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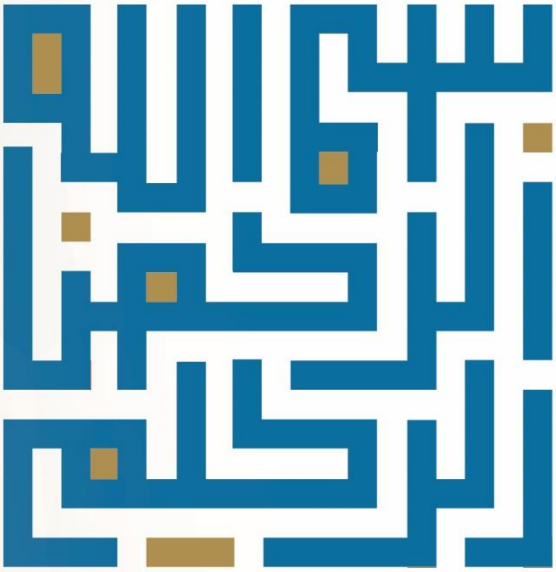

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تصورات مديري المدارس الابتدائية حول منع التنمر فى مدارسهم بمدينة حائل

Elementary Principals' Perceptions and Attitudes Regarding Bully Prevention in their Schools in Hail City

إعداد

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المستخلص

هدف البحث إلى التعرف على تصورات مديري المدارس الابتدائية حول منع التنمر فى مدارسهم بمدينة حائل والتعرف على السياسات المتبعة للحد من التنمر، ودراسة العلاقة بين تصور مديري المدارس الابتدائية عن التنمر في مدارسهم ومستوى السياسات التي يتبعونها للحد منه، ودراسة الفروق بين المدارس الحكومية والخاصة في كل من تصور مديري المدارس الابتدائية عن التنمر في مدارسهم ومستوى السياسات التي يتبعونها للحد منه، ودراسة الفروق في كل من تصور مديري المدارس الابتدائية عن التنمر في مدارسهم ومستوى السياسات التي يتبعونها للحد منه تبعا لمتغيرات(النوع، المؤهل التعليمي، سنوات الخبرة) تم تطبيق البحث على عينة تكونت من (١٣٦) من مديري المدارس الابتدائية (الذكور –الاناث) بمدينة حائل تباينت مستوياتهم التعليمية وسنوات خبرتهم. ، واتبع البحث المنهج الوصفي التحليلي.

وكان من أهم النتائج:٧٥,٧% من مديري المدارس الابتدائية بمدينة حائل كان تصورهم لمستوى التنمر بمدارسهم منخفض، ٧٢,٨% من مديري المدارس الابتدائية بمدينة حائل يتبعون سياسات الحد من التنمر بدرجة مرتفعة. وجدت علاقة ارتباطية موجبة ذات دلالة إحصائية عند مستوى معنوية ٠,٠٠١ بين تصور مديري المدارس الابتدائية عن التنمر في مدارسهم ومستوى السياسات التي يتبعونها للحد منه، لا توجد فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية بين المدارس الحكومية والخاصة في كل من تصور مديري المدارس الابتدائية عن التنمر في مدارسهم ومستوى السياسات التي يتبعونها للحد منه، وجدت فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية في كل من تصور مديري المدارس الابتدائية عن التنمر في مدارسهم ومستوى السياسات التي يتبعونها للحد منه تبعا للنوع، لا توجد فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية في كل من تصور مديري المدارس الابتدائية عن التنمر في مدارسهم ومستوى السياسات التي يتبعونها للحد منه تبعا للمؤهل التعليمي وسنوات الخبرة. تضمنت التوصيات اجراء المزيد من الدراسات مبنية على نتائج هذا البحث.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التنمر، مديري المدارس الابتدائية ، السياسات، مدينة حائل.

