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ATTITUDE AND EXPOSURE TO BULLYING OF JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Abstract:
This investigated the students' bully attitude and exposure to bullying. Specifically, it looked into the relationship between students' bully attitude and exposure with respect to predetermined profile variables as age, sexual orientation, grade level, parents' marital status, nuclear family size, types of residence, birth order, household size, parents' occupation and parents' educational background. The study was carried out employing a descriptive-correlation research design with 384 Grade 7 to Grade 10 student-respondents from the four (4) junior high schools in Tacloban City. Findings revealed that most of the respondents were 13 to 14 years old, females, Grade 7, middle born, with parents living together; with family size ranging from 4 – 6 members and whose parents have ownership of their house. Most of the respondents' fathers were tertiary graduates and private-employees. However, most mothers were tertiary graduates but not employed. Junior high school students from Tacloban City Division have generally unfavorable attitude toward bullying. Their level of exposure to bullying as victims was moderate suggesting occasional experience of being bullied. As a bully, the exposure was high. Students' bully attitudes were significantly associated to nuclear family size and to their parents' educational attainment. Evidently, school bullying among junior high schools in the study area continues to persist notwithstanding the existing and implemented guidance program. Hence, a revisit on the implementing guidelines of the schools' child protection and anti-bullying policy is suggested.

Keywords: bully attitude, exposure to bullying, bullying victims, bullies

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1. Introduction

Many stories have been told about school bullying for generations. It usually involves actions done by students through "*teasing, pushing, threatening, or other bullying behaviors*" in the classroom (Murphy, Murphy and Banas, 2009). At present, school bullying has gone online with the use of electronic technology through text messages, calls and video calls, e-mail, Facebook, Messenger, Instagram, Twitter and other social media sites used to express hostility and antagonism to identified targets.

Many students actually perceived bullying as part of growing up. They have teased, harassed and have been categorically mean to their peers. Because it is seen not as a big deal, students are just left to live with it and resolve issues among themselves making the school a place with high risk of peer bullying (Chirila, 2012). More recently however, bullying gained attention as it becomes a worldwide problem affecting more students with short and long term psychosocial effects observed to be detrimental to the victim's well-being (Srabstein and Leventhal, 2010).

Srabstein and Leventhal (2010) argued that when an individual continually experience negative behavior, be it physical or emotional, verbal or social in form, it is already considered bullying, as commonly observed and recorded in schools and in work places. Bullying has become a public health concern and has been associated with increased morbidity and mortality as its negative consequences. It has also downplayed the productive transition of students from the basic education and the sustainability of the learning processes (Abocejo and Padua, 2010) towards higher tertiary education.

In the Philippines, bullying has been legally defined thru the passage of "*Republic Act No. 10627 otherwise known as the Anti-Bullying Act of 2013*". It states that bullying refers to "*any severe or repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic expression, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at another student that has the effect of actually causing or placing the latter in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm or damage to his property; creating a hostile environment at school for the other student; infringing on the rights of the other student at school; or materially and substantially disrupting the education process or the orderly operation of a school*"(IRR of RA No. 10627). The Republic Act No. 10627, or the Anti-Bullying Law, aims to safeguard children enrolled in kindergarten, elementary, and secondary schools and learning centers (collectively, "schools") from being bullied. It requires schools to implement policies to address the existence of bullying in their respective institutions.

The law categorized bullying into five types namely: physical, verbal, social, cyberbullying and gender-based bullying. Physical bullying includes aggressive behaviors such as "*punching, pushing, shoving, kicking, slapping, tickling, headlocks, inflicting school pranks, teasing, fighting and the use of available objects as weapons*". Verbal bullying is described as perpetrating the victim by uttering insulting statement or accusation that is hurtful like "*name-calling, tormenting and commenting negatively*" on victim's physical appearance. Meanwhile, social bullying has been legally defined as any intentional, repetitive and aggressive social behavior with the purpose of hurting others by excluding them from a group. Cyberbullying refers to any bullying accomplished through use and application of information technology or any electronic

means like "*texting, email, instant messaging, chatting, internet, social media, online games*", or other platforms or formats. Last but not the least is gender-based bullying which includes "*humiliation or exclusion of a person on the basis of perceived or actual sexual orientation and gender identity*" [SOGI] (IRR of R.A. No. 10627).

High levels of exposure to school bullying can cause psychosocial "*problems such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)*", low self-esteem, depression, loneliness, anxiety, emotional issues, low performance in school, and psychosomatic symptoms. Deviant behaviors such as hostility aggression, substance abuse, adolescent pregnancy and criminality at adulthood are also included in the list.

The Department of Education (DepEd) through its Department Order No. 55, series of 2013 or the "*Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act No. 10627, otherwise known as the Anti-Bullying Act of 2013*" has mandated all elementary and secondary schools to formulate their own anti-bullying programs and referral systems to effectively address all bullying complaints. The school has to come up with an Anti-Bullying Committee that would warrant the protection of children against peer abuse or bullying and provide intervention and counselling program to both bullies and victims. This includes the conduct of orientation activities to students as well as the parents/guardians, about the Anti-Bullying Policy of the school.

Bullying in the Philippine schools suggests a rising trend every year with an aggregate cases of 6,363 bullying in private and public schools 2016 while 5,236 cases were recorded in 2015 (Garcia, Gan and Apigo, 2019). Their study clearly indicated an increasing trend of 18 percent making an average of 31 bullying incidents happening every day. Such that school bullying stood as one of the persistent problems in the Philippine context. The negative impact of bullying and students' level of exposure to it poses a serious problem in schools the same way as the lack of teachers, student delinquencies and inadequate school facilities and supplies which affect the teaching-learning process (Sanapo, 2017).

In Leyte National High School, Tacloban City, Philippines, students are referred by teachers to the Guidance and Counseling Unit due to academic truancy, attitudinal problems and some behavioral problems which includes bullying. Interestingly, referrals from the Child Protection and Anti-Bullying Committee show that incidence of verbal and physical fights or even truancy boils down to bullying.

