Bullying in schools and Mental Health

Name

Institution

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This paper is concerned with the description of social issues and their proposed solutions based on the deliberate intellectual analysis. The selected population is students and its issue is bullying at schools and academic institutions and how this issue affects their mental health along with the proposed solutions.

It is immensely irrefutable to realize the significance of academic institutions as the promoters of critical development of students particularly when they are at the initial stages of their physical, psychological, emotional and social development. The primordial role of academic institutions is to enable students to understand the current knowledge and living an independent life through deepening and discovering their skills. Due to these reasons, it is highly demanding to explore the factors that affect the education, life experiences and utmost learning at the initial stages of their education.

Potential factor that affect the performance of students include self efficacy, classroom environment, teacher- student relationship, preferences, outlooks, reinforcements, peer group and physical environment of the classroom. Such factors either foster the multifaceted aspects of student’s development or strongly disrupt their learning, academic competence and mental health.

Relationship of student with his peer group forms the basis of his intellectual development. A healthy relationship ensures healthy development whereas problematic relationship disrupts his personality development and academic performance gravely. Bullying is a form of lopsided interaction between students in which one student is immensely overwhelmed by his powers and superior strengths to the extent that he looks down upon other students, mistreats them and compels other students to attack his fellow students in order to nurture his sense of dominance. He seeks satisfaction and amusement though attacking individuals either physically or verbally.

According to Carl Rogers—a renowned Humanistic Psychologist, humans are innately predisposed with the lingering urge to have social approval and dominance. Appropriate parenting and training enables him to control his urges but when he fails to do so; the outcome is obvious. He illustrates his uncontrolled urges in form of bullying through humiliating other, communicating hateful derogatory commenting, physical assaults, negligence, and social exclusion. A prominent power imbalance between the victim and bully is the hallmark of bullying.

A bulk of literature is evident that bullying makes academic institutions one of the most unsafe places for students. This is because students start developing a strong resentment towards school and its activities. It is worth noting that bullying is executed by the students hence, it is quite hard to mitigate such practices through eliminating bullies from the schools rather other suitable evidence based techniques must be implemented to overcome this issue.

The above mentioned background makes the idea clear that bullying needs to be eliminated from the schools because of its physical, mental, emotional and social consequences for the students. Specifying the elimination of bullying instances from the schools, following strategies can be implemented to accomplish this goal: education of students, training of parents and teachers, counseling of victimized and predator students, effective policy making and legal implications. These techniques can be used as evidence-based strategies to get the goal accomplished.

However, counseling of victimized and predator students is what would be selected as an intervention plan. Students would first undergo survey to investigate the frequency and severity of bullying instances. This would be done using *Illinois Bulling Scale*. After that, their mental health would be measured using the *Warwick-Edinburg Mental Health Scale*. These instruments would be used because of their widely- acknowledged and accepted internal and external validity. After correlating bullying and mental health scores, students would be selected who require instant intervention because of at-risk mental health. Such students would be introduced to school counselors who will apply interventions accordingly.

Counseling interventions will focus exclusively on the self-concept, self efficacy, ego development and appropriateness of the schemas of victimized individuals. The basic aim of counseling is to develop insight within individuals to remain determinant in whatever the situation offers. Moreover, it will be intended at developing self empowering rationality and improvement of coping skills to combat the effects of the negative behaviors from others. In this way, counseling would be used to minimize the intellectual and behavioral ramifications of bullying in their academic institutions.

Students will be counseled two days in a week. They will again be surveyed about their mental health after 2 months trial using the same standardized instruments. Their pre-test scores will be compared to the post test scores that would give a compelling glimpse of the effectiveness of counseling in eradicating the adverse impact of bullying. Improvement in mental health scores will indicate the effectiveness of counseling techniques. If their scores are consistent, above mentioned alternative strategies might be used as well.

Based on the above mentioned activity, it can be concluded that bullying in academic institutions is highly prevalent and affects student population adversely. At the school levels, students are still passing through their psychosocial and emotional stages development that is a quite sensitive time period. It makes them susceptible for even minute happenings that are potent enough to disrupt their mental health and academic performance. After picking the phenomenon of interest, at-risk students would be selected through survey questionnaires i.e., *Illinois Bulling Scale* and *Warwick-Edinburg Mental Health Scale.* Their pre- test mental health scores would be determined and documented as records. Their scores would be determined after counseling interventions. Comparative analysis of both the scores will determine the effectiveness of intervention program. In a nutshell, no problem is there without its solution. Although bullying is a serious social issue yet its intervention strategies can be used to overcome this issue.