random and unthinkable [he refers to beatings] but are more effective and stop bullying in no time.'

These responses suggest that there is no specific strategy to deal with bullies and victims in the classrooms of Saudi Arabian schools. Evidently, teachers have developed their own coping strategies. In addition, none of their strategies are based

on training sessions run specifically to deal with school bullying, nor incorporated into teacher education courses. The responses indicate that there is no deliberate policy to help teachers in reducing the incidence of bullying in schools in Saudi Arabia. The results point to the need for educating teachers and providing training in about how to respond to bullying and reduce its prevalence among students.

Social workers

The social workers were asked a similar question in respect to using any strategic method in curbing school bullying. Their responses were similar to the teachers' answers. They relied on their own methods in dealing with school bullying. All of the social workers, even though they agreed that some sort of policy existed, still had no idea about where these school bullying policies were, or how to apply them.

I1-3 stated: 'Yes, there are policies around all school behaviours, starting from level one (which represents low risk behaviour) to level six (which represents high risk behaviour).'

He (I1-3) also admitted: 'Bullying does exist in schools but is not confined to any level; it is distributed across all levels at different levels of seriousness'.

I1- 4 pointed out: 'Yes, there is a policy around school bullying, but only for secondary and high school. In general, most of policies in schools in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia are designed only for secondary and high schools.'

The researcher pointed out that all policies that are intended to tackle school misbehaviour, such as bullying, exist at all school stages — primary, secondary and high school — not just for one stage.

I1- 1 pointed out: 'Yes, there is a policy around school bullying, and for other misbehaviours. School bullying as far as I'm concerned is ranked in the second level in the Book of Attendance and Behaviour'.

However, the researcher disputed the accuracy of this assertion.

The participant tried to display some knowledge of the policies but that disappeared when the researcher asked him about the policy details.

Also, I1- 1 mentioned: 'All policies, not just school bullying, were created by the Ministry of Education for all schools whether private or government schools. It is worth mentioning that there are six policy levels in the Book of Attendance and

Behaviour for all school behaviours, and we refer to each level according to behaviour categories in the Book of Attendance and Behaviour.

The policy states that when a student commits any misbehaviour, they firstly are sent to the deputy principal of the school and then to the student advisor (social worker), who will take all the necessary steps such as conducting a guidance session or counselling.

I1- 2 stated: ‘Yes, there is policy around school bullying and there is a continuing review and update for it. This policy is not only for school bullying, but also for all other kinds of problems and misbehaviours.’

I1- 2 emphasised that the policy about school bullying is just written and was not acted on. He said: ‘The Book of Attendance and Behaviour ranks school bullying at the **5th** level out of a total of six levels. This indicates that that school bullying is considered really dangerous. Afterwards, the necessary paperwork is signed by the student and the student advisor, who will add some points after consulting the case with the principal.’

He then corrected his previous answer: ‘The school polices guidelines exist (I think) last year 2016–2017. Sorry, school bullying is ranked at the 4th level not the 5th level.’

I1-5 added: ‘Yes, there is a policy around school bullying, but this policy is not clear enough and therefore isn’t helpful when we are dealing with school bullying behaviour. We have to rely on our personal experience and knowledge to put an end to the behaviour.’

I1-1 explained that in dealing with school bullying, there is a lack of therapeutic interventions, which leads many social workers to create their own personal interventions; this in turn leads to the perpetuation of school bullying without a solution.

‘It is very important to make the student feel comfortable and confidence to trust in you, as well as emphasising to the bully that the violation will not be recorded if he cooperates with you. Afterwards we talk to the bully and provide guidance and give him lots of advice. Most of the students who practice bullying do not think about the consequences of their actions. We inform them about the consequences of ‘bullying’ and tell them that we could inform their parents. Hearing this, the students start to be afraid. Sometimes we call the parents if we can’t solve the problem easily, and inform

the parents that we will apply the school policy if the student does not stop such behaviour. Sometimes we discover that the parents are themselves mistreating the student or being over-strict.’

14-1 stated: ‘Yes, there is policy around all bad behaviour in general; however there are no policies specifically for school bullying (to my knowledge).’

14-2 mentioned that policies exist but: ‘they are flexible which may lead to the choice of personal intervention over the scientific approach’.

Also,(I4-2) added: ‘Yes, policies are created by the Education Department and they pass them on to schools. There are also school (special) policies that can be added and used if the school wants to.’

So, the word ‘special’ opens the door wide to put in place personal interventions that have no scientific basis.

Thus, participants’ answers regarding the role of a social worker in dealing with school bullying indicates the absence of therapeutic interventions and also a lack of knowledge and understanding about school bullying. As well it is evident that social workers are poorly prepared to address complex issues such as school bullying that require specific skills. Social workers said they relied on their personal efforts, skills, and experiences, which have no scientific basis, in order to tackle school bullying and mitigate its consequences.

Policy officers: male and female

The same question was put to policy makers in the Education Department at Mecca in relation to the methods and strategies they use when it comes to dealing with school bullying.

I3-1 (male) stated: ‘Yes, there is a policy around bullying and similar misbehaviours. The role of the school is to guide the students as well as follow up to prevent such behaviour and other kinds of misbehaviour in the school environment.’

He agreed that there are policies regarding school bullying, but was not convinced about the strength or the effectiveness of these policies.

I4-4 explained further: ‘Yes, policies are created by the Education Department and they pass them to schools. There are also school (special) policies that can be added and used if the school sees it as important.’

I3-2 showed little understanding in regard to school bullying. He stated: ‘These policies exist to a certain degree but are “not currently known”; however, only some of these policies are practised.’

Although policy makers knew about the existence of policies around bullying, they were reluctant to talk about the policies in detail. They could not specify any therapeutic interventions that were meant to be in place to help both the bully and victims of bullying.

To sum up, there is no full awareness of the size of the problem and its importance. As a result, it is expected that policy makers are not considering school bullying as a problem which deserves more attention and requiring intervention that is based on scientific evidence.

Principals or deputy principals

It was also noticeable that all principals and deputy principals were not knowledgeable regarding bullying and related policy.

For instance, I2-1 stated: ‘Yes, some policies have been created by the Education Department, and others by the school administration.’

Interviewer: Which means that there are policy created by the schools?

‘Yes, policies exist but there is a problem in their application. The application of these policies varies from school to school; some schools apply them, others do not apply them.’

I2-2 also mentioned that policies do exist. He stated: ‘Yes, there are policies created by the Education Department; which after several trials they were passed on to the schools for implementation.’

Also, he (I2-2) added a valuable point: ‘These policies are floating around and not set down on firm ground [or well enough defined]. We must start by using some traditional way of breaking the process into steps (1, 2, 3, 4... etc.) using our own experiences and skills to guide us. Once we exhaust these steps, then we should start to apply policies. The application of policies has to be flexible; it is up to the individual school administration to implement them as they see fit.’

In summary, All the answers given by the participants exposed the real problem (lack of understanding and having only basic information about school bullying and its

policies) which has led failure to tackle the rising level of school bullying that has shocked schools in Saudi Arabia.

Personal versus Professional Values

Teachers

Question four asked how teachers respond to bullying, or in other words what would the teacher do if a student came to them saying they were being bullied. All teachers reported that when they are informed about or witness any inappropriate behaviour, such as bullying, in the classroom, they attempt to speak directly to students involved and tell them to stop these behaviours. If the students stop, then no further action would be taken against them. In cases where students do not respond or do not follow the teachers' advice, then the students are sent to the student advisor's office (social worker) at the school to receive further counselling so they can manage their misbehaviour.

FG #7 stated: 'As a teacher I just sit with them (the bully and the victim) separately and talk to them. If I think there is no any positive outcome from the session then I refer them to the principal or the school advisor (social worker) and then those people would carry out their roles; for example, calling their parents and letting the parents be involved in the matter'.

Also, FG # 19 described how he follows certain steps which are intended to deal with bullying. 'As a teacher I must first make sure there is a problem. If I'm convinced (that there is bullying occurring) I then sit down with them both (the bully and the victim) separately, and talk to them, as well as offer them some advice and directions. If I notice any progress, then I will leave it there without taking further action, but If there is no progress I send them to the principal or the student advisor (social worker) and then they can act according to their roles, for example, by inviting their parents in, or applying any of the policies'.

Another method used by teachers to counter such misbehaviours among students is to communicate directly with students and their parents to work out the causes that may have led the students to behave in this way.

Overall, these results indicate that there are no specific or clear policies used in Saudi schools to help teachers reduce bullying. There is also discrepancy between participants in answering the question about whether or not there are policies relating

to bullying. One group stressed the existence of policies around school bullying on the Education Department agenda; another group believes that there are no policies that can help in dealing with school bullying. The second group believes that there are policies to counteract school bullying; however these policies apply to misbehaviour in general, not specifically to bullying.

How are policies implemented? Are therapeutic programs in place for students who experience bullying, whether as bullies or victims? What should the first actions of teachers be?

The teachers all agreed that bullying or name-calling is a serious problem and there is a need to have some kind of intervention to halt the spread of this behaviour in Saudi schools.

Most of the teachers stated that they have no official advice on how to deal with school bullying incidents; and that all their efforts were personal ones.

FG # 7 in responding to the question about school bullying interventions, stated:

‘Nothing at all. There is no official advice on the teacher’s role, or maybe it is not clear enough. Even if there were a specific guide, it would be simply to refer the whole affair to the principal or student advisor (social worker).’

FG # 4: ‘I can sit with the students, advise and offer them guidance.’

FG #14: ‘Direct guidelines on how to deal with bullying? No, it is not specific to the school administration or the Department of Education and I don't think the Ministry of Education either.’

FG #13: ‘As a general practice in the Book of Attendance and Behaviour, there is no reference to special roles or systems under the heading of the modern term, bullying. It’s not in there. This term [bullying] may come under other misbehaviours’

Also, FG # 13: ‘It is not clear and has not been covered in the book.’ (He means that bullying is not mentioned in the Book of Attendance and Behaviour.)

FG #18: ‘As a teacher I must make sure there is a problem. If I confirm that, then I sit with them both separately, and talk to them, as well as give some advice and directions. If I notice any benefit, then I will leave it. If there is no benefit, then I would refer them to the principal or the student advisor (social worker).

FG #17:

‘We must make sure that there is actually a problem, as some of students could be lying. All our efforts and reactions in relation to school bullying must be personal.’

FG # 14:

‘We have two problems: First the regulations on conduct at school (the Book of Attendance and Behaviour) in general are not known to the public. Second, although bullying does exist, we do not know whether students involved are telling the truth. At the end of the year the students can still obtain full marks in their certificate of attendance and behaviour.’

The researcher’s explanation for the FG # 14 quotation above: Even though the Book of Attendance and Behaviour is given to everyone and also there is guidance on school bullying in in this book, no-one seems to read it or to follow its instructions.

Generally, the participants’ opinions demonstrate that teachers use their own personal intervention and values in dealing with school bullying. If their personal interventions do not do any good, then they refer the whole matter to the school administration and cease to have any further involvement. This is because they do not have proper guidelines to show them how to tackle serious bad behaviour in the school environment.

Social workers

The social workers, male and female, were all asked about their roles as social workers regarding school bullying and whether they drew on their professional values when dealing with bullying incidents.

I4-1 stated: ‘Everything we do is a personal initiative, as we don’t have clear roles. You need to remember that most student advisors (social workers) are not professional social workers, nor have they graduated in social work; most of them are specialists in areas other than social work.’

I1-2 said: ‘It’s a mixture of personal efforts and relying on my professional training, either might be appropriate according to the difficulty of the case.’

I1-4 also stated: ‘All my efforts are personal’.

I1-5 commented: ‘Honestly, my role as a social worker in cases of school bullying is not clear-cut. I rely on my personal experience. Normally, I solve the problem but in a case beyond my experience, or if there is a need for a much stronger intervention, I refer it to the principal.’

It is no surprise that most of the answers illustrate a lack of awareness by the social workers of their roles, which are supposed to be based on scientific and professional knowledge.

Defining school bullying clearly is the first key to understanding the policy around it as well as possible initial interventions. Unfortunately, as already mentioned, there is a lack of understanding of what constitutes school bullying as well as a lack of clear current policies on the issue. As a result, most social workers are dependent on using their own personal resources and experiences to help students affected by such behaviour.

Policy officers

The policy makers at the Education Department were also asked whether they are following any evidence-based policy to tackle bullying problems or did they merely use their personal experience to guide them.

I3-2 reported: ‘It begins by sitting down with the bully a “long time” and also the victim of bullying. In some cases we need just few interventions and all goes well. While other cases, especially if the schools cannot deal with the problem or find they need a special intervention, the case must be referred to the education offices (educational supervision, extension unit, school health, etc.). A case study file is then opened and policies applied. The application of policy is important but it varies from case to case.’

I3-1 stated: ‘The role of education in pursuing this problem begins by directing the enquiry back to the school to explain and deal with the students’ behaviours. In some cases, if the schools cannot deal with the problem or find the case needs a special intervention (above school capability), they will refer the case to the education offices (educational supervision, extension unit, school health, etc.)’.

I4-4: ‘There are no clearly defined roles; all my efforts are individual efforts’.

She also added, responding the same question: ‘These are steps I would take:

- Solve the problem with the student by sitting with her
- Hold a general conversation with her
- Guide her to correct her path and maintain good behaviour
- Or notify her parents or guardian.’

There is no commonality in the roles described. This is shown through participants’ answers, even though they work in different places and do similar tasks. It seems clear that there are no specific roles that have been established as the result of policies. However, although these policy developers are in positions of authority, these few respondents may not be representative of all the policy officers in the Education Department.

Principal and Deputy Principal

Principals and deputy principals were asked if they had any strategy or role to prevent bullying among students. In other words, whether they are relying on their personal experience or are following any professional guidelines.

All the participants in this interview population struggled to answer the researcher’s questions. All the answers failed to show any coherent knowledge of their roles in facing bullying among students or whether roles were derived from policies or personal efforts.

I2-3, for example, stated: ‘Sometimes the penalty does not necessarily need to be applied according to the policy; it can be replaced by guidance and a piece of advice.’

The answer from I2-3 was no different from the answers of I2-4, who affirmed: ‘Even though policies do exist, they are hard to apply and not clear.’

This lack of clarity and uncertainty about the significance of school bullying perhaps tells us why the participants prefer to use their own personal values and interventions instead of drawing on professional values and applying current official policy.

Character of the Bully and the Victim

Teachers

The teachers were also asked about the personal characteristics of both the bully and the victims of bullying. Everyone’s answer showed that they fully understood school

bullying sometimes; however, at other times they confused bullying with other misbehaviours.

For instance, FG #3 stated: 'From the bully, aggressive behaviour. From the victim, physical effects and signs of distress caused by physical assault.'

Also, FG #4 talked about the physical differences in students and how that sometimes leads to bullying: 'Physical differences at puberty (sexual development) also has a big role in bullying. A student who is taller and bigger than others could become a bully and wield control over other students because of this size difference.'

Also FG #18 made a good point when saying:

'The age range among students has a role in bullying and is particularly significant in the primary setting. There are differences between first grade students and fifth or sixth grade students. The sixth graders see that they are bigger than the younger students and they exercise control over the entire school and classrooms. For example, there was a student who was highly controlling in the classroom and when the teacher asked the students to open a book, the bullying student made a gesture of his own ordering the students to close the book.'

Also, FG #17 touched on the same point:

'As well as physical differences between the students, some students, even though they are in the same age group, are physically stronger. The physical differences of students play a role in the onset of bullying. When a student is physically bigger and stronger than the others, even though they are in the same age group, he physically dominates the others.'

As can be understood from the participants' responses regarding the characters of the bully and their victims, the participants have fully understood the characteristics of the bullying behaviour despite the fact that they could not draw a distinction between bullying behaviour and other misbehaviours. This is mainly due to lack of clarity on the participants' roles and responsibilities in the school.

Social workers

The social workers during the interview were asked to express their views about the personal characteristics of both the bully and victims of bullying.

Everyone came up with some sort of answers about their understanding of bullying characteristics. Overall, their answers show they are knowledgeable to some extent about school bullying; however, they seem to struggle to distinguish the nuances between definitions of bullying versus other kinds of misbehaviour.

A female, I4-2 J, mentioned: 'The bully usually is stronger than the others.'

Also, I4-3 stated: 'The bully is characterised by his love for control, a strong personality and prestige.'

I1- 6 said that: 'It's controlling others and abusing them.'

I1- 4 drew the attention to an important point: 'Bullying from my perspective is more likely to occur in schools that are located in poor or low socioeconomic neighbourhoods and less often in high socioeconomic neighbourhoods.'

Although the participants demonstrated that they have the ability to pick up some of the characteristics that can be recognised as school bullying, they were not conscious of the subtle difference between bullying and other misbehaviours in the school environment, due to using their own experiences to recognise bullying characteristics.

Prevalence of Bullying

Teachers

The participants were all asked to identify whether bullying was prevalent in schools or not, by answering the question: Do teachers encounter bullying amongst students at school?