Moreover, an average of one to two students per month complain about their experiences of being targeted online. Cyberbullying persists in schools which include hostile confrontation, retaliation and exchange of verbal statements between the perpetrators and the victim. Cyberbullying becomes the new trend, since personal identity of the bully may be hidden in social media where can start a thread by posting demeaning and hurtful messages to someone, then made fun by his/her online friends. In some affluent countries like Australia, Japan, United States and Korea, high incidence of cyberbullying was reported (Cross et al., 2012; Aoyama, Utsumi and Hasegawa, 2012; Bauman, 2012; Tippett and Kawk, 2012).

On the other hand, counseling of the victim emphasizes more on providing care and support through educating and empowering them with ways to protect themselves

from any hurtful act may it be online or offline. They are also provided with insights and skills on improving communications with others, coping with fears, identifying positive coping mechanisms, and improving self-esteem. All counseling sessions are conducted with utmost confidentiality and respect.

These cases are directly observed by the first author of this paper who is the guidance counselor. As an advocate of child protection, the first author agrees that "*every child deserves to grow free from harm and in a stable and nurturing environment*", may it be at home or in school. Interested to investigate the students' bully attitudes and their level of exposure to bullying, this study hopes to provide inputs towards guidance program enhancement with the end view of educating the students, parents, teachers and stakeholders about the nature and negative psychological effects of bullying thereby minimize, if not eliminate, bullying incidence in schools.

1.1 Study Objectives and Hypothesis

This study investigated the students' bully attitude and exposure to bullying. Specifically, it examined the profile of students as to age, sexual orientation, grade level, parents' marital status, nuclear family size, types of residence, birth order, household size, parents' occupation and parents' educational attainment. The students' bully attitudes, level of exposure to bullying, whether as victims or as bullies were examined. The study also investigated how the students' selected profile variables were associated with the bully attitudes and level of exposure as a victim or as a bully.

The study tested the null hypotheses of no significant relationship between students' selected profile and their bully attitudes, and students' profile does not correlate to their level of exposure to bullying either as a victim or as bully.

2. Literature Review

Bullying connotes the "*use of physical or emotional power to control or harm others, making threats, spreading rumors, physical or verbal attacks and name-calling or intentionally excluding someone from a group*" (Rigby, 2007). A bully person is a psychologically disturbed individual who is unable to handle emotions from a difficult home environment and lacks social skills (Zuckerman, 2016).

Antunes (as cited in Chaves and de Souza, 2016) reported that different countries have relatively used the term "bullying" to describe negative behaviors associated with it. Solberg et al. (as cited in Chaves and de Souza, 2016) viewed bullying as a subcategory of aggressive behavior. It is a persistent act of deliberately hurting someone causing physical and psychological harm.

Olweus (as cited in Sanapo, 2017), provided a demarcation to identify bullying from aggression. He stated that as distinguished from mere aggression, bullying is characterized by a disparity in power between the perpetrator and the victim wherein the perpetrator has more power over his target. Hawley (2014) believed that bullying is a dominance-motivated act that involves direct victimization. She agreed with the

common definition that it is a recurrent act of aggression toward a victim wherein there is power imbalance because the victim is weaker in terms of social status.

Sanapo (2017) mentioned four categories of bullying namely; "*physical, verbal, cyber and relational*". Physical bullying encompasses any form of bodily harm committed on the victim such as "*punching, kicking, pushing, the use of any kind of weapo*n" to intimidate someone and the like. Verbal bullying is all about directing utterances that pejorative or throwing insults towards victims such as calling mean names, tormenting, and relentless teasing causing the victim much emotional distress. Relational bullying involves making someone feel an outcast, gossiping or spreading rumors and untrue stories, backbiting and the like.

Menesini and Salmivalli (2017) explained that bullies are persons who "*lack social skills, have a low self-esteem*", and other adjustment problems. Other accounts perceive bullying as a learned behavior because it has personal satisfaction or benefits. There are three groups involved in bullying namely the bullies, victims and provocative bully-victims. Bullies are those who are "*aggressive, impulsive, hot-tempered, with positive attitude towards violence, low frustration tolerance and with strong need for power and dominance*". Submissive victims are usually those who are "*anxious, insecure, cautious, sensitive, and quiet*. Bully-victims *usually do not withdraw when attacked. Instead, they choose to retaliate with violence that is reactive rather than proactive in nature A significant percentage has aggressive attitudes; hence, they may start a fight and are more likely to carry weapons compared to passive victims*" (Maximo and Loy, 2014).

Kljakovic, Hunt and Jose (2015**)** explained that bullying incidence occurs mostly in late childhood, with highest incidence at 12 years of age with transition to high school and with decreasing trend thereafter. They further claimed that this decline after its peak appears to be consistent worldwide.

Lee (as cited in Maximo and Loy, 2014) stated that authoritarian parenting expose children to higher levels of domestic violence. Children who are subjected by this kind of parenting style observe favorable attitude toward bullying of their parents and they are more likely to bully other children. On the contrary, children whose parents are less strict and rigid are less expected to get victimized and less likely to be aggressive. Meanwhile, sibling bullying is seen as antagonistic behavior between siblings that is done repeatedly and deliberately (Wolke, Tippett and Dantchev, 2015).

Another factor is the school environment. The school becomes a place for bullying behaviors if there is poor classroom management and when students' activities are left unmonitored or unsupervised by teachers (Rodriguez and Abocejo, 2018; Saraspe and Abocejo, 2020). Bullying behaviors eventually affect the interest of students to go to school resulting to a significant decrease in their academic performance (Tiauzon and Malquisto, 2019; Fernandez and Abocejo, 2014).

Students' positive attitudes towards bullying reinforce the perpetuation of bullying behaviors. A positive correlation between bullying and beliefs supportive of violence (Khezri et al., 2013) indicates that students who are supportive of bullying behaviors may have the tendency to be involved in bullying compared to those who are not supportive. The need to belong and to be accepted (Alvarez, Ong and Abocejo; 2017)

which prompts them to give in to peer pressure which may involve their changing of attitudes, beliefs and behavior just to conform to the activities of their peer group (Khezri et al., 2013).

