

Personal and Social Characteristics of Schoolchildren Involved in Bullying in Primary Education

Consuelo Sánchez and Fuensanta Cerezo

Department of Developmental and Educational Psychology,
University of Murcia

Spain

Correspondence: Consuelo Sánchez Lacasa. Dpto. Psicología Evolutiva. Facultad de psicología. Campus de Espinardo. 30100. Murcia. Spain. E-mail: consuelosl@um.es

© Education & Psychology I+D+i and Editorial EOS (Spain)

Abstract

Introduction. According to the latest Ombudsman's report, aggressive behavior happens frequently in our country's schools (Spain), appearing in all its manifestations: insults, threats, physical aggression, social isolation, etc. Now, however, we are witnessing a growing interest in this phenomenon and the possible risk factors that may help us understand and prevent these behaviors from early childhood. Individual risk factors such as age and sex have been well documented; however, other studies indicate additional personal variables such as disability, impulsivity or nationality.

Method. The purpose of this study is to describe, in primary school children, the relationship between degree of involvement in bullying, certain personal variables and the experience of social rejection. The study includes a total of 426 students enrolled in the later years of primary school (4th, 5th and 6th grades) from three public schools in the Region of Murcia (Spain). The Bull-S Test questionnaire was used for analyzing the degree of involvement in bullying and for studying the sociometric dimension.

Results. The results confirm that this phenomenon is happening at younger ages, particularly in Primary School. The study also reveals that there is a relationship between certain personal variables (age, gender, specific needs for educational support, immigration and repeated grade) and bullying, with significant involvement from children in all profiles. Children with specific needs for educational support appear as victims and grade-repeaters and immigrant pupils appear as bullies and bully-victims.

Discussion and Conclusion. Certain personal variables (age, gender, specific needs for educational support, immigration and grade repetition), in interaction with social rejection, emerge as risk factors for involvement in bullying. From this perspective, the phenomenon requires an evaluation that describes the subjects directly involved in bullying behaviors and outlines the contextual aspects that may be affecting and supporting it.

Keywords: bully, victim, bully-victim, specific needs for educational support, immigration, grade repetition, social rejection, preadolescence.

Received: 05/31/10 *Initial Acceptance:* 06/07/10 *Final Acceptance:* 07/08/10

VARIABLES PERSONALES Y SOCIALES RELACIONADAS CON LA DINÁMICA BULLYING EN ESCOLARES DE EDUCACIÓN PRIMARIA

Resumen

Introducción. Según el último informe del defensor del pueblo las conductas agresivas entre escolares ocurren frecuentemente en los centros educativos de nuestro país (España) y se dan en todas sus manifestaciones: insultos, amenazas, agresiones físicas, aislamiento social, etc., siendo en la actualidad cuando asistimos a un creciente interés por este fenómeno y los posibles factores de riesgo que inciden en el mismo. La edad y el sexo se recogen como los indicadores más estudiados, sin embargo ciertos autores indican la relación con otras variables personales tales como el presentar alguna discapacidad, la impulsividad o la nacionalidad de los escolares.

Método. El propósito de este estudio es describir la relación que existe entre los niveles de implicación en bullying en alumnos de Educación Primaria, ciertas variables personales y rechazo social. La muestra comprende un total de 426 alumnos escolarizados en los últimos cursos de Educación Primaria (4º, 5º y 6º) de tres centros públicos de la Región de Murcia (España). Se utilizó el cuestionario Test Bull-S para el análisis del nivel de implicación en bullying y el estudio de la dimensión sociométrica.

Resultados. Los resultados confirman que este fenómeno se da desde etapas más tempranas como es el caso de Educación Primaria. Asimismo, el estudio revela que existe relación entre ciertas variables personales y el fenómeno bullying, viéndose una implicación significativa de los chicos en todos los perfiles, de los sujetos con necesidades educativas específicas de apoyo educativo como víctimas, y de los sujetos repetidores e inmigrantes como agresores y víctimas-provocadoras.

Discusión y Conclusión. Ciertas variables personales (edad, sexo, necesidades educativas específicas de apoyo educativo, inmigración o repetición), en interacción con el rechazo social se perfilan como factores de riesgo para la implicación en bullying. Desde esta perspectiva del fenómeno vemos necesaria una amplia evaluación que describa los sujetos implicados directamente y profile los aspectos personales y contextuales que pueden estar incidiendo en su aparición y mantenimiento desde las primeras edades.