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to determine elementary principals' perceptions and attitudes regarding bully prevention in their Schools in Hail City. A second purpose of this study was to understand if there a link between elementary principals' perceptions regarding the implementation of school polices to prevent bullying in the school. Additionally, a third purpose was to determine whether there was a relationship between perceptions of bullying and the effectiveness of school bullying policies. This study were select demographic variables of principal respondents (i.e., gender, years of experience and level of education) on levels of bullying in their schools and the level of implementation of school polices to prevent bullying. A total of 538 public and private elementary school principals represented the overall study population. Of the population, the response rate was 24%, or a sample of 133. The findings revealed that there are no significant differences between the principals of public and private primary schools in both perceptions of bullying and levels of school policy implementation to prevent bullying. Interestingly, there is a positive partial correlation between perceptions and policies for school principals .442 and significance at the level of 0.001. Moreover, principals' educational levels and years of experience also did not yield statistically significant differences among primary school principals' perceptions of bullying. Recommendations for further study are shared as a result of this research.

Key words: Bullying Prevention, Principals' of Primary Schools, Perceptions, Attitudes, Hail City.

Introduction

Over the past 30 years, bullying has been a part of the school experience with some saying kids will be kids. Most adults have childhood memories where they played the role of either bully or victim and learned invaluable lessons as a direct result of the experience. Many consider these and similar experiences to be rites of passage for young people such as learning the value of hard work. Unfortunately, currently, social media, aggressive video games, and overly publicized acts of violence have significantly influenced how kids today interact and deal with each other and their problems. Bullying has been responsible for countless teen suicides, attempted suicides, acts of self-harm, and acts of violence toward others (Essex, 2011).When a rite of passage infringes upon someone's quality of life, adults must intervene. Schools have stepped up to combat this epidemic in recent years. In addition to addressing specific bullying incidents within their schools, educational leaders have implemented programming with the intent of preventing bullying situations (Edmonson & Dreuth-Zeman, 2011). Principals are thought to be the single most important adult in a school who can influence students' attitudes (Marzano, et al., 2005; Roeschlein, 2002) .

Students' personalities and students' home life styles could contribute to bullying in the schools. Whitehead (2013) mentioned that students who are passive, submissive, and shy, are often targeted by bullies. These students are physically weak from the bullies' perspective. If students cry or react in what the bully notices to be a weak display of emotion, that is perceived as defenseless for further bullying (Whitehead, 2013). Salmon (20112) explained that often intelligent students are called nerd and have been targeted by bullies. As a result, young people are downplaying their academic ability because of bullying as a result of their intelligence. Furthermore, students' home life styles can cause them to be bullied as well. Students who live in over-protective homes are more likely to be bullied. Overly, protective parents (i.e., helicopter parents) usually do not give their child the confidence to be fully engaged with their peers and they generally lack social confidence, making these children afraid to make friends and as a result, they become isolated (Salmon, 2012) .

Bullying is defined as a physical, verbal, or psychological violence intended to cause fear and harm to others (Rigby, 2003). Students who have been bullied by others tend not to report incidents of bullying out of fear or because they do not believe they could be helped (Bradshaw et al., 2008). School principals must create a safe environment for students so they feel comfortable reporting incidents of bullying and victimization (McNamee & Mercurio, 2008). In sum, school principals are responsible for providing a safe

and secure learning environment in which all students can learn regardless of their race, gender, social economic status and educational need (Young, et al., 2009). In doing so, bullying behaviors are minimized.

Statement of the Problem

Presently, bullying in schools persists as a very important topic to address. Bullying is a form of aggressive behavior in which someone intentionally and repeatedly causes another person injury or discomfort (American Psychologial Association [APA], 2013). Bullying is a common phenomenon, which continues to increase in our schools today. This problem affects students' leaning as well as their status in schools. These negative influences may also cause many students to leave their schools (Coy, 2011). According to Winne (2012), 160,000 students in United States of America faced bulling in their schools on a daily basis. The Winne study found the reasons behind student bulling were greatly influenced by school polices. In elementary schools, more than 13,000 students had physical and verbal bullying and most of them stopped seeking out friends, serving to escalate feelings of isolaton (Davis &Nixon, 2011). Research suggests that bullying has spread in elementary schools worldwide from 11.3% to 49.8% during the years 2000 to 2015 respectively (Lewis, 2015). Schafer et al. (2005) noted that if bullying occurred in primary schools, it could be predicted that bullying in secondary schools would occur within that same district.