Chirila (2012) stated that being a victim of bullying over and over again for a long period results to psychosocial consequences. Feelings of fear from being bullied preludes to other different mental and emotional issues which adversely affect the general well-being of the victim. Srabstein and Leventhal (2010) argued that to curb bullying, involvement of the whole community is vital where educating everyone about the nature of bullying and its detrimental effects is very necessary.

Students' exposure of being bullied ranges from verbal to the newest and becoming more alarming form of peer abuse which is cyberbullying. In the Philippines, saying mean things to others, teasing others, and calling others names were perceived by the pupils in Region III as the most common type of bullying in their school (Sanapo, 2017). Laus (2016) revealed that direct verbal and relational are the most common forms of bullying in Cebu, similar to the study of study of Sanapo (2017) in Western Visayas. Meanwhile, Tiauzon and Malquisto (2019) showed that cyberbullying was more prevalent among public secondary learners in Leyte.

Moreover, parents' occupation was found related with exposure to bullying. Lemstra et al. (2011) disclosed that those respondents who have fathers with professional occupation were more likely to be victims of physical bullying. Peer bullying in the school showed psychological effects. Many mental problems seem to be related to bullying. The negative effects brought about by their bullying experience resulted to lower performance especially in subjects requiring higher analytical skills such as Science (Mingoa and Abocejo, 2021) and Mathematics (Jolejole-Caube, Dumlao and Abocejo, 2019).

Meanwhile, family is one factor where bullies emanate from families which have a culture of violence as a way to resolve problems, with family members who are fragmented, and where parental involvement and warmth for children is missing (Bibou-nakou et al., 2013). Menesini and Salmivalli (2017) pointed out family factors which influence bullying perpetration and victimization. Bullies see their parents as authoritarian and not supportive who use corporal punishment as a means of disciplinary measure and with less family cohesiveness than other children.

Essentially, involving the family in intervention and prevention programs is necessary (Mingoa and Abocejo, 2021). Parents can be educated about the nature and dangers of bullying. They can positively influence their children's attitude and involvement in antagonistic behaviors showing them proper social decorum leading to good peer relationships.

2.1 Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

This study is anchored on two theories in psychology, the "*Social Cognitive Theory of Bandura (2001) and the Ecological Systems Theory of Bronfenbrenner*" (as cited in Guy-Evans, 2020). Bandura (2001) argued that "*intrinsic and extrinsic factors contribute to human behavior*". His theory suggests that human conduct stems from "*internal personal factors in*

the form of cognitive, affective, and biological events, behaviors, and environmental events all operate as interacting determinants that influence one another bi-directionally".

Meanwhile, the Ecological Systems Theory of Bronfenbrenner (as cited in Guy-Evans, 2020) posits that a child's development is affected by their social relationships and the world around them. These relationships include those connections within the family, peers, school and community which have direct impact on the child's development (Lee, 2011; O'connor, 2012). The theory proposes that bullying victims and perpetrators are part of the complex, interrelated system levels— that is microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem.

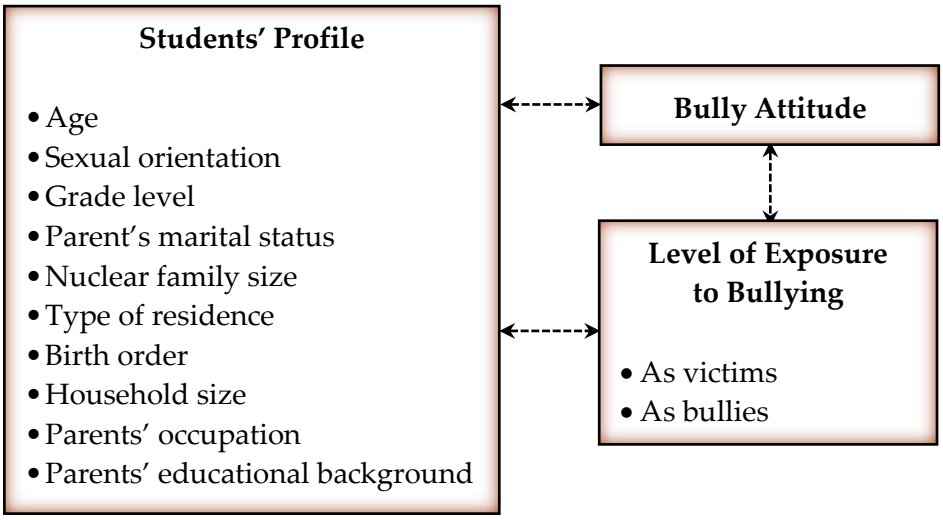

Figure 1: Conceptual framework of the study

Bullying as attitudes (i.e., bully, victim, bystander) is an offshoot of interaction between an individual and his environment. "*Social learning can influence behavior in response to repeated observations of aggressive behavior of parents, peers' siblings and adults*" (Carroll, 2014). For example, parents' display of aggressive and mean behaviors among family members may be imitated by their children (Swearer et al., 2014).

Figure 1 shows the relationship of the variables and the direction of the study. The figure illustrates the correlation of the students' profile, students' bully attitudes and their level of exposure to bullying. The lines connecting from students' profile to students' bully attitudes and students' level of exposure to bullying show the relationship between these variables with the broken line which connects the students' bully attitudes and students' level of exposure to bullying.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study employed a descriptive-correlational survey research design. This research design enabled the researchers to describe, record, analyze, interpret and evaluate the evidences generated from the survey. This research design is deemed appropriate as the

study intended to uncover the characteristics of identified study variables and the association among these variables.

3.2 Study Respondents

The respondents of the study were 384 students from the Grade 7 to Grade 10 levels from the top four (4) public Junior High Schools in Tacloban City Division having the highest incidence of bullying during the school year 2018-2019. The sample size (n=384) was drawn from the total student population (N=9,338) of the top four (4) public junior high schools following the Cochran random sampling formula. Upon obtaining the representative sample size, the number of respondents per school and per grade level (clusters) were distributed proportionate to their school population size.

