
NEWSLETTER

Effects of Individual Competence and Interpersonal Relationships on Bullying Perpetration in Primary and Secondary Students

By Li, J.

Correspondence to: Jiazhe Li, Northeast China Normal University, China. E-mail: lijz1106@126.com

MOST SURVEYS on school-based bullying focus on the perspective of the victims. Empirical research on bullying perpetration among primary and secondary school students is relatively scarce. In effect, the prevention of bullying in schools involves various parties, including perpetrators, victims, and bystanders. It is particularly important to monitor bullying perpetrators to control their offensive behaviors and prevent potential harm to others. Based on large-scale education monitoring data from a province in eastern China, this study aims to analyze the effects of individual competence and interpersonal relationships on bullying perpetration in primary and secondary school students in China using methods of logistic regression, Owen decomposition, and random forests.

Research Findings:

- Bullying behavior among primary and secondary school students is predominantly verbal, with higher incidence of perpetration by junior secondary students, male students, underweight or obese students, students who have experienced cyberbullying, boarding students, and those in urban schools.
- Primary school students with poorer parent-child relationships, primary and secondary school students with poorer teacher-student relationships, and junior secondary students or rural primary school students with better peer relationships are more likely to perpetrate bullying.
- Compared to interpersonal relationships, individual competence has a closer connection with bullying behavior among basic education students. Academically low performers in primary schools and rural junior secondary schools, students with lower task, collaboration, and emotional regulation competence, and higher communication competence, as well as primary school students and rural junior secondary students with lower openness to experience, are more likely to be bullying perpetrators.

The findings provide valuable insights for accurately identifying and scientifically intervening in school-based bullying perpetration, with significant implications for decision-making on and implementation of bullying prevention interventions in schools.

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