THE PSYCHOLOGICAL ANALYSIS
OF BULLY PROFILE VIA PEERS REPORT

This article is devoted to the problem of bullying, the various forms, and manifestations of which can be distinguished in all spheres of life of modern youth. The presented article examines the prevalence of bullying in higher educational institutions in Aktobe. The aim of the study was to identify the attitude of respondents in two groups: Kazakh-speaking and Russian-speaking to the image of the bully and to establish differences in approaches to assessing aggressive behavior. Our respondents were senior undergraduate students in different areas of study of private and public universities in Aktobe (N = 115), 58 were Russian-speaking students, 57 were Kazakh-speaking students, age (Me = 18.7). For the study, a questionnaire was developed, through which the personality traits possessed by bully were identified. The questionnaire used a bipolar scale for describing the personality of the bully, consisting of ten paired antonyms. The subjects noted several bully features, such as “dominance”, “psychological stability”. As a result of the experiment, it was revealed that there are certain features in assessing the bully profile associated with the language of the respondents. 47.5% of the participants in the Russian-speaking group noted that they were “outside observers”, 27% – victims. In the Kazakh-speaking group, 37.1% of participants were bullied at school, 40.4% witnessed bullying. At the same time, as a result of the study, there were mixed answers of respondents in the Kazakh-speaking sample, who at the same time endowed the bully with contradictory characteristics that have the features of a rapist and a victim. The differences in approaches and assessment of the bully image in the two samples are significant, which requires further research.

Key words: bullying, semantic differential, bully, students, dominance, victims, stigmatization.
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Психологический анализ образа буллеров глазами сокурсников

Данная статья посвящена проблеме буллинга, различные формы и проявления которого можно выделить во всех сферах жизнедеятельности современной молодежи. В представленной статье рассматривается степень распространенности травли в высших учебных заведениях г. Актобе. Целью исследования было выявление отношения респондентов в двух группах: казахской и русской к образу були и установление различий в подходах к оценке агрессивного поведения. Нашими респондентами выступили обучающиеся бакалавриата старших курсов разных направлений обучения частного и государственного университетов г. Актобе (N = 115), из них 58 были русскоязычными студентами, 57-казахскими студентами, возраст (Me = 18,7).

Для проведения исследования была разработана анкета, посредством которой были выявлены личностные черты, которыми обладают були. В анкете была использована биполярная шкала описания личности були, состоящая из десяти парных антонимов. Испытуемые отметили ряд особенностей були, такие, как «доминантность», «психологическая устойчивость». В результате эксперимента было выявлено, что существуют определенные особенности в оценке профиля були, связанные с языковой принадлежностью респондентов. 47,5% участников русскоязычной группы отметили, что они были «сторонними наблюдателями», 27% – жертвами. В казахоязычной группе 37,1% участников подвергались издевательствам в школе, 40,4% стали свидетелями издевательств.

В результате исследования наблюдались смешанные ответы респондентов в казахской выборке, одновременно наделявших були противоречащими характеристиками, имеющими черты насильника и жертвы. Различия в подходах и оценке образа були в двух выборках значительны, что требует дальнейших исследований.

Ключевые слова: буллинг, семантический дифференциал, були, студенты, доминантность, жертвы, стигматизация.

Introduction

In foreign psychology, violence against individuals in the educational environment was defined as bullying (school bullying). In almost every classroom, students with any characteristics are victims of bullying by their peers. The bullying of the victim is always linked to some form of aggressive behavior. Excessive aggressiveness of modern teenagers contributes to the spread of the phenomenon of bullying in the teenage environment.

The English word bullying refers to violent, physical, or psychological abuse that targets victims, causing them psychological discomfort. The following terms describe similar behavior harassment, discrimination, mobbing. Bullying has specific features, including unwanted, negative actions; it is repetitive behavior; it represents an unbalance in power and strengths (Olweus, 1991).

Olweus, 1997 suggested his theory of roles which kids play when they are involved in bullying.