Palabras Clave: agresor, víctima, víctima-provocadora, necesidades específicas de apoyo educativo, inmigración, repetición, rechazo social, preadolescentes.

Recibido: 31/05/10 Aceptación Inicial: 07/06/10 Aceptación Definitiva: 08/07/10

Introduction

There are several studies in our country that provide information on the incidence of bullying in Secondary Education, all of which show that the phenomenon is present in considerable proportions (Avilés & Monjas, 2005; Ombudsman, 2007; Serrano & Iborra, 2005). Interest is being directed to detecting these situations at earlier ages, where several studies confirm that “the ends are spreading out”, suggesting that bullying is becoming generalized to all ages of school children (Cerezo, 2009; Cerezo, Calvo & Sánchez, 2004; Craig & Pepler, 2007; Wolke, Woods, Stanford & Schulz, 2001).

Some studies from England point to age and sex as the first indicators related to incidence of this phenomenon, although attention is increasingly directed toward other personal characteristics such as the level of intelligence, presence of disability, impulsivity and nationality (Farrington, 2005; Smith, 2004; Woods, Hall, Dautenhahn & Wolke, 2007).

Regarding gender, studies indicate that boys are more frequently involved in the bullying phenomenon, showing higher rates as aggressors and as victims (Cerezo, 2010; Postigo, González, Mateu, Ferrero & Martorell, 2009; Solberg & Olweus, 2003; Tapper & Boulton, 2005). However, other studies show that gender differences in bullying are especially marked in direct aggression such as physical violence or threats, while there are less marked differences in indirect aggressions such as rumors, isolation or rejection (González, Postigo, Montoya & Martorell, 2007; Toldos, 2005; Veensta, Lindenberg, De Winter, Verhulst & Ormel, 2005).

Regarding age, there is a need for further research on its involvement in bullying (Benítez & Justicia, 2006), since there are few longitudinal studies. One retrospective study led by Eslea and Rees (2001) states that the age range with the greatest concentration of victims is from 11 to 13 years. Other authors, however, affirm that the maximum falls between 9 and 15 years and indicate that aggressors are older than their victims (Carney & Merrell, 2001; Seals & Young, 2003). Moreover, studies carried out in our region (Murcia) show that subjects who attend class with younger students act as aggressors, revealing the effect of grade repetition as a decisive element in these situations (Cerezo, 2006).

Regarding students who present specific needs for educational support, we find that subjects with a mental disability may be more involved as victims, often being less socially integrated, lacking peer protection and showing a passive attitude toward bully behaviors (Card, 2003). For his part, Farrington (2005) indicates that pupils with a profile of “hyperactivity/impulsivity/attention deficit” show the most important personality factors for predicting antisocial behavior and becoming involved in aggressive situations. Other studies show that aggressors have a greater tendency to present a deficit in executive functions and they establish a relationship between attention deficit/hyperactivity and bullying (Mestre, Samper & Frías, 2002; Unnever & Cornell, 2003). These pupils could become involved as bully-victims since they have few friends and low social status, reacting impulsively when defending themselves.

Another individual factor related to the bullying dynamic is nationality. It appears that belonging to minority ethnic groups or being an immigrant is a risk factor for being involved in these situations, although there is not a clear profile of these individuals. Studies by Unnever and Cornell (2003) indicate that immigrant subjects are more often involved as aggressors, while Wolke, Woods, Stanford and Schulz (2001) indicate that subjects with other nationalities are involved as victims, suffering most often from racist insults. In our country (Spain), the latest Ombudsman Report (2007) also reveals the incidence of immigrant subjects in the bullying phenomenon, indicating that they act as victims or witnesses, while Cerezo, Calvo and Sánchez (2004) record involvement as victims and bully-victims (b-v).

If all these individual aspects have been related to involvement in bullying, it is also true that there is a certain relationship between these factors, social competency and classroom-related aspects. Thus, teachers assess boys as being less socially skilled than girls (Díaz-Aguado, 2005) and they associate children with mental disability with more behaviors of isolation and unpopularity (Trianes, Blanca, García & Sánchez, 2003). Similarly, some studies indicate social rejection as a risk factor for becoming involved in bullying behaviors, and indicate that it is a relationship problem that takes place within the social structure of the classroom (Craig & Pepler, 2007; Gifford-Smith & Brownell, 2003).