In September 2019, the King Abdullah Research center indicated that 47% of students were bullied in elementary schools, which is a large percentage of students (King Abdullah Research, 2019). Research also sheds light on the negative issues associated with bullying such as suicidal ideation and depression (Isaacs, 2009). Moreover, there are 160,000 students absent from their school because they were afraid of being bullied from others (Lerman, 2010).Also, Alghatani (2016) indicated that there were a huge cases on bullying in public schools rather than private schools according to her study. Dake (2010) indicated that the lack of training for principals and teachers was the main reason for increased bullying in schools (Dake, 2010). In addition, literature suggests that school leaders work to prevent bullying in the schools; however, the number of bulling incidents did not reduce because of the approach or strategies used by principals (Olafasson, 2000). According to Alharthey (2017), most principals in KSA use traditional ways (e.g., punitive measures) to prevent students from bulling. Also, (TIMSS, 2015) indicated that that the average of bullying in Gulf Cooperation Council Countries 23% on the other hand on Saudi Arabia 30%. A review of research and study findings failed to reveal any research that had investigated bullying

prevention policies and activities among KSA elementary schools. Therefore, this study was conducted to identify principals' perceptions regarding bullying and their school polices to prevent bullying among KSA elementary schools .

Research Questions

This study addressed the following research questions:

1-What are elementary principals' perceptions regarding bullying in their schools ؟

2-Is there a relationship between elementary principals' perceptions and implementation of school policies to prevent bullying in their schools ؟

3-Are there significant differences in the perceptions of principals of public and private elementary schools and the implementation of school polices to prevent bullying؟

4-Are there statistically significant differences between the perceptions of principals of primary school on bullying and implementation of school polices to prevent bullying in the school according to the gender؟

5-Is there a statistically significant difference between primary school principals' perceptions of bullying and implementation of school polices to prevent bullying in the school according to educational level and the years of experience؟

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine elementary principals' perceptions and attitudes regarding bullying prevention in their schools in Hail city. A second purpose of this study was to determine if there is a link between elementary principals' perceptions and implementation of school polices to prevent bullying in the school. Additionally, this study hoped to determine whether there were links between perceptions of bullying and effectiveness of school policies regarding bullying. Finally, this study utilized select demographic variables of the principal respondents (i.e., gender, years of experience and level of education) on levels of bullying in their schools and the implementation of school polices to prevent bullying in the school.

Definitions of Terms

The following terminology are used in this study:

-Bullying is ": an aggressive behavior or acts of violence towards other people (Olweus, 1993 ,p.) .

-An elementary Principal is a school leader who has the primary responsibility and authority for leadership in an elementary school.

-Private school means "owned and governed by entities that are independent of any government—typically, religious bodies or independent boards of trustees that receives funding primarily from nonpublic sources" (Alt & Peter, 2002, p. 1).

-Public school means "state and local education agencies and publicly elected or appointed school boards [that receives] funding from local, state, and federal governments" (Alt & Peter, 2002, p. 1).

Literature Review

Bullying' has become a widespread topic to be discussed and better understood. Various instances of bullying are now prevalent in distinct regions throughout the globe and transcends different age groups and categories (Craig, 1998). The physical setting and the surrounding environment play a decisive part in unfolding this kind of aggression (O'connell et al., 1999). Bullies, who are frequently joined by others, mentally and physically victimize others. These sorts of bullying activities are being conducted in groups primarily identified as K-12 and college goers. The educational field has become a place where activities related to bullying are increasingly apparent (Salmivalli, 1999). Cases of bullying may be considered as social in nature and predominantly occurs in social groups because of the imbalance of power and aggressiveness that often defines groups (Salmivalli, et al., 1996).