According to D. Olweus, bullying is a specific type of violence when a bully (person or group) physically abuses another person or group; the victim is weaker and unable to defend himself physically or psychologically (Olweus, 1993).

Bullying is also a distinctive feature:
- a) regularity and repeatability;
- b) bully and victim are members of the same social group.

These characteristics make it possible for us to distinguish between bullying and random fights that sometimes occur between people.

According to scholars, there are two types of bullying. Direct bullying occurs in a situation when a child is beaten, nicknamed, teased, spoiled, or taken away from his or her things. Indirect bullying is when a bully spread rumors and gossip, boycotted, avoided, and manipulated a victim. However, the differences between direct and indirect bullying are not so visible to the general public. Physical and verbal aggression is clear, their negative impact is understandable, and in general, school communities tend to oppose them. Researchers showed that indirect bullying victims face challenges in maintaining social relationships; victims tend to have self-esteem issues and anxiety (Dåderman, Ragnestål-Impola, 2019).
The structure of bullying usually includes the following elements: the bully, the victim, the bystanders, “stalker assistants,” and “victim defenders.” The bully does not consider his behavior as “abusive” or “harmful” in the process of bullying (Olweus, 2007). Bullies persuade the victims till the time when victims have to leave or commit suicide.

The personal characteristics of “classical” bullies included increased aggressiveness, weak self-control over their motives, and a high tolerance for aggressive behavior. They tend to show a low level of empathy but a strong desire to dominate. A recent study showed that bully to have a higher social status compared with their victims. The self-esteem of the bullies is positive and high. Bullying lets them feel more self-confident and feel successful. Some researchers believe that bullying is a form of compensatory behavior. The bullies seek to appear more elevated, more significant at the expense of devaluing the other (Olweus, 1991).

According to Guseynova E.A., Yenikolopov S.N., the bully had high scores on self-esteem (57%), which, combined with the fact that the aggressors had a low level of hostility, indicated their self-confidence, lack of suspicion, resentfulness (Guseynova, Yenikolopov, 2014). The results show that bullying was different from other bullying activities, a desire for leadership, and a sense of interpersonal security. The aggressors had high self-esteem indicators, especially in comparison with bullying victims, and low self-esteem indicators compared to other bullying participants.

According to van Geel, the bully personality could be described as Dark Triad, which includes Machiavellianism, narcissism, and psychopathy (Van Geel et al., 2017). Machiavellianism refers to interpersonal strategies that advocate coldness, deceit, calculation, and manipulation to achieve goals. Narcissism is a pathological form of self-love, characterized by feelings of grandiosity, entitlement, dominance, and superiority. Psychopathy refers to low feelings of empathy, thrill-seeking, and fearlessness.

Mitsopoulou, E. and Givazolias, T. mentioned that bullies had low empathy scale results. The Big Five questionnaire showed that the traditional bully had lower results in Agreeableness (Mitsopoulou&Giovazolias, 2015). The high score on the Agreeableness dimension describes people’s attitudes toward interpersonal relationships and others’ needs. Surprisingly, bully, and their assistance had shown high scores in Extraversion.
Materials and Methods

Around 20% of kids are victims of bullying, from 50% to 70% of school-age children were bystanders. Bullying is a widespread phenomenon of social relationships where violence and abuse are tools to control. We are considering the social theory of bullying as the methodological base of our research.

We requested participants to fill the questionnaire and describe what personality traits a bully has. The participants (n=115) 58 were Russian speaking students, 57 Kazakh speaking students, age (Me=18.7). According to new research, students feel better when using bipolar scales (Collecting Data Through Measurement in Experimental-Type Research, 2016). We created ten characteristics describing “bullies.” The students received a Google link. Participants were students of Baishev University and K.Zhabanov ARSU.

Results

Before filling Google link, we requested participants to answer a question: “Did you ever were involved in bullying? Which role did you play?” We want to mention the anonymous character of our study and voluntary participation in it.