The respondents said that bullying existed in school but not under its scientific term (*Tanmor* in Arabic), but under colloquial terms and also that it is not a common occurrence in the school environment. This response may be the result of participants' lack of information regarding bullying, as was defined in the first question of the interview and group discussion.

FG # 7 stated: 'The term "bullying" (*Tanmor*) is not usually known by this scientific name, but it means "power" and to "conquer" others'.

FG #4 also stated: 'It exists in both sexes, male and female, as in *boyah* which means a girl acting like a boy or in the English expression "tomboy"'.

FG#10: 'Bullying may be an extension of old terms and titles such as "control" and *fotooah* which means ultimate power'.

FG # 9: '*Baltajah* also means control over a group and it is a derivative from an old word. Now possibly it might be out of use but in the past it was well known. It was in every school: for example, the *fotooah* **controls** and has the ultimate power.'

FG # 6 responded to the question: 'Yes we do experience bullying, in every class'.

The participants' answers indicate that the majority of them believed that bullying was happening in the school environment. Even though some of the teachers mixed bullying with other misbehaviours, the discussion on types of school bullying shows the teachers' interest to learn more about what bullying is and how to deal with it, or at least report it.

Social workers

This group of participants were also invited to answer the question about the prevalence of school bullying. The responses show that the social workers experienced some level of confusion regarding to the definitions of bullying behaviour and other kinds of misbehaviours in school. Moreover, they did not use the formal word that denotes bullying behaviour.

I1- 1 for instance said: 'Yes there are, and I told you about the term *hawash* which means monsters, which was also told to you (the researcher) by one of the participants in the group discussion. However, I do not see the term *hawash* expressing the reality (I'm not convinced) although it does exist among students. But I see the term *Satti*, which means controlling or trouble maker, and 'uncle' exists but I haven't heard anybody using it in front of me. The students would be afraid of saying it in front of me, but it is in use among the students.'

Also, I1-2 stated: 'There can be a few cases or cases we cannot be sure about, or describe it as (large number).'

Social worker C also mentioned: 'Bullying does exist in schools but not just at any one level. It is spread at all levels and is a problem of varying seriousness.

Which means school bullying is linked to other school misbehaviours and it does not come about by itself.

To summarise, the answers from the participants in this group show that they wished to replace the term of bullying by using different colloquial terms that refer to bullying in one way or another. This has certainly created some confusion among the participants when it comes to differentiating which behaviours can or cannot be described as bullying.

Policy officers

The policy officers were also asked to say whether bullying was being reported from schools. Their responses indicate that bullying may exist in schools although perhaps not on a daily basis.

I3-1 stated: 'Most schools do not experience bullying.'

The other opinion came from I3-2 as he said: 'A few cases have appeared.'

Also, I3-2 stated that: 'It does exist but there are only few cases'.

This response may be the result of participants' poor knowledge about bullying in general and school bullying more specifically. In consequence, the participants were not able to say whether bullying is a common occurrence in schools. Although these policy officers are in positions of authority, they may not, however, be representative of all the policy officers in the Education Department.

Principal / deputy principal

There was not much difference between the previous participants' answers and the principal and deputy principals' answers in regards to whether or not bullying is a common occurrence in school environment. Their responses show the intricacies and difficulties in identifying bullying behaviours in schools.

I2-1 stated that: 'At the primary stage, I think it does not exist, but in the secondary and higher stages of education it very clearly exists.'

I2-3 also said: 'Yes it may exist but you will find only a few cases'.

I2-4 also stated: 'It does exist but I think it is too difficult to notice and uncover.'

To sum up, the answers from this group of participants indicate the difficulty in pinpointing bullying behaviour in school environments. In fact, they were unable to confirm whether or not bullying occurs in schools on a daily basis.

Chapter 7: Discussion of the Findings

This chapter discusses the findings of the research after thematic analysis of the participants' perspectives of school bullying. Seven themes emerged from the interview responses from the participants (principals, social workers, teachers, and policy officers at the Education Department). The key sub-sections of this chapter include a summary of the findings, linkage of findings to the reviewed literature and theoretical perspectives. This is followed by an examination of limitations of the study, key points from the findings, recommendations, and ideas for future research.

Thematic Analysis: Summary of the Findings

These findings were obtained after thematic analysis of the overall responses from the participants. The findings are related to the seven themes that were identified from the interviews with research participants.

The first finding relates to the theme of **background information** about school bullying in the studied schools. Responses from the participants confirmed that the participants did not understand the meaning of school bullying and how it takes place within the school environment. Additionally, under this finding, the research found that the participants were not concerned with tackling the problems associated with bullying but only worried about protecting the reputation of their schools.

The second finding relates to the theme of **types of bullying** that are taking place in the studied schools. The researcher was seeking to determine whether the participants were aware of the different types of bullying that take place at school. From the interviews, it was found that the participants have already had some first-hand experiences of the different types of bullying at school but they could not easily classify them.

The third finding is on the theme of **statistics relating to school bullying**. Responses related to this theme were obtained from the teachers who were involved in the group discussions. On this specific theme, statistics indicated there was lack of

awareness of school bullying and its impacts on the learners and the schools in particular. Based on the available statistics, it is evident that schools in Saudi Arabia are not keen to list school bullying among the problems facing their schools and have no determination to identify measures that could be taken to solve the problem.

The fourth finding related to the theme of **strategies to combat bullying**. In relation to this theme, the responses from the participants showed that they all lacked understanding of the meaning of bullying, and also were lacking in knowledge about the policies that currently exist to address school bullying. Lack of information about strategies limits the ability of participants to intervene in order to handle the bullying problem in Saudi schools.

The fifth finding relates to the theme of **personal and professional interventions** to address bullying problems. Under this theme, it was found that the participants were more interested in applying personal values as interventions to solve school bullying problems but were less concerned with the application of professional values and anti-bullying policies to address the problem.

In the sixth theme relates to **identifying the characteristics of bullies and victims** of bullying. The participants acknowledged that they are able to identify some of the actions that characterise bullying at school. However, it emerged that the participants were not able to clearly determine the differences between bullying incidents and other misbehaviours. The reason for this is that the participants could only draw on their own personal experiences and perceptions of behaviours.

The seventh theme relates to how well the participants were able to identify the **behaviours that characterise bullying**. The main finding indicates that the participants found it difficult to recognise or identify bullying behaviours. In addition, under this theme, it emerged that the participants could not talk about daily incidents of bullying in their schools as they were not able to confirm that bullying even occurred at the school.

Emergent Themes

The findings of the study align with discussions in the literature on the issue of school bullying from different regions, and specifically, in the Saudi context. It is appropriate to compare the present findings with earlier discussions in the literature in order to corroborate or refute arguments that have been previously made on this subject. This

section will therefore relate findings for the seven themes established for this study with the literature to assess the truth or reliability of the literature. The responses from participants were related to the key research questions posed and the themes that emerged from the responses through thematic analysis. The seven themes are discussed below.

Theme 1: Background of school bullying

This first theme relates to the extent of awareness of the existence of anti-bullying policies and whether they are being applied in Saudi schools to mitigate the problem of bullying. All the participants' answers confirmed they had no proper understanding of school bullying policies within their settings of practice. According to this finding, the researcher noted that the participants appeared to be more worried about saving their own reputation than tackling a real problem facing learners at school.

It is unfortunate that the participants are largely ignorant of these policies, and if they are aware, they are not effectively applying them. The lack of a proper understanding of bullying in Saudi schools contrasts with findings in previous research that bullying is regarded as a critical problem in the West. There have been numerous empirical studies on bullying in the West, but very few in the East (Kazarian, 2013). This means that the problem of bullying is probably under-reported in the East, of which Saudi Arabia is a part. This also means that the individuals who are required to address the behaviour and to remedy it are not fully committed to this role. It is fair to state that the participants' unawareness of bullying policies will be, to some extent, due to lack of knowledge on the issue as a whole. Furthermore, according to Kazarian (2013), there has been a linguistic problem in defining the term 'bullying' in the Saudi context, as Saudi citizens are only aware of the term *baltagi*, which means something more like 'hired thugs.' This could mean that the teachers and social workers in Saudi schools cannot easily relate certain behaviours with bullying. The failure to recognise certain behaviours as acts of bullying is mainly responsible for the respondents not having a proper understanding of or even the words to describe bullying incidents in their schools.

This unawareness of bullying is also related to the participants' lack of knowledge of the factors that promote bullying. The participants seem not to know that depression and personality disorders can lead to incidents of bullying among school-going children. However, the impact of emotions as a trigger for bullying has

been widely studied in the West, where depression, aggression, and anger have been listed as prime factors related to bullying at school (Llorca, Malonda, & Samper, 2016; Domes et al., 2013). This implies that teachers, principals, and social workers associated with schools should be more knowledgeable about the factors that characterise bullies if they are to deal effectively with them. Once the characteristics are properly identified, the participants can then report or escalate cases to the administration for appropriate interventions to be planned. However, in this research it was clear that the participants would tend to ignore all the potential indicators of bullying, to the extent that they would not take any action to challenge the perpetrators to change their behaviours.

The findings also indicate that the participants were either reluctant or unaware of which interventions they should apply to mitigate bullying. According to Ttofi and Farrington (2011), interventions are necessary in the elimination or prevention of bullying in schools. The present findings indicate that participants did not take any action at their schools to report or mitigate bullying; instead they were more inclined to protect their reputation as individuals or as representatives of the school instead of dealing with the issue first-hand. This means that the participants were ignorant of the evidence-based interventions they could apply in the prevention of bullying in their schools. For instance, some of the reactive anti-bullying strategies include direct sanctions, mediation, support groups and the Method of Shared Concern (Analitis et al., 2009). None of these interventions was identified by the participants as being essential in the mitigation of bullying. None of them could recount an identifiable history of success in mitigating bullying in previous incidents. The implication of not taking any action against bullies implies that the participants were not aware of or they just ignored the possible interventions they could have applied. With participants hoping to protect the schools' reputation, it is clear that this mindset is one that is unlikely to lead to any reduction of the bullying problem. There needs to be a change of perception among them by means of which such serious issues can be addressed without compromising their culture or the reputation of their schools. In this case, the principals should provide a directive to the teachers, and the teachers should act effectively, to adopt and promote anti-bullying strategies. Principals, teachers, and social workers and the policy makers from the Education Department can then work

alongside the teachers to draft a policy plan and guidelines that can be used to address the challenges of bullying in their schools.

Theme 2: Types of school bullying that are taking place in the studied schools

This theme addresses the identification of the different types of bullying that have been identified in the studied schools. Answers to the question regarding types of school bullying indicate that most of the participants have witnessed all types of bullying in their schools, although they were unable to classify them. This finding is detrimental to the application of anti-bullying interventions. It is common knowledge that the involvement of teachers and other practitioners in the fight against bullying can lead to positive outcomes if the right protocols are followed. The difficulty respondents had with identifying and classifying the different types of bullying can be attributed to the inadequate conceptualisation of the issue within the Saudi context, as earlier mentioned by Kazarian (2013). It is clear that there is inadequate knowledge of school bullying incidents in the kingdom because the subject has not been widely considered in the East compared to the West. Participants agreed that they had witnessed all types of bullying at the schools but they could not differentiate between bad and good behaviour, or describe when a behaviour should be termed bullying rather than another type of behaviours. This finding also indicates that respondents are capable of realising that a behaviour characteristic of bullying has taken place but they are unable to differentiate types of bullying. This is evidence that Saudis are not adequately informed about different types of bullying they may encounter. To some extent, in relation to this study, it was found that social workers are better informed than the teachers, as they could more readily identify different incidents of bullying, unlike the teachers. There are numerous behaviours characterising bullying that have been covered in the literature, which the involved research participants from the identified schools should be knowledgeable about.

First, in relation to identifying the different types of bullying, the behaviours of the students should be observed and then characterised in terms of whether they are aggressive or not (Margevičiūtė, 2017). According to Margevičiūtė (2017), bullying is ‘intentional aggressive behaviour, mobbing, harassment, pestering, silent treatment, ignoring, etc., with an outcome of causing pain or discomfort of some extent’ (p. 207). This means that bullying should be directly classified as any act by a person that can

cause harm to another person. In addition to these specific behaviours of bullying, the participants should be capable of characterising bullying as either individual or collective bullying. Individual bullying is any type of bullying where a single perpetrator is involved in behaviours that can harm another person. Collective bullying is the scenario where there are numerous perpetrators bullying a single person or a group of other persons (Hong, Neely & Lund, 2014; Rose & Monda-Amaya, 2011). This means that findings in the literature regarding the different types of bullying were not adequately confirmed by this study's participants. The participants had limited knowledge about what characterises bullying and how to identify bullying incidents through observation of student behaviours. This implies that the participants would not be able to effectively engage in the mitigation of the behaviour, as they were unable to characterise the behaviour as bullying in the first place. Through observation, it should be possible for the teachers and other stakeholders in the schools to identify behaviours that characterise bullying, report them, and put measures into place to mitigate such behaviours, in the interests of ensuring positive relationships among the learners. Therefore, it could be argued that the participants associated with the studied schools are not effective in the fight against bullying, as they cannot even classify the different behaviours associated with it. There should be a total change of perceptions and assumptions to promote the agenda of collective action against bullying in schools. Otherwise, the problem will continue to occur in Saudi Arabian schools and the different behaviours that characterise bullying will become normalised.

Theme 3: Statistics around school bullying

This theme highlights the extent of bullying that take place in the schools based on the nature of interactions among learners, and the specific characteristics of bullying incidents. Under this theme, data analysis from the group participants in regard to school bullying presents statistics that show that there is a lack of awareness and understanding of school bullying and its consequences to the involved individuals. This signifies that Saudi schools do not recognise that school bullying is a major problem that needs to be studied and tackled with the urgency it deserves. This finding is consistent with the findings by Kazarian (2013) that bullying has not been fully explored and contextualised in Saudi Arabia as it has been in the West, where it has been widely discussed and is prominent in the literature. This means that there is a limited understanding of bullying by Saudis, which is detrimental to the fight against

the behaviour in schools. There are numerous consequences of bullying that have been described in the literature. These should be known about to justify the argument that mitigation of bullying is critically important in the kingdom.

Failure to recognise and mitigate bullying in Saudi schools with urgency is highly likely to lead to clinically significant problems, such as low self-esteem, anxiety, and depression among the victims (Cook et al., 2010; Zerillo & Osterman, 2011). This can even lead to victims committing suicide (Kim, Koh & Leventhal, 2005). To add to this argument, Shetgiri (2013) also argued that bullying leads to poor academic performance, and psychosomatic complaints among the bully victims. Bullying not only affects the psychological health of victims but also their physical health, as stated by several studies (Knack, Jensen-Campbell & Baum, 2011; Ouellet-Morin et al., 2011). For further illustration of the impact of bullying, that should be understood by the Saudi educators, the study by Kazarian (2013) confirmed that most victims of bullying reported physical health symptoms, including abdominal pains and headaches. Teachers should then realise, from these findings, that bullying is highly damaging to the education system because of its potency to physically and psychologically harm victims. The health impacts of bullying, on victims and perpetrators, are also likely affect their school attendance and academic performance as a whole.

To add to the above arguments, it seems that Saudi educators also do not understand that bullying affects the bullies in the same way it affects the victims. For instance, according to Menesini and Salmivalli (2017), bullying also negatively affects the academic performance of the bullies, which means that its impact is the same whether the person is the victim or the perpetrator of the act. Thus, if left to continuously occur, bullying is likely to affect the academic performance of Saudi school students and will lead to more serious problems later on. There should be concerted efforts to fully identify incidents of bullying and mitigate them as soon as possible for the purpose of protecting all the people involved.

To further illustrate the relevance of this finding, Menesini and Salmivalli (2017) have argued that, since the school environments are where bullying takes place, educators are in the right position to identify any bullying behaviour that occurs within the school setting. This is the primary setting where bullying can be easily identified by the teachers and other adults within the school environment. Gleason (2011) adds

to this argument by stating that the highest percentage of bullying takes place in high schools but most of schools do not have the capacity to deal with the problem. The factor that complicates this issue even further is that even teachers are often involved in bullying in cases where they apply excessive punishment or criticism of students (Attwood, 2004). This implies that the involvement of teachers in modelling the behaviour compromises their ability to eliminate the problem from Saudi schools.

All the arguments under this theme indicate that there is little effort by the teachers and other adults in the school setting to eliminate bullying incidents even though they should be the ones responsible for doing this. A conclusion can then be drawn that the teachers are indirectly encouraging the behaviour by failure to act. It is an act of omission that only allows the situation to worsen. Findings under this theme mean that effective strategies should be planned to ensure that the people involved in taking care of the students at school understand the dynamics of bullying and its overall impact on learners' academic performance and on their physical and mental health.