There are some classifications of bullying behavior in the literature. Olweus (1993) created a distinction between direct bullying (i.e., open attacks on a victim) and indirect bullying, such as spreading false rumors about someone, exclusion from social groups, and sending abusive mail or text messages (i.e., cyber bullying). Furthermore, verbal bullying or social exclusion, which is considered an indirect bullying behavior, might be more

hurtful and might not decrease with age (Bauman & Del Rio, 2006). Several researchers revealed that physical bullying is the most predominant type of bullying.

According to Swearer et al. (2010), both the victims and the bullies remain at risk for social adjustment troubles in the short- as well as long-run. Bullying affects the mental health of the victims, leading them to a state of depression, frustration, or even suicide. It is quite important that certain legislatives measures are adopted and executed efficiently to stop this issue of bullying at the grass-root level. This will in turn protect the social life of children and the adolescents who belong to groups focused on victimization and mental distractions; especially in the educational environment. In order to control and eradicate the conduct of bullying practices completely, proper and adequate education needs to be imparted to both the bullies and the victims. This may certainly add greater value in controlling such practices by generating awareness about the adverse impact imposed on individuals who are victimized by bullying (University of Colorado at Boulder, 2001).

Ttofi and Farrington (2011) indicated in their research, that if the school had implemented polices and activities in the school to reduce bullying among students, they found these programs lead to decreased bullying on average by 20% to 23%. In addition, the study found that more policies and programs in the school meant more success in decreased bullying (Ttofi & Farrington, 2011).

Bullying in school can be handled in a variety of ways. Pickens (2013) mentioned that three main groups should work together to solve the bullying problem. The tree groups are the parents, people in the community, and school-level personnel. Schools should create different ways children can deal with bullying; by including classroom activities in which students can learn why some students bully others. In addition, these activities can transfer the feeling of the victim of bullying to the students (Pickens, 2013). Educating students about the techniques to follow when they face a bully is an important step to follow to prevent the spread of bullying in the schools. The technique starts by teaching students how to tell a bully to stop, then walking away and telling an adult about the problem (Whitehead, 2013) .

School principals should be responsible for providing a safe learning environment for students. In addition, the principal must investigate student behavior that could be considered to affect other students learning. If a student commits a school infraction, the principal needs to know what policies are in place to address the issue and enforce them. School principals are the main ones who play the role of assisting students in being safe. The principal must

implement anti-bullying programs and enforce acceptable school policies (Young et al., 2009).

Harris and Halthorn (2006), studied principal perceptions regarding bullying at middle schools in Texas. The sample for the study included 59 school principals. The researcher sent an online survey to school principals. His study found that the most common bullying was verbal bulling. Also, the results indicated that principals who had more than five years of experience were more likely to successfully control student bullying than those with less experience .

Alqhtani (2015) focused on the perceptions of school principals to solve bullying issues in elementary schools in Riyadh. The sample for study included 89 principals. The researcher sent an online survey to school principals. The study found that most of the principal respondents do not have school polices in place to address bullying. Moreover, the result showed the principals use traditional methods to reduce bullying in school .

According to Kenny,et al. (2005), there were significant differences among gender bullying. The result of the research showed that boys were more likely to be bullied than girls were. In addition, the researchers found that boys were more likely to have physical bullying than girls do. On other hand, girls were more be likely to experience verbal bullying than boys .

Cordillo (2011) wanted to understand the perceptions of school principals regarding bullying in the schools and how they deal with it. This research originated in Australia in 2011. The study revealed that school principals need training to reduce the number of bullying incidents. Finally, Stavrinides' (2010) study aimed to determine the state of bullying spread in elementary schools. This research was conducted in Cyprus in 2010. The findings of the study showed that there were no significant differences between males and females in bullying incidents at the elementary school level.

Research Design and Methodology

Participants. The population for the study included elementary school principals in Hail, Saudi Arabia. Responses from principals of private and public schools represented the study sample. This study included a population of 538 principals, which included 287 male and 251 female school principals. An electronic survey was sent to principals to measure the elementary principals' perceptions and attitudes regarding bullying prevention in their schools in Hail city. The study sample included 136 principals who completed the online survey .