Objectives and hypotheses

This study has a two-fold objective: a) to describe the incidence of bullying in subjects from 9-12 years of age, and b) to analyze the relationship between certain individual variables and incidence of bullying, such as age, sex, having specific needs for educational support (SNES), being an immigrant and having repeated a grade, as well as the relationship between these variables and social rejection. These objectives take shape in the following hypotheses:

1. The bullying phenomenon is present at all levels and ages considered in this study.
2. Certain personal and socio-demographic variables, related to low social integration, favor involvement in bullying:
 - 1.1. Boys are more involved in all bullying profiles than are girls.
 - 1.2. Immigrant subjects and subjects with SNES are more involved as victims and bully-victims.
 - 1.3. Subjects who have repeated a grade are more involved as aggressors.

Method

Participants

Three public schools from the Region of Murcia (Spain) were selected. Two are located in rural areas and one in a city center. The sample includes 426 subjects between the ages of 9 and 12, all of whom were enrolled in upper Primary grades (fourth-, fifth- and sixth-graders) at the time the information was collected.

Eighteen classrooms were included in the study (20% of subjects were fourth-graders, 38% were fifth-graders and 42.3%, sixth-graders). Distribution by age was as follows: 10% of subjects were 9 years old, 35.7% were 10, 41% were 11 and 13% were 12. 48% of the sample were boys and 51.4% girls, so the two sexes were represented in comparable percentages. All three schools are relatively large, with 2 and 3 classrooms for each grade level, designated as groups A, B and C. Table 1 summarizes the sample characteristics, where each of these constitutes an independent variable in the study.

Table 1. *Sample characteristics*

SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS		PARTICIPANTS N= 426
AGE	9 years	42
	10 years	152
	11 years	178
	12 years	51
SEX	Male	207
	Female	219
GRADE	4 th graders	85
	5 th graders	161
	6 th graders	180
GROUP	Group A	190
	Group B	190
	Group C	46
PERSONAL VARIABLES	Subjects with SNES	18
	Immigrant subjects	29
	Grade-repeaters	29
BULLYING PROFILE	Bullies	33
	Victims	23
	Bully-victims	8

Instruments

The Bull-S questionnaire (Cerezo, 2002) was used for this study. Its interpretive analysis provides information on the structure of the group and the aggression-victimization relationship through two dimensions that encompass the dependent variables of this study.

1. The socio-metric dimension consists of variables that define the social position of each member and the socio-affective structure of the group as a whole, using items that the subject responds to by naming three classmates: 1. *Chosen*, 2. *Rejected*, 3. *Expectation of being chosen* and 4. *Expectation of being rejected*.

2. The bullying dynamic dimension is defined by the variables concerning the Aggression-Victimization relationship, distinguishing between those specific to the bully and to the victim (items 5 to 10): 5. *Strong*, 6. *Cowardly*, 7. *Aggressive*, 8. *Victim*, 9. *Provoking*, 10. *Dislike*. The items that correspond to these two dimensions are presented in the form of naming

or selecting from the subjects of the group. These variables make it possible to verify the characteristics associated with the aggressor profile (strong, aggressive, provoking) and those associated with the victim profile (cowardly, victim and dislike). This dimension allows us to establish the level of involvement in bullying through four values:

- 0 = not involved in bullying (other)
- 1 = bullies (named by at least 25% as an aggressor)
- 2 = victims (named by at least 25% as a victim)
- 3 = bully-victim (named by at least 25% as an aggressor and as a victim).

Reliability levels were obtained by calculating the Alpha Coefficient among questionnaire items, with results showing satisfactory reliability levels for concluding that the Bull-S questionnaire is a reliable and valid instrument for measuring aggressiveness among school children (Cronbach Alpha for N= 322 was .73).