Theme 4: Strategies for dealing with school bullying

The fourth theme emerging from analysis of the findings relates to strategies for dealing with school bullying. The research found that participants exposed the real problem (lack of understanding and basic information about school bullying and its policies), which has led to the current failure to handle this matter in Saudi Arabian schools. Determining participants' awareness of relevant strategies is important because this reveals their level of understanding of the problem and their ability to solve it. First, to clarify this theme, we need to determine whether there are policies in Saudi Arabia formulated specifically for the purpose of preventing the occurrence of bullying in schools. It was stated in this literature review that Saudi Arabia has previously attempted to legislate on bullying. For instance, in 2014, the kingdom set up a panel of representatives to draft legislation to combat bullying. The new law would acknowledge bullying to be a national problem, and it would mandate schools with the responsibility to adhere to set policies aimed at eliminating this behaviour. The legislation's other purpose would be to educate teachers and other stakeholders related to students' welfare about the negative impacts of bullying on learners. Unfortunately, regarding this legislation and its impact there is little in the literature to verify that the legislation is operational. It can be assumed, however, that stakeholders have failed to effectively implement it. This also implies that there is no definitive

evidence on this issue to indicate the legal consequences of either adhering or not adhering to the rules and regulations that were set down.

To illuminate this finding further, it is important to juxtapose the Saudi situation with that in other countries, especially those in the West. For instance, in Australia, there seems to be a more advanced anti-bullying debate that is supported by legislation and statutes directing people on what to do. An example is the Statutes Amendment Bullying Bill that was introduced in September 2017. The bill suggests heavy punishment for anyone found guilty of a bullying offence. The bill also offers a precise definition of bullying as any act that can cause harm to another person through humiliation or harassment, among other practices. Harm is defined in the bill in such a way that it encompasses both physical and mental harm. The penalties for those found guilty of a bullying offence, as enshrined in the Australian bill, is a maximum of ten years imprisonment and a minimum of five years for less serious infringements. However, even though the bill was meant to deter bullying in Australian schools, a section of human rights groups, the Youth Affairs Council of South Australia and also the Commissioner for Children and Young People have opposed the new rules, citing the dangers (as they see them) of applying criminal laws to the education system (Rigby & Cox, 2014).

The above discussion on the issue of anti-bullying policies suggests that using the legislation approach as an intervention has not been as effective in Saudi Arabia as it has been in the West. The above evidence indicates that even though there has been resistance by some human rights groups, Australia has tried to develop legislative interventions that Saudi Arabia has not been able to. Therefore, it also means that there are gaps in the legislated interventions that can be used as anti-bullying approaches. This implies that more efforts could be directed into this area, and the education system could be required to adhere to its provisions. Ultimately, it is hoped that positive outcomes will be achieved, but as it is now there has been no progress in the use of legislation to deter bullying in Saudi schools. Furthermore, there is no evidence in the literature to indicate that the strategies that are being applied in Australia would be workable in Saudi Arabia. Thus, it cannot be readily concluded that Australian anti-bullying strategies should be emulated in the kingdom.

Theme 5: Personal and professional interventions to address bullying problems

This fifth theme was identified from the findings obtained from the research participants. It was found that the participants prefer to use their own personal values and intervention instead of using professional values and applying current educational policy. This implies that the study participants were reluctant to follow the set rules and guidelines to mitigate bullying, and they were mainly interested in using alternative interventions.

This finding suggests that the participants tend to apply strategies that have not been recommended in the literature as the most effective. The literature stipulates that direct sanctions should be levied on students, especially where violence is involved in the bullying actions (Rigby & Cox, 2014). This means that direct sanctions would be more effective in situations where physical harm is involved. However, there is no evidence that this approach would be suitable in the Saudi context, since no studies have been carried out on this particular issue. Most of the studies that have so far been conducted on this issue outline a Western perspective on the choice of anti-bullying policies to use in schools. This situation might stem from a lack of an understanding and classification of various behaviours that could be defined as bullying in Saudi Arabia.

The other approach that has been known to be effective as an intervention is 'strengthening the victim'. According to Rigby (2012), this intervention is more effective in severe cases of bullying, although it can also be used in less severe cases. The intervention is normally applicable to cases where the victims of bullying have developed signs of low self-esteem and deficient coping skills. Furthermore, based on the literature review in this study, there is no evidence that this intervention is ever used in Saudi Arabia to mitigate school bullying. In fact, this intervention might not be workable in Saudi Arabia, where bullying is regarded as behaviour that could strengthen individuals. In simple terms, in Saudi Arabia there is a belief that bullying should be tolerated as it makes the victims stronger and resilient in harsh conditions. As indicated in the literature, Saudi teachers shy away from dealing with bullying incidents as they don't want to be associated directly with the situation for various reasons and because of various misgivings. However, ignoring the problem can result in normalisation of the behaviour (AlBuhairan, et al., 2011). Thus, we can well

conclude that this intervention (strengthening the victim) might be more appropriate in the West than in Eastern countries like Saudi Arabia.

The other main intervention strategy that should be used and yet it is not being used in Saudi Arabia is mediation. According to Rigby (2000), mediation is controversial in terms of the situations in which it should be used, as some people argue that it should be used in more severe cases while others believe that it is more effective in mild cases. The answer is also not clear regarding whether mediation is more effective when used in individual or group cases of bullying. Zapf and Gross (2001) have argued that mediation is highly effective when there is a balance of power between the victim and the perpetrator of bullying. Clearly, the victim should not be less powerful as this could worsen the situation and lead to yet more victimisation.

Even though the above interventions have been used widely, mainly in the West, and have been found to be broadly successful, it would be important to ensure they are applied carefully in Saudi Arabia in order to achieve the desired goals. Unfortunately, there are indications that education systems in the kingdom are not conducive to creating an environment that would foster trials of the above interventions.

The use of alternative approaches by the participants, instead of applying the desired guidelines and policies to curb bullying, is largely counter-productive. Evidence-based interventions and policies have been found to be effective in other countries, and Saudi Arabia should also emulate such approaches rather than alternative interventions. For instance, the UK is an example of a country where anti-bullying policies have been effective in deterring the behaviour in schools. An example of a school in the UK that has successfully applied anti-bullying policy is Badale High School, whose policy is an emancipation of the national legislation on bullying that include *Public Order Act 1986*, *Protection from Harassment Act 1997*, *The Education and Inspection Act 2006, 2011*, *The Children Act 1989*, and *The Equality Act 2010* (Badale High School, 2018). The anti-bullying policy provides for counselling sessions where both the perpetrator and victims of bullying are counselled and continued support is provided to foster a harmonious relationship between both parties. This is just one example from the UK that illustrates the success of anti-bullying strategies in mitigating aggressive behaviours and protecting potential victims from harm. Saudi Arabia should emulate such strategies, because the ones being used by the

teachers are based on previous personal experience and there is no evidence to show that they are working.

In conclusion, this theme reveals important details about the effectiveness of interventions that can be used to deal with bullying at school. It has been found that the participants tend to shy away from handling bullying incidents at school. This reluctance is exacerbated by a lack of workable policies that would enable them to evaluate the situation and then choose and apply the most appropriate strategies. The implication is that, unlike in the West where policies are working, Saudi Arabia is a long way behind in this process.

Theme 6: Identification of the characteristics of bullies and victims of bullying (The character of the bully and victim)

The sixth theme to emerge from the thematic analysis relates to the characteristics of bullies and victims of bullying. It was found that although the participants demonstrated that they could recognise some of the characteristics of school bullying, they were not conscious of the subtle difference between bullying and other misbehaviour in the school environment, due to their tendency to use their own experiences when categorising problematic behaviours among students. This indicates that the identification of bullying behaviours by teachers, principals, and social workers is unreliable. Participants appear to be uncertain about what characterises bullying. Teachers and adults need to be able to characterise behaviours as either bullying or normal behaviours in order to intervene quickly and purposefully.

Skilful identification of bullying behaviours makes it easier for the adults to intervene. According to Cross, et al. (2011), some characteristics to look out for include antagonistic intent, inequity of power, and repetition. This means that behaviour that shows any or all of those characteristics should be characterised as bullying. However, responses from the participants suggest that there is a strong risk of not identifying bullying as such, due to lack of knowledge about what bullying behaviours actually are. Kazarian (2013) elucidates these characteristics by reiterating the arguments by Cross et al. (2011) that there must be a power imbalance and that the action must be repeated to be classified as bullying. Learners should therefore be monitored closely and any behaviour that is likely to harm others identified. In this case, the focus should be on how a power imbalance leads to misunderstanding between two or more learners and how long the harassment has been taking place

between the different individuals or groups of individuals. Teachers and social workers must develop competence in identification of behaviours that are harmful to the welfare of the other learners. Therefore, it is their duty to identify all the situations within the school environment that can promote or encourage bullying.

There might be reasons that make it difficult for participants to immediately identify bullying and differentiate it from other behaviours. For instance, there is a difference in perception between Western and Eastern cultures. In relation to his study, Aoud (2012) found that certain perceptions of individuals from these two regions affect the characterisation of bullying. In the case of Saudi Arabia, Aoud (2012) found violence is regarded as a powerful tool used to resolve disputes between individuals and groups. This ingrained belief might underlie the failure of participants to characterise certain behaviours among students as bullying. This also implies that some detrimental behaviours by students might not be noticed by teachers or they might be noticed but not characterised as bullying. Ultimately, due to the failure by teachers to associate certain behaviours with bullying, it then becomes problematic because the behaviours worsen. This means schools should make efforts to enlighten and educate their staff about what bullying behaviours look like and how to identify them..

The revelation that the study participants were unable to characterise certain behaviours as bullying means that the problem of bullying is not being addressed effectively in Saudi Arabia. Therefore, it would be appropriate for all teachers and social workers to take steps to define what characterises bullying, and which interventions could be considered to deal with it. Ultimately, an informed environment can be created where the cases are handled effectively from the outset. This can be achieved by considering what has succeeded in the West and applying it in the Saudi context.

Theme seven: How participants can identify behaviours that characterise bullying (prevalence)

Bullying is associated with various characteristics that an individual can easily recognise and link to the various actions exhibited by the perpetrators. In this theme, the intention of the research was to determine what the participants think about the behaviours that they believe to characterise bullying. Responses from the participants indicate that they had difficulty in pinpointing what constitutes bullying behaviour at

school, and they were unable to say whether bullying was taking place at school on a daily basis.

There are many reasons why there is a problem in identifying bullying behaviours in Saudi Arabia. For instance, the Arabic word used for bullying, *Tanmor*, is not a specific term, rather it means 'power' and to 'conquer' others. The people in Saudi Arabia are not familiar with the Western definition of the term. Thus, any aggressive behaviour that they encounter among students is not classified as bullying but as having power over or conquering others. This argument is consistent with the findings by Aoud (2012) who stated that violence is often seen in Saudi Arabia as a dispute resolution tool. The same behaviour is perceived in both males and females, where such behaviour is termed as *boyah* in reference to a girl with behaviours that are considered more male (or what is referred to as being a 'tomboy' in English). In relation to this, *tanmor* is mainly understood as having control over others and is similar to the term *fotooah*, which means ultimate power over other people. Hence, since the participants are not aware of the technical term 'bullying', it has become quite problematic to identify certain behaviours as bullying. These sentiments are also confirmed by AlBuhairan, et al., (2011), who said that behaviours that characterise bullying have been normalised in the kingdom. This means that bullying can be taking place daily at school but the teachers and social workers may not identify it as bullying or see the need to address the issue urgently.

Theoretical Framework for Understanding the Findings

It is always necessary to link theories to research findings, especially if it is qualitative research. This section discusses the application of the theories reviewed in the literature to the findings of the study that took place in the Saudi context. Defining the relationship between the relevant theory and the findings of the study reveals the extent to which the issues can be viewed from a theoretical perspective, and whether the theory is applicable to the Saudi context as well as to the Western context. The underpinning theories include social learning theory, school standpoint, psychoanalytic theory, the transactional model of development, ecological theory of development, and rational-cultural theory.

Social learning theory

The social learning theory was developed by Bandura to depict the learning process among children whereby their learning takes place by interacting with others and observing their actions (Bandura, 1978). In the process, the children observe the actions, behaviours, and the outcomes of the behaviours, and then attempt to apply the same behaviours through imitation. The relevance of this theory is that, through observation, young people can learn new behaviours irrespective of whether they are appropriate or not.

There was no question in the study asking the participants to say whether they think bullying is a learned behaviour. However, it can be concluded that, just as in the West, there is a high risk that in the Saudi context children are motivated to engage in bullying behaviours as a result of exposure to violence and observation of violent incidents. It would then be important for the people tasked with the protection of children at school to enact policies and develop environments that do not condone violence. Interventions taken during the child's early stages of development will be more likely to be successful. Ultimately, it is a prerequisite that Saudi schools should apply the concept of early intervention to prevent the spread of undesirable behaviour to the rest of the students in the same school. However, it might be problematic to curb the problem, especially when the children are exposed to violence outside school in other areas, such as at home and through the media.

School standpoint theory

The school standpoint theory maintains that the school's social climate and environment also contribute to the problem of bullying at school. According to Astor, Guerra and Van Acker (2010), a school environment that does not foster student-friendly rules and ensure that students follow the rules is responsible for fanning violence and acts of bullying. This means that schools, as social environments within which learners interact, must create an environment that enables the identification of devious behaviour. Disciplinary measures should thus be established in schools to ensure that the rules are followed and that the learners co-exist harmoniously. This aspect of the theory has been applied in Australia and the UK, where adequate policies have been put into place to safeguard school-going children from being bullied. The policies in these Western contexts ensure that a secure school environment is created whereby the learners interact positively with each other. However, this approach has

not been effective in the Saudi context due to weak laws and anti-bullying policies in the schools. There are various factors that contribute to the problem of bullying in Saudi Arabia an important one of which is the absence of functional legislation to combat the problem of bullying in schools.

The findings of this research indicate that there is a positive relationship between school standpoint theory and bullying in Saudi Arabia. For instance, according to the findings, most of the participants believed that addressing the problem of bullying is not as relevant as protecting the reputation of their schools. This means that the teachers and social workers in Saudi schools shy away from the notion of creating a school environment that will eliminate bullying. Educators' failure to act is a major contributory factor in the escalation of bullying in Saudi schools. Another finding that corroborates the relevance of this theory to the situation in in Saudi schools is that the teachers are not even capable of identifying cases of bullying that take place at school on a daily basis. Participants stated that they are unable to recognise bullying as such and to differentiate it from other behaviours. As a result, the schools are creating an environment where there is little concern about bullying, a factor that will definitely lead to a situation where interventions to prevent bullying are completely absent. The issues are likely to be further complicated as cases of bullying are likely to rise exponentially if the problem is left unattended for long. To ensure that the children are kept in a safe environment devoid of bullying, teachers and social workers should be educated about bullying behaviours and intervene as soon as possible whenever they notice such behaviours.

Psychoanalytic theory

Analysis of this theory in terms of two main factors, aggression and attachment, is relevant for understanding how bullying takes place between individuals or groups of people. This, according to Morris (2001), is an essential theory that enhances an understanding of all human behaviour, but especially, in this context, behaviours that relate to socialisation. As earlier discussed in the literature, the mental effects of bullying on the victims is significant, and includes anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem (Cook et al., 2010).

As mentioned earlier, bullying causes serious psychological issues in the affected individuals in the West, which will also apply in the East, where the topic has not been fully explored. There might be unreported cases of mental issues arising from

bullying in Saudi Arabia, although they have not been scientifically proven through empirical research. As stated by Kazarian (2013), there are no prevalence studies on the issue to confirm whether there is a positive relationship between bullying and psychological problems among victims. There is the need to understand how the theory relates with bullying in Saudi Arabia and to confirm its viability. In the Western world it has already been confirmed to be essential to the understanding of aggression and the psychological effects of bullying on learners. It can only be assumed that, since human behaviours are universal, focus should be directed on the Saudi students to determine how bullying affects them psychologically. The current study did not focus on the relationship between bullying and the mental states of affected learners.

Transactional model of child development

There is the need to contextualise the transactional model of child development to the Saudi environment. In this theory, the home environment to which a child is exposed impacts on that child's development. According to Georgiou (2008), parenting style has an indirect impact on both bullies and their victims. This means that children practise certain behaviours based on their experiences of the same behaviours in their families. Most studies on this theory, and how it is linked to bullying, have been conducted in the West to suit the Western context; hence, it needs to be revised to fit the Saudi Arabian context.

In previous arguments it has been stated that violence has become normalised in Saudi Arabia as the most effective dispute resolution approach; it has been observed even beyond peer-to-peer interactions, because even teachers can be targeted (AlQahtani, 2008; Alzahrani, 2012). Some of the participants' responses also indicate that they are not fully committed to eliminating bullying behaviours, whether imitated from parents or learned from their peers at school. This means that the problem is getting out of hand in the kingdom, and there is a need to identify its root cause. Is there a likelihood that Saudi children are exposed to violent environments both at home and at school? In relation to the theory, it would be useful for learners to be monitored and their family relationships explored. Determining whether learners are exposed to violence at home is a precept of social learning theory, which posits that behaviours are learned through observation and interaction with perpetrators. Family observation might be problematic in Saudi Arabia but it would be useful to view the bullying problem from the perspective of this theory. More efforts should be made to determine

how children relate with their parents, and how the behaviours of their parents impact on their psychological development to turn them either into bullies or victims of bullying.