47.5% of the Russian group participants mentioned that they were “bystanders,” 27% were victims. In the Kazakh group, 37.1% of participants were bullied at school. 40.4% witnessed bullying. No one of the participants committed “bullying.”

The first semantic differential scale which we used in our study was “SOCIABILITY – WITHDRAWNNESS.”

![Figure 2](image)

Figure 2 – The results of the first bipolar dimension SOCIABILITY – WITHDRAWNNESS

As we see in Figure 1, 45% of Russian group participants mentioned the “Sociability” of bullies. Kazakh speaking participants scored bully as less “sociable.” Bullying in a school has an interesting dynamic; bully usually has a higher social level than their victims. They tend to have pro-social support, as an almost anecdotal case of “Mean Girls.”

The differences in the estimation of bullies’ IQ are quite impressive, as we see in Figure 3, 20% of participants of Russian speaking groups evaluate bullying as extremely SMART. Moreover, in Kazakh speaking, 31% of participants scored bully so high. The high than average scores in Russian and Kazakh groups were given by 33% and 19% of students.
Emotional stability is when you can calm your mind after encountering negative experiences. It is an inner motivation, an inner force through which we can experience all the difficulties of life, like other aspects of our personality, such as IQ, emotional intelligence, social intelligence. Emotional stability is a trait that is present from birth and continues to develop throughout life. Emotional resilience could be described as a personal ability to adapt to stressful situations. More resilient people can “ride with blows” and adapt to misfortunes without long-term difficulties; less resilient people show more difficulties cope with stress and life changes, especially with “uncertain situations.” It has been found that those who cope more easily with minor stresses can also cope more easily with significant crises, so resilience has its advantages for both everyday life and a rare major disaster.
39% of Russian-speaking participants described bully as an “emotionally unstable” person; however, the majority of participants in Kazakh groups estimated bully as an “emotionally resilient person” (65%). In research from Tani et al. (Tani et al., 2003), teachers reported that emotional instability was a predictor of pro-bully behavior.

Dominance is the desire and ability to take a dominant position in the group and influence others to dictate their will. The common name of a dominant person is a strong personality. 78% of both declared that “dominance” is one of a bully’s main personality traits. Volk examined Chinese (n=389) and Canadian (N=482) students; the two main traits were used in bully self-reports: extraversion and dominance. Our study showed that “dominance” was the main personality trait that was significant for both samples (Volk et al., 2019).

Dominance is usually described as Self-reliance, independence, perseverance, stubbornness, assertiveness, willfulness, conflict, aggressiveness, refusal to recognize foreign power, the inclination to authoritarian behavior, lust for admiration, and rebellion.

Opposite to dominance is subordination, such as softness, pliability, tactfulness, meekness, courtesy, dependence, politeness, helpfulness, piety, shyness, willingness to blame, modesty, expressiveness, a tendency to get out of balance quickly.

The respondents in Kazakh and Russian speaking groups found out that bullying tends to show more “expressive” behavior. Expressiveness is cheerfulness, impulsiveness, enthusiasm, carelessness, recklessness in choosing communication partners, social contacts’ emotional significance, expansiveness, emotional brightness in relationships between people, and dynamism of communication, which implies dynamic leadership in groups.

The psychological dictionary defines “Conscience” as “the ability of a person to independently formulate his moral duties and exercise moral self-control, demand from himself their fulfillment, and evaluate his actions; one of the expressions of moral self-consciousness a person” (Van Geel et al., 2017).

![Figure 5](image-url)  
Figure 5 – The results bipolar dimension “HIGH CONSCIENCE – MALEVOLENCE”

As researchers, we could not find a logical explanation of why participants see the bully as “high conscience” people. As a possible explanation, this may give us ideas about why people tend to be “bystanders”; they seem to be OK with “bully.” Nowadays, we do not have empirical research in the Kazakh speaking population, which could describe “nation attitudes” towards bullying.