Procedure

The data collection process began with selection of Early Childhood and Primary Education schools from the Region of Murcia. To begin, school administrations were contacted in order to explain to them the objectives and scope of the research, as well as to propose their voluntary participation. Once the school administration gave its consent to collaborate, an informational meeting was held with mainstream teachers for the grade levels in the sample, in order to explain the study objective and to collect relevant information about the respective grade levels. At the same time, parents were notified with a letter explaining the research, to obtain consent for their son or daughter to participate in the study.

After agreeing on the teachers' and pupils' participation, days were assigned for carrying out the different tests, such that subjects from each classroom completed the questionnaires in their own room during two different sessions. Several previously trained researchers were on hand to coordinate and supervise application of the instruments in the different classrooms.

In the first session, pupils were informed about the importance of the study and its educational implications, thereby gaining a good level of participation. Anonymity of the data was guaranteed, and once the tests were completed, they were inserted in an envelope that

was sealed in their presence, noting down the name of the school, grade level and group, for identification purposes.

Design and statistical analyses

Within a quantitative empirical research design, a descriptive study of the incidence of bullying was executed. At the same time, the study was also a retrospective “ex post facto” study of a group using multiple measurements, allowing us to study the relationship between the independent and dependent variables, using questionnaires to obtain empirical evidence (Montero & León, 2008).

In order to analyze the incidence of bullying, a frequency study was carried out for the whole sample. In order to establish whether significant differences exist as a function of the independent variables, the chi-squared (χ^2) test was carried out. The size of the effect was also verified using association indices “phi coefficient” and “Cramer’s V coefficient”, applied for those variables whose magnitude reached a minimum value of 0.10. A t-test analysis of Bull-S (t test for independent samples) was performed in order to see the relationship between personal variables and social rejection, making possible two by two comparisons of the sub-groups between the individual variables and the sociometric dimension.

Results

Incidence of the bullying phenomenon

In the analysis by grade level, the data shown in Table 2 reveal that the bullying phenomenon is present at all levels in the study and, furthermore, significant differences between the levels are not observed. It is worth noting, however, that the percentage of involvement in fifth and sixth grades (17% and 15%) is somewhat greater than in fourth grade (12%).

Seen by class group, the bullying phenomenon is found to be present in all groups, with no significant differences between them, although Table 2 does show a higher percentage in Group C (24%), where 11% are involved as aggressors and 6.5% as bully-victims.

Table 2. *Frequency by grade level, group and age. Percentages and absolute values.*

	GRADE			GROUP			AGE			
	4 th	5 th	6 th	A	B	C	9	10	11	12
OTHER	88.2 (75)	83.2 (134)	85.2 (153)	85.8 (163)	81.3 (164)	76.1 (35)	90.5 (38)	84.9 (129)	84.3 (150)	83.3 (45)
BULLY	5.9 (5)	8.7 (14)	7.8 (14)	7.9 (15)	6.8 (13)	10.9 (5)	4.8 (2)	7.2 (11)	7.9 (14)	11 (6)
VÍCTIM	3.5 (3)	5.6 (9)	6.1 (11)	4.2 (8)	6.3 (12)	6.5 (3)	4.8 (2)	5.3 (8)	6.2 (11)	3.7 (2)
B-V	2.4 (2)	2.5 (4)	1.1 (2)	2 (4)	0.5 (1)	6.5 (3)	-	2.6 (4)	1.7 (3)	1.9 (1)
TOTAL BULLYING	11.8 (10)	16.8 (23)	15 (27)	14.2 (27)	13.6 (26)	23.9 (11)	9 (4)	15 (23)	15.8 (28)	16.7 (9)
TOTALS	85	161	180	190	190	46	42	152	178	54

Finally, there are no statistically significant differences according to age. This indicates that bullying is present at all ages of our study. Nonetheless, in Table 2 we can observe that there is a gradual increase of percentage of involvement, being more noticeable at the ages of 10, 11 and 12 years, with 15%, 16% and 17% respectively. It is worth noting that the percentage of subjects involved as aggressors increases with age (from 5% to 11%) and the percentage of victims decreases (from 6% to 4%), and that at age 9 we find no subject within the bully-victim profile.

Level of implication in bullying and personal and socio-demographic variables

Involvement in bullying by gender

With regard to gender, greater involvement is observed on the part of the boys, with involvement in bullying dynamics at 25% as compared to 6% of the girls. An analysis by profiles is required for this variable, since the sharp differences are owing to the subjects involved as aggressors. Thus, 15.5% of boys are observed in this category, representing 97% of this profile, as compared to 0.5% of the girls.