Ecological theory of development

The environment in which an individual lives and interacts with others impacts their behaviour. The ecological theory of development is mainly about the impact of the different environmental systems (mesosystem, microsystem, exosystem and macrosystem) on the people who interact within those environments (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The microsystem of bullies includes their immediate surroundings, such as their homes. This means that they are more likely to replicate any act of violence that they experience at home and apply the same at school on their peers. As mentioned above, it may be relevant to focus on the family environment to understand what Saudi children experience at home behind closed doors, and whether the violent behaviours they display at school have been nurtured at home.

The other aspect of the ecological theory of development by Bronfenbrenner is the exosystem, which refers to the system outside the immediate surroundings of an individual. In the case of bullies in Saudi Arabia, we need to study this system because most of the bullying incidents that occur in schools are directly related to the school environment. For instance, the findings of the study indicate that teachers are not concerned with mitigating bullying at school, and that the school environment is not willing to put in place key measures and policies to combat the problem of bullying. This can be interpreted to mean that the school environment, which is the main exosystem of consideration in this case, is not effective in eliminating the problem. This also implies that bullying incidents are more likely to continue taking place at school because the behaviour has been accepted and normalised. This is contrary to the situation in the West, where educators have realised that the school environment can be developed in such a way that it becomes difficult for learners to engage in bullying behaviours. This argument is evidenced by the initial discussions on the policies that have been developed specifically to deal with bullying in the UK and Australian schools.

Applying this theory to the Saudi context is not complicated but its application is likely to meet some sort of resistance, especially as a result of an unwillingness to recognise bullying as deviant behaviour. In fact, the teachers in Saudi schools should

be capable of identifying the characteristics of bullying and should be able to solve the problems effectively. They should first create an environment that fosters cohesion, and then seek to identify the probable causes of bullying behaviour at school. At the end of the process, there should be positive outcomes that would enhance cohesion among the learners and eliminate aggression. This should be accompanied by developing a school environment that is sociable, to boost positive interactions among learners and ensure that aggression is minimised to the fullest extent. However, whether or not this outcome will be attained in the Saudi context is still uncertain.

Relational-cultural theory

In the relational-cultural theory, Jordan (2010) argued that children create relational images by internalising the extent to which they associate or dissociate from other people in their environment. In relation to this theory, children have different expectations related to what they think about the interactions that they have with each other. This means that only the positive behaviours are relevant to them; any negative behaviours experienced during their relationships with others is not conducive to the maintenance of positive relationships. This theory depicts the complexities that exist in the process of forming relationships. The relationships created should be growth-fostering, and should be characterised by a sense of energy, increased feeling of worth, clarity, productivity, and the desire by an individual to gain more connection for functional benefits. In such instances, it is expected that people should grow towards positive development, enhance their worth, and be able to benefit from each other by gaining from positive change. Furthermore, the role of gender is of particular interest when used as a lens for viewing the interactions between culture and personal relationships (Pepler et al., 2006). This is because cultural norms and relational disconnection are mainly dependent on the gender of an individual. For example, the sexual orientation of individuals plays an important role in developing relationships or disconnections among school-going children. This theory could be relevant to the Saudi environment, although it has not been fully explored in that context. Also, the participants were not asked about the relationship between gender and bullying incidents in their schools.

However, even though the question of gender and culture was not posed to the participants to determine how relationships are affected, and how they might lead to bullying, it is intuitive to assert that the theory affects the relationships between

schoolchildren to some extent. It cannot be assumed without question that homophobic views and sexual harassment are factors in the incidence of bullying in Saudi Arabia, as articulated by Episelege et al. (2012), because there is a lack of empirical evidence regarding the extent to which disconnections in relationships at school lead to bullying. However, it is evident from the findings that the teachers who participated in the study are not committed to ensuring that the relationships among learners are built on growth and strength. The teachers seem to be dissociated with the learners, while the social workers who were interviewed asserted that they could not identify behaviours that characterise bullying among the children attending the schools in which they work. This then confirms that the theory cannot be fully contextualised to the Saudi environment to explain bullying among learners.

Limitations

The limitations faced in the study were mainly methodological. The initial limitation was there is a lack of significant amounts of literature on school bullying in Saudi Arabia. This means that the background of the research was developed on the existing limited research in the Saudi context, which means that there was overreliance on literature from the Western context that might not be readily applicable in the Saudi context. The other limitation of this study included the low response rate, and sampling issues. First, although the researcher was pleased with the generally high level of response, it is not 100%, which means that the required data was not fully acquired for all research questions and responses. Additionally, in relation to sampling, the sample does not include schools from other areas of Saudi Arabia, such as more rural areas or places with different socioeconomic backgrounds. This limitation implies that the findings cannot be generalised to the rest of the population in Saudi Arabia. Finally, the researcher would have liked to interview teachers from all of the schools, but due to time constraints and practical considerations (i.e. final exams), this was not possible. This then means that the information that was collected could have been more comprehensive had there been involvement of a larger number of teachers. Thus, the small sample size limited the generalizability of the research findings. The researcher needed to collect diverse views from more participants to enhance the reliability and credibility of the findings.

Summary of Findings

Some key points emerge from the findings of the research. The first point is that the participants who were interviewed in the study did not have any idea about what bullying is or about the behaviours that characterise bullying. This factor contributed directly to the creation of an environment that encourages bullying as opposed to creating an environment that marginalises and limits bullying. To some extent, lack of knowledge made the participants prefer to rely on their own personal values and interventions instead of using professional values and applying a formal policy. Lastly, there is a lack of appropriate policies in Saudi Arabia that would help in the mitigation of the problem. Thus, it is unfortunately more than likely that school bullying will continue to be experienced in Saudi Arabia if measures are not taken to stamp out the behaviour. Measures such as anti-bullying policies should be developed and applied in Saudi Arabia as a matter of urgency.

Recommendations

- A committee be established by the Education Department and given the task of auditing the schools to determine why the teachers are not aware of bullying instances, and the reasons for their failure to respond to the observed bullying incidents.
- That this committee review the current policies on school bullying to determine their effectiveness and any areas of weakness that might be improved.
- New legislation be drafted, in consultation with policy makers, to develop policies that are workable and can lead to the mitigation of bullying at school.
- Any new policies be replicated in all Saudi schools, and later subjected to assessment and auditing to determine their efficacy in addressing the school bullying problem.
- Education sessions be conducted to inform the teachers about the characteristics of bullies and the behaviours that can be categorised as bullying.
- Evidence-based modes of interventions should also be explained during the educator training sessions to equip the teachers with adequate knowledge and skills on how to handle the problem.

- Students, as well as teachers, should be taught about the dangers of bullying, and why it is necessary for students to positively coexist with each other at school in a cohesive and sociable manner.
- Parents of school children should also be involved in educational sessions about bullying to assist in the identification and mitigation of bullying.

Future Research

The above limitations may have potentially affected the generalisability of the study due to the small sample size that might not be a valid representation of the whole Saudi population. In relation to this, future research into bullying in Saudi Arabia should address these issues more exhaustively to enhance the credibility of the findings. Future research needs to activate greater professional commitment towards considering all sides of the problem, to ensure the research is scientifically based.

Furthermore, future research should focus on types of policies that would be valid to address bullying in schools, as well as how to roll out the policies to all employees in educational institutions. This might be in form of training programs, role play and seminars. The teachers should be actively involved in the identification and prevention of bullying incidents, which has been identified by this study as a problem in Saudi Arabia.

The results of this study suggest that the definition of term ‘bullying’ needs to be clearer to all school teachers and students. This study therefore proposes the establishment of further research to educate the school members about bullying and its characteristics and what distinguishes it from other school problems. It would also be important for future research to test the applicability and effectiveness of anti-bullying policies in some Saudi schools.

This research applied a qualitative design; however, future research could apply mixed methods or a quantitative approach for the purpose of empirically investigating the topic, to quantify the extent to which bullying has affected the Saudi schooling system. The quantification could examine the extent to which the identified anti-bullying policies have been successful in mitigating the behaviour. This will also be in line with investigating the relationship between bullying and school performance, which cannot be analysed qualitatively but could be analysed quantitatively. Furthermore, by

applying the quantitative approach, a larger sample size could be recruited, which would also enhance the generalisability of the findings.

It would also be important for future researchers to consider including observation as a prime research approach, to collect first-hand data from the school environment regarding interactions among the learners. Through observation of the learners in their natural environment, it would be possible to identify the behaviours that characterise bullying among Saudi learners. The actions and reactions of the teachers could also be observed to determine whether they are consistent in addressing the issue of school bullying in an appropriate manner according to the adopted anti-bullying policies.

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APPENDIX A

(ETHICS APPROVAL)

CONDITIONAL APPROVAL RESPONSE

For Review by Chair Between Meetings

Submission Instructions	IMPORTANT
<p>a) <u>Submit</u> a single PDF version of your conditional approval response (including all attachments) to the SBREC Executive Officer at human.researchethics@flinders.edu.au.</p> <p>b) You <u>do not</u> need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to sign your conditional approval response; - submit an amended version of your application; or - submit a hard-copy. Submit PDF version only. 	<p><u>Response time</u> Committee response will be emailed to you in 1-2 weeks.</p> <p><u>Modifications</u> If you need to make some modifications to your project, please also submit a modification request at the same time as your conditional approval response.</p>

1. Project Information

Project No. 7459

Project Title Responses to school bullying in Saudi Arabia and how these responses are reflective of the educational policies on bullying

Principal Researcher Hani Alsihli

Email address: Als0008@flinders.edu.au

1.	<p><u>Commencement Date (item A3)</u> Item A3 listed the planned date of commencement of data collection as the 1st of January 2017. On the basis that conditional approval has been granted; and due to the Christmas break, the committee advises that it will not be possible to receive final ethics approval by the 1st of January. Please provide a revised planned commencement date and be reminded that projects may not commence without prior written approval from the Social and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee</p>
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Researcher's response

Revised planned commencement date now is going to be 15/02/2017.

2.	<p><u>How Information Collected will address Research Objectives (item C6)</u> The committee noted that the response given to item C6 did not answer the question asked. Please explain how the information to be requested from participants will help address the research objectives listed in item C1c</p>
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Researcher's response

How Information Collected will address Research Objectives
The information obtained from the participants in this research will provide data and new knowledge about cultural factors, policies around school bullying, implantation of policies and their strengths and weakness. This will lead to the development of a framework for best practice

3.	<p><u>Source of Participants (item D1c)</u> Please provide a list of all the schools in the city of Mecca that will be approached for the purposes of this research project. If this cannot be confirmed at this time, please confirm that a modification request will be submitted to have the relevant schools added on to the protocol (i.e, after receipt of final ethics approval).</p>
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Researcher's response

Inspiring
achievement

List of all the schools

The specific schools have not yet been determined, as this needs to be discussed further in person with the region of Mecca Education Department after I receive final ethics approval and return to Saudi Arabia. Schools will be chosen by the Education Department. Invitation to schools will be sent via Education Departments in the region of Mecca. The names of the schools and correspondence granting permission will be submitted to SBREC on receipt. The researcher confirms that all correspondence regarding permissions will be sent when received.

4.	<p>4. Recruitment (item D4a)</p> <p>Please provide additional information by responding to the following comments:</p> <p>(A) Role of Principals in Recruitment Item D4a indicates that once permission has been granted by the Education Department and school principals, that the principals will recruit teacher and school advisor participants. Please provide a detailed explanation of how the principal will go about recruiting teachers and school advisors (e.g. provide a research information pack face-to-face at a staff meeting; via email; via pigeon hole; or telephone call etc).</p> <p>(B) Indication of Interest in Participating Item D4a indicates that once permission has been granted by the Education Department and school principals, that the principals will recruit teacher and school advisor participants. Please confirm that interested respondents will be asked to contact the researcher directly (i.e. interested respondents are not to let the principal know).</p>
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Researcher's response

4. Recruitment

4(A) The principals with whom the researcher have spoken have indicated that they would hand out my research information sheet at a face-to-face staff meeting and any interested teacher could contact the researcher outside of school by email. I will ask all the school to follow this procedure.

4(B) The principals will all ask their staff to contact the researcher by email outside of school hours and without any official involvement. It will be stressed with the principals that the participation of their staff is confidential.

Education department in the region of Mecca will be asked to choose primary and secondary schools for boys and girls.

The principals of chosen schools will be contacted via the Education Department. They will receive the Information Sheet, the Consent Form, the Flyer, and the Letter of Introduction. Invitation for teachers and school advisors will be sent via the principals of the School and anyone the wishes to participate in the study can contact the researcher outside the school hours. In this regard, the voluntary nature of participation in the research studies should be emphasized.

5.	<p>5. Anonymity (item D7)</p> <p>Item D7 indicates that interviews and focus groups will not be anonymous; however the committee noted that the Information Sheets for interviews and focus groups indicate otherwise. To ensure that informed consent can be obtained, please revise both the interview and focus group Information Sheets to include clear advice that while identifying information will not be published that anonymity cannot be guaranteed. Please submit copies of the revised Information Sheets for review.</p>
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Researcher's response

Revised Information Sheets for both interviews and focus groups now has been revised. (see the attachment)

The individual interviews will be anonymous. The focus groups will obviously not be.

6.	Burdens and/or Risks (items F2 and F3) Item F2 indicates that some participants could feel distressed or embarrassed during research participation; however in item F3 it states that the researcher will reassure these participants using personal experience and training as a social worker. Please confirm that no counselling will be provided by the researcher. The committee notes the researcher's experience with mental health, however advises that a clear line needs to be drawn between a clinical setting and research; and on that basis it is not appropriate for the researcher to provide any counselling for the purposes of this research project.
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Researcher's response

Confirming that no counselling will be provided by the researcher:

The researcher confirms that he will not engage in any counselling of the participants but that will refer anyone who indicates they need further consultation or help to another party such as from within the education department counselling service.

7.	Interview Information Sheet Please revise the Information Sheet by: (A) ensuring that 'interview' is included in the title of the Information Sheet (i.e, Information Sheet for Interviews); and (B) ensuring that the principal student researcher is listed before the supervisors, as per the template available from the Guidelines, Forms and Templates webpage. Please submit a copy of the revised Information Sheet for review.
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Researcher's response

. Revise the Information Sheet:

(A) A revised copy of the information sheet for the interviews now ensures that 'interview' is included in the title.

(B) and that principal researcher is listed before the supervisors. A revised copy is included.

8.	Focus Group Information Sheet Please revise the Focus Group Information Sheet by including 'focus group' in the title of the Information Sheet (i.e, Information Sheet for Focus Groups). Please submit a copy of the revised Information Sheet for review.
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Researcher's response

A revised copy of the information sheet for the focus group now ensures that focus group is included in the title and that principal researcher is listed before the supervisors. A revised copy is included.

9.	9. Interview and Focus Group Consent Form Please revise the interview and focus group Consent Form by: (A) splitting the Consent Form up so that there is one form for interviews and one form for focus groups (i.e, 2 Consent Forms in total); (B) rewording dot point 5.3 by clearly explaining that while information collected will be treated
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	<p>with the strictest confidence, anonymity cannot be guaranteed for; focus groups in the Focus Group Consent Form; and interviews in the Interview Consent Form;</p> <p>(C) deleting dot point 5.4 regarding ‘course of study’ in both of the new Consent Forms as it is not relevant to any of the four participant groups; and</p> <p>(D) rewording dot point 5.5 by including clear advice that while participants may withdraw at any stage, if they do withdraw they cannot withdraw their data or ask for the audio recording to be stopped (for the Focus Group Consent Form).</p> <p>Please submit a copy of the new Interview and Focus Group Consent Form for review.</p>
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Researcher’s response

Revised Interview and Focus Group Consent Form

Points (A and B) The Consent Forms have been separated and the section on anonymity are now better clarified.

(C) As requested ‘course of study’ on point 5.4 has been deleted from both the interview and focus group Consent forms.

(D) As requested substitute on the instructions on 5.5 for the Focus Group Consent form are now included:

“I may withdraw at any time from this session but you cannot withdraw your data or ask for the audio recording to be stopped.

10.	<p>Translations (item D3) Please provide the Arabic translations of all information and documents to be distributed to participants. Please also provide a signed copy of the Translation Accuracy Certification document, available from the Guidelines, Forms and Templates web page, to verify that accurate translations have been provided.</p>
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Researcher’s response

Arabic translations are now included.

11.	<p>Governance Issues Permissions (item D8) Please provide copies of correspondence granting permission to conduct the research from the Education Department in the Region of Mecca. Once the schools to be approached have been identified; please also provide permissions from each school principal.</p> <p>Please ensure that all correspondence clearly outlines the specifics of what permission is being granted. If the documentation cannot be provided at the time of response to conditional approval, please confirm that it will be provided to the Committee on receipt. <u>Please note</u> that data collection cannot commence until all relevant permissions have been granted.</p>
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Researcher’s response

Permission has already been received from Education Department in the region of Mecca (See attached letter). The researcher will contact the Education Departments and with their approval certain schools will be selected and letters will be sent to the school principals. These letters cannot be provided until the Education Department decides on the names of specific selected schools and when that happens the researcher will send a copy to SBREC.