During the actual data gathering, multi-stage sampling involving simple random sampling and cluster sampling with proportional allocation were used to identify the target respondents. The official list of students by section were obtained from the schools under study. Random numbers using MS Excel were generated and assigned to each student from which they were randomly drawn to constitute the study respondents per class.

3.3 Research Locale

The study was implemented in the Tacloban City Division of the Department of Education (DepEd). With the recent construction of new schools in the northern resettlement part of the city, it has a total of twenty (20) public junior high schools distributed all over Tacloban City and at the outskirts of the area. In this particular study, the top four (4) schools with high incidence of bullying are namely: Leyte National High School, Sagkahan National High School, Cirilo Roy Montejo National High School and Greendale Residences Integrated School. Figure 2 shows the location map of the schools considered in the study.

3.4 Research Instruments

A research questionnaire composed of four (4) parts as used in the study. Part I contained the student's profile. Part II elicited the student's bully attitudes. Part III was pertained to the level of exposure of students as victims while Part IV was on the level of exposure of student as bullies. The students' profile (Part I) included variables on age, sexual orientation, grade level, parents' marital status, nuclear family size, type of residence, birth order, household size, parents' occupation and parents' educational background. In part II, the questionnaire included student's bully attitudes modified from Craven's (2014) Bully Attitude Scale, evaluating bullying behavior as favorable or otherwise. Parts III and IV were adapted and modified from Olweus' Bullying Questionnaire Standard School Report (2007).

3.5 Validation of Research Instruments

The research instrument was pilot-tested at Palo National High School located in Palo, Leyte. The school was chosen for the dry run since it has more or less the same

characteristics with the locale of the study. After conducting the pilot-test, the questionnaires were tested for validity and reliability using Cronbach alpha. The statement No. 20 in the Student's Bully Attitude Questionnaire was deleted in order to have a Cronbach Alpha of 0.752. The Cronbach Alpha of the questionnaire on Students' Level of Exposure as a Victim was 0.791 while the questionnaire on the Students' Level of Exposure as a Victim was 0.860. All statements in the questionnaires were considered good or acceptable items based on the Cronbach Alpha test of validity and reliability.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

To ensure quality and integrity of this research, the researchers observed and followed ethical standards from the pre-survey up to the data gathering phase following the proper research protocols and ethical standard. The consent from the Principal of the identified school was secured and the participation of the identified students was voluntary. Proper orientation was conducted to make everyone involved in the study aware of the nature and purpose of this undertaking. The confidentiality and anonymity of the research respondents were also considered. All throughout the process, the safety of the research respondents was on top of the list to ensure that any form of harm would be avoided as the study wanted to serve independence and impartiality.

3.7 Data Gathering Procedure

Permission from the school Principal and approval by Schools Division Superintendent was secured prior to the conduct the survey. Having observed the protocol, the researcher had the kick off of her data gathering. Specific details of the procedure undertaken are discussed below.

a. Preliminary Stage

First, the schools with high incidence of bullying were determined by visiting the Guidance Office or Designated Personnel assigned to handle bullying in all the public Junior High Schools in Tacloban City. Only the top four (4) schools with high most cases of bullying were finally included in the study. The schools included were Leyte National High School with a total student population of 5451 and number of reported bullying cases of 10, Sagkahan National High School with 2066 number of students and with 8 reported bullying cases, Cirilo Roy Montejo National High School with a student population of 1700 and with 8 cases of bullying and finally, Greendale Residences Integrated School with 121 students and with 7 bullying cases.

Second, after determining the schools to be included in the study, the population of students was determined. Then, sampling was applied from the total students' population of the four (4) schools.

Third, upon determining the school to be included and the number of respondents, the dates of conducting the survey were finalized. Letters to the concerned administrators or principals were sent to obtain due permission. Prior to the conduct, the researcher held an orientation with all the respondents with the help of the teachers so that validity and objectivity of the test would be sustained.

b. Data Gathering Phase

The researcher administered the questionnaires to the respondents with the help of the teachers in the identified school. For a period of one month and a half, the data collection and retrieval were completed. Upon retrieval, tallying started and immediately followed by interpretation of results.

3.8 Statistical Treatment of Data

The gathered data were tallied encoded to the computer and analyzed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistical analysis. For the profile characteristics, the bully attitudes and exposure to bullying (as a victim and bully), mean, frequency counts and percentages were used. Then correlation analysis, contingency coefficient, gamma coefficient and Pearson r (Pearson moment correlation coefficient) were employed to examine the association of identified study variables.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Profile of Study Respondents

As shown in Table 1, the respondents mean age of 14.32 years with SD of 1.53 can be associated to the common age bracket of junior high school students, i.e., 13 for grade 7, 14 for grade 8, 15 for grade 9, and 16 for grade 10. The oldest was 20 years old and youngest was 12 years. By sexual orientation, 226 (58.85 percent) of the students were female while 141 (36.72 percent) were male, 7 (1.82 percent) were gays and the same number was recorded for the bisexual with 3 (0.78 percent) lesbians.

The respondents were dominated by female as female students are usually noted as obedient and attentive. During the data gathering phase, most students who responded were female. By marital status, married parents who were living together covered 254 (66.15 percent), followed by 61 (15.89 percent) separated parents, 55 (14.32 percent) were under live-in status and 14 of the parents were either widowed/widower. This finding can be attributed to the fact that strong family ties is still evident in the Filipino culture even at the present times.