Survey Validity. The survey contained three sections. Part I focused on demographic information, including gender, years of experience, and level of education. Part II of the survey included nine questions to measure principal perceptions regarding bullying levels on a Likert-type scale that ranged from 1 to 5. Part III of the survey included 12 questions to measure principal perceptions regarding bullying prevention programs and activities on a Likert-type scale that ranges from 1 to 5. According to Creswell (2009), there are two forms of validity when the researcher is examining a survey: content validity, and construct validity. In this study, content validity for the survey was established. The survey was sent to professors to review with edit suggestion being invited. Based of feedback, some change did occur in the survey .

Data Analysis

Statistical tests were processed using SPSS (version 22). Descriptive data were provided as means (M) and standard deviations (SD). Descriptive statistics were calculated. The one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed as well. An Independent Samples t-test to compare the means of two independent groups was used.. The level of significance was set at $p<0.05$. Cronbach's alpha was employed to ensure reliability in this quantitative study. Cronbach's alpha is "A measure of the internal consistency of a test or scale" (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011, p. #). It is expressed as a number between 0 and 1. . The value of the Cronbach alpha coefficient for the elementary principals' perceptions and attitudes regarding bully prevention in their schools in Hail city questionnaire was .914, which was a strong and acceptable value. The value of the Cronbach alpha coefficient for the policies applied by elementary principals to reduce of bullying was 0.963, which was a strong and acceptable value. According to Fraenkel et al. (2012), the validity of the instrument was confirmed by construct validity, which is the validity of internal consistency, Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to measure the degree of the relationship between each variable. A positive correlation was detected at the level of significance of 0.01. This indicated the instrument is valid. This confirmed the consistency and reliability of the tool. The results revealed that there is an internal consistency between the items questionnaire of perceptions of principals of primary schools in the city of Hail and their implementation of school polices to prevent bullying in the school. A correlation between the items was also calculated for each item in the survey.

Results

The first question: What are elementary principals perceptions regarding bullying in their schools؟

Table **1. The level of elementary principals' perceptions regarding bullying in their schools.**

	Frequency	Percent		
High perception	103	75.7		
average perception	20	14.7		
Low perception	13	9.6		
Total	136	100.0		

The descriptive results revealed that the percentage of those having perceptions with a high degree was 75.7%, and those with perceptions with an average degree 14.7%, and those with low-level perceptions were 9.6%, so the degree of school principals' perceptions of bullying is high at 75.7% as indicated in Table 1.

Table 2. The level of elementary principals' perceptions regarding bullying policies in their schools

	Frequency	**Percent**		
Many policies	٩٩	72.8		
Moderate policies	24	17.6		
Low policies	13	9.6		
Total	136	100.0		

Additional descriptive findings indicated in Table 2 revealed that the percentage of those perceived to have "Many policies" are 72.8%, and those with "Moderate policies" are 17.6%, while those with "Low policies" are 9.6%. As such, the degree of school leaders' with a high number of policies of bullying is strong.(%٧٢,٨)

The Second Question: Is there a relationship between elementary principals' perceptions and implementation of school policies to prevent bullying in their schools ؟

Table 3. Pearson correlation coefficient analysis to reveal the relationship between Elementary Principals' perceptions and levels of school policy implementation to prevent bullying in the school

		Perceptions	policies
Perceptions:	Pearson Correlation	1	.442**
Policies	Pearson Correlation	.442**	1

****. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).**

The results in Table 3 show that there is a positive partial correlation (.442) between perceptions and policies for school principals utilizing a significance of 0.01 This means that the higher the level of perception related to policy supports, the more measures that are taken to prevent bullying in the school.

The Third Question : Are there significant differences in public and private elementary principal perceptions of bullying and the implementation of school polices to prevent bullying؟

To test this hypothesis, the researcher used Independent Samples Test as a statistical method. The results were shown in the following table .