The principals do not have the authority to issue a letter regarding the research since they will be requested to participate by the Education Department in the region of Mecca and they will conform. It is important to understand that within the Educational structure in Saudi Arabia the authority for

research rests with the education department and not with the school or principals. It is not acceptable to seek permission from individual school principals. Within the schools the teachers will have the choice of participating or not in the study.

This study is funded by the Saudi Government who is fully in support of my research.

12.	12. Overseas Ethics Approvals (item E3) Item E3 indicated that no ethics approval processes, relevant to the research, need to be adhered to in Saudi Arabia. Please explain how this is known to the researcher and <u>either</u> provide (a) written correspondence confirming that no ethics approval is required <u>or</u> (b) written confirmation that this is the case from the student's supervisor.
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Researcher's response:

All education in Saudi Arabia is religiously based and education and religion are closely interwoven. Ethics are not considered to be in a separate sphere but a part of all considerations regarding the educational processes, including research. In giving approval for the research the education department is indicating that they feel the project is ethically sound. It would not be appropriate to ask for an additional statement saying that not further ethics in Saudi Arabia would be required because they have issued a general approval letter which also represents the ethical perspective of the institution.

Note from supervisor:

I have known this candidate for 6 years during this study of his MSW and now his PhD. Mr Alsihli now holds a lecturing position at the University of Umm Alqurra in the city of Mecca. During the time I have known this candidate he has always spoken of the fact that all issues concerning ethics were handled by the educational institution itself and that ethics was not considered a separate concern from daily life and activities. Accordingly there is no definitive ethics approval per se and as Hani has explained the approval from the Education Department contains ethics approval as well. I hope this explanation is acceptable and I am happy to be contacted if there is a need for further comment.

Carol Irizarry

Jan 20/17
Primary Supervisor

IMPORTANT - If you have <u>more than 20 conditions</u> to respond to please copy and paste to add more rows. - If you have <u>less than 20 conditions</u> please delete the boxes that are not required before submission.
--

Associate Professor Carol Irizarry



School of Social and Policy Studies
Flinders University
GPO Box 2100 / Adelaide SA 5001
Telephone Number: + 61 8201-2452
Email: carol.irizarry@flinders.edu.au

7459 SBREC Final approval notice (30 January 2017)

Human Research Ethics

Mon 1/30/2017 2:25 AM

To: Hani Alsihli <alsi0008@flinders.edu.au>; Keith Miller <keith.miller@flinders.edu.au>; Carol Irizarry <carol.irizarry@flinders.edu.au>;

Importance: High

 attachments (4 MB)

7459 conditional approval response;

Dear Hani,

The Chair of the [Social and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee \(SBREC\)](#) at Flinders University considered your response to conditional approval out of session and your project has now been granted final ethics approval. This means that you now have approval to commence your research. Your ethics final approval notice can be found below.

FINAL APPROVAL NOTICE

Project No.:

7459

Project Title:

Responses to school bullying in Saudi Arabia and how these responses are reflective of the educational policies on bullying

Principal Researcher:

Mr Hani Alsihili

Email:

alsi0008@flinders.edu.au

Approval Date:

30 January 2017

Ethics Approval Expiry
Date:

30 December 2019

The above proposed project has been **approved** on the basis of the information contained in the application, its attachments and the information subsequently provided with the addition of the following comment(s):

Additional information required following commencement of research:

1. Permissions

Please ensure that copies of the correspondence granting permission to conduct the research from the principals of all schools involved are submitted to the Committee *on receipt*. Please ensure that the SBREC project number is included in the subject line of any permission emails forwarded to the Committee. Please note that data collection should not commence until the researcher has received the relevant permissions (item D8 and Conditional approval response – number 11)

7.1 RESPONSIBILITIES OF RESEARCHERS AND SUPERVISORS 1. PARTICIPANT DOCUMENTATION

Please note that it is the responsibility of researchers and supervisors, in the case of student projects, to ensure that:

- x all participant documents are checked for spelling, grammatical, numbering and formatting errors. The Committee does not accept any responsibility for the above mentioned errors.
- x the Flinders University logo is included on all participant documentation (e.g., letters of Introduction, information Sheets, consent forms, debriefing information and questionnaires – with the exception of purchased research tools) and the current Flinders University letterhead is included in the header of all letters of introduction. The Flinders University international logo/letterhead should be used and documentation should contain international dialling codes for all telephone and fax numbers listed for all research to be conducted overseas.
- x the SBREC contact details, listed below, are included in the footer of all letters of introduction and information sheets.
This research project has been approved by the Flinders University Social and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee (Project Number 'INSERT PROJECT No. here following approval'). For more information regarding ethical approval of the project the Executive Officer of the Committee can be contacted by telephone on 8201 3116, by fax on 8201 2035 or by email human.researchethics@flinders.edu.au.

7.2 2. ANNUAL PROGRESS / FINAL REPORTS

In order to comply with the monitoring requirements of the [National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research \(March 2007\)](#) an annual progress report must be submitted each year on the **30 January** (approval anniversary date) for the duration of the ethics approval using the report template available from the [Managing Your Ethics Approval](#) SBREC web page. *Please retain this notice for reference when completing annual progress or final reports.*

If the project is completed *before* ethics approval has expired please ensure a final report is submitted immediately. If ethics approval for your project expires

please submit either (1) a final report; or (2) an extension of time request and an annual report.

Student Projects

The SBREC recommends that current ethics approval is maintained until a student's thesis has been submitted, reviewed and approved. This is to protect the student in the event that reviewers recommend some changes that may include the collection of additional participant data.

Your first report is due on **30 January 2018** or on completion of the project, whichever is the earliest.

7.3 3. MODIFICATIONS TO PROJECT

Modifications to the project must not proceed until approval has been obtained from the Ethics Committee. Such proposed changes / modifications include:

- x change of project title;
- x change to research team (e.g., additions, removals, principal researcher or supervisor change);
- x changes to research objectives; x changes to research protocol;
- x changes to participant recruitment methods; x changes / additions to source(s) of participants; x changes of procedures used to seek informed consent; x changes to reimbursements provided to participants;
- x changes / additions to information and/or documentation to be provided to potential participants;
- x changes to research tools (e.g., questionnaire, interview questions, focus group questions); x extensions of time.

To notify the Committee of any proposed modifications to the project please complete and submit the *Modification Request Form* which is available from the [Managing Your Ethics Approval](#) SBREC web page. Download the form from the website every time a new modification request is submitted to ensure that the most recent form is used. Please note that extension of time requests should be submitted prior to the Ethics Approval Expiry Date listed on this notice.

Change of Contact Details

Please ensure that you notify the Committee if either your mailing or email address changes to ensure that correspondence relating to this project can be sent to you. A modification request is not required to change your contact details.

7.4 4. ADVERSE EVENTS AND/OR COMPLAINTS

Researchers should advise the Executive Officer of the Ethics Committee on 08 8201-3116 or human.researchethics@flinders.edu.au immediately if: x any complaints regarding the research are received;

x a serious or unexpected adverse event occurs that effects participants; x an unforeseen event occurs that may affect the ethical acceptability of the project.

Kind regards
Andrea

Mrs Andrea Fiegert and Ms Rae Tyler

Ethics Officers and Executive Officer, Social and Behavioural Research

Ethics Committee Andrea Telephone: +61 8 82013116 | Monday,

Tuesday and Wednesday

Rae – Telephone: +61 8 82017938 | ½ day Wednesday, Thursday and Friday

Email: human.researchethics@flinders.edu.au

Web: [Social and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee \(SBREC\)](#)

Manager, Research Ethics and Integrity – Dr Peter Wigley

Telephone: +61 8 82015466 | email: peter.wigley@flinders.edu.au

[Research Services Office](#) | Union Building Basement

Flinders University

Sturt Road, Bedford Park | South Australia | 5042

GPO Box 2100 | Adelaide SA 5001

CRICOS Registered Provider: The Flinders University of South Australia | CRICOS

Provider Number 00114A This email and attachments may be confidential. If you are not the intended recipient, please inform the sender by reply email and delete all copies of this message.

APPENDIX B

INFORMATION FOR PARTICIPANT:

- Information sheet for interview.
- Information sheet for focus group.
- Consent form for participation in research for interview.
- Consent form for participation in research for focus group.
- Arabic translations.



Mr Hani Alsihli
A PhD student at Flinders University
Department Of Social Work and Planning
School of social and policy studies
GPO Box 2100 Adelaide SA 5001
Tel: +61
Email: als0008@flinders.edu.au

INFORMATION SHEET FOR INTERVEIWS

Title: Responses to school bullying in Saudi Arabia and how these responses are reflective of the educational policies on bullying

Investigators: Hani Alsihli

E-mail: Als0008@flinders.edu.au
Number: +61424763767.

Department of Social Work and Planning
School of social and policy studies

Supervisor 1 (Principal Supervisor): Dr Carol Irizarry

Associate Professor - School of Social and Policy Studies
Flinders University
GPO Box 2100 / Adelaide SA 5001
Telephone Number: + 61 8201-2452

Supervisor2 (Associate Supervisor)

Keith Miller PhD
Senior Lecturer
School of Social and Policy Studies
Flinders University
GPO Box 2100/Adelaide SA 5001
<http://www.flinders.edu.au/people/keith.miller>
Telephone Number: + 61 8 8201 5619

Description of the study:

The study is part of the project entitled “Responses to school bullying in Saudi Arabia and how these responses are reflective of the educational policies on bullying.” The study aims

inspiring
achievement

to investigate the responses by policy officers, principals, teachers and school advisors (who are social workers) to school bullying in Saudi Arabia with a comparison to policies around this issue. The study also aims to align policies more effectively with staff responses to bullying in schools. The study will explore bullying responses using a qualitative approach.

Purpose of the study:

This project aims to:

1. Explore current practice around school bullying and the influence of social and cultural factors that may influence bullying responses in educational institutions
2. Understand how teachers, principals and school advisors identify and manage school bullying.
3. Identify the strength and the weakness of the existing policies around school bullying.
4. Develop a framework for best practice around school bullying

What will I be asked to do?

- You will be asked to volunteer to participate in an interview

• Interview

You may be invited to participate in an interview with the researcher who will ask a set of questions about the policies and impact of school bullying amongst young people. The interview will take between 45 – 60 minutes. The interview will be recorded using a digital voice recorder to help with looking at the results. Once recorded, the interview will be transcribed (typed-up) and stored as a computer file.

What benefit will I gain from being involved in this study?

The sharing of your experiences will help in developing awareness of school bullying in a school context, as well as encouraging further research on this issue in Saudi Arabia in general. We anticipate that it will influence decision makers in Saudi Arabia to affect policy development on school bullying.

Will I be identifiable by being involved in this study?

We do not need your name and you will remain anonymous. Once the interview has been typed up and saved as a file, the voice file will be kept in a secure location. Any identifying information will be removed and the typed-up file stored on a password protected computer that only the researcher and supervisors will have access to. Your comments will not be linked directly to you.

Are there any risks or discomforts if I am involved?

As a participant, you may become distressed during your involvement in the interview. If this occurs, you may be referred to the free counselling service offered to all school employees. If you have any concerns regarding anticipated or actual risks or discomfort, please raise them with the researcher initially and he will recommend that you contact the free counselling service. (Contact details of free counselling service will be made available in the Information sheet once available from Region of Mecca Education Department.)

How do I agree to participate?

Participation is voluntary. You may answer 'no comment' or refuse to answer any questions and you are free to withdraw from participating in the study at any time without effect or consequences. A consent form accompanies this information sheet. If you agree to participate, please read and sign the form and give it back to the researcher.

How will I receive feedback?

Outcomes from the project will be summarised and given to you by the researcher if you would like to see them.

If you have any concerns or questions regarding this research, please feel free to contact the supervisor Dr Keith Miller telephone (+61 8 82015619) or by email (keith.miller@flinders.edu.au).

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet and we hope that you will accept our invitation to be involved.

This research project has been approved by the Flinders University Social and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee (Project number 7459). For more information regarding ethical approval of the project the Executive Officer of the Committee can be contacted by telephone on +61 8 8201 3116, by fax on +61 8 8201 2035 or by email human.researchethics@flinders.edu.au



Mr Hani Alsihli
A PhD student at Flinders University
Department Of Social Work and Planning
School of social and policy studies
GPO Box 2100 Adelaide SA 5001
Tel: +61
Email: als0008@flinders.edu.au

INFORMATION SHEET FOR FOCUS GROUPS

Title: Responses to school bullying in Saudi Arabia and how these responses are reflective of the educational policies on bullying

Investigators: Hani Alsihli

E-mail: Als0008@flinders.edu.au
Number: +61424763767.

Department of Social Work and Planning
School of social and policy studies

Supervisor 1 (Principal Supervisor): Dr Carol Irizarry

Associate Professor - School of Social and Policy Studies
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Supervisor2 (Associate Supervisor)

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2. Understand how teachers, principals and school advisors identify and manage school bullying.
3. Identify the strength and the weakness of the existing policies around school bullying.
4. Develop a framework for best practice around school bullying

What will I be asked to do?

- You will be asked to volunteer to participate in a focus group

• Focus Group

You may be invited to participate in a focus group with the researcher who will ask a set of questions about the policies and impact of school bullying amongst young people. The focus group will take between 45 – 60 minutes. The focus group will be recorded using a digital voice recorder to help with looking at the results. Once recorded, the focus group will be transcribed (typed-up) and stored as a computer file.

What benefit will I gain from being involved in this study?

The sharing of your experiences will help in developing awareness of school bullying in a school context, as well as encouraging further research on this issue in Saudi Arabia in general. We anticipate that it will influence decision makers in Saudi Arabia to affect policy development on school bullying.

Will I be identifiable by being involved in this study?

In the focus groups, you will be aware of the other members in the group. Individual names or identifying information will not be recorded and comments made in the group will not be linked to any group member. The researcher asked that you respect the confidentiality of the focus group meeting.

The recording for the focus groups will be removed and the typed-up file stored on a password protected computer that only the researcher and supervisors will have access to. Your comments will not be linked directly to you.

Are there any risks or discomforts if I am involved?

As a participant, you may become distressed during your involvement in the focus group. If this occurs, you may be referred to the free counselling service offered to all school employees. If you have any concerns regarding anticipated or actual risks or discomfort, please raise them with the researcher initially and he will recommend that you contact the free counselling service.

(Contact details of free counselling service will be made available in the Information sheet once available from Region of Mecca Education Department.)

How do I agree to participate?

Participation is voluntary. You may answer 'no comment' or refuse to answer any questions and you are free to withdraw from participating in the study at any time without effect or consequences. A consent form accompanies this information sheet. If you agree to participate, please read and sign the form and give it back to the researcher.

How will I receive feedback?

Outcomes from the project will be summarised and given to you by the researcher if you would like to see them.

If you have any concerns or questions regarding this research, please feel free to contact the supervisor Dr Keith Miller telephone (+61 8 82015619) or by email (keith.miller@flinders.edu.au).

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet and we hope that you will accept our invitation to be involved.

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**CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH
(for interviews)**

Responses to school bullying in Saudi Arabia and how these responses are reflective of the educational policies on bullying

I
being over the age of 18 years hereby consent to participate as requested in the Information Sheet for the research project on Responses to school bullying in Saudi Arabia and how these compare with policies on bullying.

1. I have read the information provided.
2. Details of procedures and any risks have been explained to my satisfaction.
3. I agree to audio recording of my information and participation.
4. I am aware that I should retain a copy of the Information Sheet and Consent Form for future reference.
5. I understand that:
 - I may not directly benefit from taking part in this research.
 - I am free to withdraw from the project at any time and am free to decline to answer particular questions.
 - While the information gained in this study will be published as explained, I will not be identified, and individual information will remain confidential. anonymity cannot be guaranteed.
 - I may ask that the recording be stopped at any time, and that I may withdraw at any time from the session or the research without disadvantage.

6. I agree/ I don't agree to the transcript being made available to other researchers who are not members of this research team, but who are judged by the research team to be doing related research, on condition that my identity is not revealed.

Participant's signature.....Date.....

I certify that I have explained the study to the volunteer and consider that he understands what is involved and freely consents to participation.

Researcher's name.....

Researcher's signature.....Date.....

*E:\Ethics\Documents to be translated\Consent Form for interview 23.01.17.doc
Updated 28 June 2006*



**CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH
(for focus groups)**

Responses to school bullying in Saudi Arabia and how these responses are reflective of the educational policies on bullying

I

being over the age of 18 years hereby consent to participate as requested in the Information Sheet for the research project on Responses to school bullying in Saudi Arabia and how these compare with policies on bullying.

1. I have read the information provided.
2. Details of procedures and any risks have been explained to my satisfaction.
3. I agree to audio recording of my information and participation.
4. I am aware that I should retain a copy of the Information Sheet and Consent Form for future reference.
5. I understand that:
 - I may not directly benefit from taking part in this research.
 - I am free to withdraw from the project at any time and am free to decline to answer particular questions.
 - While the information gained in this study will be published as explained, I will not be identified, and individual information will remain confidential. anonymity cannot be guaranteed.
 - You may withdraw at any time from this session but you cannot withdraw your data or ask for the audio recording to be stopped
6. I agree/I don't agree to the transcript being made available to other researchers who are not members of this research team, but who are judged by the research team to be doing related research, on condition that my identity is not revealed.