Table 1: Profile of study respondents by age, sexual orientation, grade level and parents' marital status

Profile Variable	Frequency	Percent (%)
Age (years): Mean = 14.32, SD = 1.53		
Sexual orientation		
Bisexual	7	1.82
Lesbian	3	0.78
Gay	7	1.82
Female	226	58.85
Male	141	36.72
Total	384	100.00
Grade level		
Grade 10	82	21.35
Grade 9	95	24.74

Grade 8	101	26.30
Grade 7	106	27.60
Total	384	100.00
Parents' marital status		
Widow/widower	13	3.39
Separated	61	15.89
Married	255	66.41
Live-in	55	14.32
Total	384	100.00

Meanwhile, as gleaned from Table 2, most of the respondents had medium nuclear family size composed of 4 to 6 members which accounted for 238 (62 percent). The largest nuclear family size had 13 to 15 members while the smallest family size was 3 and below. This finding is corollary to the average household size among Filipino families, which has slowly transitioned to nuclearization, which means that concept of extended family is slowly declining over the last three decades.

As defined by PSA 2021, nuclear family includes the father, mother and their own children living with them. Majority of the student respondents lived with their parents in their own housing dwelling units comprising 299 (78 percent). Only 24 students lived in a house for rent or rented apartment. The figure indicates that, as a basic necessity, Filipino families give importance to dwelling that is why majority of these students are residing with their family under the roof of a house owned by their parents. By birth order, some respondents were middle born at 149 (39 percent) and the other 15 students indicated that they were only child in the family.

Table 3 revealed that the largest group of student respondents' fathers are employed in the private sector comprising about 42 percent of the total. This was followed by those working in the government sector composed of about 20 percent and about 18 percent of self-employed fathers. The minority, a little over four percent, are overseas Filipino workers (OFW) fathers. The fathers' employment in private institutions over government service coincides with the perennial employment issue in the country because of scarce government hiring and job opportunities.

Table 2: Profile of study respondents by nuclear family size, type of residence, birth order and household size

Profile Variables	**Frequency**	**Percent (%)**
Nuclear family size		
13 to 15	4	1.04
10 to 12	27	7.03
7 to 9	86	22.40
4 to 6	238	61.98
3 and below	29	7.55
Total	384	100.00
Type of residence		
Stay with relatives	25	6.51
Stay with grandparents	36	9.38
Apartment rented	24	6.25
Own house	299	77.86

Total	384	100.00
Birth Order		
Only child	15	3.91
Youngest	114	29.69
Middle born	150	39.06
First	105	27.34
Total	384	100.00
Household Size		
16 to 18	4	1.04
13 to 15	12	3.13
10 to 12	37	9.64
7 to 9	90	23.44
4 to 6	208	54.17
3 and below	33	8.59
Total	384	100.00

However, the largest proportion of student respondents' mothers are not employed accounting about 39 percent, followed by those working in the government sector at 21 percent, and in the private sector at 20 percent (Table 3). Self-employed mothers constitute about 15 percent of the total. This finding clearly shows the role of women in the family which due to huge responsibility borne by mothers, they would prefer to stay at home taking care of the family and attending to the individual needs of the family members.

It is indicated in Table 3, majority of both the father and the mother of the respondents had high educational attainment. A total of 125 (32.55 percent) of the respondents' fathers and 128 (33.33 percent) of their mothers have earned a college degree or diploma. On mothers' employment status and educational background, it is noted that even if most of the mothers were college graduates, they were not employed. This may imply that some of them may have chosen their parental obligation to manage the family or household and take care of the kids while their husband is at work.

Table 3: Parents' occupation and educational attainment

Profile Variable	**Frequency**	**Percent (%)**
Father's occupation		
Government employee	75	19.53
Private	161	41.93
Self employed	65	16.93
OFW	15	3.91
Not employed	68	17.71
Total	384	100.00
Mother's occupation		
Government employee	79	20.57
Private	77	20.05
Self employed	58	15.10
OFW	20	5.21
Not employed	150	39.06
Total	384	100.00
Father's Educational Background		

Doctorate graduate	7	1.82
Masters graduate	13	3.39
Masters level	5	1.30
Tertiary graduate	125	32.55
Tertiary level	53	13.80
HS graduate	81	21.09
HS Level	52	13.54
Elementary graduate	22	5.73
Elementary level	25	6.51
Never attended	1	0.26
Total	384	100.00
Mother's Educational Background		
Doctorate graduate	6	1.56
Doctorate level	1	0.26
Masters graduate	21	5.47
Masters level	5	1.30
Tertiary graduate	128	33.33
Tertiary level	46	11.98
HS graduate	90	23.44
HS Level	52	13.54
Elementary graduate	14	3.65
Elementary level	19	4.95
Never attended	2	0.52
Total	384	100.00

Also, with the significant unemployment rate in the country due to job mismatch, it may also imply that there is no job opportunity for them despite having a college degree. This result is congruent to the data from the Philippines Statistics Authority wherein the unemployment rate in January 2019 was estimated at 5.2 percent and among the unemployed Filipinos, 20.9 percent were college graduates.

4.2 Students' Bully Attitudes

As shown in Table 4, Junior High School students from Tacloban City Division have unfavorable attitude toward bullying as indicated by the mean score of 2.23. This result implies that students have an anti-bullying attitude which further means that they are against bullying behaviors and do not approve hurtful acts of their fellow students in the school. This may also indicate the idea that these students actually support or empathize with the victims of bullying because they are aware of its negative effects. From the results, it may be inferred that the students are apprehensive or cautious of bullying circumstances.

Table 4: Students' bully attitudes

Bully attitude	Frequency	Percent (%)
Favorable	63	16.41
Unfavorable	291	75.78
Very unfavorable	30	7.81
Total	384	100.00

4.3 Students' Level of Exposure to Bullying as a Victim and as a Bully

The students' level of exposure to bullying as a victim, be it verbal, social, physical or cyber can be gleaned from Table 5. The findings yield a grand mean of 2.95 and SD of 0.197 in terms of the level of respondents' exposure as victims. This suggests that students have occasional experiences of being bullied so they have moderate exposure as victims. The low SD value indicates that the respondents' answers tend to be concentrated around the mean.

This result is confirmed by the moderate number of reported cases among schools in DepEd Tacloban City Division. However, the results are not conclusive since data gathering was merely through survey and are dependent on the disclosed information by the Office of the Guidance Counselor or Guidance Teacher/Designate in the identified school. It does not negate the possibility that there might be some unaccounted cases of bullying due to students' lack of awareness or knowledge about bullying and inability to report incidents especially as victims which may be caused by fear or other reasons.