Table 4. T-Test of significant differences in public and private elementary perceptions and principal implants school polices to prevent bullying

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		Ff	sig	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
perception	Equal variances assumed	3.502	.063	-1.058	134	.292	-2.92969	2.76821	-8.40472	2.54535
	Equal variances not assumed			-.763	7.423	.469	-2.92969	3.83767	-11.90049	6.04112
policies	Equal variances assumed	1.587	.210	-1.629	134	.106	-7.49219	4.59935	-16.58889	1.60452
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.275	8.989	.049	-7.49219	3.29381	-14.94469	-.03969

It is clear from Table (4) that there are no significant differences between the principals of public and private primary schools in both perceptions and principal implementation efforts of school polices to prevent bullying, and thus the null hypothesis will be accepted. A .05 level of significance was utilized.

The fourth Question: - Is there a statistically significant difference between primary school principals in perceptions of bullying and implementation of school polices to prevent bullying in the school according to principal gender؟

To verify this hypothesis, the researcher used Independent Samples Test as a statistical method. The results were shows in the following table

Table 5. T-Test to significant differences between primary school principals in perceptions of bullying and implant school polices to prevent bullying in the school according to principal gender

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
	Equal variances assumed	6.076	.015	3.544	134	.001	8.91689	2.51579	3.94110	13.89268
	Equal variances not assumed			2.522	8.524	.034	8.91689	3.53626	.84871	16.98506
	Equal variances assumed	6.030	.015	-2.116	134	.036	-9.15136	4.32457	-17.70460	-.59811
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.514	8.532	.166	-9.15136	6.04252	-22.93573	4.63302

The fifth Question: Is there a statistically significant difference between primary school principals in each of the perceptions of bullying and mplementation of school polices to prevent bullying in the school according to educational level and the years of experience ؟

To verify this hypothesis, the researcher used a ONE-WAY ANOVA analysis as a statistical method. The results are shown in Table 6.

Table 6. One-way ANOVA analysis about perceptions of bullying and implant school policies to prevent bullying in the school according to the educational level and the years of experience

			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
The educational level	**Perceptions**	Between Groups	274.554	3	91.518	1.606	.191
		Within Groups	7521.563	132	56.982		
		Total	7796.118	135			
	Polices	Between Groups	789.573	3	263.191	1.656	.180
		Within Groups	20976.192	132	158.911		
		Total	21765.765	135			
			Sum of Squares	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
The years of experience	**perception**	Between Groups	11.938	2	5.969	.102	.903
		Within Groups	7784.180	133	58.528		
		Total	7796.118	135			
	policies	Between Groups	214.400	2	107.200	.662	.518
		Within Groups	21551.364	133	162.040		
		Total	21765.765	135			

As shown in Table6. The findings indicate that there are no statistically significant differences between primary school principals in perceptions of bullying, according to the educational level. There are also no significant differences between primary school principals in efforts to reduce bullying, according to the educational level. From the above, it is clear that there are no differences between primary education principals in their perceptions of bullying or their implementation of school polices to prevent bullying in the school according to the educational level. Concerning the differences between primary school principals in perceptions of bullying, according to their years of experience, no significant differences was observed. From the above, it is clear that there are no differences between primary education principals in their perceptions of bullying or their implementation of school polices to prevent bullying in the school according to years of experience

Discussion:

The results of this study revealed that the percentage of principals' with high perceptions regarding the occurrence of bullying in their schools was 75% .Thus, it is interesting to note principals' perceptions regarding the extent of bullying in Hail elementary schools is high. The current results can be explained by the absence of barriers to any of these activities in Hail schools. It is apparent that principals are generally concerned about the magnitude of bullying problems in elementary schools. These results are in contrast with Dake et al. (2004) who reported that the principals ' perceptions regarding the bullying is very low. The same authors suggest that pre-professional training and continuing education are needed to educate principals regarding the important topic of bullying.