Participant's signature.....Date.....

I certify that I have explained the study to the volunteer and consider that he understands what is involved and freely consents to participation.

Researcher's name.....

Researcher's signature.....Date.....

*E:\Ethics\Documents to be translated\Consent Form for focus groups 23.01.17.doc
Updated 28 June 2006*

ورقة معلومات البحث للمقابلات

عنوان الدراسة : "التعامل مع مشكلة التنمر المدرسي في المملكة العربية السعودية وكيف يعكس هذا التعامل على السياسات التعليمية إزاء

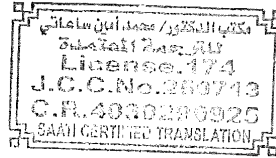
التنمر المدرسي"

وصف الدراسة :

<p>معلومات الباحث الرئيسي :</p> <p>هاني السهلي البريد الإلكتروني: Alsii008@flinders.edu.au رقم الهاتف: +61424763767 طالب دكتوراه في جامعة فلندرز قسم الخدمة الاجتماعية والتخطيط كلية الدراسات الاجتماعية والسياسية</p>	
<p>المشرف الأول (المشرف الأكاديمي): د. كارول إريزاري أستاذ مشارك - كلية الدراسات الاجتماعية والسياسية جامعة فلندرز صندوق بريد ٢١٠٠ أديلايد - المملكة العربية السعودية ٥٠٠١ الموقع الإلكتروني : http://www.flinders.edu.au/people/keith.miller رقم الهاتف : + 61 8 8201 5619</p>	<p>المشرف الثاني (المشرف المساعد): د. كيث ميلر أستاذ مشارك - كلية الدراسات الاجتماعية والسياسية جامعة فلندرز صندوق بريد ٢١٠٠ أديلايد - المملكة العربية السعودية ٥٠٠١ الموقع الإلكتروني : http://www.flinders.edu.au/people/keith.miller رقم الهاتف : + 61 8 8201 5619</p>

وصف الدراسة:

إن هذه الدراسة هي جزء من مشروع بحثي بعنوان "التعامل مع مشكلة التنمر المدرسي في المملكة العربية السعودية وكيف يعكس هذا التعامل على السياسات التعليمية إزاء التنمر المدرسي". وتهدف الدراسة إلى البحث في تعامل واضعي السياسات ومدبري المدارس والمعلمين والمرشدين الطلابيين (الأخصائيين الاجتماعيين) مع التنمر في المدارس في المملكة العربية السعودية، مع مقارنة السياسات المتبعة حول هذه المسألة. كما تهدف الدراسة أيضا إلى مواءمة سياسات أكثر فعالية لتعامل الكادر التعليمي مع ظاهرة التنمر في المدارس. وستستكشف الدراسة سياسات التعامل مع التنمر باستخدام المنهج النوعي.



Inspiring
achievement

الغرض من الدراسة:
تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى :

1. استكشاف الممارسات الحالية حول ظاهرة التتمر المدرسي ومدى تأثير العوامل الاجتماعية والثقافية والتي قد تؤثر على سياسات التعامل مع ظاهرة التتمر في المؤسسات التعليمية.
2. فهم كيفية تعامل المعلمين ومديري المدارس ومستشاري المدرسة مع التتمر المدرسي.
3. تحديد نقاط القوة ونقاط الضعف للسياسات الموجودة حول ظاهرة التتمر المدرسي.
4. تطوير إطار للممارسات المثلى حول ظاهرة التتمر المدرسي.

ماذا سوف يطلب مني؟

- سوف يطلب منك التطوع للمشاركة في المقابلة.

• المقابلة

ربما ستكون مدعوًا للمشاركة الطوعية في مقابلة مع الباحث الذي سوف يوجه مجموعة من الأسئلة حول سياسات التعامل مع التتمر المدرسي ومدى تأثيره في أوساط الشباب. وسوف تستغرق المقابلة من ٤٥ إلى ٦٠ دقيقة. وسوف يتم تسجيل المقابلة باستخدام جهاز تسجيل الصوت الرقمي للمساعدة في عملية النظر في النتائج. وبمجرد الانتهاء من عملية التسجيل، سوف يتم كتابة (طباعة) مقابلات مجموعة النقاش وحفظها في ملف على جهاز الحاسوب.

ماهي الفائدة التي سوف أكتسبها من مشاركتي في الدراسة؟

سوف يساعد تبادل خبراتكم في تطوير الوعي حول ظاهرة التتمر في السياق المدرسي. وكذلك في تشجيع القيام بأبحاث إضافية في هذا الموضوع في المملكة العربية السعودية بشكل عام. كما نتوقع أنه سيؤثر على صناعات القرار في المملكة العربية السعودية من أجل التأثير على تطوير السياسة المتبعة للحد من التتمر المدرسي.

هل سوف أكون معروفًا عن طريق مشاركتي في هذه الدراسة؟

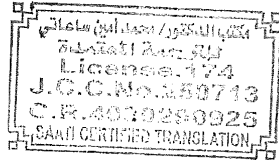
إننا لا نحتاج إلى اسمك لذلك فإن تكون معروفًا. وبمجرد طباعة المقابلة وحفظها كملف آمن سيتم حفظ ملف الصوت في موقع آمن على الحاسوب. وستتم إزالة المعلومات الشخصية وتخزين الملف النصي في جهاز حاسوب محمي بكلمة مرور، بحيث يطلع عليه الباحث والمشرفون فقط. كما أن تعليقاتك لن تكون مرتبطة بك مباشرة.

هل هناك أي مخاطر أو مضايقات تترتب على مشاركتي؟

بصفتك مشاركًا فلربما تتعرض للانزعاج أثناء مشاركتك في المقابلة، وإذا حدث هذا فربما تتم إحالتك إلى خدمة الاستشارات المجانية التي يتم تقديمها لجميع العاملين بالمدرسة. وإذا كان لديك أي قلق بشأن المخاطر أو المضايقات المتوقعة أو الفعلية، فيرجى طرح ذلك على الباحث في البداية والذي بدوره سيفهم بالتوصية على اتصالك بخدمة الاستشارة المجانية. (سيتم كتابة معلومات الاتصال بخدمة الاستشارة المجانية في ورقة المعلومات فور توفرها من وزارة التعليم بمنطقة مكة المكرمة).

كيف أوافق على المشاركة؟

إن مشاركتك طوعية. وبإمكانك الإجابة بـ 'لا تعليق' أو رفض الإجابة عن أي أسئلة، ولك مطلق الحرية في الانسحاب من المشاركة في هذه الدراسة في أي وقت دون تأثير أو عواقب. وهناك استمارة موافقة مصاحبة لورقة المعلومات هذه. وعليه يرجى قراءة نموذج الموافقة والتوقيع عليه ثم إعادته إلى الباحث إذا كنت موافقًا على المشاركة.



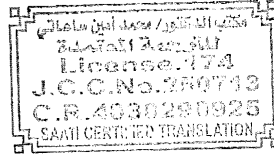
كيف يمكنني الحصول على النتائج؟

سيتم تلخيص نتائج المشروع وإعطائك إياها من قبل الباحث إذا ما كنت ترغب في رؤيتها.

وإذا كان لديك أي اهتمامات أو أسئلة بخصوص هذا البحث، فلا تتردد في الاتصال بالمشرف د. كيث ميلر على هاتف رقم (+ 61 8 82015619) أو عبر البريد الإلكتروني (keith.miller@flinders.edu.au).

شكراً على قضائك بعض الوقت لقراءة ورقة المعلومات هذه ونأمل بأن تقبل دعوتنا للمشاركة.

تمت الموافقة على مشروع البحث هذا من قبل لجنة أخلاقيات البحوث الاجتماعية والسلوكية بجامعة فلندرز (رقم المشروع ٧٤٥٩) ، ولمزيد من المعلومات بشأن الموافقة الأخلاقية للمشروع يمكن الاتصال برئيس اللجنة التنفيذي عن طريق الهاتف رقم +61 8 8201 3116 أو الفاكس رقم +61 8 8201 2035 أو عبر البريد الإلكتروني: human.researchethics@flinders.edu.au.



ورقة معلومات البحث لمجموعة النقاش

عنوان الدراسة : "التعامل مع مشكلة التتمر المدرسي في المملكة العربية السعودية وكيف يعكس هذا التعامل على السياسات التعليمية إزاء

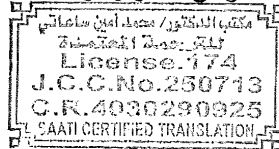
التتمر المدرسي"

وصف الدراسة :

<p>معلومات الباحث الرئيسي :</p> <p>هانى السهلى البريد الإلكتروني: Alsı0008@flinders.edu.au رقم الهاتف : +61424763767 طالب دكتوراه في جامعة فلندرز قسم الخدمة الاجتماعية والتخطيط كلية الدراسات الاجتماعية والسياسية</p>	
<p>المشرف الأول (المشرف الأكاديمي): د. كارول إريزاري أستاذ مشارك – كلية الدراسات الاجتماعية والسياسية جامعة فلندرز صندوق بريد ٢١٠٠ أديلايد – المملكة العربية السعودية ٥٠٠١ الموقع الإلكتروني : http://www.flinders.edu.au/people/keith.miller رقم الهاتف : + 61 8 8201 5619</p>	<p>المشرف الثاني (المشرف المساعد): د. كيث ميلر أستاذ مشارك – كلية الدراسات الاجتماعية والسياسية جامعة فلندرز صندوق بريد ٢١٠٠ أديلايد – المملكة العربية السعودية ٥٠٠١ الموقع الإلكتروني : http://www.flinders.edu.au/people/keith.miller رقم الهاتف : + 61 8 8201 5619</p>

وصف الدراسة:

إن هذه الدراسة هي جزء من مشروع بحثي بعنوان "التعامل مع مشكلة التتمر المدرسي في المملكة العربية السعودية وكيف يعكس هذا التعامل على السياسات التعليمية إزاء التتمر المدرسي". وتهدف الدراسة إلى البحث في تعامل واضعي السياسات ومديري المدارس والمعلمين والمرشدين الطلابيين (الأخصائيين الاجتماعيين) مع التتمر في المدارس في المملكة العربية السعودية، مع مقارنة السياسات المتبعة حول هذه المسألة. كما تهدف الدراسة أيضا إلى موازنة سياسات أكثر فعالية لتعامل الكادر التعليمي مع ظاهرة التتمر في المدارس. وستستكشف الدراسة سياسات التعامل مع التتمر باستخدام المنهج النوعي (الكيفي).



inspiring
achievement

الغرض من الدراسة:
تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى :

1. استكشاف الممارسات الحالية حول ظاهرة التنمر المدرسي ومدى تأثير العوامل الاجتماعية والثقافية والتي قد تؤثر على سياسات التعامل مع ظاهرة التنمر في المؤسسات التعليمية.
2. فهم كيفية تعامل المعلمين ومديري المدارس ومستشاري المدرسة مع التنمر المدرسي.
3. تحديد نقاط القوة ونقاط الضعف للسياسات الموجودة حول ظاهرة التنمر المدرسي.
4. تطوير إطار للممارسات المثلى حول ظاهرة التنمر المدرسي.

ماذا سوف يطلب مني؟

- سوف يطلب منك التطوع للمشاركة في مجموعة نقاش.

• المشاركة في مجموعة النقاش

ربما ستكون مدعوًا للمشاركة الطوعية في مجموعة نقاش مع الباحث الذي سوف يوجه مجموعة من الأسئلة حول سياسات التعامل مع التنمر المدرسي ومدى تأثيره في أوساط الطلاب. وسوف تستغرق مجموعة النقاش من ٤٥ إلى ٦٠ دقيقة. وسوف يتم تسجيل مجموعة النقاش باستخدام جهاز تسجيل الصوت الرقمي للمساعدة في عملية النظر في النتائج. وبمجرد الانتهاء من عملية التسجيل، سوف يتم كتابة (طباعة) مقابلات مجموعة النقاش وحفظها في ملف على جهاز الحاسوب.

ماهي الفائدة التي سوف أكتسبها من مشاركتي في الدراسة؟

سوف يساعد تبادل خبراتكم في تطوير الوعي حول ظاهرة التنمر في السياق المدرسي. وكذلك في تشجيع القيام بأبحاث إضافية في هذا الموضوع في المملكة العربية السعودية بشكل عام. كما نتوقع أنه سيؤثر على صناع القرار في المملكة العربية السعودية من أجل التأثير على تطوير السياسة المتبعة للحد من التنمر المدرسي.

هل سوف أكون معروفًا عن طريق مشاركتي في هذه الدراسة؟

في مجموعات النقاش، سوف تكون على علم بالأعضاء الآخرين في المجموعة. ولن يتم تسجيل أسماء الأشخاص أو المعلومات عن هوياتهم، ولن تكون التعليقات التي تطرح في المجموعة مرتبطة بأي عضو من أعضاء المجموعة. وطالب الباحث بأن يتم احترام سرية اجتماع مجموعة النقاش.

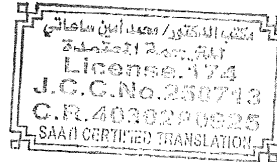
وستتم إزالة ملف الصوت الخاص بمجموعة النقاش. كما سيتم تخزين الملف النصي في جهاز حاسوب محمي بكلمة مرور بحيث يطلع عليه الباحث والمشرفون فقط. ولن تكون تعليقاتك مرتبطة بك مباشرة.

هل هناك أي مخاطر أو مضايقات تترتب على مشاركتي؟

بصفتك مشاركًا فلربما تتعرض للانزعاج أثناء مشاركتك في مجموعة النقاش، وإذا حدث هذا فربما تتم إحالتك مجانًا إلى خدمة الاستشارات المجانية التي يتم تقديمها لجميع العاملين بالمدرسة. وإذا كان لديك أي قلق بشأن المخاطر أو المضايقات المتوقعة أو الفعلية، فيرجى طرح ذلك على الباحث في البداية والذي بدوره سيقوم بالتوصية على اتصالك بخدمة الاستشارة المجانية. (سيتم تزويد معلومات الاتصال بخدمة الاستشارة المجانية في ورقة المعلومات فور توفرها من وزارة التعليم بمنطقة مكة المكرمة).

كيف أوافق على المشاركة؟

إن مشاركتك طوعية. وبإمكانك الإجابة بـ 'لا تعليق' أو رفض الإجابة عن أي أسئلة، ولك مطلق الحرية في الانسحاب من المشاركة في هذه الدراسة في أي وقت دون تأثير أو عواقب. وهناك استمارة موافقة مصاحبة لورقة المعلومات هذه. وعليه يرجى قراءة نموذج الموافقة والتوقيع عليه ثم إعادته إلى الباحث إذا كنت موافقًا على المشاركة.



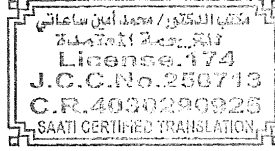
كيف يمكنني الحصول على النتائج؟

سيتم تلخيص نتائج المشروع وإعطاؤك إيها من قبل الباحث إذا ما كنت ترغب في رؤيتها.

وإذا كان لديك أي اهتمامات أو أسئلة بخصوص هذا البحث، فلا تتردد في الاتصال بالمشرف د. كيث ميلر على هاتف رقم (+ 61 8 82015619) أو عبر البريد الإلكتروني (keith.miller@flinders.edu.au).

شكراً على قضائك بعض الوقت لقراءة ورقة المعلومات هذه ونأمل بأن تقبل دعوتنا للمشاركة.

تمت الموافقة على مشروع البحث هذا من قبل لجنة أخلاقيات البحوث الاجتماعية والسلوكية بجامعة فلندرز (رقم المشروع ٧٤٥٩) ، ولمزيد من المعلومات بشأن الموافقة الأخلاقية للمشروع يمكن الاتصال برئيس اللجنة التنفيذي عن طريق الهاتف رقم +61 8 8201 3116 أو الفاكس رقم +61 8 8201 2035 أو عبر البريد الإلكتروني: human.researchethics@flinders.edu.au.





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استمارة الموافقة على المشاركة في البحث
(عن طريق المقابلات)

عنوان البحث: التعامل مع مشكلة التمر المدرسي في المملكة العربية السعودية وكيف ينعكس هذا التعامل على السياسات التعليمية إزاء التمر المدرسي

أنا.....
أبلغ من العمر أكبر من 18 سنة وأوافق بموجب هذه الاستمارة على المشاركة كما هو مطلوب في ورقة المعلومات للبحث الذي بعنوان التعامل مع مشكلة التمر المدرسي في المملكة العربية السعودية وكيف ينعكس هذا التعامل على السياسات التعليمية إزاء التمر المدرسي.
١. لقد قمت بقراءة المعلومات الواردة.
٢. تم شرح تفاصيل الإجراءات وأية مخاطر قد تكون مترتبة على المشاركة بصورة مرضية.
٣. أوافق على التسجيل الصوتي لمعلوماتي ومشاركتي.
٤. أدرك بأنه يجب علي أن احتفظ بنسخة من ورقة المعلومات واستمارة الموافقة كمرجع في المستقبل.
٥. أفهم بأنني:

- قد لا أستفيد مباشرة من المشاركة في هذا البحث.
- لي مطلق الحرية في الانسحاب من المشروع في أي وقت، وكذلك رفض الإجابة عن أسئلة معينة.
- عندما سيتم نشر المعلومات المكتسبة في هذه الرسالة كما هو موضح، فلن أكون معروفاً، وستبقى المعلومات الشخصية للمشاركين سرية.
- وقد يكون عدم الإفصاح عن هوية المشاركين أمراً غير مضمون.
- يمكنني أن أطلب أن يتم إيقاف التسجيل في أي وقت، كما يمكنني الانسحاب من المقابلة أو البحث في أي وقت دون ضرر.