As can be gleaned also from Table 5, students' level of exposure to bullying as bullies reflects that they are highly expose to verbal bullying (mean = 3.94, SD = 0.512). This is followed by moderate exposure in social bullying (mean = 3.37, SD = 0.538), physical bullying (mean = 2.78, SD = 0.385), and cyberbullying bullying (mean = 2.96, SD = 0.395). Generally, the findings reveal that the students of Dep Ed Tacloban City Division have moderate exposure as bullies (grand mean = 3.27, SD = 0.264).

The small SD score means that the respondents' answers tend to be concentrated and close to the mean (Table 5). Although still within the moderate level of exposure, it is not desirable since already in the upper limit of the range tending towards high exposure. Arguably, this could be an offshoot of students who are not clearly or fully oriented about the RA 10627 or the Anti-Bullying Act of 2013 where bullying is comprehensively defined.

Table 5: Students' level of exposure to bullying as victims and as bullies

Exposure of students	Mean	SD	Description
As victims			
Social bullying	3.10	0.386	Moderately exposed
Cyber bullying	2.98	0.343	Moderately exposed
Physical bullying	2.97	0.441	Moderately exposed
Verbal bullying	2.73	0.409	Moderately exposed
Grand mean	2.95		Moderately exposed
Overall SD		0.197	
As bullies			
Verbal bullying	3.94	0.512	Highly exposed
Social bullying	3.37	0.538	Moderately exposed
Physical bullying	2.78	0.385	Moderately exposed
Cyber bullying	2.96	0.395	Moderately exposed
Grand Mean	3.27		Moderately exposed
Overall SD		0.264	

Ranges for the weighted mean	Description
1.00 – 1.80	Very lowly exposed
1.81 – 2.60	Lowly exposed

2.61 – 3.40	Moderately exposed
3.41 – 4.20	Highly exposed
4.21 – 5.00	Very Highly exposed

In the school, bullying behaviors may occur in a form of joke or just for fun among high school students to the extent that they are not aware that they are already hurting another person. It may just be for fun. Everybody is doing it anyway, so they tend to become insensitive to others' feelings. These acts are not regarded as bullying and so not reported that's why the behavior is perpetuated and not corrected.

4.4 Relationship of the Students' Profile and their Bully Attitudes

As shown in Table 6 that among the ten (10) profile variables considered in this study, only two variables were highly and significantly correlated with the bully attitude, namely students' nuclear family size and parents' educational background, the rest of the variables were not statistically correlated with the bully attitude. The association of the two variables with bully attitude was direct as indicated in the r-value of 0.150 and p-value of 0.003. This implies that students with bigger nuclear family size are more likely to have more positive or favorable attitude towards bullying.

This finding supported the study of Kim, et al. (as cited in McGaha-Garnett, 2013) which claimed that students from larger families have high exposure to bullying interactions from siblings and parents, they have adopted that home environment pattern which can either be permissive or supportive of bullying behaviors towards others including outside of their homes.

The same positive relationship is revealed between the father's and the mother's educational attainment and their children's bully attitude with gamma coefficient = 0.306, p-value = 0.000 for the father and gamma coefficient = 0.26, p-value = 0.001 for the mother. Since the parents' educational background is inversely coded in the data analysis, positive correlation means that those students whose parents have lower educational background have the tendency to be more supportive of bullying.

Table 6: Correlation between the students' profile variables and their bully attitude

Variable	Test statistic	Computed value	p-value
Age	r-value	0.037^{ns}	0.465
Sexual orientation	Contingency coefficient	0.185^{ns}	0.091
Grade level	Gamma coefficient	-0.113^{ns}	0.202
Parents' marital status	Contingency coefficient	0.097^{ns}	0.887
Nuclear family size	r-value	0.150**	0.003
Type of residence	Contingency coefficient	0.085^{ns}	0.834
Birth order	Gamma coefficient	-0.111^{ns}	0.202
Household size	r-value	0.018^{ns}	0.729
Father's occupation	Contingency coefficient	0.173^{ns}	0.190
Mother's occupation	Contingency coefficient	0.147^{ns}	0.591
Father's educational background	Gamma coefficient	0.306**	0.000
Mother's educational. background	Gamma coefficient	0.261**	0.001

ns – not significantly correlated

** - Highly significant correlation at $\alpha = 0.01$

Parents who are low educated may apply the authoritarian parenting techniques making use of harsh and inconsistent punishment or they may lack parental support and monitoring and have poor parent-child communication. These conditions influence the emotional well-being of children paving the way for them to misbehave or demonstrate anti-social behaviors such as bullying.

Essentially, the findings reveal that the null hypothesis of no significant relationship between students' level of exposure to bullying, as bully and their profile variables, was rejected for nuclear size and parents' educational background. On the other hand, the null hypothesis was not rejected for age, sexual orientation, grade level, parents' marital status, type of residence, birth order, household size, and parents' occupation.

4.5 Relationship of the Students' Profile and their Level of Exposure as Victims

As indicated in Table 7, there is a significant inverse correlation between the students' nuclear family size and their overall level of exposure to bullying as victims which is indicated in the computed r-value of -0.105 and particularly -0.171 for social bullying. This means that the bigger the students' nuclear family size, the lesser bullying exposure they have as victims of bullying especially on social bullying.

The smaller the nuclear family size, the higher the chances or exposure to social bullying. This circumstance may be explained with the concept that with smaller family size which tend to be cohesive where children are protected such that they are not socially exposed. This finding however refutes what Wolke, Tippett and Dantchev (2015) claimed that the bigger the family size, the more likely there will be bullying among siblings. They further stated that younger ones are more likely to be exposed as the victims while the older siblings as perpetrators.

Further, the finding reveals a direct significant relationship between selected profile variables and their exposure to certain types of bullying such as the students' grade level and verbal bullying (gamma coefficient = 0.179 and p-value = 0.016). This indicates that as students' grade level increases, their exposure to bullying also increases. This finding is not congruent to the study of Koonce and Mayo (2013) wherein they concluded that there is no association between the grade level and incidence of bullying.