In the victim and bully-victim profiles, the percentage of boys is still higher in both cases, although the differences are not so pronounced. Table 3 shows that 7% of the boys are victims as compared to 4% of the girls, and 2.5% of the boys are bully-victims as compared to 1.5% of the girls. In this analysis, we find it striking that the boys represent almost the entirety of the subjects involved as aggressors, but 40% of victims and 37.5% of bully-victims are girls, making the differences less pronounced in these two profiles.

Lastly in this regard, in addition to finding statistically significant differences ($\chi^2(3, N= 426) = 37.30, p<.001$), we observe a significance range of 29% according to the Phi coefficient and Cramer's V coefficient, allowing us to make a practical interpretation regarding these two variables and affirm that there is a considerable relationship between gender and the bullying phenomenon.

Table 3. *Incidence of bullying. Frequencies by gender, SNES, grade repetition and immigration*

	GENDER		SNES	IMMIGRATION	GRADE RE- PETITION
	M	F			
OTHER	75.4 (156)	94.1 (206)	66 (12)	72.4 (21)	72.4 (21)
BULLY	15.5 (32)	0.5 (1)	5.6 (1)	17.2 (5)	10.3 (3)
VICTIM	6.8 (14)	4.1 (9)	22.2 (4)	-	6.9 (2)
B-V	2.4 (5)	1.4 (3)	5.6 (1)	10.3 (3)	10.3 (3)
TOTAL BULLYING	24.7 (51)	6 (13)	33.4 (6)	27.5 (8)	27.5 (8)
TOTAL	207	219	18	29	29

Involvement in bullying by pupils with specific needs for educational support

Another personal variable examined in this study is that of presenting specific needs for educational support (SNES). As shown in Table 3, 33% of these subjects are involved in bullying, most notably as victims (22%), as compared to the role of bullies or bully-victims (only 5.6%).

Thus, we find a statistically significant relationship between this variable and the bullying phenomenon ($\chi^2(3, N= 426) = 12.06, p<.01$), and at the practical level, a relationship that reaches a statistical value of 17% (Phi and Cramer's $V = .168$). These figures allow us to state that there is a certain relationship between presenting specific needs for educational support and becoming involved in the bullying phenomenon, mainly as a victim.

Involvement in bullying by immigrant pupils

The next personal variable analyzed was nationality, studied through the immigration variable. We observe in Table 3 that 27.5% of immigrant subjects are involved in this type of situation. Most notably, immigrant subjects are only involved as bullies (17%) and as bully-victims (10%), and that furthermore they represent 37.5% of the total of the bully-victims.

In analyzing these variables, a significant relationship was found ($\chi^2(3, N= 426) = 17.75, p<.001$). Reaching a range of practical significance of 20%, we observe that being an immigrant is a risk factor to be taken into account in the bullying dynamic, its impact noted mainly in the bully and bully-victim profiles.

Involvement in bullying by grade-repeaters

Regarding the grade repetition variable, we observe in Table 3 that 27.5% of the subjects who had repeated a school year are also involved in the bullying dynamic, mainly as bullies and bully-victims. A percentage of 10% is observed for both profiles, respectively, compared to 7% who were involved as victims. As with immigrant subjects, the high percentage of bully-victims is noteworthy, representing 37.5% of this profile.

The relationship between these two variables is statistically significant ($\chi^2(3, N= 426) = 12.85, p<.01$). We also find a practical significance that reaches 17% (Phi and Cramer's $V= 0.174$), such that the grade-repetition effect incurs considerably in the bullying phenomenon, becoming a risk factor for being involved in bullying – in our case, mainly as a bully or bully-victim.

Personal characteristics and their relationship to social rejection

In analyzing personal variables, we also wished to see whether they bore any relationship to social aspects. The data reveal that these subjects have poor social integration in the classroom, which undoubtedly is related to their involvement in bullying, as observed in Table 4.