Dåderman & Ragnestål-Impola, have shown that workplace bullying may be predicted by an early HR evaluation of potential staff members. Bullies tend to show high results in the Dark Triad and Extraversion, with comparable low values of Honesty-Humility and Agreeableness (Dåderman & Ragnestål-Impola, 2019). A similar study was conducted on adolescents, and it showed that bullies had
to tend to show low scores on the Honesty-Humility scale (Aston&Lee, 2008).

The participants described “bully” as “brave.” How do you understand the term “brave”? The person can act in a specific situation within individual

social courage. The courage of a person allows him to fight with his fears.

We are confused with this description of bullies. Does this mean that society understands aggressive behavior towards others as a form of bravery?

Thus, bullying is quite widespread, which may harm both parties’ personality formation: bullies and victims. The more we focus on this problem, the more we understand that this phenomenon’s casualty does not allow us to systematize all information and make further steps to prevent bullying.

As we see in Figure 7, participants in the Kazakh speaking group “idealize” a bully image. Bully, for 44% of the participant, is a “TRUSTFUL” person. Trustfulness is blind faith, lack of experience, ignorance of life, its device, all its speakers, its manifestations, the illusion of what is near you, a particular deception of vision. The inability to recognize lies, deception, lack of intuition, and contact with yourself. The trustful person is not ready to take responsibility for what happened. Trust and trustfulness have a different meaning. When we speak about trust, the first thing we need to mention is believing in yourself. The belief in your strength, the ability to recognize lies, deception, developed sensitivity it is all matter. Therefore, you can better understand and feel the other person, test his ability to close contact, analyze, and understand that this person will not betray, cheat, and fail. You have checked it internally and externally several times and made a decision that you can trust.

This scale also represents a different attitude of respondents. 60% of Kazakh speaking students believe that bullies are “dreamers.” Is it a form of excuse for their behavior? 32% of Russian respondents tend to estimate bullies as more practical individuals.

According to Ekimova, when they speak about bullying, some participants could represent a combined image of an “aggressive victim” when, in some situations, a person is a bully. In another, he/she is a victim (Ekimova&Zalaldinova, 2015).

The mixed answers of respondents in the Kazakh sample were a surprising fact. The traditional system of values-based on “victim-blaming” and the construct of “UYAT” (Kazakh word means “shame”). The differences in approaches and the estimation of bullies in the two samples are quite impressive, requiring further research.
Conclusion

The hierarchical relationships based on the cult of power and authority, inequality, and subordination were a part of our Dark History. The families were victims of historical circumstances and tend to live in survival mode. It may affect the values which children inherited from us. Modern psychologists speak about “toxic masculinity,” the type of behavior when society accepts abusive behavior as a form of dominancy.
Despite its historical character, it is critical to understand that our children will thrive when they support us as parents, educators, and psychologists. Bullying awareness and adverse outcomes have to be included as a part of the curriculum for schools and universities.

The most favorable conditions need to be created to establish positive relationships in the educational environment, friendly communication. The research review on the problem allows us to say that to date, quite in detail, the degree of prevalence and forms of bullying manifestation were studied, including such modern bullying varieties, as cyber-bullying. Simultaneously, the results of research on the individual characteristics of bullying participants are quite controversial. Because some external features, features behavior, and social status may be a characteristic and a reason for accepting students of different roles in a bullying situation.

The particular interest is the figure of “aggressive victims,” which combines the characteristic features of the abuser and the victim. It can simultaneously be in the position of the attacker and the victim.

As you can see, it is “aggressive victims are particularly active, consistent and violent in the role of the attacker. Besides, despite the widespread bullying, there are not many methods for it is diagnoses, which also detect the presence and determine the forms of manifestation bullying in an educational institution, but not given the ability to explore his numerous interiors intrapsychic factors.

The possible limitations of this study were that our participants were students speaking Kazakh and Russian languages. The study was conducted in Aktobe city before Covid – 19 pandemic. That fact does not represent current changes in the attitudes of our participants.

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