Table 7: Correlation between the selected students' profile and their level of exposure as victims

Variable	Test statistic	Bullying exposure as a victim				
		Verbal	Social	Physical	Cyber	Overall Exposure
Age	r-value	0.081^{ns}	-0.087^{ns}	-0.059^{ns}	-0.010^{ns}	-0.038^{ns}
	p-value	0.115	0.090	0.246	0.845	0.454
Sexual orientation	Contingency coefficient	0.180^{ns}	0.192^{ns}	0.120^{ns}	0.138^{ns}	0.099^{ns}
	p-value	0.384	0.259	0.934	0.493	0.872
Grade level	Gamma coefficient	0.179*	-0.129^{ns}	-0.082^{ns}	0.051^{n}s	-0.174^{ns}
	p-value	0.016	0.090	0.261	0.556	0.264
Parents' marital Status	Contingency coefficient	0.117^{ns}	0.170^{ns}	0.159^{ns}	0.063^{ns}	0.125^{ns}
	p-value	0.945	0.496	0.621	0.992	0.638
Nuclear	r-value	0.016^{ns}	-0.171*	-0.015^{ns}	-0.048^{ns}	-0.105*

family size	p-value	0.753	0.001	0.775	0.346	0.040
Type of residence	Contingency coefficient	0.168^{ns}	0.106^{ns}	0.150^{ns}	0.063^{ns}	0.113^{ns}
	p-value	*0.266*	*0.888*	*0.457*	*0.956*	*0.544*
Birth order	Gamma coefficient	-0.017^{ns}	0.013^{ns}	-0.017^{ns}	0.037^{ns}	-0.049^{ns}
	p-value	*0.828*	*0.874*	*0.830*	*0.694*	*0.747*
Household size	r-value	0.026^{ns}	-0.064^{ns}	0.104*	-0.013^{ns}	0.035^{ns}
	p-value	0.612	0.209	0.042	0.800	0.499
Father's Occupation	Contingency coefficient	0.181^{ns}	0.176^{ns}	0.280*	0.177^{ns}	0.150^{ns}
	p-value	0.424	0.480	0.002	0.164	0.404
Mother's occupation	Contingency coefficient	0.133^{ns}	0.137^{ns}	0.197^{ns}	0.198^{ns}	0.136^{ns}
	p-value	0.961	0.947	0.419	0.110	0.707
Father's educational background	Gamma coefficient	0.033^{ns}	-0.012^{ns}	0.093^{ns}	0.156*	0.039^{ns}
	p-value	0.651	0.873	0.214	0.044	0.825
Mother's educational background	Gamma coefficient	0.014^{ns}	0.069^{ns}	0.032^{ns}	0.102^{ns}	0.113^{ns}
	p-value	0.846	0.374	0.655	0.227	0.563

ns – not significantly correlated
*- Significant correlation at $\alpha = 0.05$

The relationship between household size and physical bullying (r-value = 0.104 and p-value = 0.042) also indicated a positively and significantly correlation. This means that the larger the students' household size the more exposed they are exposed to bullying as victims while those with smaller household have lower exposure to bullying as victims. There is also a significant correlation between the students' fathers' occupation and physical bullying (contingency coefficient = 0.280 and p-value = 0.002).

This means that those students whose fathers are employed are more like to be more exposed to bullying as victims. This result parallels with the study of Lemstra et al. (2011) which found out that those respondents who have fathers with professional occupation were more likely to be victims of physical bullying. Somehow, the finding suggests that employed fathers may be overwhelmed by the demands of their job and are likely to be working late, they may lack communication, hands-on supervision and monitoring of their children. Indeed, parental involvement in children's formative and growing years is crucial towards reduced risk for involvement in bullying.

The same positive relationship was exhibited between the students' fathers' educational background and cyberbullying (gamma coefficient = 0.156 and p-value of 0.044). The parents' educational background was reversely coded in the computation. Hence, significant positive correlation means that students with fathers who have lower level of educational background have higher level of exposure to bullying as a victim especially on cyber bullying and those students with fathers with higher level of education have lower level exposure to cyber bullying.

The above finding suggests that fathers who are low educated are not technology oriented and may not be able to teach their children about the proper use of gadgets and positive online behaviors, hence, making their children vulnerable to cyberbullying victimization. On the contrary, respondents with well-educated fathers are most likely to be well-versed with internet using computers and other electronic gadgets that's why they are less exposed to online perpetration.

4.6 Relationship of the Students' Profile and their Level of Exposure as Bullies

The finding reveals a positive correlation between the students' grade level and their level of exposure to bullying as bullies especially on social bullying (gamma coefficient = 0.182 and p-value = 0.006) and cyber bullying (gamma coefficient = 0.187 and p-value = 0.010). This finding means that the higher the grade level of the student, the higher his or her tendency to bully someone socially or through cyberbullying. This result refutes the study of Hesapcioglu and Tural (2018) which found that students in the lower grades have higher involvement in bullying compared to those in the higher grade levels.

Birth order and physical bullying (gamma coefficient = -0.179 and p-value = 0.032) has been found to be negatively correlated based on the data. This means that the older the respondent the lesser his exposure to physical bullying as a bully and the younger he is the higher his exposure to physical bullying. This further indicates that older students are more aware that bullying is not good, hence, they tend to refrain from involving themselves in it. The same positive association was also found between household size and physical bullying (r-value = 0.187 and p-value = 0.010). This finding suggests that the bigger the students' household size, the more that he or she is prone to be involved in bullying as a bully himself or herself.

Father's occupation and physical bullying are also related as shown in the data analysis result (contingency coefficient = 0.258 and p-value = 0.012). This denotes that those students who have fathers who are employed are more likely to be exposed to physical bullying as bullies while those who whose fathers are unemployed have lesser exposure to bullying. This result is consistent with the correlation between father's occupation and exposure to physical bullying as a victim. This shows that the student's father's occupation is strongly related to his or her level of exposure whether as a victim or as a bully.