Table 4: *Bull-S t-test differences between others/ SNES/ immigrants/ grade-repeaters for rejection and acceptance*

	OTHERS/SNES			OTHERS/IMMIGRANTS			OTHERS/GRADE-REPEATERS		
	T	D.F.	DIF.M	T	D.F.	DIF.M	T	D.F.	DIF.M
REJECTION	-2.37**	17.37	-850	-2.32**	29.13	-6.12	-2,80***	29,48	-6,64
CHOSEN	3.13***	424	3.30	7.02***	47.72	3.23	4,49***	38,19	2,64
EXPECTATION OF BEING CHOSEN	5.89***	22.04	2.64	6.43***	39.15	2.59	3,57***	424	2,14
EXPECTATION OF REJECTION	-	-	-	-2.44**	30.68	-279	-276***	424	-2,60

Associated P: *p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001

Subjects with specific educational needs are rejected by the group (M = 12.16, SD = 15.14), and at the same time are less often chosen by their classmates (M = 1.61, SD = 2.56), presenting the greatest differences of means for these two variables with respect to the others, as observed in Table 4 (p=.03; p<.01). Furthermore, it can be seen how they themselves show a low expectation of being chosen (p<.001), and they feel isolated in the classroom.

Immigrant subjects also show high means for rejection (M = 9.72, SD = 14.06) and low means for number of times chosen (M = 1.75; SD = 2.16), with significant differences of means with respect to the others being observed for both variables (p=.02; p<.001). Furthermore, this group of subjects presents a low expectation of being chosen (p<.001) and a high expectation of being rejected (p=.02), being more aware of their situation of isolation and rejection in the classroom.

The means of grade-repeaters also show high scores on rejection (M = 10.20; SD = 12.59) and low scores for number of times chosen (M = 2.31, SD = 2.92) as compared to oth-

ers, with significant differences found on both variables ($p < .01$; $p < .001$). Moreover, their expectations of being chosen ($p < .001$) and of being rejected ($p < .01$) also show that this group of subjects has rather negative psychosocial aspects.

Discussion and Conclusions

This study confirms that bullying situations are happening in all groups of upper primary education, its incidence at early ages being significant since the relational and social network is being established at this time (Eisenbraun, 2007). Age does not appear to be a relevant factor in incidence of the phenomenon.

In analyzing incidence by gender, results concur with those of numerous studies that confirm bullying to be a largely male phenomenon, with gender as a risk factor for involvement in bullying (Cerezo, 2009; Seals & Young, 2003; Solberg y Olweus, 2003; Tapper & Boulton, 2004). Data show that the bully profile is adopted by boys, with certain studies pointing to the relationship between being a boy and having low social competence, while at the same times boys play down the importance of these situations and they are more accustomed to aggressive behaviors (Avilés, 2006; Trianes, Cardelle-Elawar, Blanca & Muñoz, 2003).

However, we find that girls are represented in considerable proportions in the profile of victims and bully-victims, where we see that the tendency toward being an exclusively male phenomenon is changing (Carney & Merrell, 2001; Benítez & Justicia; 2006). These results may indicate that the aggressive conduct of girls is not infrequent, but that it goes unnoticed, having to do with indirect aggression that is more difficult to observe and detect, as well as to be identified by the students (González, Postigo, Montoya & Martorell, 2007; Toldos, 2005; Veenstra et al., 2005).

The data indicate that having specific needs for educational support is significantly related to involvement in bullying, this being a risk factor that incurs mainly in the victim profile. Along these lines, it would be interesting to investigate further and be able to associate specific educational needs with each profile. For example, in some studies (Farrington, 2005;

Unnever & Cornell, 2003), subjects with needs due to attention deficit and hyperactivity act aggressively to defend themselves, leading them to take on the profile of bully-victims.

Regarding nationality, results concur with those obtained by Unnever and Cornell (2003), and indicate that being an immigrant is a risk factor related to the incidence of the bullying phenomenon. Moreover, given the number of immigrant subjects in our schools, we feel that further research along these lines would be interesting, delving into other aspects that may be related to involvement in bullying, such as particular nationality or the moment when the subject entered our educational system.

Regarding the grade-repetition effect, results show a significant relationship between repeating a grade and becoming involved in the bullying dynamic, adopting the profile of bully (Cerezo, 2006). However, our study also shows a high number of grade-repeaters who have become bully-victims, so this may be a two-sided effect. From this point of view, it is important to consider social aspects when deciding on whether Primary Education pupils should be required to repeat a grade.