The results revealed a link between primary school principals' perceptions and implementation of school policies to prevent bullying in the school. The percentage of bullying policies among school leaders is high, at 75.7%. The Safe Schools Initiative can explain these results, as some states have begun to require the development and implementation of anti-bullying policies (Kann et al., 2001). The positive results of the Norwegian Anti-Bullying Program (Olweus, 1992) motivated other countries to address bullying problems, and the results regarding the effects of the Anti-Bullying School Intervention Program on the extent of bullying showed positive changes in primary schools. According to a recent study, Stevens et al. (2000) reported findings that an intervention strategy to combat bullying at school can be effective in reducing bullying problems, especially within primary schools. High school students' developmental characteristics have been said to interfere with program outcomes.

However, other studies have found low levels of effect or even inconsistent results (Dake et al. 2004). The differences between the studies can be explained by the different anti-bullying intervention strategy being utilized. Cemaloğlu (2011) reported that the leadership styles of managers that occur in relation to these leadership styles influence the incidence of bullying in the workplace in educational institutions. It was emphasized that as a result of the positive actions of managers such as motivation and effective communication that are observed in leaders, occurs as a positive effect in educational organizations. Hence, bullying does not happen in the workplace nearly so much. Managers who create a negative organizational environment contribute to workplace bullying in educational institutions. Thus, the leadership styles of principals can explain, in part, the link between primary school principals' perceptions and policies to prevent bullying in the school.

The results revealed no significant differences between the principals of public and private primary schools in both perceptions and principal implementation of school polices to prevent bullying. These results are in line with previous studies that showed no significant differences between public and private schools in the percentage of bullying (Garaigordobil et al., 2015; Machimbarrena & Garaigordobil, 2017). However, Piñero-Ruiz et al. (2014) found that students from public schools performed bullying significantly more than students from private schools. The discrepancies in the results can be related to the school typology and may be due to the differential characteristics of the samples in the diverse studies (e.g., sociocultural context, participants' age). Therefore, researcher suggests conducting more research on this aspect. Other studies examined the differences between the two phenomena in public or private schools, related to the socioeconomic status.

According to Harris (2006), who investigated principal perceptions regarding bullying at middle schools in Texas, principals who had more than 5 years' experience were more likely to be in control of student bullying in comparison to those with less experience. The same authors suggested that there may be some differences in principal awareness of bullying based on their gender and their years of experience. In contrast, this study indicated there were no statistically significant findings by gender, or principals' educational level and years of experience. This indicated that these variables were not factors in the safety of the school and the principals' and faculty's commitment to stopping bullying .

Study limitations

The results of this study must be viewed in the context of several limitations. The response rate was 24%. This response rate is less than ideal. Only 18% of schools were participating in selected bullying prevention activities, and it is likely that unresponsive principals were less likely to have bullying prevention activities in their schools. The answer to some questions is seen as potentially making the principal or his school look bad and so truthful disclosure may have been an issue as well. Further research is needed to collect this type of data.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Bullying has had a great impact on students' academic achievement, social interactions, and overall well-being (Kevorkian & D'Antona, 2008). As result of this study, principals need to examine their perceptions to reduce bullying in their school. Pr re-examining their

perceptions, principals may be able to determine the main reasons of bullying and can works with other school stakeholders to prevent bullying. Principals could also implement programs to prevent bullying in the school such as supervision of the outdoor school environment, establishing classroom rules specifically against bullying. Additional recommendations to be considered might include :

1- It is important that school principals implement programs to reduce student violence, whether in the form of lectures, symposiums or periodic bulletins distributed to parents in order to direct them to the best methods in educating their kids.
2- Increasing the powers of school administrators and giving them more confidence and security to maintain the success of educational learning process might prove to be helpful.
3- The necessity to specify the part of the principal's time to follow the students' problems through when complaints are made would encourage students to inform the Director of their problems when they occur.
4- The necessity of participation principals to review incidents of school bullying, to clarify the causes and risks, which contribute to modifying the behavior of students.
5- The necessity to communicate with the students and especially those with violent behavior, through home visits, to raise their morale and promote their confidence within themselves to decrease bully behaviors .

Recommendations for future research :

1- Conduct the current study in middle or high school settings to determine if the finding are similar.
2- Conduct qualitative research including interviews and observations to gain detailed accounts of principals' perceptions regarding bullying.

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