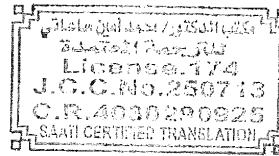
٦. أوافق / لا أوافق بأن يتاح المحتوى المكتوب الذي تم إنشاؤه لباحثين آخرين ليسوا أعضاء في فريق البحث هذا؛ ولكن تم الحكم عليهم من قبل فريق البحث بأنهم يقومون ببحث له علاقة بهذا البحث شريطة ألا يتم الإفصاح عن هويتي.

توقيع المشارك التاريخ.....

أشهد بأنني قد شرحت هذه الدراسة للمتطوع وأعتبر بأنه يفهم ماهية المشاركة ويوافق بحرية على المشاركة.

اسم الباحث :

توقيع الباحث : التاريخ.....





استمارة الموافقة على المشاركة في البحث
(عن طريق مجموعة النقاش)

عنوان البحث: التعامل مع مشكلة التتمر المدرسي في المملكة العربية السعودية وكيف ينعكس هذا التعامل على السياسات التعليمية إزاء التتمر المدرسي

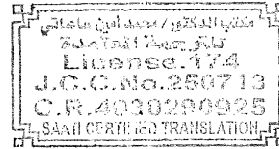
- أنا.....
- أبلغ من العمر أكبر من 18 سنة وأوافق بموجب هذه الاستمارة على المشاركة كما هو مطلوب في ورقة المعلومات للبحث الذي بعنوان التعامل مع مشكلة التتمر المدرسي في المملكة العربية السعودية وكيف ينعكس هذا التعامل على السياسات التعليمية إزاء التتمر المدرسي.
1. لقد قمت بقراءة المعلومات الواردة.
 2. تم شرح تفاصيل الإجراءات وأية مخاطر قد تكون مترتبة على المشاركة بصورة مرضية.
 3. أوافق على التسجيل الصوتي لمعلوماتي ومشاركتي.
 4. أدرك بأنه يجب علي أن أحتفظ بنسخة من ورقة المعلومات واستمارة الموافقة كمرجع في المستقبل.
 5. أفهم بأنني:
 - قد لا أستفيد مباشرة من المشاركة في هذا البحث.
 - لي مطلق الحرية في الانسحاب من المشروع في أي وقت، وكذلك رفض الإجابة عن أسئلة معينة.
 - عندما سيتم نشر المعلومات المكتسبة في هذه الرسالة كما هو موضح، فلن أكون معروفًا، وستبقى المعلومات الشخصية للمشاركين سرية. وقد يكون عدم الإفصاح عن هوية المشاركين أمرًا غير مضمون.
 - يمكنك الانسحاب في أي وقت من مجموعة النقاش هذه ولكن لا يمكنك سحب بياناتك أو طلب إيقاف التسجيل الصوتي.
 6. أوافق / لا أوافق بأن يتاح المحتوى المكتوب الذي تم إنشاؤه لباحثين آخرين ليسوا أعضاء في فريق البحث هذا؛ ولكن تم الحكم عليهم من قبل فريق البحث بأنهم يقومون ببحث له علاقة بهذا البحث شريطة ألا يتم الإفصاح عن هويتي.

توقيع المشارك التاريخ.....

أشهد بأنني قد شرحت هذه الدراسة للمتطوع وأعتبر بأنه يفهم ماهية المشاركة ويوافق بحرية على المشاركة.

اسم الباحث :

توقيع الباحث : التاريخ.....



APPENDIX C

LETTERS OF PERMISSIONS FOR DATA COLLECTION FROM:

- Director General of Education in Mecca Region.
- Letters of explanations regarding research from the supervisors.
- Letter of introductions to:
 - Policy officer
 - Principal and deputy Principal
 - Teacher
 - Social worker (student advisor).
- Letters to school
- Arabic translations

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Ministry of Education
(280)
General Administration of Education in
Mecca Region
Planning and Development Department



No. : 38365879

Date: 29/02/1438H(30/11/2016)

Attachments:

Subject: Acceptance of Study Conducting

Cultural Attaché in Australia,
His Excellency,

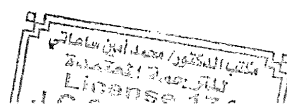
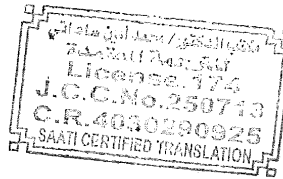
Based on the call presented by the researcher/ Hani Abdullah Abeid Alsihli, with the number (none) dated on 24/02/1438H(25/11/2016) regarding his study which he is conducting from Flinders University in Australia for Doctoral Degree that includes his desire to get an affidavit to apply his study entitled: "Responses to school bullying in Saudi Arabia and how these responses are reflective of the educational policies on bullying."

Accordingly, there is no objection of providing the researcher with the necessary data and applying his research tools on a sample of school leaders, school counselors, and teachers in public education schools in Mecca city. And that is after bringing the research tools and plan to enable the competent authority in our department to complete the necessary procedures.

With best regards and appreciation,

Director General of Education
In Mecca Region
(signature)

Mohammed Mahdi AlHarthi





Dr Keith Miller
School of Social and Policy Studies
Flinders University
GPO Box 2100
Adelaide SA 5001
Tel: +61 8 8201 5619
Email: keith.miller@flinders.edu.au

To whom it my concern

Dear Sir,

This letter is to introduce Mr. Hani Alsihli who is a doctorate student in the School of Social and Policy Studies at Flinders University in Australia.

Mr Alsihli is undertaking research leading to the production of a thesis on the subject of "Responses to school bullying in Saudi Arabia and how these responses are reflective of the educational policies on bullying." He would like to conduct a study in primary and secondary schools in the city of Mecca. He would be most grateful if you could assist in this project by giving permission for this study to occur. If possible, are you able to designate up to 10 schools with which Mr Alsihli can negotiate as he would like to investigate this matter in at least four schools?

Mr Alsihli would like to interview one of the policy officers in the Education Department, principals, teachers and school advisors in each of the schools. He would like to conduct these interviews during approximately three months commencing in January 2017.

Any enquiries you may have concerning this project should be directed to me at the address given above or by telephone on (+61 8 8201 5619) or by email (keith.miller@flinders.edu.au). Mr Alsihli can be contacted on the local number on +966 568376931 or by email (alsi0008@flinders.edu.au).

Thank you for your attention and assistance.

Yours sincerely

Dr Keith Miller

Flinders University
GPO Box 2100
Adelaide SA 5001
+61 8 82015619 (overseas)
keith.miller@flinders.edu.au



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School of social and policy studies
Flinders University
GPO Box 2100
Adelaide SA 5001
Tel: +61 8 8201 5619
Email: keith.miller@flinders.edu.au

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

Dear Policy Officer,

This letter is to introduce Mr. Hani Alsihli who is a doctorate student in the School of Social and Policy Studies at Flinders University in Australia. He will produce his student card, which carries a photograph, as a proof of identity.

Mr Alsihli is undertaking research leading to the production of a thesis on the subject of "Responses to school bullying in Saudi Arabia and how these responses are reflective of the educational policies on bullying." He would be most grateful if you would volunteer to assist in this project by agreeing to be involved in participating in an interview which will take between 45 - 60 minutes.

Be assured that any information provided will be treated in the strictest confidence and none of the participants will be individually identifiable in the resulting thesis, report or other publications. You are, of course, entirely free to discontinue your participation at any time or to decline to answer particular questions.

Since Mr Alsihli intends to make an audio recording for the interview, he will seek your consent, on the attached form, to use the information from the interview recording (transcript) in preparing the thesis, report or other publications, on condition that your name or identity is not revealed. Any enquiries you may have concerning this project should be directed to me at the address given above or by telephone on (+61 8 8201 5619) or by email (keith.miller@flinders.edu.au). Mr Alsihli can be contacted in the local number on +966 568376931 or by email (alsi0008@flinders.edu.au).

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LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

Dear Principal,

This letter is to introduce Mr. Hani Alsihli who is a doctorate student in the School of Social and Policy Studies at Flinders University in Australia. He will produce his student card, which carries a photograph, as a proof of identity.

Mr Alsihli is undertaking research leading to the production of a thesis on the subject of "Responses to school bullying in Saudi Arabia and how these responses are reflective of the educational policies on bullying." He would be most grateful if you would volunteer to assist in this project by agreeing to be involved in participating in an interview which will take between 45 - 60 minutes.

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LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

Dear Teacher,

This letter is to introduce Mr. Hani Alsihli who is a doctorate student in the School of Social and Policy Studies at Flinders University in Australia. He will produce his student card, which carries a photograph, as a proof of identity.

Mr Alsihli is undertaking research leading to the production of a thesis on the subject of "Responses to school bullying in Saudi Arabia and how these responses are reflective of the educational policies on bullying." He would be most grateful if you would volunteer to assist in this project by agreeing to be involved in participating in a focus group which will take between 45 - 60 minutes.

Be assured that any information provided will be treated in the strictest confidence and none of the participants will be individually identifiable in the resulting thesis, report or other publications. You are, of course, entirely free to discontinue your participation at any time or to decline to answer particular questions.

Since Mr Alsihli intends to make an audio recording for the interview, he will seek your consent, on the attached form, to use the information from the focus group recording (transcript) in preparing the thesis, report or other publications, on condition that your name or identity is not revealed. Any enquiries you may have concerning this project should be directed to me at the address given above or by telephone on (+61 8 8201 5619) or by email (keith.miller@flinders.edu.au). Mr Alsihli can be contacted in the local number on +966 568376931 or by email (alsi0008@flinders.edu.au).

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Yours sincerely

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School of social and policy studies
Flinders University
GPO Box 2100
Adelaide SA 5001
Tel: +61 8 8201 5619
Email: keith.milelr@flinders.edu.au

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

Dear School Advisor,

This letter is to introduce Mr. Hani Alsihli who is a doctorate student in the School of Social and Policy Studies at Flinders University in Australia. He will produce his student card, which carries a photograph, as a proof of identity.

Mr Alsihli is undertaking research leading to the production of a thesis on the subject of "Responses to school bullying in Saudi Arabia and how these responses are reflective of the educational policies on bullying." He would be most grateful if you would volunteer to assist in this project by agreeing to be involved in participating in an interview which will take between 45 - 60 minutes.

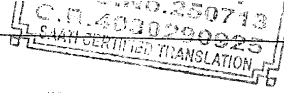
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Thank you for your attention and assistance.

Yours sincerely

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Flinders University
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Adelaide SA 5001
+61 8 8201 5619



الرقم: ٣٨٣٦٥٨٧٩
التاريخ: ٢٤/٧/٢٠٢٤
المشروعات:



المملكة العربية السعودية
وزارة التربية والتعليم
(٢٨١)
الإدارة العامة للتربية والتعليم بمنطقة مكة المكرمة

إدارة التخطيط والتطوير

الموضوع / الموافقة على إجراء دراسة

وفقه الله

سعادة المحقق الثقافى باستراليا

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته وبعد

فبناءً على الاستدعاء المقدم من الباحث / هاني عبد الله عبيد السهلي ذي الرقم (بدون)
وتاريخ ١٤٢٨/٠٢/٢٤هـ بخصوص دراسته التي يقوم بها من جامعة فلندرز باستراليا لمرحلة
الدكتوراه والمتضمن رغبته في الحصول على إفادة بتطبيق دراسته المعنونة ب:
((التعامل مع مشكلة التمر المدرسي في المملكة العربية السعودية وكيف ينعكس هذا
التعامل على السياسات التعليمية أزاء التمر المدرسي))
عليه لا مانع من تزويد الباحث بالبيانات اللازمة وتطبيق أدوات بحثه على عينه من القيادات
المدرسية والمرشدين الطلابيين والمعلمين بالمدارس الحكومية بالتعليم العام بمدينة مكة
المكرمة وذلك بعد إحضار أدوات البحث وخطته لكي يتسنى للجهة المختصة بإدارتنا إكمال
الإجراءات اللازمة .

وتقبلوا تحياتي وتقديري ،،،،

مدير عام التعليم بمنطقة

مكة المكرمة

محمد بن مهدي الحارثي

مكة المكرمة - العربية

٠٠٥٥٥٦٦٦ - ٠٠٥٥٥٦٦٦

إلى من يهمة الأمر

تحية طيبة وبعد،

إن هذا الخطاب هو من أجل تقديم السيد هاني السهلي، وهو طالب دكتوراه في كلية الدراسات الاجتماعية والسياسية بجامعة فلندرز في أستراليا.

يقوم السيد السهلي بإجراء بحث من أجل الوصول إلى نتائج خاصة بأطروحاته التي هي بعنوان "التعامل مع مشكلة التمر المدرسي في المملكة العربية السعودية وكيف يعكس هذا التعامل على السياسات التعليمية إزاء التمر المدرسي". وسوف يكون في غاية الامتنان إذا كان بمقدوركم مساعدته في هذه الدراسة من خلال إعطائه الإذن والسماح له بإجرائها. فإذا كان ذلك ممكناً، فهل بمقدوركم تحديد ما يصل إلى ١٠ مدارس يمكن للسيد السهلي التخاطب معهم بشأن الدراسة؛ علماً بأنه يرغب بالتحقيق في هذه المسألة في أربع مدارس على الأقل.

ويرغب السيد السهلي في مقابلة أحد واضعي السياسات في الإدارة العامة للتربية والتعليم بمنطقة مكة المكرمة بالإضافة إلى مديري المدارس والمعلمين وكذلك المرشدين الطلابيين (الأخصائيين الاجتماعيين) في كل من تلك المدارس. وهو يود إجراء هذه المقابلات والحلقات النقاشية خلال ما يقرب من ثلاثة أشهر تبدأ في فبراير عام ٢٠١٧م.

ويمكنكم توجيه أي استفسارات بشأن هذه الدراسة إليّ على العنوان المذكور أعلاه أو عن طريق الهاتف رقم (+61 8 8201 5619) أو عن طريق البريد الإلكتروني (keith.miller@flinders.edu.au). كما يمكن الاتصال بالسيد السهلي على الرقم المحلي +966 568376931 أو عن طريق البريد الإلكتروني (alsi0008@flinders.edu.au).

وأشركم على اهتمامكم ومساعدتكم.

المخلص لكم



د. كيث ميلر
كلية الدراسات الاجتماعية والسياسية
جامعة فلندرز
صندوق بريد ٢١٠٠
أديلايد - المملكة العربية السعودية (٥٠٠١)
رقم الهاتف : 61 8 8201 5619 (دولي)
keith.miller@flinders.edu.au



خطاب التقديم

السيد الفاضل المسئول عن وضع السياسة،

تحية طيبة وبعد،

إن هذا الخطاب هو من أجل تقديم السيد هاني السهلي، وهو طالب دكتوراه في كلية الدراسات الاجتماعية والسياسية بجامعة فلندرز في أستراليا. وسوف يقوم بإبراز بطاقته الجامعية والتي تحمل صورته الشخصية كدليل لإثبات الهوية.

يقوم السيد السهلي بإجراء بحث من أجل الوصول إلى نتائج خاصة بأطروحته التي هي بعنوان "التعامل مع مشكلة التمر المدرسي في المملكة العربية السعودية وكيف ينعكس هذا التعامل على السياسات التعليمية إزاء التمر المدرسي". وسوف يكون في غاية الامتنان لو تفضلتم بالتطوع للمساعدة في هذا المشروع من خلال الموافقة على المشاركة في مقابلة ستستغرق من ٤٥ إلى ٦٠ دقيقة.

تأكد بأن كل المعلومات المقدمة سيتم التعامل معها بسرية تامة ولن يتم تحديد هوية أي من المشاركين بشكل فردي في نتائج الأطروحة، أو التقارير أو غيرها من المنشورات. ولديك، بالطبع، مطلق الحرية في التوقف عن المشاركة في أي وقت، كما يمكنك رفض الإجابة عن أسئلة معينة.

وبما أن السيد السهلي ينوي استخدام تسجيل صوتي للمقابلة، فإنه سيسعى للحصول على موافقتك، على الاستمارة المرفقة، وذلك لاستخدام المعلومات المسجلة (المكتوبة) من المقابلة في إعداد الأطروحة أو التقارير أو غيرها من المنشورات، شريطة ألا يتم الكشف عن اسمك أو هويتك.