Finally, the study sought to understand the bullying phenomenon from a cognitive-relational theory approach, considering the subjects' individual characteristics and the peer network as relationship units (Ortega & Mora, 2008). The bullying phenomenon should be approached from a multi-causal focus, not limited to the subjects' behaviors and the lack of social skills or social competency, but also paying attention to curriculum and organizational aspects that are sure to favor adequate educational attention to student diversity and social integration for each and every one (Ballester & Arnaíz, 2001). From this perspective, the school's effort is fundamental, in its role as educating agent for all pupils, offering an environment for learning and living together (Ballester & Calvo, 2007).

References

Avilés, J. & Monjas, I. (2005). Estudio de la incidencia de la intimidación y el maltrato entre iguales en la Educación Secundaria Obligatoria mediante el cuestionario CIMEI (Cuestionario sobre Intimidación y Maltrato Entre Iguales). [A study of the incidence of bullying and peer abuse in Compulsory Secondary Education using the CIMEI

- questionnaire (Questionnaire on Bullying and Peer Abuse.] *Anales de Psicología*, 21(1), 27-41.
- Avilés, J. M. (2006). Differences of causal attribution in bullying among participants. *Electronic Journal of Research in Educational Psychology*, 9, 4(2), 201-220.
- Ballester, F. & Arnaiz, P. (2001). Diversidad y violencia escolar. [Diversity and school violence.] *Revista Interuniversitaria de Formación del profesorado*, 41, 39-58
- Benítez, J.L & Justicia, F. (2006). Bullying: description and analysis of a phenomenon. *Electronic Journal of Research in Educational Psychology*, 9, 4(2), 151-170.
- Card, N. A. (2003). Victims of peer aggression: A meta-analytic review. Presented at Society for Research in *Child Development biennial meeting*, Tampa, USA, April.
- Carney, A. G. & Merrell, K. W. (2001). Bullying in schools: Perspectives on understanding and preventing an international problem. *School Psychology International*, 22(3), 364-382.
- Cerezo, F. (2002). *BULL-S: Test de evaluación de la agresividad entre escolares. Manual de referencia*. [BULL-S: Assessment test on school bullying.] Bizcaia: Grupo ALBORCOHS.
- Cerezo, F. (2006). Violence and victimization among school children. Bullying: identification and intervention strategies using the Bull-s Test. *Electronic Journal of Research in Educational Psychology*, 9, 4(2), 333-352.
- Cerezo, F. (2009). Analyzing bullying in Spanish Schools. *International Journal of psychology and psychological therapy*, 9(3), 383-394.
- Cerezo, F. (2010). Social status, gender, classroom climate and bullying among adolescent pupils. *Anales de psicología*, 26(1), 137-144.
- Cerezo, F., Calvo, A., & Sánchez, C. (2004). *Bullying y estatus social en el grupo-aula en una muestra de escolares*. [Bullying and social status in the class group in a sample of school children.] Communication presented at the 4th International Congress on Psychology and Education. Almería, March 30 to April 2, 2004. Conference proceedings.
- Craig, W. & Pepler, D. (2007). Understanding bullying: From research to practice. *Canadian Psychology*, 48(2), 86-93.
- Díaz-Aguado, M. J. (2005). La violencia entre iguales en la adolescencia y su prevención desde la escuela. [Violence among adolescent peers and its prevention at school.] *Psicothema*, 17(4), 549-558.
- Eslea, M. & Rees, J. (2001). At what age are children most likely to be bullied at school? *Aggressive Behavior*, 27(6), 419-429.