Table 8: Correlation between students' profile and their level of bullying exposure as bullies

Variable	Test statistic	Bullying exposure as a bully				
		Verbal	Social	Physical	Cyber	Overall exposure
Age	r-value	0.016^{ns}	0.097^{ns}	-0.048^{ns}	0.099^{ns}	0.075^{ns}
	p-value	0.747	0.058	0.348	0.053	0.143
Sexual orientation	Contingency coefficient	0.109^{ns}	0.219^{ns}	0.157^{ns}	0.196^{ns}	0.149^{ns}
	p-value	0.812	0.081	0.639	0.223	0.378
Grade level	Gamma coefficient	0.051^{ns}	0.182*	-0.074^{ns}	0.187*	0.173*
	p-value	0.513	0.006	0.336	0.010	0.046
Parents' marital status	Contingency coefficient	0.082^{ns}	0.143^{ns}	0.119^{ns}	0.093^{ns}	0.095^{ns}
	p-value	0.962	0.783	0.940	0.992	0.906
Nuclear family size	r-value	-0.095^{ns}	-0.131*	0.027^{ns}	-0.041^{ns}	-0.120*
	p-value	0.062	0.010	0.601	0.420	0.019
Type of residence	Contingency coefficient	0.077^{ns}	0.116^{ns}	0.196^{ns}	0.079^{ns}	0.111^{ns}
	p-value	0.901	0.811	0.082	0.983	0.584
Birth order	Gamma coefficient	0.044^{ns}	0.102^{ns}	-0.179*	0.093^{ns}	-0.031^{ns}
	p-value	0.606	0.150	0.032	0.249	0.748
Household size	r-value	-0.006^{ns}	-0.079^{ns}	0.103*	-0.061^{ns}	-0.029^{ns}
	p-value	0.901	0.122	0.044	0.234	0.570

Father's occupation	Contingency coefficient	0.120^{ns}	0.179^{ns}	0.258*	0.168^{ns}	0.170^{ns}
	p-value	0.748	0.443	0.012	0.569	0.229
Mother's occupation	Contingency coefficient	0.178^{ns}	0.161^{ns}	0.197^{ns}	0.203^{ns}	0.197^{ns}
	p-value	0.287	0.806	0.421	0.360	0.126
Father's educational background	Gamma coefficient	-0.185*	-0.097^{ns}	0.246*	-0.021^{ns}	-0.062^{ns}
	p-value	0.014	0.129	0.000	0.758	0.468
Mother's educational background	Gamma coefficient	-0.084^{ns}	-0.080^{ns}	0.201*	-0.040^{ns}	-0.158^{ns}
	p-value	0.249	0.205	0.006	0.541	0.057

ns – not significantly correlated

* - Significant correlation at $\alpha = 0.05$

The relationship between parents' educational attainment and physical bullying is also found to have bearing as indicated in the gamma coefficient = 0.246 and p-value = 0.000, and gamma coefficient = 0.201 and p-value=0.006. As mentioned earlier, the parents' educational background was reversely coded in the computation. Thus, significant positive correlation means that students with fathers who have lower level of educational background has higher level of exposure to bullying as a bully especially on physical bullying and those students with fathers with higher level of education have lower level exposure to cyber bullying. This result is similar to the relationship of parent's educational attainment and exposure to bullying as a victim.

Conversely, a negative relationship is shown between nuclear family size and social bullying (r-value = -0.131 and p-value = 0.010), which means that the bigger the student family size, the less he or she is exposed to social bullying as a bully. The same result yielded in the correlation between the father's educational background and verbal bullying (gamma coefficient = -0.185 and p-value = 0.014). This implies that the lower the educational background of the student's father, the higher is his or her exposure to cyberbullying as a bully. Indeed, parents' educational background influence their attitudes regarding child-rearing which also affects children's attitudes towards decision making and resolving conflicts (Park, Choi and Lim, 2014).

On the other hand, the student profile variables which have no association with their level of exposure to bullying (as bullies) include age, sexual orientation, parents' marital status, nuclear family size, type of residence, birth order, and parents' occupation. This means that these profile characteristics are not attributes of exposure to bullying whether it is physical, verbal, social and cyber.

With these findings, the null hypothesis of no significant relationship between overall level of exposure to bullying (as bullies) was not rejected for age, sexual orientation, parents' marital status, type of residence, birth order, household size, parents' occupation, and parents' educational background. The null hypothesis was rejected only for grade level and nuclear family size (Table 8).

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

In the light of the study findings, the authors conclude that school bullying in the junior high schools is still evident despite the existing Guidance Program being implemented

and the students' level of exposure as a bully is quite alarming. These two are enough reasons for a calibrated comprehensive awareness drive to eradicate bullying in schools. The high school students' bully attitudes manifest that they are not generally supportive of bullying acts or any engagement leading to bullying. Significant relationship exists between the students' level of exposure to bullying, either as victims or as bullies, and the profile variables such nuclear family size and parents' educational attainment. As students' level of exposure to bullying (physical, verbal, social, and cyber) relate to some family variables, the family still plays the greatest role in every child's disposition, behavior and attitude.

Based on the conclusions, the authors recommend to revisit the implementing guidelines of the schools' Child Protection and Anti-Bullying Policy to keep at pace with the recent developments and complexities brought by technological advancements. Schools may strengthen its mandate on strict policy implementation and monitoring of R.A. No. 10627. A whole school community approach in the intervention programs may be adopted or utilized for a unified and synchronized system of implementation with the wider participation from the school community especially the parents who will serve as the school's strong ally in this endeavor. Conference or forum for school guidance counselors, guidance advocates, guidance designates and members of the Child Protection and Anti-Bullying Committee may be conducted annually in the division level to provide proper platform to share common concerns about the implementation of R.A. No. 10627 thereby formulate shared prevention and intervention programs to reduce bullying-related incidence in schools. Similar studies may be conducted using other loci to examine if the same findings are obtained.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflicts of interests.

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