ويمكنك أن توجه أي استفسارات بشأن هذه الدراسة إلي على العنوان المذكور أعلاه أو عن طريق الهاتف رقم (+61 8 8201 5619) أو عن طريق البريد الإلكتروني (keith.miller@flinders.edu.au). كما يمكن الاتصال بالسيد السهلي على الرقم المحلي 966 568376931+ أو عن طريق البريد الإلكتروني (alsi0008@flinders.edu.au).

وأشركم على اهتمامكم ومساعدتكم.

المخلص لكم



د. كيث ميلر

كلية الدراسات الاجتماعية والسياسية
جامعة فلندرز

صندوق بريد ٢١٠٠

أديلايد - المملكة العربية السعودية ٥٠٠١

رقم الهاتف: +61 8 8201 5619



inspiring
achievement

خطاب التقديم

السيد الفاضل مدير المدرسة،

تحية طيبة وبعد،

إن هذا الخطاب هو من أجل تقديم السيد هاني السهلي، وهو طالب دكتوراه في كلية الدراسات الاجتماعية والسياسية بجامعة فلندرز في أستراليا. وسوف يقوم بإبراز بطاقته الجامعية والتي تحمل صورته الشخصية كدليل لإثبات الهوية.

يقوم السيد السهلي بإجراء بحث من أجل الوصول إلى نتائج خاصة بأطروحته التي هي بعنوان "التعامل مع مشكلة التنمر المدرسي في المملكة العربية السعودية وكيف ينعكس هذا التعامل على السياسات التعليمية إزاء التنمر المدرسي". وسوف يكون في غاية الامتنان لو تفضلتم بالتطوع للمساعدة في هذا المشروع من خلال الموافقة على المشاركة في مقابلة ستستغرق من ٤٥ إلى ٦٠ دقيقة.

تأكد بأن كل المعلومات المقدمة سيتم التعامل معها بسرية تامة وإن يتم تحديد هوية أي من المشاركين بشكل فردي في نتائج الأطروحة، أو التقارير أو غيرها من المنشورات. ولديك، بالطبع، مطلق الحرية في التوقف عن المشاركة في أي وقت، كما يمكنك رفض الإجابة عن أسئلة معينة.

وبما أن السيد السهلي ينوي استخدام تسجيل صوتي للمقابلة، فإنه سيسعى للحصول على موافقتك، على الاستمارة المرفقة، وذلك لاستخدام المعلومات المسجلة (المكتوبة) من المقابلة في إعداد الأطروحة أو التقارير أو غيرها من المنشورات، شريطة ألا يتم الكشف عن اسمك أو هويتك.

ويمكنك أن توجه أي استفسارات بشأن هذه الدراسة إلي على العنوان المذكور أعلاه أو عن طريق الهاتف رقم (+61 8 8201 5619) أو عن طريق البريد الإلكتروني (keith.miller@flinders.edu.au). كما يمكن الاتصال بالسيد السهلي على الرقم المحلي 966 568376931+ أو عن طريق البريد الإلكتروني (alsi0008@flinders.edu.au).

وأشركم على اهتمامكم ومساعدتكم.

المخلص لكم



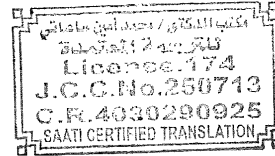
د. كيث ميلر

كلية الدراسات الاجتماعية والسياسية
جامعة فلندرز

صندوق بريد ٢١٠٠

أديلايد - المملكة العربية السعودية ٥٠٠١

رقم الهاتف : +61 8 8201 5619



inspiring
achievement

خطاب التقديم

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تحية طيبة وبعد،

إن هذا الخطاب هو من أجل تقديم السيد هاني السهلي، وهو طالب دكتوراه في كلية الدراسات الاجتماعية والسياسية بجامعة فلندرز في أستراليا. وسوف يقوم بإبراز بطاقته الجامعية والتي تحمل صورته الشخصية كدليل لإثبات الهوية.

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تأكد بأن كل المعلومات المقدمة سيتم التعامل معها بسرية تامة ولن يتم تحديد هوية أي من المشاركين بشكل فردي في نتائج الأطروحة، أو التقارير أو غيرها من المنشورات. ولديك، بالطبع، مطلق الحرية في التوقف عن المشاركة في أي وقت، كما يمكنك رفض الإجابة عن أسئلة معينة.

وبما أن السيد السهلي ينوي استخدام تسجيل صوتي لمجموعة النقاش، فإنه سيسعى للحصول على موافقتك، على الاستمارة المرفقة، وذلك لاستخدام المعلومات المسجلة (المكتوبة) من مجموعة النقاش في إعداد الأطروحة أو التقارير أو غيرها من المنشورات، شريطة ألا يتم الكشف عن اسمك أو هويتك.

وينبغي توجيه أي استفسارات بشأن هذه الدراسة إليّ على العنوان المذكور أعلاه أو عن طريق الهاتف رقم (+61 8 8201 5619) أو عن طريق البريد الإلكتروني (keith.miller@flinders.edu.au). كما يمكن الاتصال بالسيد السهلي على الرقم المحلي +966 568376931 أو عن طريق البريد الإلكتروني (alsi0008@flinders.edu.au).

وأشركم على اهتمامكم ومساعدتكم.

المخلص لكم



د. كيث ميلر

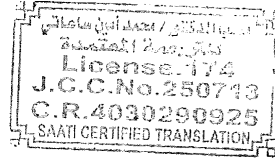
كلية الدراسات الاجتماعية والسياسية
جامعة فلندرز

صندوق بريد ٢١٠٠

أديلايد - المملكة العربية السعودية ٥٠٠١

رقم الهاتف : + 61 8 8201 5619

ABN 65 524 596 200 OFICOS Provider No. 00114A



inspiring
achievement



Hgia] hg'ghfdDr Keith Miller
School of social and policy studies
Flinders University
GPO Box 2100
Adelaide SA 5001
Tel: +61 8 8201 5619
Email: keith.miller@flinders.edu.au

خطاب التقديم

السيد الفاضل المرشد الطلابي (الأخصائي الاجتماعي)،

تحية طيبة وبعد،

إن هذا الخطاب هو من أجل تقديم السيد هاني السهلي، وهو طالب دكتوراه في كلية الدراسات الاجتماعية والسياسية بجامعة فلندرز في أستراليا. وسوف يقوم بإبراز بطاقته الجامعية والتي تحمل صورته الشخصية كدليل لإثبات الهوية.

يقوم السيد السهلي بإجراء بحث من أجل الوصول إلى نتائج خاصة بأطروحته التي هي بعنوان "التعامل مع مشكلة التنمر المدرسي في المملكة العربية السعودية وكيف ينعكس هذا التعامل على السياسات التعليمية إزاء التنمر المدرسي". وسوف يكون في غاية الامتنان لو تفضلتم بالتطوع للمساعدة في هذا المشروع من خلال الموافقة على المشاركة في مقابلة تستغرق من ٤٥ إلى ٦٠ دقيقة.

تأكد بأن كل المعلومات المقدمة سيتم التعامل معها بسرية تامة ولن يتم تحديد هوية أي من المشاركين بشكل فردي في نتائج الأطروحة، أو التقارير أو غيرها من المنشورات. ولديك، بالطبع، مطلق الحرية في التوقف عن المشاركة في أي وقت، كما يمكنك رفض الإجابة عن أسئلة معينة.

وبما أن السيد السهلي ينوي استخدام تسجيل صوتي للمقابلة، فإنه سيسعى للحصول على موافقتك، على الاستمارة المرفقة، وذلك لاستخدام المعلومات المسجلة (المكتوبة) من المقابلة في إعداد الأطروحة أو التقارير أو غيرها من المنشورات، شريطة ألا يتم الكشف عن اسمك أو هويتك.

ويمكنك أن توجه أي استفسارات بشأن هذه الدراسة إليّ على العنوان المذكور أعلاه أو عن طريق الهاتف رقم (+61 8 8201 5619) أو عن طريق البريد الإلكتروني (keith.miller@flinders.edu.au). كما يمكن الاتصال بالسيد السهلي على الرقم المحلي 966 568376931+ أو عن طريق البريد الإلكتروني (alsi0008@flinders.edu.au).

وأشكركم على اهتمامكم ومساعدتكم.

المخلص لكم

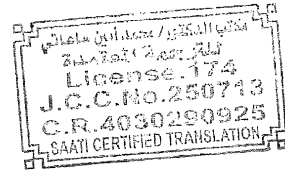
د. كيث ميلر

كلية الدراسات الاجتماعية والسياسية
جامعة فلندرز

صندوق بريد ٢١٠٠

أديلايد - المملكة العربية السعودية ٥٠٠١
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الرقم: ٣٨٩٠٩٥١٥
التاريخ: ١٤٣٧/٦/٢١
المشرفون: أ.م.ع. محمد بن مكيال شامسة



المملكة العربية السعودية
وزارة التربية والتعليم
(٢٨)
الإدارة العامة للتربية والتعليم بمنطقة مكة المكرمة
إدارة التخطيط والتطوير

الموضوع / الموافقة على إجراء دراسة

((تعميم لبعض المدارس الحكومية (ابتدائي ، متوسط ، ثانوي)))

وفقه الله

المكرم قائد مدرسة

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته وبعد

فيناءً على الاستدعاء المقدم من الباحث / هاني عبدالله عبيد السهلي ذي الرقم (بدون)
وتاريخ ١٤٣٨/٠٦/٢١هـ بخصوص دراسته التي يقوم بها من جامعة فلنדרز باستراليا لمرحلة
الدكتوراه والتي بعنوان:
((التعامل مع مشكلة التمر المدرسي في المملكة العربية السعودية دراسة مطبقة على
مدارس مكة المكرمة))

وحيث إن دراسة الباحث تتطلب إجراء مقابلة مع القائد والوكيل والمرشد الطلابي
بالمدرسة وإجراء حلقة نقاش مع بعض المعلمين. ولقناعتنا بجدوى الدراسة وأهميتها . فلا مانع
من تطبيق الأدوات البحثية المشار إليها والسماح للباحث وتمكينه من ذلك . شاكرين لكم
كريم تعاونكم خدمة للبحث العلمي .

وتقبلوا تحياتي ، ، ،

مدير عام التعليم بمنطقة

مكة المكرمة

محمد بن مهدي الحارثي



الرقم: ٣٨٩١٠٩٥١٥
التاريخ: ١٤٢٨/٠٦/٢١
المشرفون: محمد بن مهيدي الحارثي

الموضوع / الموافقة على إجراء دراسة

((تعميم لبعض المدارس الحكومية (ابتدائي ، متوسط ، ثانوي))

المكرم قائد مدرسة الشيخ عبدالرحمن خياط المرطمة وفقه الله

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مكة المكرمة

محمد بن مهيدي الحارثي

الرقم: ٣٨٩٠٩٥١٥
التاريخ: ١٧ / ٦ / ٢١
المشرفون: د. محمد بن مكيال العتيق



المملكة العربية السعودية
وزارة التربية والتعليم
(٢٨)
الإدارة العامة للتربية والتعليم بمنطقة مكة المكرمة
إدارة التخطيط والتطوير

الموضوع / الموافقة على إجراء دراسة

((تعميم لبعض المدارس الحكومية (ابتدائي ، متوسط ، ثانوي))

المكرم قائد مدرسة **الاصف بن قيس لإسداء** وفقه الله

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته وبعد

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وتقبلوا تحياتي ، ، ،

مدير عام التعليم بمنطقة
مكة المكرمة
محمد بن مهدي الحارثي



الرقم: ٣٨٩٠٩٥١٥
التاريخ: ٢٠١٦/٠٦/٢١
المشرفون: محمد بن مهدي الحارثي

الموضوع / الموافقة على إجراء دراسة

((تعميم لبعض المدارس الحكومية (ابتدائي ، متوسط ، ثانوي))

وفقه الله

المكرم قائد مدرسة عيسى بن علي الثانوية

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته وبعد

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الدكتوراه والتي بعنوان:
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مدارس مكة المكرمة))

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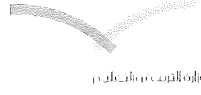
وتقبلوا تحياتي ، ، ،

مدير عام التعليم بمنطقة

مكة المكرمة

محمد بن مهدي الحارثي

الرقم: ٣٨٩٦٠٩٥١٥
التاريخ: ٢٦ / ٠٦ / ١٤٣٨ هـ
المستقبل: مركز بحوث التعليم



المملكة العربية السعودية
وزارة التربية والتعليم
(٨٨)
الإدارة العامة للتربية والتعليم بمنطقة مكة المكرمة
إدارة التخطيط والتطوير

الموضوع / الموافقة على إجراء دراسة

((تعميم لبعض المدارس الحكومية (ابتدائي ، متوسط ، ثانوي))

المكرم قائد مدرسة **د. بن الحبيزة عامر بن الجراح** وفقه الله
السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته وبعد

فبناءً على الاستدعاء المقدم من الباحث / هاني عبدالله عبيد السهلي ذي الرقم (بدون)
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وتقبلوا تحياتي ، ، ،

مدير عام التعليم بمنطقة

مكة المكرمة

محمد بن مهدي الحارثي



الرقم: ٣٨٩٠٩٥١٥
التاريخ: ١٤٣١/٦/٢١
المشروعات: إدارة مكة المكرمة

الموضوع / الموافقة على إجراء دراسة

((تعميم لبعض المدارس الحكومية (ابتدائي ، متوسط ، ثانوي))

وفقه الله

المكرم قائد مدرسة جعفر لصارمه الابتدائية

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته وبعد

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وتقبلوا تحياتي ،،،

مدير عام التعليم بمنطقة

مكة المكرمة

محمد بن مهدي الحارثي

الرقم: ٣٨٩٠٩٥١٥
التاريخ: ١٤٣١/٦/٢١
المشرفون: كبرية



المملكة العربية السعودية
وزارة التربية والتعليم
(٨٠)
الإدارة العامة للتربية والتعليم بمنطقة مكة المكرمة
إدارة التخطيط والتطوير

الموضوع / الموافقة على إجراء دراسة

((تعميم لبعض المدارس الحكومية (ابتدائي ، متوسط ، ثانوي))

وفقه الله

المكرم قائد مدرسة ابن سينا (ت) نوح

والسلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته وبعد

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مدير عام التعليم بمنطقة

مكة المكرمة

محمد بن مهدي الحارثي



الرقم: ٣٨٩٠٩٥١٥
التاريخ: ١٤٣٨/٠٦/٢١
المشروعات: تطوير التعليم

الموضوع / الموافقة على إجراء دراسة

((تعميم لبعض المدارس الحكومية (ابتدائي ، متوسط ، ثانوي))

وفقه الله

المكرم قائد مدرسة ناصر لدرسيه الإلبناني الشريم

السلام عليكم ورحمه الله وبركاته وبعد

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مدير عام التعليم بمنطقة

مكة المكرمة

محمد بن مهدي الحارثي



الرقم: ٣٨٩١٩٥١٥
التاريخ: ١٤٣٨/٠٦/٢١
المشرفون: محمد بن مهدي الحارثي

الموضوع / الموافقة على إجراء دراسة

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وفقه الله

المكرم قائد مدرسة ابي لؤي (ثانوي)

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مدير عام التعليم بمنطقة

مكة المكرمة

محمد بن مهدي الحارثي



الرقم: ٣٨٩٠٩٥١٥
التاريخ: ١٤٢٨/٠٦/٢١
المشرفون: محمد بن مهيدي الحارثي

الموضوع / الموافقة على إجراء دراسة

((تعميم لبعض المدارس الحكومية (ابتدائي ، متوسط ، ثانوي)))

وفقه الله

المكرم قائد مدرسة 'رسيم لعا برسيم الحارثي'

والسلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته وبعد

فبناءً على الاستدعاء المقدم من الباحث / هاني عبدالله عبيد السهلي ذي الرقم (بدون)
وتاريخ ١٤٢٨/٠٦/٢١ هـ بخصوص دراسته التي يقوم بها من جامعة فلنדרز باستراليا لمرحلة
الدكتوراه والتي بعنوان:
((التعامل مع مشكلة التمر المدرسي في المملكة العربية السعودية دراسة مطبقة على
مدارس مكة المكرمة))

وحيث إن دراسة الباحث تتطلب إجراء مقابلة مع القائد والوكيل والمرشد الطلابي
بالمدرسة وإجراء حلقة نقاش مع بعض المعلمين. ولقناعتنا بجدوى الدراسة وأهميتها. فلا مانع
من تطبيق الأدوات البحثية المشار إليها والسماح للباحث وتمكينه من ذلك. شاكرين لكم
كريم تعاونكم خدمة للبحث العلمي.

وتقبلوا تحياتي ، ، ،

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APPENDIX D

Number of Social Workers in
Government and Private Schools in
the city of Mecca

Number of Social workers in private schools		Number of Social workers in public schools		Educational Qualifications				Students wellbeing support			
Non-specialties	Specialized	Non-specialties	Specialized	Ph.D.	Master	Bachelor	Diploma in Guidance	Social work	Psychology	Sociology	Others (teacher)
5	99	365	188	2	27	376	123	13	11	14	365