- Eisenbraun, K. D. (2007). Violence in schools: Prevalence, prediction, and prevention. *Aggression and Violent Behavior, 12*(4), 459-469.
- Farrington, D. P. (2005). Childhood origins of antisocial behavior. *Clinical Psychology & Psychotherapy, 12*(3), 177-190.
- Gifford-Smith, M. & Brownell, C. (2003). Childhood peer relationships: Social acceptance, friendships, and peer networks. *Journal of School Psychology, 41*(4), 235-284.
- González, R., Postigo, S., Montoya, I. & Martorell, M. C. (2007). Implicación femenina en el acoso escolar. [Female involvement in school harassment.] In Gázquez, J. J., Pérez, M. C., Cangas, A. J. & Yuste, N. (eds.), *Situación actual y características de la violencia escolar*, Vol. I, 179-184. Almería: Grupo Editorial Universitario.
- Mestre, M. V., Samper, P. & Frías, M. D. (2002). Procesos cognitivos y emocionales predictores de la conducta prosocial y agresiva: La empatía como factor modulador. [Cognitive and emotional processes as predictors of prosocial or aggressive behavior: empathy as a modulating factor.] *Psicothema, 14*(2), 227-232.
- Montero, I. & León, O. G. (2007). Guía para nombrar los estudios de investigación en Psicología. [A guide for naming research studies in Psychology.] *International Journal of Clinical and Health Psychology, 7*(3), 843-862.
- Ombudsman (2007). *Violencia Escolar: El maltrato ente Iguales en la Educación Obligatoria Secundaria 1999-2006*. [School violence: Bullying in Compulsory Secondary Education 1999-2006.] Madrid: Publicaciones de la Oficina del Defensor del Pueblo.
- Ortega, R. & Mora, J. (2008). Las redes de iguales y el fenómeno del acoso escolar: explorando el esquema dominio-sumisión. [Peer networks and the school bullying phenomenon: exploring the domain-submission schema.] *Infancia y aprendizaje, 31*(4), 515-528.
- Postigo, S., González, R., Mateu, C., Ferrero, J. & Martorel, C. (2009). Diferencias conductuales según género en convivencia escolar. [Behavioral differences in school coexistence, according to gender.] *Psicothema, 21*(3), 453-458.
- Seals, D. & Young, J. (2003). Bullying and victimization: Prevalence and relationship to gender, grade level, ethnicity, self-esteem, and depression. *Adolescence, 38*(152), 735-747.
- Serrano, A. & Iborra, I. (2005). *Violencia entre compañeros en la escuela*. [Violence among school classmates.] Queen Sofia Center for the Study of Violence. Valencia: Goeprint.
- Smith, P. K. (2004). Bullying: Recent developments. *Child & Adolescent Mental Health, 9*(3), 98-103.

- Solberg, M. E. & Olweus, D. (2003). Prevalence estimation of school bullying with the Olweus Bully/Victim questionnaire. *Aggressive Behavior*, 29(3), 239-268.
- Tapper, K. & Boulton, M. J. (2004). Sex differences in levels of physical, verbal, and indirect aggression amongst primary school children and their associations with beliefs about aggression. *Aggressive Behavior*, 30(2), 123-145.
- Toldos, M. P. (2005). Sex and age differences in self-estimated physical, verbal and indirect aggression in Spanish adolescents. *Aggressive Behavior*, 31(1), 13-23.
- Trianes, M. V., Blanca, M^a. J., García, J. & Sánchez, A. (2003). Competencia social en alumnos con N.E.E: Nivel de inteligencia, edad y género. [Social competency in pupils with Special Educational Needs: Level of intelligence, age and gender.] *Revista de Psicología General y Aplicada*, 56(3), 325-338.
- Trianes, M. V., Cardelle-Elawar, M., Blanca, M^a. J. & Muñoz, A. (2003). Social context, gender and social competence, self-evaluated in 11- and 12-year-old Andalusian students. *Electronic Journal of Research in Educational Psychology*, 1(2), 37-55.
- Unnever, J. D. & Cornell, D. G. (2003). Bullying, self-control, and ADHD. *Journal Interpersonal Violence*, 18(2), 129-147.
- Veenstra, R., Lindenberg, S., Oldehinkel, A. J., De Winter, A. F., Verhulst, F. C. & Ormel, J. (2005). Bullying and victimization in elementary schools: A comparison of bullies, victims, Bully/Victims, and uninvolved preadolescents. *Developmental Psychology*, 41(4), 672-682.
- Wolke, D., Woods, S., Stanford, K. & Schulz, H. (2001). Bullying and victimization of primary school children in England and Germany: Prevalence and school factors. *British Journal of Psychology*, 92(4), 673.
- Woods, S., Hall, L., Dautenhahn, K. & Wolke, D. (2007). Implications of gender differences for the development of animated characters for the study of bullying behavior. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 23(1), 770-786.